

Refugee and asylum seeker health

Refugee Health Fellow Program

March 2018 – do not use after June 2018

Legal status

Refugee:

Someone who, “owing to a **well founded fear of being persecuted** for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is **outside the country of his nationality**, and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is **unable** or, owing to such fear, is unwilling **to return to it.**”.

Asylum seeker:

A person who has left their country of origin, has applied for recognition as a refugee in another country, and is **awaiting a decision on their application.**

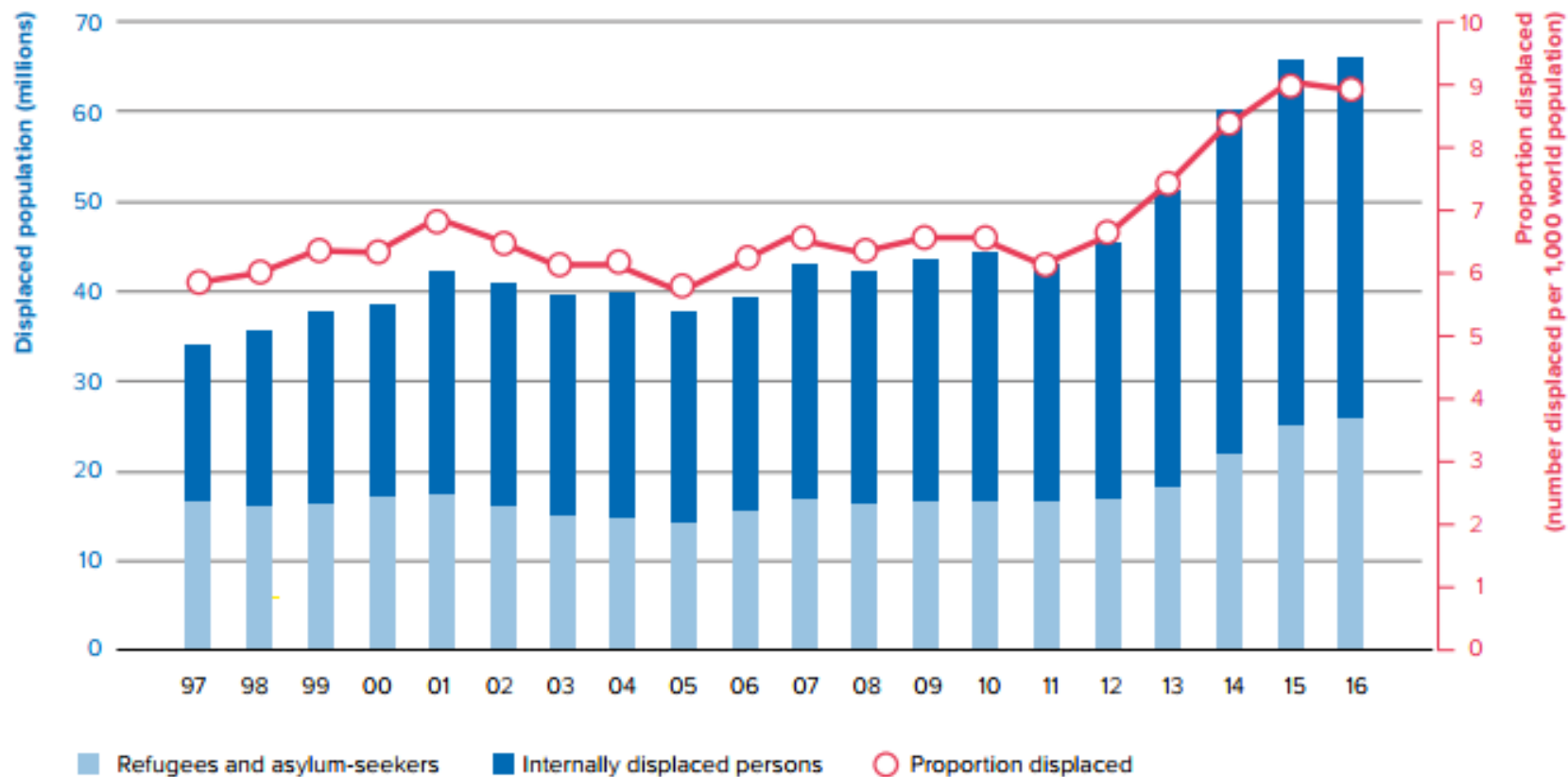
UNHCR Global Trends 2016

- 65.6 M forcibly displaced
 - 22.5M Refugees
 - 40.3M Internally Displaced
 - 2.8M Asylum Seekers
 - 75,000 Unaccompanied Children
- 10M stateless
- 51% of refugees are children <18yo

