

MentorNet

Module_ Immigrant and Refugee Health

Overview: Around the world, immigrants and refugees have a unique set of needs and requirements when accessing health care services. As countries 'open their doors' to newcomers, understanding the complexities of immigrant and refugee experiences will be critical to ensuring equitable access to healthcare. This module explores immigrant and refugee health in the Canadian as well as global context. Health status is not equivalent across all immigrants and refugee groups. Health is influenced by their place of origin and experiences, and further impacted by postmigration factors related to integration into their new place of residence such as employment, education, and responsiveness of the healthcare system. This module is intended to examine the effects of the social determinants of health on immigrants and refugees. It also examines the processes through which various actors address the unique set of needs of immigrants and refugees at the local, national, and global levels. The articles should kick start some meaningful dialogue on the topic, your experiences, insights, and unique perspectives will continue the conversation!

Objectives:

- To Identify individual, societal, and systemic determinants of immigrant and refugee health.
- To understand considerations necessary to provide adequate healthcare to immigrants and refugees pre- and post-migration.
- To discuss models and practices that are designed to reduce disparities in access to healthcare services in Canada for immigrants and refugees.

Prior to meeting with your Mentor/SYP

1. Scan through UNHCR Emergency Handbook: Health in Camps:
<https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/54565/health-in-camps>
2. For a brief overview of refugee sponsorship and resettlement in a Canadian context, read Chapter 1 of the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP) Sponsoring Group *Handbook*:
http://www.rstp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Chapter-1-Overview_rev_100417-FC.pdf
3. Read a report by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) describing the social determinants of migrant health and how migration shapes health outcomes:
<https://www.iom.int/social-determinants-migrant-health>

4. Read over the summary, *Barriers and Facilitators to Health Care for Newcomers to Canada*, by the organization Caring for Kids New to Canada:
<http://www.kidsnewtocanada.ca/care/barriers>
5. Peruse the editorial on obstacles to healthcare for sub-Saharan African immigrants in France:
[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(17\)30246-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(17)30246-3/fulltext)
6. Peruse the website for a Canadian community volunteer clinic for the medically uninsured: Canadian Centre for Refugee and Immigrant Health Care
www.healthequity.ca
7. Uganda hosts over 1.19 million refugees and ranks third globally among the countries with the highest number of refugees. Read Uganda's health sector integrated refugee response plan (2019-2024):
<https://www.afro.who.int/news/uganda-launches-health-sector-integrated-refugee-response-plan-2019-2024>

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the various barriers (e.g. legal, social, cultural, economic, and communication) mentioned throughout the readings that put immigrants' and refugees' health at risk pre- and post-migration.
2. Discuss health sector responses to immigrants and refugees pre- and post-migration you came across throughout the readings. Discuss challenges faced by health professionals in managing care for immigrants and migrants pre- and post-migration to Canada. What response stands out to you? What suggestions could you propose to strengthen the various responses?
3. What foreseeable challenges could impede, or regress progresses made towards immigrant and refugee health?
4. How best can policy makers, civil society, the private sector, and research community respond to bridge the immigrant and refugee health gap?
5. Discuss practical ways you as a global health professional can reduce health inequities for immigrants and refugees through action on the various determinants of health.