IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON VISITORS TO IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTRES

Dr. Teresa Degenhardt

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Research Findings

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Dr. Teresa Degenhardt
School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
Queen's University Belfast
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Context

The World Health organization (WHO) declared the Covid-19 outbreak a global pandemic on 11 March 2020. The UK Government released guidance on preventing the spread of the disease in places of detention on 16 March. The Home Office then released a document on 20 March 2020, with specific instructions to stop all visits to immigration removal detention centres to ensure the safe and secure functioning of these centres. As a result, people in detention could be contacted only through Internet and IT facilities, apart from exceptional circumstances. Volunteers from the AVID network started supporting migrants remotely, mostly via phone or Skype. Detention Action issued a legal challenge on 18 March, over the Government's failure to safeguard from Covid-19 all those held in UK immigration removal centres. Consequently, most people in detention were released. The number of detainees dropped from 1,637 at the end of the 2019 to 698 by June 2020 (latest statistics available from the UK Government, 27 August). At the same time, however, 1819 people entered immigration detention between April and June 2020 (during the lockdown), of whom a third were transfers from prison. Some groups who are members of AVID have started providing support by phone or Skype to those still in

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detention, whilst many others have started post-release support within the community. This study aimed to understand the challenges involved in the move to support migrants in detention and post-detention through technology during the lockdown imposed by the spread of Covid-19.

Project outline and methodology

The project was funded by Queen's University Belfast and enabled by the AVID network. AVID is an umbrella organization of groups of volunteers and visitors supporting migrants in detention centres, in short-term immigration detention facilities and in a number of prisons. It comprises: Asylum Welcome, BEST, Detention Action, Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group, Jesuit Refugees Service, Larne House Visitors Group, Lewes Prison Visiting Group, MIDST, Morton Hall Detainee VG, Scottish Detainee Visitors, SOAS Detainee support, Sudanese Visitors Group, Yarl's Wood Befrienders. Not all groups belonging to AVID participated in the study, and some groups were represented more than others. The researcher is part of the network as a coordinator of the Larne House Visitors Group.

This report is based on phone and Skype interviews with 14 people who were either continuing their support of migrants and asylum seekers or had discontinued because of the pandemic. Thirteen participants were from the UK-based AVID network, and one was from the Republic of Ireland. Those interviewed were mostly women; only two were men. The majority were supporting migrants post-release; five were still supporting migrants in detention, and one had stopped volunteering because of the move to phone and online support. Some were recruited for the study through a call for participants disseminated by email, Facebook and twitter. As only a few responded to that call, specific centres were targeted, and snowballing occurred via AVID and some local group coordinators. The recruitment process included participants from as many detention centres as possible in an attempt to capture a variety of experiences. As a result, the sample included a few people supporting migrants in detention as part of their job (coordinators) rather than as volunteers. Although not representative of the experiences of everyone supporting migrants in detention, the findings yield insight into what some have experienced.

Interviews lasted between 30 to 45 minutes and were conducted on Skype or by phone. They were recorded and transcribed for accuracy. The study was conducted during June and July 2020, thus capturing experiences of support provided towards the end of the initial lockdown restrictions.

The purpose of the interview-based study was to describe the effects of the pandemic on those who support migrants in detention, to understand challenges and benefits arising from changes in the provision of support from direct contact to phone and Skype interactions and to clarify the emotions felt by those providing support in a time of vulnerability. Questions were asked in general terms about the reason participants were involved in the network, the limitations and positive aspects of providing support through online and phone media and possible improvements.

As the research progressed, it became clear most respondents were facing unexpected challenges only partly related to the use of online and phone media. Although the release of migrants from detention centres was certainly needed to save lives in the course of the pandemic, this greatly increased the vulnerability of some migrants. The research highlighted lack of mental health support and issues about the protection of adults at risk in the post-release

phase. Organizations and individual supporters from civil society were left with the responsibility of supporting extremely vulnerable people. Given its findings, this report could be used to inform future policies on the release of migrants and the support required by this vulnerable population.

Reasons for being involved in groups belonging to the AVID network

Participants were supporting migrants for different reasons. The majority had political reasons, including anger at the hostile environment and racism. Many had started volunteering post-retirement as a way to contribute to society. Some were motivated by faith and religious beliefs. Others wanted to help those mistreated by the system for reasons not of their own making. A few had family histories connecting them with migration or detention. Some recounted personal experiences of the plight of migrants in contemporary times or had read/heard items in the news on the detention system that moved them to volunteer.

