

Arizona Refugee Health

ISSUE 1

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POINT OF INTEREST:

- Please submit any events, stories or photos you would like to share with the community!

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The Arizona Refugee Health Newsletter is a periodic publication featuring updates from the Department of Health Services and the Phoenix and Tucson communities relating to the health and wellness of refugees. If you would like to subscribe to the newsletter, please email Zachary.Holden@azdhs.gov.

Community Spotlight: Massa, Cultural Health Navigator

As a refugee from Liberia, Massa Fahnbulleh has been actively involved in the community ever since she was resettled in Phoenix in September 2004. Massa has worked as a case manager for Catholic Charities, volunteered as a navigator for the Refugee Women's Health Clinic (RWHC), is an active member of the Refugee Women's Health Community Advisory Coalition, and currently serves as a Cultural Health Navigator at McDowell Healthcare Center.

Unmet Need

In her own experience as one of the first patients at the RWHC, Massa realized that refugee patients who came to the clinic were getting lost in the health care system. Seemingly simple tasks such as going to the pharmacy, using the phone, and arranging for transportation were completely foreign to most refugees. Differences in culture and language often created barriers to care. To help out, Massa began volunteering as a navigator at the RWHC. In January 2012, when the McDowell Healthcare Center identified a similar need for assisting refugee patients who were not compliant with treatment or had dropped out of care altogether, she stepped into a position there.

Role

In her role as one of two Cultural Health Navigators at the McDowell

Healthcare Center, Massa assesses patients' needs and health literacy, coordinates care, visits homes, provides interpretation, and helps patients understand their health condition, the available services, and the U.S. health care system. The ultimate goal is to teach patients to become independent in managing their own health care.



Massa Fahnbulleh, Cultural Health Navigator at McDowell Healthcare Center.

Challenges

The McDowell Healthcare Center specializes in treating patients with HIV/AIDS. Massa says one of the major challenges in working with refugee patients at the clinic is stigma. Many patients fear what other people in the community will think, worry they will not be able to get a job, or may not want to visit the clinic at all. There may also be cultural beliefs and misconceptions relating to what causes the disease and how it should be treated.

Advice for patients with HIV

Massa encourages patients to comply with treatment to keep

their condition under control and to not be concerned about what others think. She stresses, "Your health and yourself should be your priority. Because if you have good health, you have wealth, and you can seek anything!"

Advice for health care providers

Patience is essential in providing care for refugee patients, Massa says, "Refugees are coming to a new place, coming to embrace a new system, which requires change and takes time." It is also important for providers to be especially observant about the needs of each refugee.

Education and outreach

Beginning this year, Massa will be working on a new program for health education and outreach in refugee communities. She will be working closely with Ethnic Community Based Organizations (ECBOs) and resettlement agencies to identify needs and key issues relating to the health of refugees. The focus will be primarily on educating new arrivals, including youth, on these key health topics.

Impact

The services provided by cultural navigators such as Massa are vital to ensuring refugees receive appropriate care and encouraging refugees to be proactive in their health. Thank you, Massa, for your contributions to the community!

Improving Behavioral Health Screening

All refugees resettled in Arizona receive a preventive health screening, ideally within the first 30 days of arrival. An important aspect of this screening is an assessment of behavioral health. Many refugees have experienced immense trauma in their lives leading to high rates of anxiety, depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Identifying refugees' behavioral health concerns early on and connecting them with appropriate services is essential for their health and well-being.

Beginning this summer, the screening clinics in Phoenix and Tucson will use the Refugee Health Screener (RHS-15)

to evaluate the behavioral health of all newly arrived refugees. Previously, each clinic had its own method of screening.

