



German students visit ACH Birmingham



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On 13th June, 5 German students visited our Birmingham office to learn more about our community health work.

The students were from the Department of Community Health of The Hochschule für Gesundheit, University of Applied Sciences in Bochum.

They have been looking at health care for migrants in Bochum, but the purpose of the visit was to widen their focus by providing them examples about care practices for marginalised people beyond Germany.

The students heard from David from Brushstrokes Sandwell about their work, and the situation faced by refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants in Birmingham and Sandwell. Osman Ishal, Regional Manager for Ashley Community Housing, introduced them to the work we do in Birmingham, and Mohammed Baharoon, Support Worker for Ashley Community Housing, told them about the support we give our tenants with benefits and applying for council, housing association and private rented housing.

Matthew Rogers, Marketing and Communications Officer for Ashley Housing, then gave them more background about our organisation and the work we do in the West of England, as well as the West Midlands. He also talked about our #rethinkingrefugee campaign, and how we work on changing perceptions amongst employers and local communities. The attendees liked the positive way we approach refugee resettlement and integration, and told us something similar was needed in Germany.

Prof. Dr. Christiane Falge, Department of Community Health, said; “as a professor for health and diversity I specifically care for the health and wellbeing of marginalized communities such as refugees. By supporting refugees with Housing, ACH provides one of the essential base for good health. In Germany we lack such institutionalized support structures and refugees in search of Housing mainly rely on the goodwill and voluntary engagement of German citizens. This often affects the mental health of refugees who are accommodated far too long in provisional

emergency shelters. Therefore, our graduates are highly inspired by the good work of Ashley and our students would greatly benefit if they would be given the chance to do placements' at Ashley Housing in order to learn from Ashley and empower refugees by building up similar structures in Germany".