All participants said they found what they were doing "really worthwhile." They felt they were contributing to different messages on those caught in the system, counteracting misinformation, cruelty and racism. Some said they really enjoyed meeting people from different parts of the world with whom they could talk, pray, share ideas and comment on the news. They reassured them that they mattered, and some spoke of the development of lasting friendships. They appreciated the chance to laugh with or even just sit in silence with those in detention. As one volunteer put it, helping others was a meaningful experience:

> "I think it's this thing of … that I know I help. I know I help that person. Even though they're struggling I know I help. Just by listening to them. And if you can then send him to the food bank, then you've done something that's made their burden a little, a tiny tiny little bit lighter."

The use of technology to communicate

Because of Covd-19, participants had to use phones or Skype to contact migrants still in detention or released from detention. Responses on the use of technology were similar among those who supported people in detention or post-detention.

One person said phone support may actually work better, as people may feel more able to talk about confidential issues harder to reveal face to face:

> "I mean some conversations are actually easier to do on the phone when you're not seeing the person. It is sometimes easier for them to talk openly when they can't be seen."

Some mentioned that "it takes less time," as there is no commuting, and there are no security checks to go through. In some cases, participants said they now "spend more time talking," whilst the phone provides "additional flexibility towards the relationship." One person said:

> "To be honest it's quite handy…they have a direct line to us…it makes them feel a lot more connected"

For some, the added flexibility was a good aspect, but for others it was problematic, as they were no longer sure of their role.

Many spoke of incontrovertible difficulties understanding the language and the accent of people they were supporting by phone. In some cases, this had deterred them from providing support during the pandemic. Problems of lack of a common language, accent and acoustics (because of hearing difficulties and/or reception issues in detention centres or elsewhere) were considered critical:

> "Communicating with somebody with whom you do not have a shared language is very very hard."
>
> "To explain that they can get to a computer and book a Skype call was a challenge."
>
> "If you actually analysed it, her English was not a problem. But on the phone she is not confident at all."

Language issues are common in detention centres, as many migrants do not speak English or are not fluent. Visitors consequently find it hard to understand people's needs and worries and to offer appropriate support. The language issue was perceived as problematic, as it affected the supporters' role:

> "I might not understand what he is saying and not respond appropriately."
>
> "… just to make sure I'm understanding. And as I've got to know him better it's become easier to say 'Whoa, slow down please' … I think it's inevitable in a situation where you're not both native speakers."
>
> "… making sure they are getting the help they need."

The fact that conversation was also usually one-to-one on the phone increased participants' sense of responsibility for understanding what a person may say or try to say over the phone. Fear of not being able to adequately respond to requests for help or clarification was highlighted in a few cases. One participant said it was hard to use interpreters on the phone, whilst another suggested the use of interpreters had become more relevant.

A few participants mentioned that they did not know how to ask important questions or how to respond to critical situations:

> "Broaching potentially sensitive things is way way harder than it would be normally."
>
> "Once or twice he was really angry, justifiably angry, about things that had happened … I was quite shaken about that. Not because it was directed at me, because it wasn't … but simply to think that he had been put in the situation where he felt so kind of upset and emotional."

Many participants said the phone had deprived them of a number of options to understand and support migrants (such as physical contact, picking up cues from facial expressions or bodily movements, the possibility of smiling, looking at paperwork etc.), thus curtailing their ability

to understand what was said or needed and or to know how to react. Many thought it was much easier to overcome silence in the presence of a person; at times, hugging someone or even touching his/her hand may enable a level of support difficult to replicate over the phone:

> "Difficult to know what to say."
>
> "I could have held his hand."
>
> "There's a kind of intensity of one to one over the phone"
>
> "It takes away the ability to sit in silence."
>
> "When you are in a visit there is a lot of looking at paperwork; that's obviously not possible on the phone"

In some cases, participants used text messages. They said WhatsApp and text messages were quite helpful in enabling a better understanding. In some cases, migrants used these with the aid of friends and partners. Although recognised as not ideal, this was considered a useful means of maintaining contact. Text messages, together with the use of a private phone number, became the preferred method of support for some, but this affected the boundaries of the relationship:

> "When you go to the centre, it's very clearly boundaried. You know you go, you're there and you come away again … although I kept in touch with the person by text message in between and by email, there was quite a clear differentiation between being there and doing the occasional text message … whereas now, sitting in my home phoning, it feels more personal."
>
> "Visiting in the centre we have very clear boundaries that they (the coordinators) help us put in place and do it very successfully."
>
> "Now she's far more in my daily life because we'll text each other… it is harder to put her in a compartment so that I can survive."
>
> "It is much harder to partition and say: 'I can't change that, I can help in this way but not in any other way'."

