

# Health pathways for refugee and asylum seeker children

RCH Immigrant Health Service

June 2018

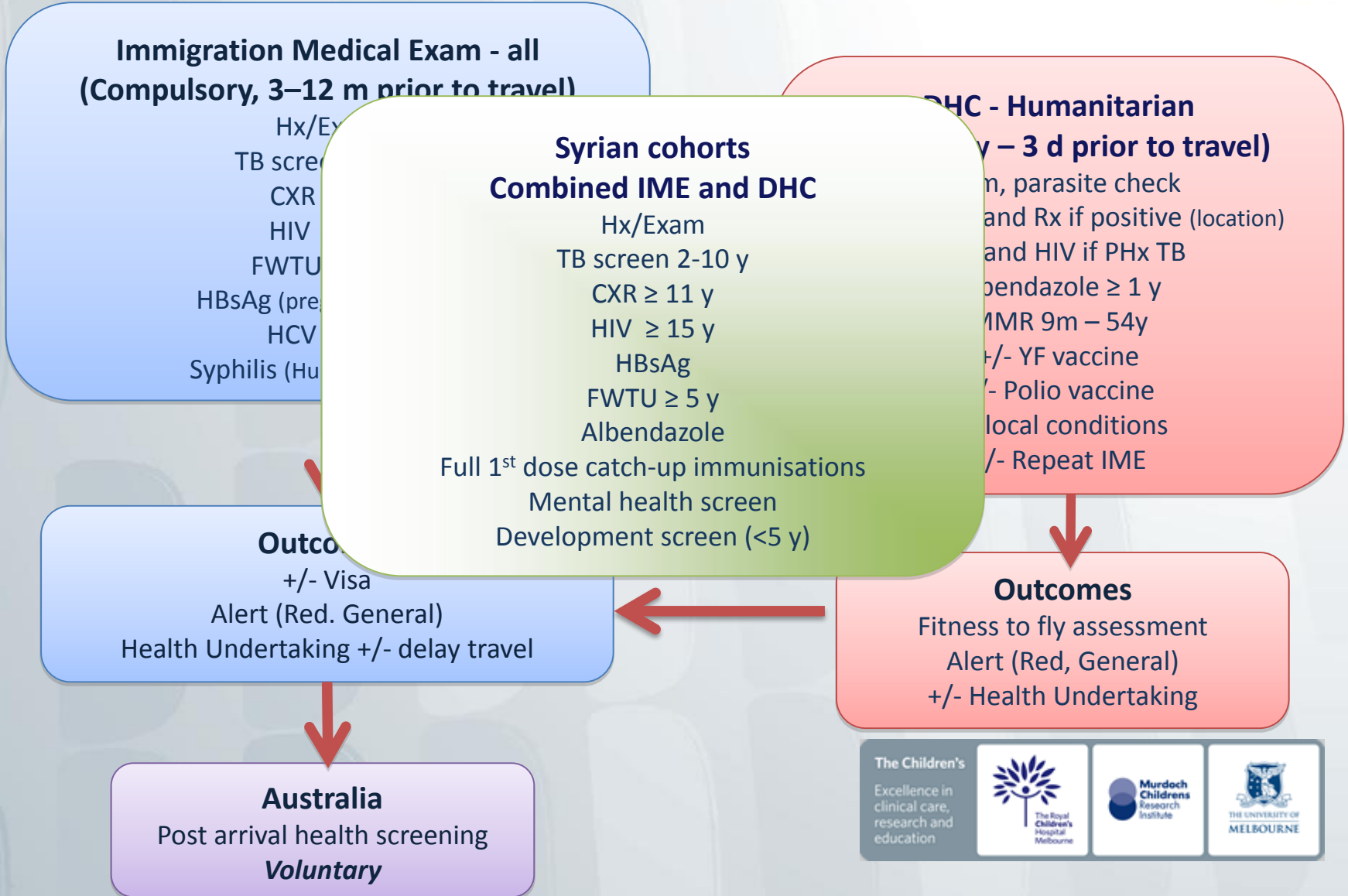
Dr Georgie Paxton

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# 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





# Maximising referral value

- Make sure country, language, DOB documented
- Include current address, caseworker details
- **Copy of e-medical paperwork**
- **Offshore immunisations – AIR – all ages**
- **Health undertakings**
- Any screening completed
  - Test results
  - Immunisations
  - Progress/reviews/medications
- **Never give original paperwork to health providers!**

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# Has my patient had a refugee health check?