The Refugee Health Screener (RHS-15) was developed by Pathways to Wellness, a project based in Seattle, WA. Pathways to Wellness developed the screener specifically for evaluating the mental health needs of resettled refugees. The screener has been validated to be a reliable and effective tool for detecting symptoms of anxiety and depression in refugee populations. RHS-15 takes less than 10 minutes to administer and is currently available in Arabic, Burmese, Karen, Nepali, Russian,

Somali, and Tigrinya. For patients who are not literate, the screener will be administered with the help of interpreters and cultural health navigators.

By implementing RHS-15 into the preventive health screening for all newly arrived refugees, our community will be better equipped to identify the behavioral health needs of refugees and provide the services to meet those needs.

For more information about the Refugee Health Screener (RHS-15), please visit <http://www.lcsnw.org/pathways>

Fostering cultural sensitivity at the doctor's office: Community Profiles

In recent conversations, local health care providers have expressed concern over providing culturally appropriate care for refugee patients. Cultural differences between patient and provider can often be a source of misunderstanding which may have an impact on health outcomes and follow-up to service.

For example, in some cultures it is inappropriate for members of the opposite sex to touch. If an effort is

made to match the patient with a provider of the same sex and to explain the reason for initiating contact, the patient may feel more comfortable and be more likely to continue to access health services.

In response to these concerns, the DHS Refugee Health Program is developing a community profile for each of the major refugee groups in Arizona. These one-page profiles will include cultural information that may be useful for any health

professional serving refugees. This resource can be used together with cultural competency best practices to provide the best possible care for patients from these diverse groups.

The community profiles are being developed with feedback from local Ethnic Community Based Organizations (ECBOs) and health care providers. Keep an eye out for updates on this project, and please contact the Refugee Health Coordinator for more information.

Affordable Care Act

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was passed in March 2010 with the goal of providing quality, affordable health insurance to all Americans. Over the next six months, changes to the U.S. health care system brought about by the ACA will be fully implemented.

The next issue of the Refugee Health newsletter will have more information on the ACA. In the meantime, here are a few key dates

and resources.

Key Dates:

October 1, 2013—The health insurance marketplace opens. Individuals and families can begin enrolling in health insurance plans at the Health-e-Arizona PLUS website.

January 1, 2014—Health insurance coverage begins. Those without health insurance must pay a penalty.

Useful Resources:

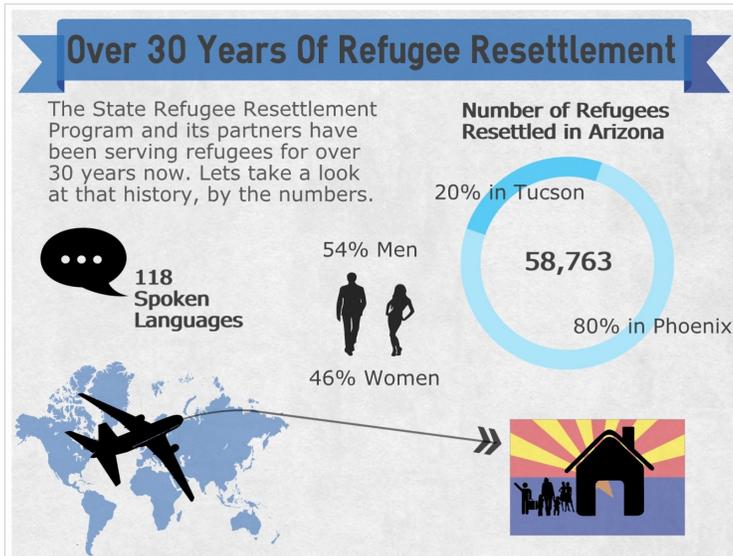
Handy information on how the ACA will impact specific populations and specific states.

<http://www.healthcare.gov/law/information-for-you/index.html>

Two-page briefs with basic information about the ACA in Arabic, Burmese, English, and Nepali.

