



Immigrant health service 2016

Department of General Medicine

Key achievements in 2016

Clinical care

- **Around 2260 episodes of clinical contact** - for approximately 1360 patients and more than 100 clinical consultations; across RCH Immigrant Health, RCH Tuberculosis Clinic, CoHealth West Footscray, EACH (Ringwood), and Craigieburn Health Services
- **New paediatric refugee health outreach clinic** at Craigieburn Health Services in partnership with Northern Health (NH)
- **Planning for Syrian and Iraqi intake** - liaison with Northern Health, planning and education delivery to northern region services, meetings around health response.

Education

- **54 education sessions to approximately 2000 people**
 - 32 external, 22 internal, 3 conference presentations, focus on the Northern region
- **Revision child/adolescent course module** - Master of Nursing, Monash University
- **New disability webpage, 8 updated webpages:** Initial assessment, Immunisation, Tuberculosis screening, Translated resources, Policy changes, Asylum seekers, Syrian refugees, Talk bank (talks for other providers to deliver)
- **Health pathways** - paediatric refugee health, refugee health assessment.

Research

- **Research** – post-arrival prevalence data, immunisations in asylum seeker children, RCH interpreter use/clinical outcomes, prospective audit of Syrian/Iraqi cohort
- **AIHW ethics approval** Settlement, Immigration and Hospitals data linkage project
- **Publications:** 2 peer reviewed publications, 1 accepted for publication, 1 submitted for publication, 1 manuscript in draft, contribution to MOCHA report
- **Research clearing house** updated - 200 new articles added from 2015 - mid 2016.

Policy

- **Contribution to 2016 ASID/RHEANA refugee and asylum seeker health screening guidelines** authorship: introduction, vitamin D, immunisation, skin infections, prevalence, mental health; contributions: women's health, tuberculosis; also editing and review
- **Immunisation working group:** Chair, 4 meetings; fact sheets - i) patients (collaboration with Centre for Ethnicity and Health) ii) case managers, iii) providers, 2 policy briefings, ACIR workshop Canberra, work offshore immunisation protocols
- Presentation and briefing for **Victorian Children's Council** on refugee and asylum seeker health
- **Submission to Senate Inquiry** on conditions in Regional Processing Centres.

Reference groups, advisory roles, committees

- **Minister's Council on Asylum Seekers and Detention (MCASD), Health Sub-committee of the Joint Advisory Committee** on Nauru Regional Processing Arrangements, **Independent Health Advisor Panel**, DIBP (GP)
- **Commission for Children and Young People**, Victoria: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (Victorian Government) (GP)
- **Victorian Refugee Health Network (VRHN)** (GP, SO, KK)
- **Outer Northern Refugee Health Network** (KK)
- **AMES Disability Action Group** (KK).

Background

2016 saw the last children released from held detention; the arrival of refugees from Syria and Iraq, and the processing of asylum seeker protection claims restart; with significant impact on our patients, clinical service delivery and broader work within Immigrant Health. Our focus throughout the year has been on clinical care, education, capacity building, research and policy work to promote the health of children and families who are refugee background or seeking asylum.

During 2015-2016 the most frequent source countries for refugees and asylum seekers to Australia were:

- **Offshore program** – Iraq, Syria, Burma (Myanmar), Afghanistan, Congo (DRC)
- **People in community detention** – Iran, Sri Lanka, ‘Stateless’¹, Iraq, and Vietnam.

Key policy changes influencing our work in 2016 included:

- Release of all remaining children and their families from the Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation (MITA) into community detention (CD) in early April 2016
- Ongoing preparation for, and now response to, the Syrian/Iraqi refugee intake, with increasing numbers of people arriving in the second half of 2016
- Increasing numbers of children arriving with complex medical needs and disability
- The impact of the February Australian High Court decision and the Papua New Guinea Supreme Court decision in April regarding regional processing centres (RPC)
- Commonwealth ‘No Jab, No Pay’ and Victorian ‘No Jab, No Play’ legislation regarding early childhood immunisation requirements and Centrelink payments
- The November 2016 announcement of resettlement in the United States for people in the RPC, and the impact for our patients who have spent time in Nauru.