- 3 sets immunisations (~3-4 needles in each)
- Screening blood tests
- Faecal specimen
- Mantoux test (children <5y)
  
- Check results (i.e. 2 visits)
- Treatment of problems

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# Specific health issues

- Vaccine preventable diseases
  - Are *you* immunised?
  - Consider schedule vaccines, inc. hepatitis, influenza
- Tuberculosis
  - Latent TB infection
    - Evidence of infection (+ screening test) without evidence of disease based on history, exam, CXR. **Not infectious, 30% world**
  - TB disease
    - Uncommon, rates Victoria steady, household contacts greater risk
- Blood born viruses
  - Universal precautions



**Australian Government**

**Department of Health**

# **No Jab, No Pay – New Immunisation Requirements for Family Assistance Payments**

## **SUMMARY**

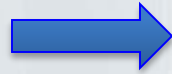
From 1 January 2016:

- Only parents of children (less than 20 years of age) who are fully immunised or are on a recognised catch-up schedule can receive the Child Care Benefit, the Child Care Rebate and the Family Tax Benefit Part A end of year supplement. The relevant vaccinations are those under the National Immunisation Program (NIP), which covers the vaccines usually administered before age five. These vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR).



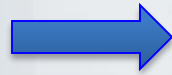
# Clinical red flags

Vit D deficiency



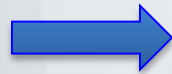
Rickets, bone pain, muscle pain, late teeth  
late fontanelle closure (low dairy)

TB (active vs latent)



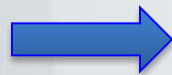
Prolonged cough, fever, night sweats, poor  
growth

Anaemia



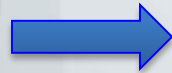
Irritability, lethargy, developmental delay  
(prolonged BF, high dairy, low meat)

Gastrointestinal  
and nutrition



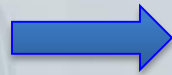
Low weight/poor growth, diarrhoea, abdominal  
pain, epigastric pain, vomiting, poor appetite

Developmental  
concerns



Parent concern, different to siblings, sentences >  
3 years, detention, family stress/MH

Mental health  
concerns



Behavioural disturbance: sleep, eating, play,  
somatisation



# Nutrition



# Development and disability

- Developmental delay/disability
  - Language, motor, social/play, global
  - Vision and hearing
- Disability
  - Physical
  - Intellectual
  - Sensory impairments (vision/hearing)
  - Function/equipment/supports

# MCH, childcare, playgroups



# Maternal and child health

- Birth to school age
- Development, parenting, support, +/- immunisation
  - Checks: at birth, 2w, 4w, 8w, 4m, 8m, 12m, 18m, 2y, 3.5y
- Locally zoned
  - <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/findaservice/Home.aspx>