Interviewees talked about how the use of private phones, WhatsApp and text messages modified the conditions of support, making it much more difficult to compartmentalise and maintain the boundaries crucial to their own mental health and wellbeing.

Participants supporting migrants in detention were more likely to use Skype, given the availability of the technology in immigration detention centres. Skype was considered helpful because those using it can see the face of the other person, leading to trust and a sense of knowing the other person:

> "I still don't understand him well but to be able to smile and gesticulate and see his face and him to see me has made a huge break through."

But it was not feasible for everyone; not all had the required technological skills or necessary technological facilities. In some cases, there were issues with the limited number of computers in centres, or the limited time allowed to each person. People in detention centres may not be sufficiently aware of the opportunity of using available computers.

Challenges of supporting migrants post-detention during the Covid-19 pandemic

Most participants expressed relief when they heard the migrants they worked with were going to be released, but the majority said post-detention support was much more challenging. The inability to know where precisely people were living and in what conditions, their level of access to food or their health needs were commonly mentioned issues:

> "Our initial thought was 'Yay they're going to be released, great!' But actually they're more vulnerable now than they were in the centre because they were released very quickly and not necessarily with anywhere secure or safe to go."

> "A few people have been released in really bad situations. They've been homeless, or in accommodation where they don't know anyone. They're really lonely … having to try to survive on a small amount of money each week."

> "I could not be 100% comfortable that they did have money coming in at the moment."

> "He was talking about being positive and then I slowly discovered that there were days where he was not eating. I asked him a simple question about what he was going to eat that night and he did not have any food … he had not told me that he was really struggling for money and food and that some days he was not eating."

Participants invariably commented on the lack of support for people with whom they were in contact and the difficulties involved in offering practical help. A few said this new kind of support was not just emotional, as it had been before the pandemic. It now included a practical element, as it involved helping migrants seek support: some needed food or had to learn how to access food banks; some had difficulties registering with a GP, or opening a bank account; some had no source of income or monthly payment; some faced eviction or had to move quickly to other accommodation. It was a very different kind of volunteering:

> "We've very quickly realised that we really needed to help people who'd been released to get access to what they needed, whether it was food, clothes, accommodation, signposting to organizations that could help them … *it became massive* … it became something that was even more important than what we had been doing before, which was generally just emotional support."

Participants often felt ill-equipped to provide enough guidance on these issues: "Our expertise is not actually in the community." Some had been given information by their organization, but at times they needed more specific knowledge. A couple of

participants indicated a reluctance to reach out for help and attempted to find things out for themselves:

> "I have tried not to use them. So whereas I used to do a quick call before, now I find things out myself and pursue things myself. And I am not that good at that sort of research. I find it harder."

One interviewee talked about the difficulty migrants had setting up a bank account with High Street banks. Credit and debit cards were the only means of payment in most shops during the pandemic, but not many migrants had access to them:

> "What I have never fully appreciated was, if you live on the fringes of society, you are invisible. To get a GP, to get a bank account in particular in the time of Covid, it seems trivial but I had no idea … in the shops now they do not want cash. The person I support does not have a bank account so can only use cash, which limits the shops to go to."

> "… the difficulty of not having a current ID, passport, driving licence – not having a permanent address."

One participant mentioned limitations in support provided to asylum seekers suffering domestic abuse:

> "If you are a British National you can get support, or if you are a refugee. If you're an asylum seeker you cannot get all of that."

As migrants were released in the community to avoid the spread of the virus and reduce the risk of potential fatalities, many supporters were left to deal with migrants' greater vulnerability. Participants reported migrants' experiences of domestic abuse, evictions, previous histories of slavery, war and torture, detention and mental ill-health. Many feared migrants might attempt suicide or self-harm, because of their past experiences:

> "She was released because of her mental health, and she had made attempts to take her life."

> "They sleep a lot, they may not always answer the phone."

> "Her mental health went off the cliff."

> "They were paranoid. In one or two places the Wifi went down. Can you imagine yourself with no Wifi in this situation?"

> "These people are traumatised from their own country and then this happens to them."