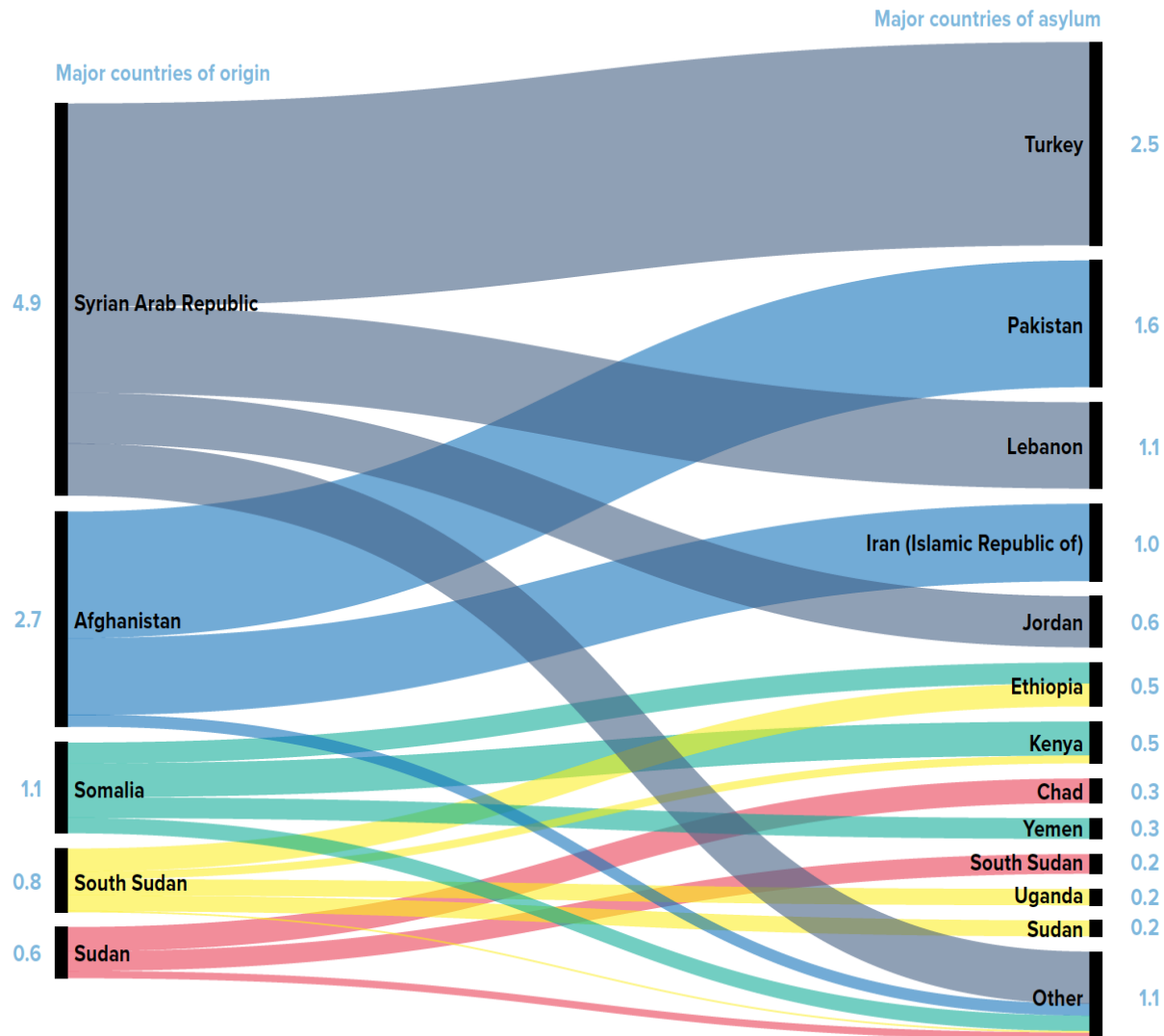


UNHCR numbers - 2016

Figure 1 | Trend of global displacement & proportion displaced | 1997-2016



UNHCR pathways – end 2015



- Destination
 - 84% developing world
 - <1% resettled

REFUGEE APPLICANT



OFFSHORE

ONSHORE

ORPHAN
RELATIVE
ONSHORE 837
OFFSHORE 117



HUMANITARIAN ENTRANT




ASYLUM SEEKER



AIR ARRIVALS*

'ILLEGAL'/UNAUTHORISED/IRREG
ULAR MARITIME ARRIVALS

Asylum seeker identification – 2018

	<p>Evidence of immigration status card</p> <p>Issued to people on Bridging Visa E (BVE-subclass 050 or 051) granted to asylum seekers who arrived without a valid visa, and to individuals who arrived on a valid visa and lodged a protection claim. May be issued to people in the review process.</p> <p>Also issued to refugees - TPV-785, THC-786, SHEV-790, and 866 Permanent Protection Visas, although these people will have Medicare, and be eligible for healthcare cards by the usual criteria.</p>
	<p>SRSS payment card</p> <p>Individuals on Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) payments may have an SRSS payment card. From late 2017, the number of people on SRSS has been reducing.</p>
<p>No image available</p>	<p>Protection visa application letter</p> <p>People who arrive by plane and seek asylum will receive an acknowledgement letter when they submit a protection claim - this is proof that they have engaged in a refugee determination process. They may remain on their entry (substantive) visa, or have a BVE.</p>
<p>No image available</p>	<p>Judicial review - re-application for BVE letter</p> <p>Individuals seeking judicial review of a negative protection decision can reapply for a bridging visa. When they lodge for review, they will receive an acknowledgement letter that they have reapplied for a BVE, which can be used as proof they are engaging in review of their refugee determination process.</p>
	<p>IHMS card</p> <p>Individuals in community detention will have an International Health and Services (IHMS) card to facilitate payment at their assigned general practice and pharmacy.</p>
<p>No image available</p>	<p>Other documents recording asylum seeker status</p> <p>Individuals may also have a letter from a support provider such as Red Cross, AMES, Life Without Barriers; the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre; other health providers; charities or lawyers - this may also provide evidence of asylum status. Public Transport Victoria cards record asylum seeker status.</p>