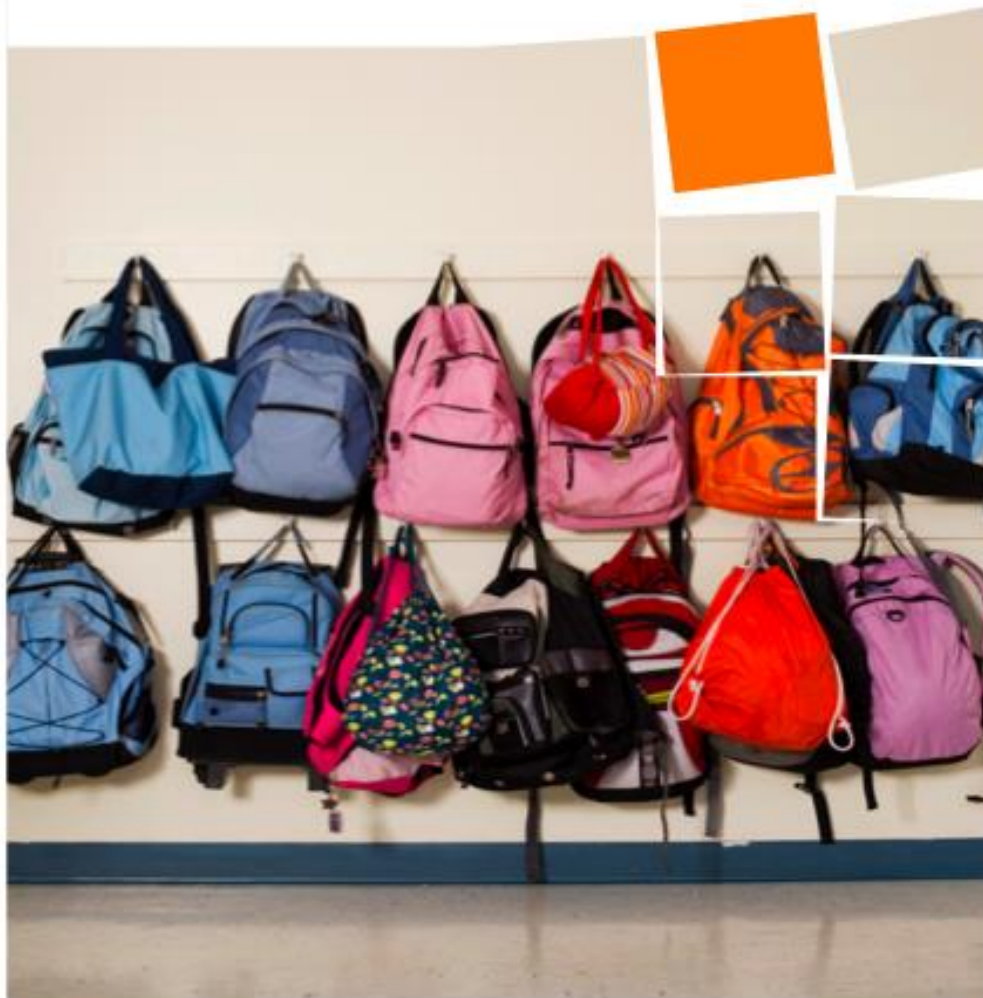
# 4 yr old kindergarten

- Important! - play based, preparation for school
- Free - kindergarten fee subsidy
  - Refugees/SHP visa 200–217, AS on BV A–F , TPVs 447, 451, 785, RoS visa
  - <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/kindergarten/pages/fees.aspx>
  - CD – via DIBP
  - Pre School Field Officers
  - Help kids with developmental problems
  - Free kindergarten association
- Enrolment – call kinder
  - <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/findaservice/Home.aspx>

# Schools

- All kids should be at school
  - Check age and level – no rush
  - Think: prep age 6, cut off is 1 May
- Language schools
  - Within 18 m arrival
  - <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/parents/translations/engldet.pdf>
  - Ideally 12m, often 6m, **balance vs missing school**
  - Limited places in North – outpost schools
- Local Government and Catholic schools
  - <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/findaservice/Home.aspx> (Govt)
  - <http://raisingchildren.net.au/myneighbourhood/Default.aspx> (all)

# Program for Students with Disabilities – operational guidelines for schools 2017



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# Refugee Health Program/Nurses



- 16 community health centres
- 50 RHNS in 14 metro sites and 8 rural sites
- Allied health workers, physios, bicultural workers, support workers, case coordinators

 victorian refugee health network

Search  Health Translations

Welcome to the Victorian Refugee Health Network. We work to develop responsive health service systems that meet the needs of people from refugee backgrounds, including asylum seekers.

Home | About | News | e-Bulletin | Publications | Information sheets | Asylum Seekers

Learn | Get Involved | Clinical Quicklinks | Refer | Library

## Refer

**Refugee Health Program (formerly Refugee Health Nurse Program)**

Refugee Health Nurses and Allied Health are located in community health centres in areas of high refugee settlement. Refugee health nurses can provide advice on primary and specialist referral, as well as referral to relevant community groups and community services.