We remain involved in policy work at local, state and Commonwealth level, including through the Victorian Refugee Health Network (VRHN), the (associated) immunisation working group, and advisory committees. Our main areas of focus have been immunisation, and finalising the 2016 Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases and Refugee Health Network of Australia (ASID/RHeANA) guidelines on post-arrival refugee health screening. In the early part of the year, a difficult component of our work was preparation for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

We have continued our clinical work across RCH immigrant health clinic (IHC), RCH tuberculosis (TB) clinic, coHealth in the western region, and EACH community health centre in the eastern region. We have also started a collaborative partnership with Northern Health, commencing an outreach clinic at the Craigieburn Health Service. Within RCH, the introduction of a new electronic medical record system in May 2016- EPIC - changed workflow, as we learned how to integrate this system into our clinical care.

Key clinical areas include asylum seeker healthcare, disability and child development, and mental health. We look forward to working with the Syrian/Iraqi cohorts and renewing our focus on health screening and catch-up immunisation in the months to come.

Service model

The immigrant health service includes a weekly outpatient clinic, inpatient and outpatient consultations, and telephone and email advice. The clinic provides post-arrival health (including dental) screening and immunisation catch-up where needed, and a tertiary consultation service on paediatric refugee health issues.

Our clinic model includes the use of the CAReHR electronic health record in certain clinics, integrated use of interpreting services, picture-based prescribing where needed, contact with schools by the team’s resident teacher, and fortnightly audit meetings alternating with fortnightly mental health secondary consult meetings for children with significant mental health problems.

The Immigrant Health Service effectively provides specialist paediatric refugee health services in the west (CoHealth Joslin clinic in West Footscray), in the east (EACH Community Health Service in Ringwood), and in the north, through a new partnership with Northern Health, with an outreach clinic at Craigieburn Health Services. Monash Health provides care in the southeast. The Immigrant Health Fellows also work in the fortnightly RCH tuberculosis clinic.

Staff

In 2016, the immigrant health team consisted of four consultants: Dr Georgie Paxton, Dr Hamish Graham, Dr Shidan Tosif, and Dr Jane Standish (covering Dr Andrea Smith).

Dr Karen Kiang continued in the role as an immigrant health fellow (0.5 EFT) from last year. Dr Sophie Oldfield commenced in February 2015 as a second fellow providing support at coHealth and the RCH TB clinic, also stepping into RCH IHC from September 2016. Both fellows worked at Craigieburn Health Services.

Both leave and the new electronic health record have affected clinic numbers. Hamish and Shidan have had extended periods of leave related to international health work, and Sophie has been on unpaid leave across April - May 2016.

Position	Staff member	EFT
Clinic coordinator	Helen Milton	0.4
Medical lead	Georgie Paxton GP	0.5
Consultants	Jane Standish JS	0.1
	Hamish Graham HG	0.1
	Shidan Tosif ST	0.1
Fellows	Karen Kiang KK	0.5
	Sophie Oldfield SO	0.4 (+ 0.1 WRHC)
Dental therapist	Tatiana Polizzi	0.1
Community worker	Nagaha Idris	0.05
Research nurse	Katrina Sangster	0.2
Teacher	Erin O'Rourke	(RCH Education)
Volunteers	Kirsten Gordon	Volunteer
	Sylvie Bui Hoang	Volunteer
	Jenny Kendrick	Volunteer
	Yasmin Abubaker	Volunteer

Affiliated services

- **RCH tuberculosis clinic:** Hamish Graham, Shidan Tosif, Karen Kiang, Sophie Oldfield
- **Cohealth, West Footscray:** Sophie Oldfield, Jane Standish, Kate McCloskey, Merryn Redenbach
- **EACH Social and Community Health, Ringwood East:** Georgie Paxton, Shidan Tosif
- **Craigieburn Health Services, Craigieburn:** Karen Kiang, Sophie Oldfield
- **Darebin Community Health Centre:** Dr Anthea Rhodes
- **Dandenong Hospital Refugee Health Clinic:** Dr Danni Bao.

Clinical care

In total we have provided at least 2260 direct clinical care episodes to approximately 1360 patients in 2016.

- **RCH Immigrant health clinic** – 793 consultations, 405 patients, at least 127 new patients (KK, GP, JS, ST, HG)
- **RCH Tuberculosis clinic** – 265 consultations, approximately 170 patients (SO, KK, HG, ST)
- **Joslin clinic – Cohealth** – 1050 consultations, approximately 700 patients (JS, SO)
- **EACH outreach clinic** – 146, more than 60 patients (ST, GP)
- **Craigieburn outreach clinic** – 9 consultations, 9 patients (KK) - commenced Nov 2016.