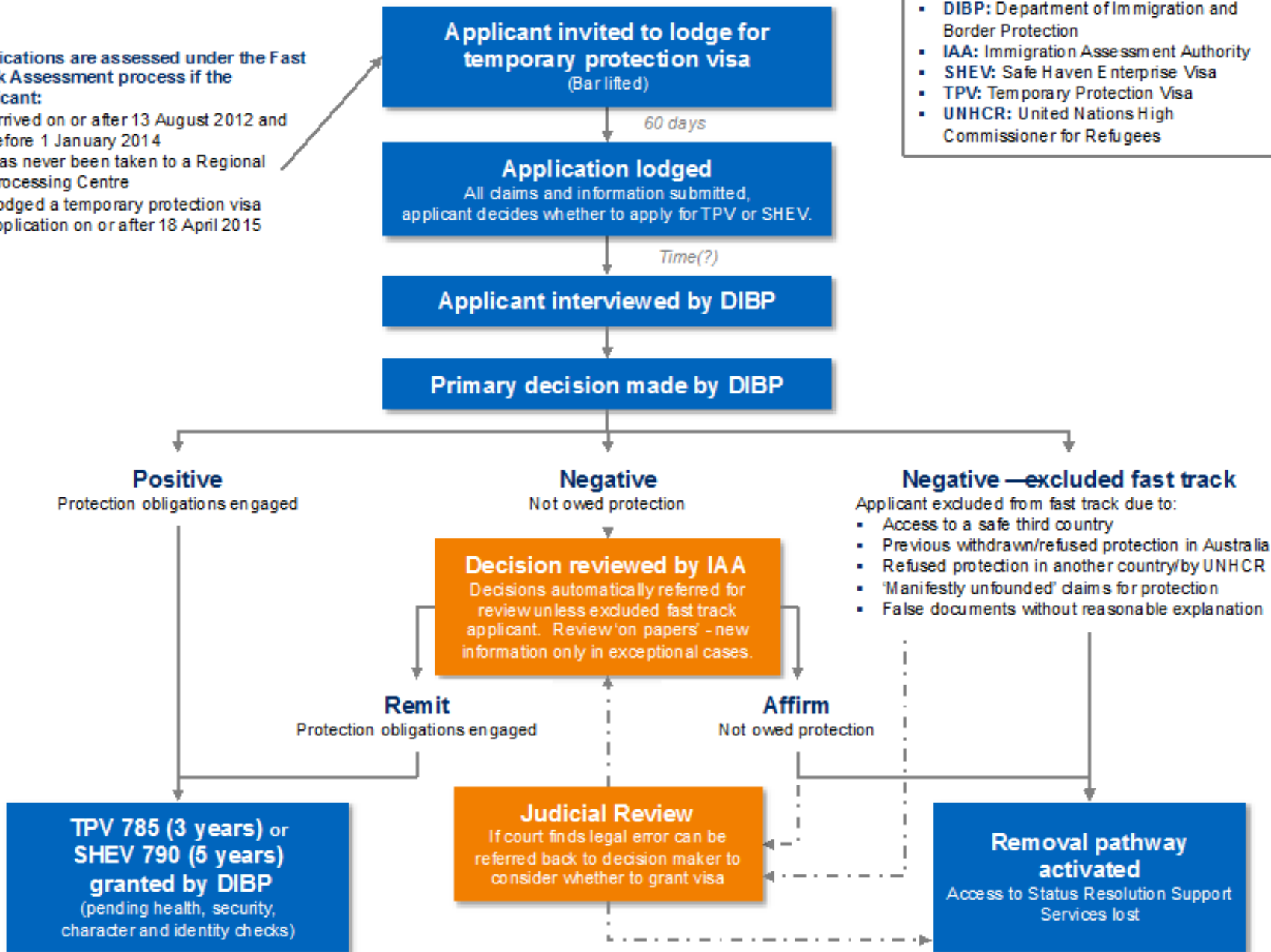
Interim Medicare card Non-citizen/permanent resident Medicare cards are a blue colour. These Medicare cards are used for people seeking asylum (tied to having a valid bridging visa thus may have expired). Other groups of temporary migrants may also have these cards (e.g. people from New Zealand without permanent residence).