To contact a Refugee Health Nurse in your area please refer to the Metropolitan Melbourne Refugee Health Nurse table below or refer to the [Rural and Regional Refugee Health Nurse page](#).

**Refer**

- Asylum seeker health services
- Bilingual GPs
- Complementary Therapies
- Case Management Quicklinks
- Disability Services



# Primary care

- **Refugee health teams-** Advice on referral pathways
  - <http://refugeehealthnetwork.org.au/refer/refugee-health-nurse-program/>
- **General Practitioners -** Health screening, general
  - *(CD = IHMS accredited)*
  - Community Health Centres = free
  - Local – bulkbilling doctors
  - (Local private doctors)
  - Bilingual language doctors [http://amavic.com.au/dr\\_search/](http://amavic.com.au/dr_search/)
  - *Ideally refugee health experienced*

# Immunisation

- GPs, MCHN, LGA/Council – *Opportunistic!*
- Catch-up vaccinations FREE for all refugees and asylum seekers in Victoria
  - Free for all children <10 years of age
  - Free for all children 10-19 years where families receive family assistance payments until end 2017
- SA Immunisation Calculator  
<https://immunisationcalculator.sahealth.sa.gov.au/>
- *No Jab No Pay and No Jab No Play*



# Allied Health

- Community health centres
  - Often only 0 – school entry
  - Children with developmental problems 1 domain
  - <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/pch/commhealth/directory.htm>
- Early Intervention (0 – school entry)
  - Children with developmental problems > 1 domain
  - All children eligible, including asylum seekers, CD
- Hospital (varies)

# Specialist Paediatric Services

- Anything (anyone) complex, disability, worried
  - ?All Unaccompanied minors
- Refugee specific
  - RCH, Craigieburn, Dandenong/Doveton, Footscray, Reservoir, Melton, Sunshine, Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo
  - [http://www.rch.org.au/immigranthealth/about\\_us/About\\_the\\_Immigrant\\_Health\\_Service/](http://www.rch.org.au/immigranthealth/about_us/About_the_Immigrant_Health_Service/)
- Paediatric hospitals
  - All except RMH, Alfred, St Vincent's, Footscray
- Most community health centres

# Disability

- All ages
  - GP, paediatrician, eyes, ears, (allowances)
- Early childhood
  - MCH
  - Early intervention
- Kindergarten
  - Aide – PSFO, ISF, FKA
- Schools – mainstream or specialist (ID, ASD)
  - Entry criteria (strict)
  - **Call for help**

# Mental health

- Refugee/CALD specific
  - Vic Foundation for Survivors of Torture (VFST)
  - Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY)
- Mental health general
  - Schools
  - Headspace
  - Community health centres
  - ATAPS scheme
  - (Better Access scheme) – *no interpreters*
  - CAMHS - location and age

# Acute care

- Ambulance
  - Free in emergency
  - <http://refugeehealthnetwork.org.au/ambulance-transport-for-asylum-seekers-in-victoria/>
- Public hospitals/related services
  - Free (don't forget RVEEH hospital)
  - Refugee health nurse liaison (Monash health)
  - <http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Guide-to-asylum-seeker-access-to-health-and-community-services-in-Victoria>

# Patient advocacy/consumer liaison

- Available all hospitals
- Mechanism to progress concerns
- Mandatory reporting systems
- Helpful!
- Consider if:
  - Care declined (**please act**)
  - Language services not available
  - Concerns about care quality
  - Bills being sent incorrectly
  - Positive feedback



# Eyes

- Vision check
  - Government schools – school nurses
  - Medicare – e.g. OPSM, Spec savers (any bulk billing)
  - Australian College Optometry – all
- Glasses
  - Australian College Optometry cheapest (\$40/pair)
    - <http://www.aco.org.au/eye-care-services/eye-care-in-melbourne/clinic-locations-and-operating-hours>
  - Specsavers/OPSM
- Emergencies - RVEEH