Clinic	Attendances - fellow	Attendances - consultants
RCH IH Clinic	219	574 (GP, JS, ST, HG)
RCH TB Clinic	120	145 (HG, ST)
Joslin clinic CoHealth	450	600 (JS)
EACH outreach clinic	-	146 (GP, ST)
Craigieburn outreach clinic	9	-
Total		2263

Demographics

Clinic attendance rates were 87% (793 attendances of 910 bookings)

We saw children and young people from **32 countries of birth**, most commonly from (in order) Iran, Syria, Sudan, Burma, Iraq, Malaysia, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Thailand, and Australian-born children from refugee background families

We saw families speaking **33 languages**, most commonly Arabic languages (Arabic, Assyrian, Chaldean – 21%), Farsi (20%), English (20%), Burmese languages (Karen, Chin dialects, Burmese – 10%), Somali (7%), Dinka (5%), Oromo and Tigrinya

Interpreters assisted with 78% of consultations - interpreting requirements have been steady around 80% for 3 years (85% in 2015, 80% in 2014) and increased from a nadir (68%) in 2013.

Other clinical activities

In addition, we have provided more than 100 clinical consultations in 2016

- Hospital inpatient consultations: 12 (KK, GP)
- Telephone and email consultations
 - Nurses (Refugee Health and schools): at least 30 – with liaison
 - Medical practitioners (GPs, IHMS, and specialists) – at least 30 with liaison
 - Case Managers (Settlement and Refugee Minor Program) – at least 20
- Care team meetings with the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) – around 10.

Current clinical issues

A large proportion of our clinical time was directed towards **asylum seeker children and new arrival children from Syria/Iraq with complex disability**. The children seen in Immigrant health clinic have had increasingly complex health issues, which, coupled with a shift to seeing individual patients (rather than large new arrival family groups), has changed clinic workflow. Throughout the year we have worked closely with our colleagues in the settlement sector and with welfare support teams within schools.

Mental health and education secondary consultation - for asylum seeker patients, the length of held detention, impact of ongoing uncertainty, and delays in processing protection claims have been associated with complex mental health issues and substantial impact on families. The secondary mental health consultations established in 2013 have been an important source of support for our team in 2016, and we are grateful to Dr. Sanjay Patel from Psychiatry, and Dr. Rowena Conroy from psychology for their advice and supervision. The presence of Erin O'Rourke, a lead teacher from the RCH Education Institute, has been essential for enhanced follow up and discussion of issues related to education.

Dental review and oral health promotion – Tatiana Polizzi, the dental therapist with Immigrant Health team, has continued to see all new patients for assessment and oral health promotion, and link them with dental services where needed. This has been an important service through 2016, as a large proportion of our patients have needed dental care.

Preparation for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse - in early 2016, the hospital provided documentation arising from clinical care where child protection concerns had been raised in relation to held detention.

Education and presentations

In 2016, we delivered 54 education sessions to approximately 2000 participants from health, education, and community organisations on a diverse range of topics. This figure includes 32 external presentations across metropolitan Melbourne and a program of ongoing education around working with CALD communities for RCH Volunteers and Nurses, delivered by our research nurse Katrina Sangster, who was also based at ISIS Hoppers Crossing in a refugee health nurse position for most of the year.

Key education sessions and presentations included:

- **Monash University Refugee Health Master of Nursing paediatric unit content update** on paediatric refugee health and access to child health services (ST)
- **Victorian Refugee Health Network (VRHN) webinar** on paediatric refugee health and access to child health services (KK)
- **Northwest Melbourne PHN GP education initiative** for GP practices about refugee health (SO, KK)
- **3 invited conference presentations**
 - **Children and Families Across Borders**, Melbourne, April 2016 (GP)
 - **Global Ideas Forum**, Melbourne, August 2016 (GP)
 - **Australasian College of Legal Medicine**, Melbourne, October 2016 (GP)
- **Education on working with CALD families for RCH volunteers** (KS, delivered quarterly at induction of all new RCH volunteers)
- **Education for RCH nursing staff on working with CALD families, and working effectively with interpreters** (KS, delivered quarterly).