> "People would not go out. They would not go for their hour walk. It took me a long time to explain that they are allowed out to exercise for one hour. They still do not go out because they are frightened the police would get into trouble because they are asylum seekers."

> "This person is in rubbish accommodation, he gets £37 pounds or whatever it is a week, which, I mean, you know, how do you live on that, even if you're not paying rent?"

> "I am the only thing he does … because everything closed down, the various charities … the church … where they would give him food, he could chat to people and they would maybe give him second hand clothes … none of that … all that closed up."

> "They are really lonely… someone's being sent to a place they've never lived in and then they have not got anyone there to support them…people who are suicidal and homeless"

Participants mentioned that they could not discuss legal issues as they would have before, as solicitors were not available or hard to reach during this time. One mentioned worries resulting from migrants' lack of access to some sort of support system:

> "My worry was for one man who had epilepsy because they were away from any support system. In detention they've got medicines, they've got somebody that would recognise if they are sick, if they have a temperature, and would deal with it ... I was scared of them being put on the street, or in a hostel where people would not be careful. And I was worried about the lack of English and how much information they were understanding."

Other challenges revolved around how to manage the relationship on the phone. As participants were providing support from home, it was harder to maintain boundaries, both because of the means used (i.e. the phone, which sometimes involved text messages) and because there might be other people in the home who became inadvertently involved in the relationship: "I can't make this too much part of my husband's life." Volunteers were unsure what sort of conversation they could have, what questions they could ask and what they should avoid talking about. They were worried about making people feel low and did not know how often to call or make contact: "Hard to know when to back down and when to insist with phone - given vulnerability but also adulthood."

Some volunteers were concerned about the issue of ending their relationship with migrants in the community and how this should happen. Given the private nature of support provided, some mentioned that, at times, even terminating a phone conversation could be problematic.

To some extent, these were boundary issues, but they intersected with the feeling of great responsibility and friendship that were part of the support offered by participants and reflected their concern about the dreadful situations into which migrants had been released.

Challenges of supporting migrants in detention during the Covid-19 pandemic

Participants noted that the number of migrants in detention had decreased, so there were fewer people to support. Nevertheless, they talked about the inability to reach new ones. They were frustrated having to rely on information provided by officers in detention centres. They had no way of knowing if new people had arrived at the centre, or what the situation was with respect to social distancing:

> “Very sporadic the information you get from the centre.”

> “Try to know more about what is going on behind closed doors: they’re terrible closed institutions and unless you push the door, they’re not going to tell you anything.”

> “People are in there and we’re not being told. They keep telling you how open they are and they reassure you that people are happy. But they’re not getting what I give to people is solidarity. Because they’ve got a uniform on, they’ve got tasers, they’ve got everything that I don’t have when I go in and sit down and offer my hands and say ‘hello’. The pandemic has showed us that the Home Office is totally in charge at all times and can make any decision.”

> “Because our presence in the centre is less, it’s more difficult to make contact with people who are in the centre.”

> “We have not had any sort of new referrals.”

The phone/Skype support had consequences for the kind of support participants could offer. Some restrictions due to the pandemic deprived them of the possibility of offering practical help to migrants (such as clothes and phone credit to those who had just arrived), removing their first point of contact and reducing the possibility of offering solidarity. The fact that detention centres were now providing phone credit was seen as positive but deprived participants of a first point of contact with migrants in detention. These aspects were seen as limiting their ability to support new migrants or migrants whom they had not previously reached. They suggested the kind of support they could offer was mostly emotional during the lock down. Others were still able to offer practical help, sending phone credit or goods to migrants in detention. Overall, however, they were not satisfied:

> “We have struggled to replicate the model of support we were using before…there are a lot of things to actually work through…it raises all sorts of issues: it’s doing things individually rather than as a group or in a couple.”

Those supporting migrants in detention spoke of the difficulties caused by the lock down, such as gaining access to lawyers, granting bail, finding bail addresses and dealing with probation officers. These were issues many had not dealt with before the pandemic:

> “A number of people who have been granted bail but can’t be released because their bail address isn’t deemed to be acceptable.”

> “There is real frustration about things being slower… not being able to get in touch with lawyers…to determine whether bail addresses are appropriate”

Participants who were still supporting detained migrants spoke of issues of poor mental health, with suicide figuring prominently among their concerns:

> "Those inside are afraid of the virus spreading in detention centres and they are living with a degree of anxiety: they have very little control."