Applications are assessed under the Fast Track Assessment process if the applicant:

- Arrived on or after 13 August 2012 and before 1 January 2014
- Has never been taken to a Regional Processing Centre
- Lodged a temporary protection visa application on or after 18 April 2015

Glossary:

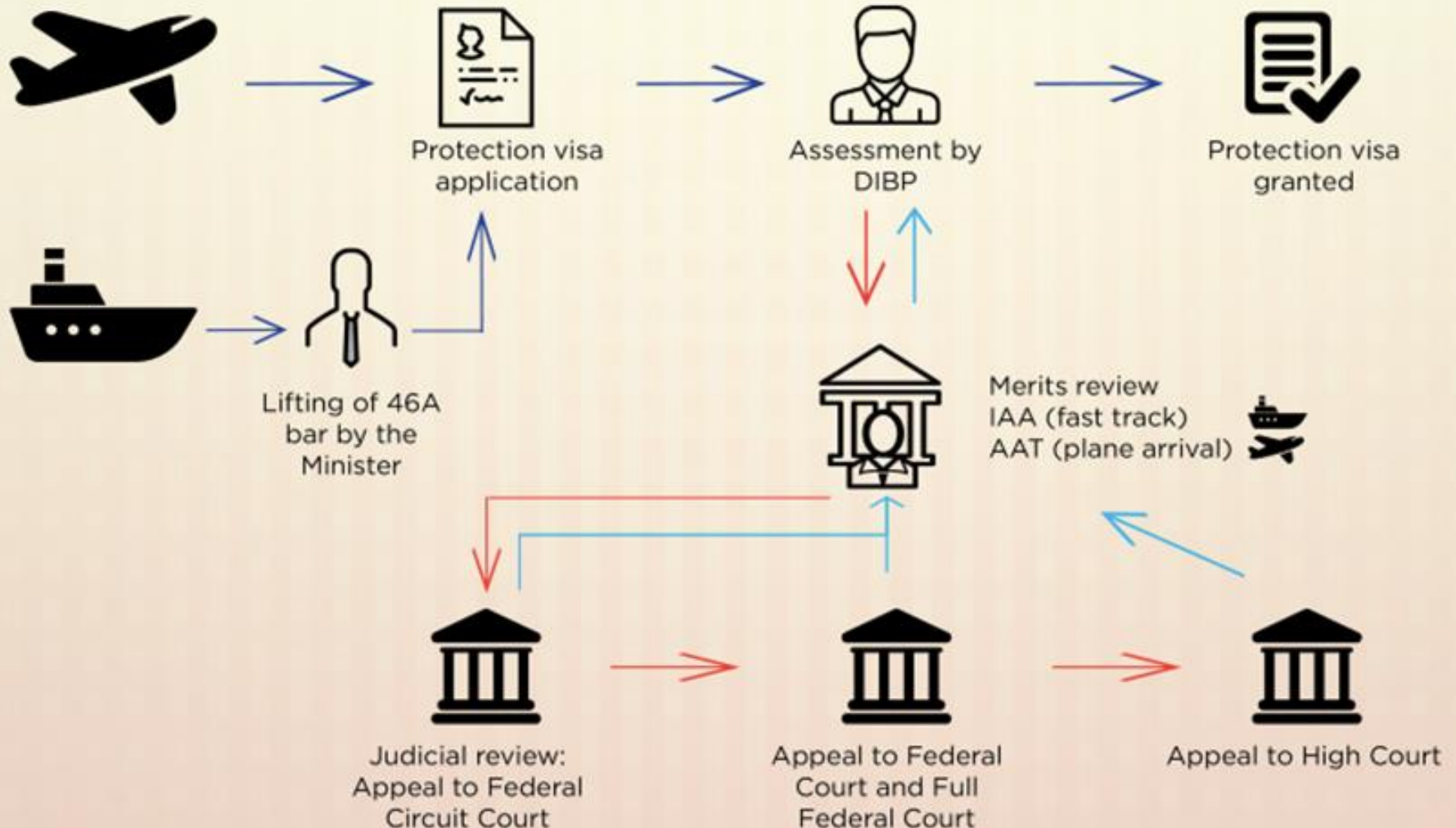
- DIBP: Department of Immigration and Border Protection
- IAA: Immigration Assessment Authority
- SHEV: Safe Haven Enterprise Visa
- TPV: Temporary Protection Visa
- UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



THE PROCESS OF SEEKING PROTECTION

RACS

REFUGEE
ADVICE &
CASEWORK
SERVICE



Australian and Victorian numbers

Category	Australia	Victoria
Offshore intake	13,750 in 2015-16 18,750 by 2018-19	~ 4000/year ~ 6000/year
Syrian/Iraqi	12,000 (across 2016 -2017)	~ 40%
AS, boat, BVE	19,129 (1/2018) <i>11,237 finalised grants (1/2018)</i>	6882 (1/2018) <i>3599 finalised grants (1/2018)</i>
Held detention	1287 (1/2018)	167 (1/2018)
Community detention	447 (1/2018)	164 (1/2018)

Arrival dates – policy (boat arrivals)

- Before August 2012
 - Work rights
 - Retrospective application temporary visas
- 13 August 2012
 - Path – held detention -> Community Detention or Bridging Visa
 - 2013 Temporary Visas
 - Subject to offshore processing (Manus, Nauru) – **processing halted (until 4/15)**
 - No work rights
 - No family sponsorship
- 19 July 2013
 - Offshore processing, no resettlement
 - Prolonged held detention – **detention releases stopped (until end 2014/early 2015)**
 - *If stayed in Australia – included in legacy caseload*
- 15 December 2014
 - Migration Act amended – legacy caseload