<http://refugeehealthta.org/access-to-care/affordable-care-act/resources-for-providers-and-refugees/>

Refugee resettlement by the numbers



In light of the expected increase in Congolese arrivals over the next few years, the Cultural Orientation Resource Center has developed a backgrounder on Refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Published in March 2013, the backgrounder includes information about the refugee crisis, the history and culture of the Congolese, common health concerns and beliefs, the strengths Congolese refugees bring and the challenges they may face in their resettlement in the United States. Please view this informative guide at <http://www.culturalorientation.net/learning/backgrounders>

Polio outbreak in Kenyan refugee camp

There has been a polio outbreak in the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya, with five confirmed cases of polio since May 17, 2013. The Dadaab complex is home to 424,000 Somalis and is considered the largest refugee camp in the world.

Polio is a highly contagious and potentially fatal infectious disease caused by a virus that invades the nervous system. About 95% of infected persons have no symptoms but may still pass the virus to others via fecal-oral or oral-oral transmission. About 4-8% of infected persons have minor flu-like symptoms, and less than 1% suffer from paralysis which can lead to death. Polio vaccines are highly effective and have dramatically

reduced the prevalence of polio worldwide. The United States has been polio-free since 1979, but the virus continues to infect individuals in several other countries.



A child receives the oral polio vaccine.
(WHO/ Rod Curtis)

Agencies in Kenya are working to contain the polio outbreak by vaccinating all inhabitants of the Dadaab camp. Priority has been given

to vaccinating the 288,000 children under age 15. In addition, pre-departure measures are in place to vaccinate all children and investigate all individuals with symptoms of polio before they depart the camp for resettlement.

Although no known cases linked to the Dadaab outbreak have been reported in the United States, the CDC has issued a recommendation for newly arrived refugees. Until further notice, all refugees who have arrived from Kenya since the beginning of April 2013 should receive one dose of inactivated polio vaccine (IPV), regardless of their immunization history. Case managers should ensure that this is done in a timely manner.

Research Spotlight

Controlled Trial of Psychotherapy for Congolese Survivors of Sexual Violence. 2013 Jun 6. Bass JK, Annan J, Murray SM, Kaysen D, Griffiths S, Cetinoglu T, Wachter K, Murray LK, Bolton PA. *N Engl J Med*. <http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa1211853>

Decreasing Disparities in Breast Cancer Screening in Refugee Women Using Culturally Tailored Patient Navigation. 2013 May 18. Percac-Lima S, Ashburner JM, Bond B, Oo SA, Atlas SJ. *J Gen Intern Med*. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23686510>

The Prevalence of Torture and Associated Symptoms in United States Iraqi Refugees. 2013 Apr 6. Willard CL, Rabin M, Lawless M. *J Immigr Minor Health*. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23564397>



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>> Call for Submissions <<

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Upcoming Events

Tuesday, June 18, 2013—World Refugee Day Celebration/ RISP-Net Re-launch
10:30 AM—12:30 PM at Tucson High School Auditorium , SW Corner of 6th St and Euclid Ave, Tucson, AZ

Come celebrate World Refugee Day and the renewed community focus of the Refugee Integrated Service Provider Network of Tucson (RISP-Net). The celebration will feature remarks from local leaders and youth performances.

Thursday, June 20, 2013—World Refugee Day Youth Art Contest & Celebration, IASPF and Catholic Charities

6:00 PM—9:00 PM at IASPF, 3581 W. Northern Ave, Suite 8, Phoenix, AZ
Refugee youth are invited to submit art for the Refugee Youth Art Contest to the Iraqi American Society for Peace and Friendship (IASPF) by 5 PM on June 18. All are welcome on June 20 to celebrate World Refugee Day and see art from the Refugee Youth Art Contest on display.

Thursday, June 20, 2013—World Refugee Day Celebration, TIARC

6:00 PM—9:00 PM at TIARC, 4224 East Grant Rd, Tucson, AZ
Come celebrate World Refugee Day and the diversity of our community with Tucson International Alliance of Refugee Communities (TIARC). All are welcome to come enjoy entertainment and refreshments.