> "There's been a lot of people I've spoken to who've been very very down and quite suicidal, which ties in with this kind of perpetual waiting, with being in a cycle with bail in principle been granted then after a couple of weeks it runs out."

Supporters' Feelings of Frustration and Concern

Although the majority of respondents said that they still found providing support was worthwhile, many found the situation under lockdown "frustrating" and "draining." Asked how they felt about new forms of support they answered:

> "Not having met in person before, I felt a bit anxious."

> "It's a less satisfying volunteering experience, as it's more sporadic."

> "It is emotionally draining and difficult at times."

Many spoke of feeling helpless and worrying about the health and safety of the people they were supporting, especially if they could not reach them or they were not answering the phone:

> "I have no way of knowing how she really is now."

> "I am messaging in a bit of a void really."

> "Initially I felt dread, we had so little information about what was going on."

Participants talked of the dreadful situations some migrants were in and lamented their inability to do much more than listen:

> "Dreadful … there is nothing you can do to improve someone's situation."

> "I could talk to her about whom she might go and see and talk to, I have no guarantees she'll do it."

Overall, this created a very different experience:

> "I used to come away feeling that I'd done something helpful. You know, even if it's just being there, just hugging her, just having that sort of connection … now I can only give her tools. I have to accept she may not actually use them."

Participants talked about their increased sense of responsibility. Some were so afraid of not being able to respond appropriately, they preferred not to volunteer anymore:

> "I did not know what was happening for him … I just thought … it's not going to end well for him."

> "I do feel a level of responsibility which I haven't felt for anybody else to that degree."

> "It's hard: people are suicidal and homeless."

Anxiety was common, as supporters did not know where the migrants were or what sort of help they needed since contact was only by phone, and people often did not answer right away. Reminding themselves of the limits to what they could do, many were conscious of the isolation of the people they were supporting:

> "I have to know now there's actually a limit to what I can offer, beyond just a connection …. it's a lot more difficult"

One recounted a story to illustrate how he coped with overwhelming concerns about the migrants' situation:

> "My partner told me this wonderful story. One day there was a huge storm, on a beach at the seaside and people go down to the beach and this terrible storm has washed up all these star fish. And they're all lying on the beach dying, thousands of them, and people are sort of walking around looking at this scene of utter devastation. This woman is there and she sees this guy near the water's edge, walking through these dead and dying star fish and occasionally picking one up and throwing it into the sea. And there are just thousands, millions, of them on the beach. And she goes up and say to him: 'Why are you doing that? You know you are never going to save all these star fish? It's a disaster'. And he picks one up and throws it in the sea and says: 'I saved that one'."

The frustrations and concerns of participants about the limitations of using technology were the same whether they were communicating with detainees in the centre or those in the community. In most cases, people supporting migrants in the centres were frustrated by the lack of knowledge on the situation inside them and their inability to reach for meaningful help in a context where much support had stopped.

Suggestions for improvement

All participants expressed gratitude towards local staff who were said to be "fantastic," "great help" and "doing much" in spite of limited resources. Participants were "impressed by their work," and expressed gratitude for their role:

> "They've supported me in every way I've ever needed it."

> "Without training we would have been very lost."

> "We always know that we can talk, reach out to people at work."

Some had attended training from AVID or local organizations (for example, on zoom) that was described as "really helpful" and a "great help." Training was appreciated not only because it provided skills and help, but also because it allowed them to meet other people involved in similar work. Coordinators expressed their appreciation for online meetings:

> "I really valued the calls we've had with other groups … I really like the space to hear how people are getting on, speaking to people who are dealing with similar issues, so I think they've been really good."

Some participants talked about being more isolated now than before. They missed the opportunity to bump into other volunteers for a casual chat outside or inside the detention centre, or occasions to discuss cases of concern with professionals in the detention centre:

> "I liked the casual chats with volunteers that going physically to the centre enabled with other volunteers."

> "It's helpful to talk to someone who's worked with more people than I have."

> "Being two people - take pressure off me to respond appropriately."

> "More reassurance by meeting in groups and bouncing ideas off each other, and where we can share what is going on."

Some participants wondered whether they could Skype in pairs. Along similar lines, one mentioned how lonely it felt not to be able to share what she was talking about, or could talk about, with other volunteers. A couple of participants suggested introducing some sort of supervision:

> "Feedback to each session, like monthly, to say how things are going - to get someone else's advice or suggestions … not that this is not available, but I think people need encouragement to know they can …. rather than asking people to call the centre if they're in difficulty, the centre may need to contact people to see how it is going. People may need more support with phone support."