Education sessions in 2016

04/02/16	VRHN paediatric webinar (KK, 150 registered)
10/02/16	Masters of Public Health lecture, Burnet Institute (KK, 25)
16/02/16	Caring for CALD families – RCH Nurses (Katrina Sangster (KS), 105)
16/02/16	Australian Border Force training college (GP, 15)
17/02/16	Caring for CALD families – RCH volunteer induction training (KS, 30)
24/02/16	Northern hospital – ED and paediatric teaching session, Epping (KK, 40)
26/02/16	General Medicine handover – introduction to our service (KK+SO, 15)
09/03/16	RCH mental health week (ST, 80-100)
15/03/16	Translation and Interpreting Studies program, Monash University (ST, 25)
23/03/16	Box Hill Hospital paediatric registrars (KK+SO, 12)
24/03/16	Plenty Valley Community Health refugee health partnership (KK, 25)
06/04/16	Caring for CALD families – Post Grad Dip Advanced Clinical Nursing (KS, 6)
06/04/16	Refugee and asylum seeker health – Post Grad Dip Adv. Clinical Nursing (KS, 6)
05/04/16	Children and families across borders conference (ISS) (GP, 70)
20/04/16	CCCH, refugee health, RCH (KK, 20)
20/04/16	CCCH, English as an additional language, RCH (ST, 20)
18/05/16	Caring for CALD families – RCH volunteer induction training (KS, 30)
20/05/16	General Medicine handover – intro to our service (SO+KK, 15)
26/05/16	AMES Australia insight seminar (GP, 50)
27/05/16	Health and Human Rights, MPH, University of Melbourne (GP, 25)
31/05/16	Crossing Borders, Deakin medical students (KK, 40)
08/06/16	NH children's and maternity ward nurses and social workers (KK, 25)
10/06/16	Sunshine Hospital children's and maternity ward nurses and SW's (KK, 30)
15/06/16	Immunisation section, Department of Health (GP, 8)
20/06/16	Hume Council refugee week expo (KK, 40)
22/06/16	RCH emergency registrar teaching (SO+KK, 25)
22/06/16	RCH Grand Rounds (GP+KK+HG, 200)
23/06/16	Hume Council Children and Family Services (KK, 25)
23/06/16	Bendigo GP education for Refugee Week (KK, 50)
18/07/16	Hume Council and VFST – supporting refugee children in schools (SO+KK, 120)
26/07/16	Caring for CALD families – RCH volunteer induction training (KK, 30)
26/07/16	Lunch and learn, Department of Health (GP, 15)
08/08/16	Junior medical staff, RCH, policy (GP, 40)
11/08/16	Waterwell volunteer induction, Melbourne (SO+GP, 75)
16/08/16	Mernda Village Medical Centre – GP education (KK, 6)
17/08/16	Refugee and asylum seeker health – Post Grad Dip Adv Clinical Nursing (KS, 27)
24/08/16	Refugee and asylum seeker health – Post Grad Dip Adv Clinical Nursing (KS, 24)
30/08/16	Refugee Minor Program, DHHS (GP, 15)
04/09/16	Global Ideas Forum 2016, Melbourne (100)
08/09/16	Laurimer Medical Centre – GP education (SO, 7)
09/09/16	General Medicine handover – intro to our service (SO, 15)
23/09/16	NDIS and refugee-related issues, General Medicine meeting, RCH (SO+GP, 40)
05/10/16	Victorian Children's Council - Refugee health (GP, 10)
12/10/16	Waterwell volunteer induction - recorded webinar (SO, 75)
13/10/16	Junior Medical Staff teaching, RCH (KK, 20)
15/10/16	Australasian College of Legal Medicine (GP, 30)
19/10/16	Cohealth Fitzroy GP education (SO, 15)
19/10/16	Refugee and asylum seeker health – Post Grad Dip Adv Clinical Nursing (KS, 17)
24/10/16	Nillumbik Medical Centre GP education (SO, 15)
09/11/16	RCH ED registrar teaching (KK, 10)

15/11/16	Grantham Street General Practice education, Brunswick West (KK, 10)
23/11/16	Hume Council Refugee Health professional development (KK, 15)
08/12/16	NH Transcultural and Language Services orientation refugee health (KK, 20)
09/12/16	General Medicine - update on service activity (GP, 30).

Capacity building

Linking with other services – a substantial part of our work in 2016 has been supporting primary care capacity in refugee and asylum seeker health, particularly in the Northern region, in anticipation of (and response to) the Syrian and Iraqi arrivals.