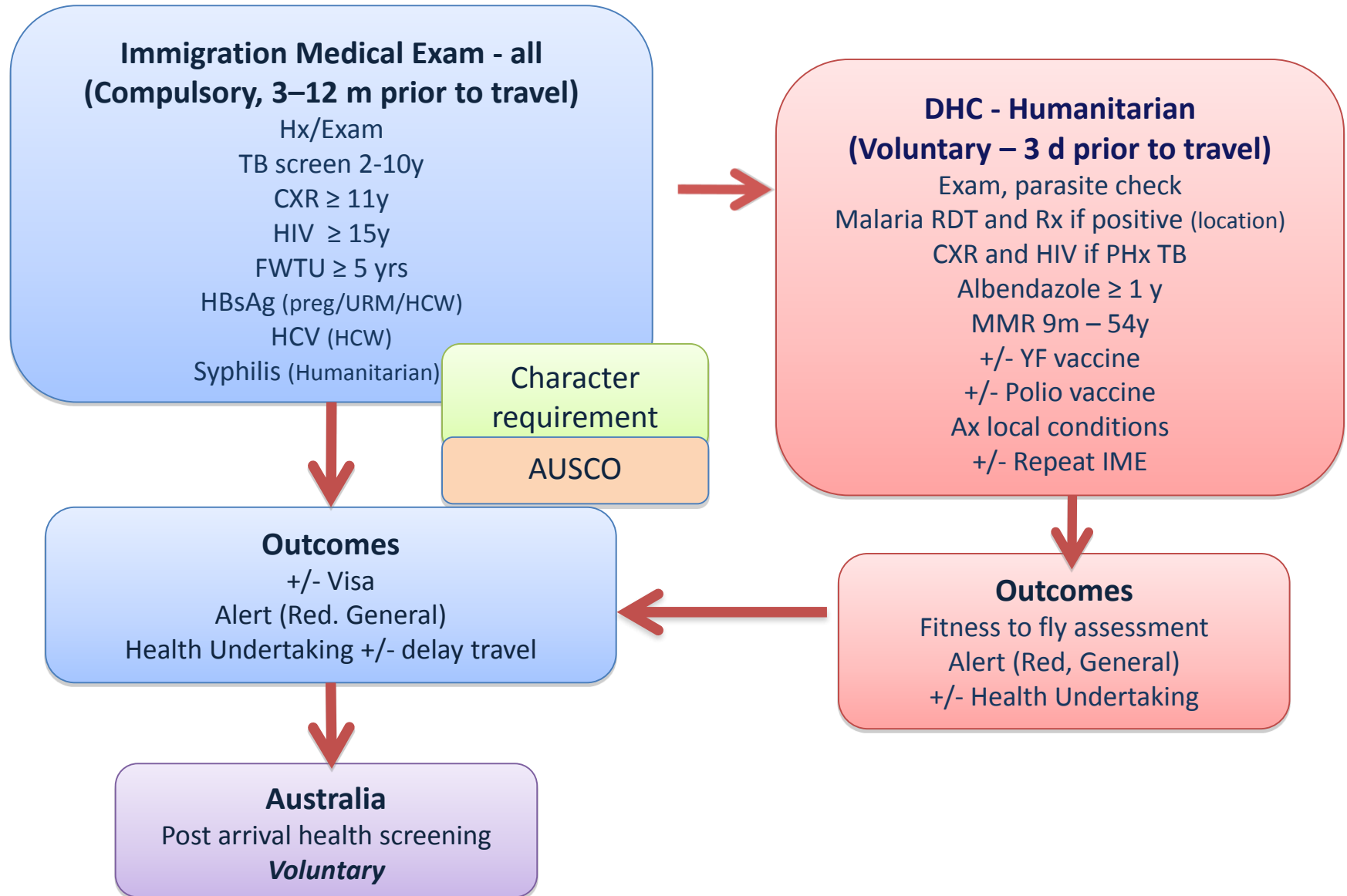
By December 2017 – 9396 finalised of ~24,684 fast track