# Hearing

- Hearing check
  - Government schools – school nurses
  - Audiologists
    - [http://www.rch.org.au/genmed/clinical\\_resources/Audiology\\_Services\\_in\\_Victoria/](http://www.rch.org.au/genmed/clinical_resources/Audiology_Services_in_Victoria/)
- Hearing aids – Australian hearing
- Emergencies - RVEEH

# Teeth

- Priority access
  - <https://www.dhsv.org.au/patients-and-public/refugee-services>
  - All refugees and AS
  - All kids 0 – 12
- Clinics
  - <https://www.dhsv.org.au/clinic-locations/community-dental-clinics>

# Language services

- Right and entitlement
  - Hospitals – should happen (advocate)
  - Community health – should happen (advocate)
  - MCH - VTIS
  - Private GPs – TIS 24 hr line (free)
  - Private specialists – TIS 24hr line (free)
  - Private psychologists/allied health – not available
- Previously universal code – CD/held detention
  - Now closed



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## Syrian refugees - key issues

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- [Australia's response to the Syrian conflict](#)
- [Pre-arrival health screening](#)
- [Specific health issues](#)
  - [Vaccine preventable disease and catch-up immunisations](#)
  - [Other communicable or infectious diseases](#)
  - [Nutrition](#)
  - [Non-communicable diseases](#)
  - [Oral health](#)
- [Mental health, trauma and family impact](#)
- [Gender-based violence, early marriage](#)
- [Reproductive health and neonatal outcomes](#)
- [Disability](#)
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## Immigrant Health Service

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## Caseworker Resources

This page provides a guide for caseworkers on service access for refugee and asylum seeker children and families. A presentation is available to provide training on service access (see [resources](#)).

- [Acute care access](#)
- [Refugee health screening and immunisation catch-up](#)
- [Primary care](#) (refugee health teams, general practice, maternal and child health)
- [Medications and pharmacy access](#)
- [Allied health](#)
- [Specialist care](#)
- [Mental health](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Other](#) (consumer liaison, language services)
- [Resources](#)



## Choose the places and services that you would like to see on your neighbourhood map

Close ^

### Activities & entertainment

- Libraries
- Museums
- Playgroups
- Toy libraries
- Zoos and animals

### Government services

- Centrelink
- Local councils
- Medicare

### Family services & support

- Child counselling
- Community centres
- Family support
- Indigenous services
- Relationship counselling

### Child care & schools

- Child care centres
- Preschools
- Schools

### General health services

- Child health centres
- Dentists
- GP Super Clinics
- Hospitals
- Local GPs
- Medical centres
- Pharmacies

### Special health services

- Dietitians
- Disability support
- Occupational therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Reading improvement
- Speech therapy

### Helping Children With Autism

- Board-certified behaviour analyst
- Occupational therapy
- Psychology
- Special education teacher
- Speech pathology

### User-added places/events

- Events
- Family-friendly spots
- General services
- Playgrounds
- Special needs

### Better Start Initiative

- Audiology
- Conductive education
- Occupational therapy
- Optometry
- Orientation and mobility instruction
- Orthotics
- Orthotics
- Physiotherapy
- Psychology
- Social worker
- Special education teacher
- Speech pathology
- Teacher of the deaf
- Teacher of the visually impaired

# Paediatric Refugee Health Clinic

Craigieburn  
Health Services

The **Paediatric Refugee Health Clinic** is a joint initiative between Northern Health (NH) and The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) to provide specialist paediatric refugee services in Melbourne's North. The clinic provides a multidisciplinary assessment service for recently arrived children of a refugee background. Asylum seeker children and children in community detention are also welcome.

## Clinic details

**Time:** Fortnightly Fridays, 9.30am to 4pm

**Clinician:** RCH Paediatric Refugee Health Fellow

**Eligibility:** All recently arrived children of refugee background, including asylum seekers on bridging visas or community detention who are under 18 years of age.