Another possibility was a "buddy system" to share experiences of support:

> "I think it would be useful to have somebody in the relationship who could listen … that would take some pressure off me to respond appropriately and to be ready with the next topic and next question … if there was two of us, we could perhaps understand better."

One person suggested AVID could provide more information about the possibility of using Internet and Skype in the detention centres and offer training to maintain volunteers' morale:

> "Raise awareness of video calls in centres, you know, FaceTime and Skype facilities."

> "Understand how to keep volunteers' engagement and to keep their morale ... or how to re-engage with volunteers whose communication with you may have dipped out."

Another spoke of how difficult it was to understand acronyms:

"I wish people would talk less in digit (i.e. acronyms)."

Some felt great satisfaction sending cards, letters or gifts (such as books in appropriate language, fresh vegetables, BLM t-shirts) to let migrants know someone cared about them.

Key Findings

This study was conducted to understand the issues faced by visitors and volunteers in immigration detention centres during the Covid-19 pandemic, especially given the move to online and phone support. The findings highlight some critical issues migrants have faced whilst still in detention and when released in the community. They enhance understanding of how the move to phone and online support has changed the concerns and ability of supporters to provide help. The findings are summarized below.

Issues faced by migrants supported in detention centres

Participants highlighted a number of critical issues faced by migrants still detained in immigration detention centres:

- **Lack of access to lawyers**
- **Difficulty getting acceptable bail address**
- **Extended wait times**
- **Anxiety**
- **Lack of knowledge of use of Skype**
- **Mental health issues**

Issues faced by migrants supported post-release

Participants mentioned a number of issues faced by migrants released into the community. Although the release was necessary and important to save lives in the course of the pandemic, migrants were released without appropriate access to bare necessities:

- **Lack of suitable accommodation**
- **Lack of income**
- **Lack of food and lack of information on how to access food banks**
- **Lack of access to clothing**
- **Lack of access to Wi-fi**
- **Lack of access to important information in their language**

Migrants faced difficulties accessing crucial services:

- **Problems signing up for GP**
- **Difficulty using bank cards – lack of bank accounts- crucial to but food and medicines during the pandemic**

- **Support from organizations dealing with sexual violence and domestic abuse not offered to migrants and asylum seekers**
- **Inadequate mental health support**

Concerns raised by participants about their role

- Participants expressed their concerns about their ability to fully understand migrants on the phone because of language issues and the inability to access proper translation services on the phone.
- The use of the phone, text messages and WhatsApp to reach those in the community caused anxiety because of lack of responses by migrants and participants' inability to know what situation migrants were living in.
- Participants spoke of their concern about possible suicide and self-harm among both those who were detained and those who had been released.
- Participants were frustrated and anxious about the level of support they could offer in the presence of the structural limitations highlighted above and often felt responsible for migrants' vulnerability. They wanted to help but did not know how. Some were not comfortable offering practical support and felt they lacked specific information.
- Participants suggested they needed more opportunities to engage with other volunteers and exchange information.
- Participants suggested the online and phone contact created issues of boundaries with respect to what kind of questions could be explored, what needs may migrants have or even how or when to end calls.

Points for action:

Participants appreciated the role played by AVID in providing training and coordinating different groups in their responses to common issues. Suggestions for future support in the event of a pandemic are detailed below:

- **Government must provide appropriate accommodation, access to food (or information on how to access food banks), GP, mental health support and bank card approval for shopping (or alternative) to migrants released in the community.**
- **Government must provide information on the possibility of using Skype in detention facilities (in different languages)**
- **Revision is required on access to lawyers and procedures for bail and probation.**
- **Research is required to explore the issues faced by migrants who are released and those who remain in detention, including talking to migrants and other key informants. Research is also required to understand issues faced by migrants placed in isolation (due to Covid-19) while in detention.**
- **AVID to provide training for possible situations of suicide and mental health issues in the context of the pandemic (i.e. not having direct access to of knowledge of the situation).**

- **AVID to look into the issue of boundaries keeping in relation to the use of phone as a means of contact**
- **AVID to check whether Government is providing information to people in detention on the use of Skype (in different languages).**
- **AVID to provide information on how to re-engage volunteers and maintain morale.**
- **Groups to organise a more systematic level of supervision (or buddy system) or monthly meetings to guarantee volunteers can talk about their experiences to each other.**