Asylum seekers and detention

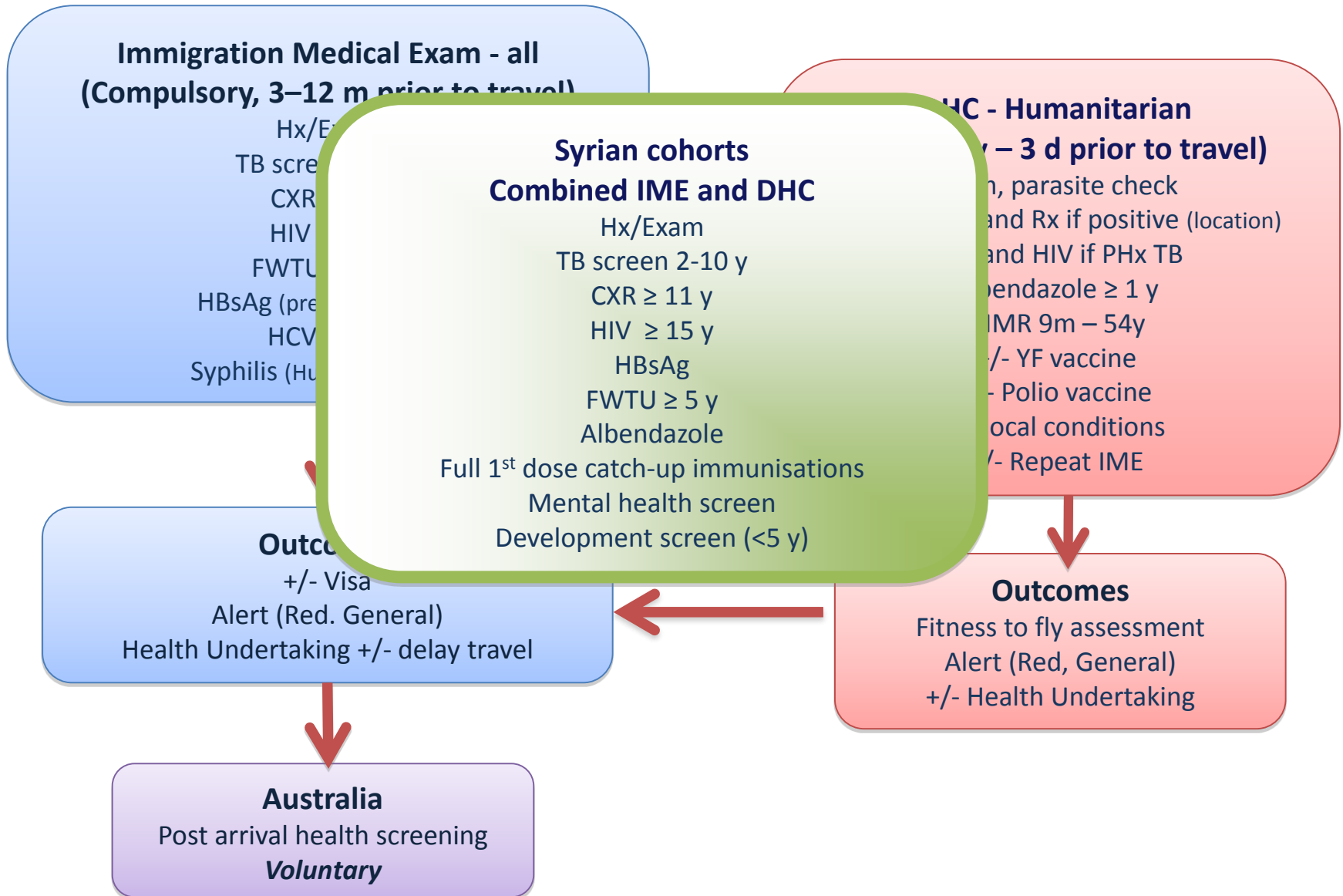
Table 2 – People in Immigration Detention Facilities (IDFs), Alternative Places of Detention (APODs), Regional Processing Centres (RPCs) and the Community at 31 January 2018

Place of immigration detention	Men	Women	Children	Total	Change from Previous Summary 31/12/17
Christmas Island IDC	334	0	0	334	+ 7
Maribyrnong IDC	82	10	0	92	- 3
Perth IDC	19	7	0	26	0
Villawood IDC	426	44	0	470	+ 3
Yongah Hill IDC	218	0	0	218	+ 2
Mainland APODs	<5	<5	0	<5	+ 1
Total IDCs/APODs	1,081	62	0	1,143	+ 10
Adelaide ITA	21	<5	0	22	- 1
Brisbane ITA	42	5	0	47	- 7
Melbourne ITA	67	7	<5	75	0
Total in ITA	130	13	<5	144	- 8
Total in IDC/F	1,211	75	<5	1,287	+ 2
Total in Community under Residence Determination	135	139	173	447	- 1
Total IMA in Community on Bridging Visa E (Including people in a re-grant process)	13,394	2,458	3,277	19,129	- 461
Republic of Nauru (RPC)	262	38	36	336	- 2
Manus Province, Papua New Guinea (RPC)	0	0	0	0	0
Total IMA in RPCs	262	38	36	336	- 2
Detention Group					
S501 Visa Cancellation	469	21	0	490	+ 21
Illegal Maritime Arrival	328	6	0	334	+ 5
Other	414	48	<5	463	- 24
Total	1,211	75	<5	1,287	+ 2

Pre-departure health screen (offshore)



Pre-departure health screen (offshore)





RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPREHENSIVE POST-ARRIVAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT FOR PEOPLE FROM REFUGEE-LIKE BACKGROUNDS