## Issues commonly managed

- Refugee Health Assessment (RHA)
- Learning/behavioural issues and developmental delay/disability
- Adolescent health issues
- Birthdate issues
- Growth/nutritional issues
- Vitamin D deficiency
- Iron deficiency
- Tuberculosis screening and treatment of latent TB
- Mental health issues (medical components of assessment/management)
- Catch-up immunisation planning (unable to administer on-site)

## To refer

GP referrals are not required. We accept direct referrals from refugee health nurses, settlement agencies, maternal child health nurses, schools, and others.

Referral information should include:

- Reason for referral
- Accurate contact details, including telephone number
- Immigration status (e.g. refugee, asylum seeker)
- Preferred language and interpreter requirement
- Casework contact details if available
- Previous investigations
- Vaccination history
- Immigration health records (pre-arrival or detention paperwork)

**Referrals should be faxed or emailed to the centralized Northern Health Ambulatory Care Entry and Triage Service (ACETS)**

### Paediatric Refugee Health Clinic

Attn: **Bev Leiper**  
Fax: **(03) 9495 3510**  
Free call: **1300 128 539** (referral enquiries only)  
Email: **ACETS.Helpdesk@nh.org.au**





# Fellow positions in Refugee Health

The Victorian Department of Health has funded refugee health fellow positions to build capacity across the state to improve refugee and asylum seeker healthcare

Their roles include:

- Improving coordination of refugee and asylum seeker healthcare
- Providing advice and liaison about clinical issues in people who are refugee background/asylum seekers
- Providing education on refugee health on request

Fellows are happy to speak to either large or small groups, and can travel to outer metropolitan or regional areas if required. They can provide information across a variety of topics, and are happy to compile information on emerging issues.



## The Royal Melbourne Hospital

### Dr Kudzai Kanhutu and Dr Joanne Gardiner

Dr Kudzai Kanhutu and Dr Joanne Gardiner are based at the Victorian Infectious Diseases Service (VIDS) at the Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH) and the Peter Doherty Institute in Parkville.

Kudzai is an infectious diseases physician with a special interest in telemedicine, global public health policy and women's health.

Joanne is a GP with a special interest in refugee mental health who also works in community health and at Foundation House. She runs a Refugee and Asylum Seeker GP clinic on Tuesday mornings at VIDS for refugee health assessments, complex problems, mental health and those not linked into a GP.

**Available** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday (Kudzai) and Monday–Friday (Joanne)

**Email** [refugee.fellow@mh.org.au](mailto:refugee.fellow@mh.org.au) **Telephone** +61 3 9342 7000

## Monash Health



### Dr Mark Timlin

Dr Mark Timlin is a GP at Monash Health Refugee Health and Wellbeing in Melbourne's South East. He has extensive experience in refugee health, having spent some time in Afghanistan, and has a particular interest in mental health.

**Available** Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday **Email** [mark.timlin@monashhealth.org](mailto:mark.timlin@monashhealth.org)

**Telephone** +61 3 9792 8100 **Mobile** 0407 051 086

## The Royal Children's Hospital



### Dr Yoko Asakawa, Dr Dan Mason and Dr Ingrid Laemmle-Ruff

Dr Yoko Asakawa, Dr Dan Mason and Dr Ingrid Laemmle-Ruff are general paediatric trainees and fellows with the Immigrant Health Service (IHS) at the Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) Melbourne. They provide clinical care for children of refugee and asylum seeker background during the IHS Monday afternoon clinic. They provide outreach clinics in Footscray (Yoko), Craigieburn (Dan) and Darebin (Ingrid). They also support other child-related services

(schools, maternal child health nurses, allied health, community groups). They have interests in international child health, medical education and public health.

**Available** Monday - Friday

**Email** [refugee.fellow@rch.org.au](mailto:refugee.fellow@rch.org.au) **Telephone** +61 3 9345 5522 (pager 7142)

# Thank-you

- Questions?
- All located at:
  - [http://www.rch.org.au/immigranthealth/clinical/Clinical\\_resources/](http://www.rch.org.au/immigranthealth/clinical/Clinical_resources/)
- Also DIY Appointment reminder system (NSW Refugee Health)
  - <http://www.swslhd.nsw.gov.au/refugee/appointment/>
- Please contact us:
  - Refugee Health Fellow 9345 5522 (page 7142)