Friday, June 28, 2013—Webinar: Breaking the Glass, Navigating Sexual Health & HIV Stigma with African Immigrants and Refugees, OMH
11:00 AM—12:30 PM Register at <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/548259906>

This webinar presented by the Office of Minority Health (OMH) is targeted at clinicians that work with African immigrants with HIV and its co-morbidities. The webinar will address HIV stigma, MSM, FGM, gender issues, medical adherence, and cultural barriers related to African clients.

Friday, June 28, 2013—Women's Workshop: Exercise, IASPF

11:30 AM—1:30 PM at IASPF, 3581 W. Northern Ave, Suite 8, Phoenix, AZ
Classes at the Iraqi American Society for Peace and Friendship (IASPF) are open to all refugees and are usually taught in both English and Arabic. No sign up is required ahead of time, just come!

Friday, July 12, 2013—Refugee Patient Education Class, RWHC

1:30 PM—4:30 PM at MIHS Auditorium 3, 2601 E. Roosevelt St, Phoenix, AZ
The class is open to patients of the Refugee Women's Health Clinic (RWHC) and covers topics such as prenatal care, access to care, labor and delivery processes, comfort at birthing, infant care, car seat safety, and healthy homes.

For additional events and contact information, please refer to the calendar at <https://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=azrefugeehealth%40gmail.com>

Funding Opportunities

Grants for Nonprofits—Allyn Family Foundation

Amount: up to 5,000

Eligibility: Nonprofit organizations focused on health, education and welfare in communities. Of special concern are the status, condition and treatment of women, children, minorities and the underprivileged. Maricopa County is one of the counties given high priority.

Deadline: June 30, 2013

<http://www.allynfamily.org/procedure.html>

Refugee Agricultural Partnership Program—Office of Refugee Resettlement

Amount: 80,000 to 85,000 per budget period, three 12-month budget periods

Eligibility: Nonprofit organizations with proposed projects that incorporate agriculture and food systems to improve the lives of refugee families. Applicants cannot have previously received ORR RAPP grants in 2007 and/or 2010.

Deadline: July 2, 2013

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/view/HHS-2013-ACF-ORR-ZR-0571>

Grant—Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust

Amount: as needed, previous awards range from 2,000 to 500,000

Eligibility: Nonprofit organizations focused on helping people in need, protecting animals and nature, or enriching community life. Phoenix is one of two cities for which funding is available.

Deadline: August 1, 2013

<http://www.ninapulliamtrust.org/>

Cigna Foundation Grant—Cigna Foundation

Amount: typically 5,000 for first-time applicants

Eligibility: Programs aimed at enhancing the health of individuals and families and the well-being of their communities through promoting wellness, expanding

opportunities across barriers, developing leaders, or creating networks.

Deadline: rolling

<https://secure17.easymatch.com/cignagive/applications/agency/default.aspx?Skip=Guideline&programid=2>

Healthy Environments Grant—The Kresge Foundation

Amount: as needed, previous awards range from 7,000 to 1,000,000

Eligibility: Programs seeking to improve the health and well-being of vulnerable populations through initiatives concerning safe and healthy housing, transportation and the built environment, or healthy food.

Deadline: rolling

<http://www.kresge.org/programs/health/healthy-environments>

Community Health Partnerships Grant—The Kresge Foundation

Amount: as needed, previous awards range from 7,000 to 1,000,000

Eligibility: Programs seeking to address the social determinants of health through building a better primary care safety net or developing innovative approaches to improve the community health of vulnerable populations.

Deadline: rolling

<http://www.kresge.org/programs/health/community-health-partnerships>

Grants for Nonprofits—The Kroger Co. Foundation

Amount: as needed

Eligibility: Nonprofit organizations, including schools, hunger relief organizations, women's health initiatives, organizations promoting the advancement of women and minorities, and grassroots community organizations, that focus on enhancing quality of life in communities.

Deadline: rolling

<http://www.thekrogerco.com/community/kroger-foundation>