AUSTRALASIAN SOCIETY FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES
AND REFUGEE HEALTH NETWORK OF AUSTRALIA

2ND EDITION



Table 1.7: Short checklist of recommendations for health assessment

All	FBE	
	HBsAg, HBsAb, HBcAb. Write: 'Query chronic hepatitis B?'	
	Strongyloides serology	
	HIV serology (≥15 years or unaccompanied minor)	
	TST or IGRA (depends on risk factors and local jurisdiction, check Medicare for IGRA rebates, TST preferred for children <5 years)	
	Varicella serology (≥14 years if no known history of disease)	
	Visual acuity and review for glaucoma in Africans >40 years and others >50 years	
	Dental review	
	Hearing review	
	Social and emotional wellbeing/mental health	
	Disability	
	Developmental delay or learning concerns (children and adolescents)	
	Preventive health as per RACGP, consider screening earlier for NCDs	
	Catch-up immunisations	
Risk-based	Rubella serology (women childbearing age)	
	Ferritin (women and children, men where risk factors present)	
	Vitamin D (write risk factors e.g. dark skin, lack of sun exposure). Also check Ca, PO ₄ and ALP in children.	
	Vitamin B12 (arrival <6 months, food insecurity, vegan, from: Bhutan, Afghanistan, Iran, Horn of Africa)	
	NAAT first pass urine or self-obtained low vaginal swabs for gonorrhoea or chlamydia (risk of STIs)	
	Syphilis serology (risk of STIs, unaccompanied minor)	
	Helicobacter pylori stool antigen or breath test (gastric cancer family history, upper GI symptoms)	
	Stool microscopy (OCP) (no pre-departure albendazole or persisting eosinophilia after albendazole treatment)	
Country-based	Schistosoma serology	
	Malaria thick and thin films and RDT	
	Hepatitis C Ab (also screen if risk factors)	

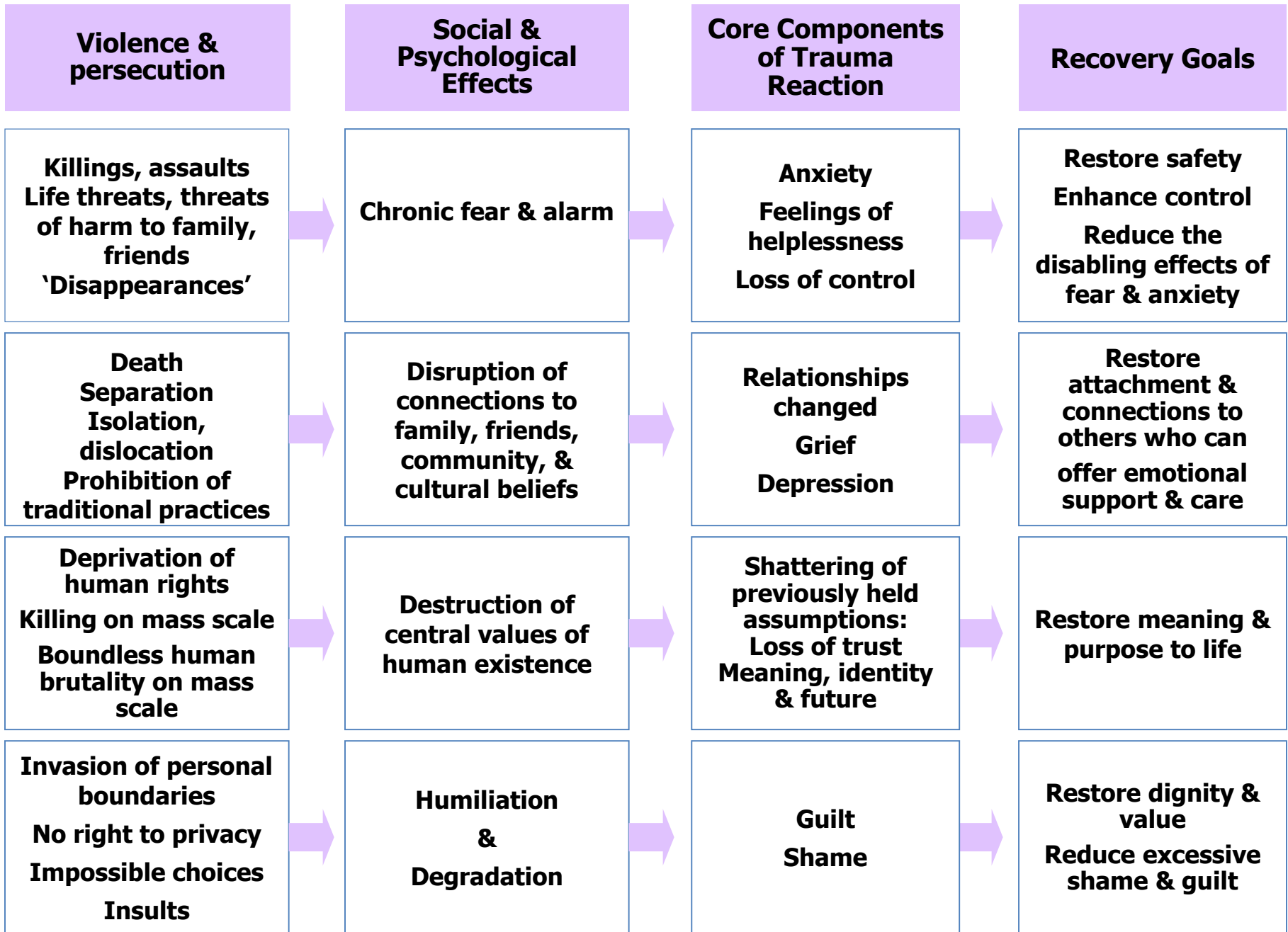
FBE – full blood examination, HBsAg – hepatitis B surface antigen, sAb – surface antibody, cAb – core antibody, HIV – human immunodeficiency syndrome, IGRA – interferon gamma release assay, NCDs – non-communicable diseases, NAAT – nucleic acid amplification test, STI – sexually transmissible infections, RDT – rapid diagnostic test, TST – tuberculin skin test

Chaves NJ, Paxton G, Biggs BA, Thambiran A, Smith M, Williams J, Gardiner J, Davis JS; on behalf of the Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases and Refugee Health Network of Australia Guidelines writing group. Recommendations for comprehensive post-arrival health assessment for people from refugee-like backgrounds.

