

Practice Checklist | REFUGEE HEALTH

Is your practice refugee health ready?

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The following table aims to provide a quick-reference guide to general practices considering or currently providing health care services to people from a refugee background. It is by no means an exhaustive list, but aims to serve as a tool to support health care for this vulnerable group and the development of appropriate primary care services.

Process / System	Comments	Essential	Recomm- ended	Your Comments
Bulk-billing for MBS Items, including Pathology	<i>Clients are Medicare eligible, receive Centrelink benefits, and will have a Health Care card.</i>	✓		
Capacity for long consultations and designated appointment times	<i>Initial GP Health Assessment. Use of interpreters can also lengthen consultations. Consider additional time for completion of practice registration forms.</i>	✓		
Understanding and acceptance of possible DNA	<i>At times clients may miss appointments due to lack of understanding of appointment reminders or conflicting commitments.</i>	✓		
Clients receive continuity of health care provider and co-ordinated in practice care	<i>Extra attention to the management of the client's care, including referrals and follow-up can assist with ensuring needs are met. Never underestimate the power of a friendly and familiar face.</i>	✓		
Appointment reminder system is appropriate to clients' needs	<i>Letters and voice phone messages can be confusing for clients with limited or no English. Some reported success with text messages. Appointment translation website: http://www.swslhd.nsw.gov.au/refugee/appointment/</i>	✓		
Interpreter Service (telephone and on-site) registered and utilising (All GPs)	<i>All bookings are now to be made on-line https://www.tisnational.gov.au/ TIS National Doctors Priority Line (DPL) on 1300 131 450. A portable cordless speaker phone greatly assists with maintaining contact with the interpreter as the client moves within the practice.</i>	✓		
GPs and practice staff are comfortable working with interpreters, e.g. speak in first person	<i>http://www.tisnational.gov.au/About-TIS-National/Publications-and-promotional-material/TIS-National-videos</i>	✓		
Family members / friends are not used to interpret - except in an emergency	<i>For many reasons it is inappropriate to ask a family member or friend to interpret during a consultation. Cultural, religious, inter-generational, confidentiality and health literacy issues can impact on the quality of personal clinical information requested and received, and on the client's experience.</i>	✓		
Vaccine Service Provider	<i>Refugee Catch-up Schedule of vaccinations is usually required</i>	✓		

Process / System	Comments	Essential	Recomm- ended	Your Comments
Immunisation recall and reminder system	<i>This system may need modification or additional processes to meet client needs.</i>	✓		
Awareness of cultural, religious and refugee sensitivities	<i>Review current knowledge and attitudes within practice team</i>	✓		
Documented communication processes – internally and with external service providers	<i>How do we communicate information regarding follow-up appointments within the practice? Facilitating referrals? Emergency settlement agency contact number for after hours client issues.</i>	✓		
Support processes for staff at risk of vicarious trauma	<i>Are there opportunities for discussion of issues? Consider networks and plans for support and debriefing.</i>	✓		
Practice nurse	<i>Translated clinical resources http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/ Translated resources for clients http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au/</i>		✓	
Practice nurse appointment scheduling (allows for protected time)	<i>Essential for practice nurse involvement in Refugee Health Assessments. http://www.racgp.org.au/download/Documents/PracticeSupport/apna-racgp-quality-health-assessment-info-sheet.pdf</i>	✓		
Family-friendly, spacious waiting room	<i>Large and extended families are common.</i>		✓	
Professional development opportunities	<i>Identify prior learning and expertise within practice team. Promote training opportunities.</i>		✓	
Accredited General Practice	<i>The systems and processes supported by accreditation also assist a practice to be Refugee Health ready.</i>		✓	
Cultural competency training for all staff	<i>Identify prior learning and expertise within practice team. Promote training opportunities.</i>		✓	
Practice software allows capture of language and ethnicity / country of origin	<i>The country that the client has travelled from is most likely not their country of origin. Their ethnicity may not be that of their country of origin or their country of birth.</i>		✓	

After Hours Emergency Settlement Agency Contact Numbers

ACCESS Community Services (Access)	0419 201 099
Multicultural Development Association (MDA)	0411 355 733
Multicultural Families Organisation (MFO)	0402 257 118