Refugee Health in Worcester

University of Massachusetts Medical School Population Health Clerkship

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Refugee: a displaced person who has been forced to cross national boundaries and who cannot return home safely.

Asylum Seeker: a person who flees his or her home country, enters another country and applies for the right to international protection, in this other country.

(USCIS, 2018)
Definition of Population Focus

Geographic Distribution:

- Worcester Area
- Resettling Agencies
  - Ascentria Care Alliance
  - Refugee and Immigrant Assistant Center
Race in Refugee Clinic

- White: 19%
- Asian: 8%
- Black or African American: 29%
- Unreported/Refused To Report: 34%
- Other Pacific Islander: 1%
- More than one race: 9%
Top 10 Languages Spoken by Refugee Clinic Patients

- Arabic: 20%
- Nepali: 18%
- Swahili: 14%
- English: 12%
- Kinyarwanda: 4%
- French: 5%
- Spanish: 9%
- Somali: 8%
- Kasa: 3%
- Sango: 3%
Physical problems and disabilities:
- Malunited fractures
- Soft tissue injuries
- Musculoskeletal symptoms
- Neuropathies
- Head injuries
- Epilepsy
- Malnutrition and anemia
- Non-communicable diseases and infectious diseases

Risks to refugees and asylum seekers

(Langlois, Haines, Tomson, Ghaffar 2016)
Medical Risks

- Tuberculosis
- Polio
- Mumps
- Measles
- Rubella
- Viral Hepatitis
- Malaria

(CDC, 2013)
Social Risks

- Language/culture Barrier
- Theft
- Lack of Job Opportunities
- Substance Abuse
- Poverty
- Education Gap
- Human Trafficking

(UNHCR, 2018)
Acute Mental Health Problems and Trauma

REFUGEES WITH PTSD OR INSOMNIA

TEAM 3 WITH PTSD OR INSOMNIA

Mental health screening results in resettled Syrian refugees

Note: 82 adults were evaluated with the PTSD Checklist for DSM-IV (PCL) and the Hopkins Symptom Checklist (HSCL-25).

Source: Dr. Javanbakht

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PTSD</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High anxiety</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High depression</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Refugee Clinic:
- PTSD: 12%
- Anxiety: 1.2%
- Depression: 17%

Team 3:
- PTSD: 5%
- Anxiety: 3.4%
- Depression: 25%
As a future provider, why is this a population that you should know more about?

**Rapid increase in population**
- Public health implications
- Response from health sector

**Increased risk of diseases**
- Not common in the US

**Vulnerable Population**
- Mental health
- Education gap
- Adjustment to new environment
Exploration of Interprofessional Teams

- Physicians (4)
  - Amber Sarkar, MD
  - Olga Valdman, MD
  - Satu Salonen, MD
  - Danielle Fitzsimmons-Pattison MD

- Nurse (1)
  - Alaina Theocles, RN

- Medical assistants (3)
  - Haddy Kanuteh MA
  - Sulay Alamo MA
  - Yamilette Torres MA

- Scheduler
  - Yorelis Rivera

- Behavioral health specialist (1)
  - Shawna

- Interpreters (both on-site and over the phone)

- Case managers, social workers
What is Refugee Advocacy?

**Government Policy**
- Funding for refugee agencies
- Number of accepted refugees

**Legal**
- How broad is the refugee determination?
- Individual legal needs

**Local**
- Individual / community assistance
- Education
- Healthcare
- Employment
Local Refugee Advocacy Agencies

• Worcester provides a wealth of agencies which work to advocate for its refugee population
  • New Citizen Center
  • Ascentria
  • African Children Education (ACE)
  • Family Health Center of Worcester
  • Catholic Charities of Worcester County
  • Worcester Refugee Assistance Project (WRAP)
State/National Refugee Advocacy Agencies

• Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)

• The Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center (RIAC)

• Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)

• US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)
International Refugee Advocacy Agencies

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- Refugees International
- Refugee Council USA
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- World Relief
Acknowledgements

• Family Health Center of Worcester
  • Staff:
    • Fran Anthes, CEO
    • Amber Sarkar, MD
    • Olga Valdman, MD
    • Satu Salonen, MD
    • Danielle Fitzsimmons-Pattison MD
    • Alaina Theocles, RN
    • Haddy Kanuteh MA
    • Sulay Alamo MA
    • Yamilette Torres MA
    • Yorelis Rivera - scheduler

• Worcester Public School Transition Program and New Citizens Center
  • Staff:
    • Judy Freedman Fask
Acknowledgements Cont.

• Women, Infants and Children
  • Staff:
    • Kwame Appiah

• African Community Education Program (ACE)
  • Staff:
    • Kwame Bidi, Program Director
    • Noah Stolkner, After School Program Coordinator

• Umass Medical School
  • Staff:
    • John Trobaugh, Manager Diversity & Inclusion Office
    • Heather-Lyn Haley, Research Project Director Family Med & Community Health
    • Carla Carten, Assistant VC Diversity & Inclusion Office
BY THE NUMBERS

68.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide

Internally Displaced People
40 million

Refugees
25.4 million
19.9 million under UNHCR mandate
5.4 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA

Asylum-seekers
3.1 million

Where the world's displaced people are being hosted

85%
85 per cent of the world's displaced people are in developing countries

57% of refugees worldwide came from three countries

Top refugee-hosting countries

Islamic Republic of Iran
979,400

Lebanon
10.0m

Pakistan
14m

Uganda
14m

Turkey
3.5m
Refugee Statistics in the U.S.

Refugee Arrivals by Top Country of Nationality: Fiscal Year 2016
(Ranked by country of nationality)

16,370 | 19.3%

Syria
12,587 | 14.8%

Burma
12,347 | 14.5%

Iraq
9,880 | 11.6%

Somalia
9,020 | 10.6%

Source: U.S. Department of State.

Figure 3.
Refugee Arrivals by Leading States of Residence:
Fiscal Year 2016
(Ranked by 2016 state of residence)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Arrivals</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>7,909</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>7,803</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>5,026</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>4,258</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>4,194</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>4,107</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>3,342</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>3,230</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>3,219</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Department of State.
Asylum Seeker Statistics in the U.S.

Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively or Defensively by Country of Nationality: Fiscal Year 2016
(Ranked by country of nationality)

People’s Republic of China 4,484 | 21.9%
El Salvador 2,157 | 10.5%
Guatemala 1,949 | 9.5%
Honduras 1,505 | 7.4%
Mexico 919 | 4.5%

Source: U.S. Department of State.

Individuals Granted Asylum Affirmatively by State of Residence: Fiscal Year 2016
(Ranked by 2016 state of residence)

California 5,143 | 43.8%
New York 1,270 | 10.8%
Florida 913 | 7.8%
New Jersey 656 | 5.6%
Texas 500 | 4.3%
Virginia 486 | 4.1%
Maryland 347 | 3.0%
Washington 224 | 1.9%
Massachusetts 204 | 1.7%
Illinois 188 | 1.6%

Note: Data exclude follow-to-join asylees.
Source: U.S. Department of State.
References


http://miracoalition.org/facts

Refugee Council USA, Refugee Resettlement Massachusetts, 2017

https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-asylum/asylum

https://www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/index.html

QUESTIONS?