Mental health - consider

- Country of origin situation
- Migration journey
- Detention experience/uncertainty
- Torture/trauma
- Sexual violence
- Family separation/loss

- Depression
- Anxiety
- PTSD
- Self harm/suicidal ideation
- Adjustment/grief/other
- Developmental/behavioural impact (children)



A

ASK

What country are you from?
When did you arrive in Australia?
What is your preferred language?
Would you like an interpreter?
TIS 1300131450

S

SCREEN – consider latent TB; *Hep B, Hep C, HIV, syphilis* and FPU for gonorrhoea and chlamydia; schistosomiasis; strongyloides; *H. pylori* if symptoms; intestinal parasites; *iron, Vitamin D*, immunisations and non-communicable diseases screen

KINDNESS

“Every clinical encounter can be an opportunity for healing”

K

SCREEN – for social issues (*housing, financial security, education and training, social supports*); family O/S, family well-being

- for mental health concerns (*PTSD, depression*)

For more information go to the
Victorian Refugee Health Network
<http://refugeehealthnetwork.org.au/>

Access to health care

Offshore Permanent Residency	TPV or SHEV Temporary Residency	Asylum seeker boat arrival on BVE, or plane arrivals on BVE	Community detention (now mostly offshore medical transfers)	Post claim (negative decision) or FDBVE
<p>Referred to GP on arrival +/- RHN</p> <p>Medicare eligible All services (inc. community health & hospitals) FASSTT NDIS eligible</p>	<p>Most linked with GP No RHN</p> <p>Medicare eligible All services (inc. community health & hospitals) FASSTT No NDIS eligibility NDIS – EI likely</p>	<p>Most linked with GP Usually no RHN</p> <p>Medicare eligible (~10% expired now) All services (inc. community health and hospitals) FASSTT No NDIS eligibility NDIS – EI likely</p>	<p>Allocated GP Usually no RHN</p> <p>Not Medicare eligible All services (inc. community health and hospitals) GP, meds, specialists and hospitals funded by IHMS FASSTT No NDIS eligibility NDIS – EI likely</p>	<p>GP access varies No RHN</p> <p>May have Medicare, may be short duration May rely on AS primary care services Hospitals – access if appealing decision No FASSTT No NDIS eligibility NDIS – EI unclear</p>
<p>Medications: Medicare – HCC rate</p>	<p>Medications: Medicare – HCC rate</p>	<p>Medications: Medicare – PBS rate HCC rate if SRSS(?)</p>	<p>Medications: through IHMS letter and selected pharmacies (or hospitals)</p>	<p>Medications: Medicare – PBS cost, otherwise full price</p>

Community supports

Offshore Permanent Residency	TPV or SHEV Temporary Residency	Asylum seeker boat arrival on BVE, plane arrivals on BVE	Community detention (now mostly offshore medical transfers)	Post claim (negative decision) or FDBVE
<p>Housing support Case Mx up to 18m (AMES) Tier system 1=min 2=?most 3=complex</p> <p>Centrelink – full access, inc HCC/Carers</p>	<p>No housing support Can have case Mx if complex (AMES) Employment support</p> <p>Centrelink – access, inc family/childcare and HCC/Carers SHEV provisions (1.5/5 yrs welfare)</p>	<p>No housing support Band 5 complex case Mx, DHA case Mx Band 6 – min case Mx, no DHA case Mx SRSS stopping No funded legal</p> <p>No Centrelink 89% Newstart equiv Code conduct</p>	<p>Housing and utilities provided Fixed location Contracted case Mx DHA case Mx No funded legal</p> <p>60% Special Benefit equiv No Centrelink Code conduct</p>	<p>No housing support No caseworker No income support (loss SRSS) No funded legal</p> <p>No Centrelink Urgent Victorian support package available till 30 June 2018</p>
<p>Work rights Kinder Full access education, recently difficult Tertiary education</p>	<p>Work rights Kinder School to 18y Tertiary – Int student (no Austudy or Youth Allowance)</p>	<p>Most work rights from 2015 (if BVE valid) (none 2012-2014) Kinder School to 18y Tertiary – Int student</p>	<p>No work rights Kinder (2015) School to 18y</p>	<p>Work rights Kinder School to 18y</p>

Plane arrivals often retain conditions of their substantive entry visa (e.g. tourist/student), and remain eligible for permanent protection visas

For more information:

Refugee Fellow Program Contacts:

- <http://refugeehealthnetwork.org.au/engage/refugee-health-fellows/>

RCH Immigrant Health:

- <http://www.rch.org.au/immigranthealth/>

Foundation House (VFST):

- <http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/>

Department of Home Affairs Fact Sheets:

- <http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about/corporate/information/fact-sheets>