Key initiatives include:

Craigieburn Health Services (Northern Health) – Nov 2016 (KK, SO) development of a new paediatric refugee health outreach clinic in partnership with Northern Health

VRHN paediatric webinar – February (KK)

Refugee Health Matters (RHM) – is a short newsletter from the Refugee Health Fellows to update skills and knowledge in GPs and nurses

- RHM - updated refugee health assessment - Apr 2016
- RHM - chronic pain - Oct 2016
- Articles on vitamin D, mental health, and infectious diseases being drafted

Health Pathways - Eastern Melbourne PHN – submitted Aug 2016 (KK, GP)

- Paediatric refugee health
- Refugee health assessment

Northwest Melbourne PHN – (SO, KK) developing a GP education curriculum and practice visits by the fellows

Circulation of a 'letter of introduction' to GP practices in the Northern and Western region Mar 2016 (KK) to introduce the refugee health fellows to GPs, nurses, and practice managers. This was circulated through the NW Melbourne PHN and Eastern Melbourne PHN practices, and to individual practices with bilingual doctors

Phone calls to bilingual GP practices in the Northern region Aug-Sep 2016 (SO) to introduce GP practices to the refugee health fellows, connect them to available resources, and offer education sessions

Immunisation working group – has been an effective network of providers linking refugee and asylum seeker health and immunisation catch-up and service delivery

Clinical consultations – are an ongoing means of building connections - as above

Workforce development - majority of the 12 paediatric refugee services across Victoria are run by paediatricians who have worked with the RCH immigrant health service - see: http://www.rch.org.au/immigranthealth/clinical/Caseworker_Resources/#Resources.

Health services improvement within RCH

- **Audit** of interpreter services use and clinical outcomes at RCH (KS, KK, GP)
- **Audit** of RCH outpatient waitlist and impact on low English proficiency patients (KK, GP)
- **Business case and background research** in order to build translated appointment letters and SMS reminders directly into the RCH EMR - EPIC (KK, GP).

Research

Peer reviewed publications

Graham H, Minhas RS, **Paxton G**. Learning problems in children of refugee background - a systematic scoping review. *Pediatrics* 18 May 2016 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27194628>

Paxton GA, Tyrrell L, **Oldfield SB**, **Kiang K**, Danchin MH. No Jab, No Pay – no planning for migrant children. *Med J Aust* 8 Oct 2016; 205(7):296-8 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27681964>

Chaves N, **Paxton GA**, Biggs BA et al. Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases and Refugee Health Network of Australia Recommendations for Health Assessment for People from Refugee-Like Backgrounds: An Abridged Outline. Accepted for publication, *Med J Aust* 2016

Kiang KM, Elia S, **Paxton GA**. Catch-up immunisation in immigration detention. Submitted for publication to *Med J Aust*

Sangster K, Drewe R, **Paxton G**. TB screening in Karen Refugees - draft now finalised.

Other

Contribution to the Models of Child Health Appraised (MOCHA) report: [Entitlements to healthcare for migrant children in Australia and relationship to migration status](#). Companion paper in comparison to the European situation. Centre for Community Child Health, Aug 2016

Ongoing research

Systematic review prevalence data from post-arrival refugee health screening – completed as part of the ASID guidelines, will be extended into a publication (KK, GP)

Audit of physical and mental health in asylum seeker children in detention (ST, team)

Audit of health and service use in new arrival Syrian and Iraqi refugee children (team)

Data linkage - Hospitals, Settlement and Immigration linkage project, collaboration across Victorian Department of Health, Australian Department of Health, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), Department of Social Services (DSS) and Australian Bureau of Statistics - AIHW Ethics approval received November 2016.

Meetings and committees

In addition to our regular clinical meetings (below) we have attended or convened approximately 70 meetings with partner or community organizations to discuss better service delivery, collaborations, policy issues and other aspects of refugee and asylum seeker health. Our current focus of work is to extend our connections to Western region health services (including Sunshine Hospital) and Northern region health services (including Dianella Community Health, Plenty Valley Community Health, and Northern Hospital).

Committees, reference groups and working groups

MCASD – Minister’s Council on Asylum Seekers and Detention, DIBP, May 2015 – ongoing (GP, 3-year term)

- Visits to Wickham Point Feb 2016, Maribyrnong Immigration Detention Centre (MIDC) Feb 2016 and MITA Feb, Jun 2016
- Quarterly meetings Canberra

- Chair Victorian Detention Community Consultation Group meetings Jun, Sep, Dec 2016

Independent Health Advisor Panel – DIBP, Oct 2014 – ongoing (GP).

- Visit to Villawood Immigration Detention Centre Mar 2016 and MIDC Sep 2016
- Quarterly meetings.

Health Sub-Committee to the Joint Advisory Committee for Nauru Regional Processing Arrangements, DIBP, Dec 2013 – ongoing (GP)

- Visit to Nauru 1-4 May 2016, and 27-30 Nov 2016
- Meetings post visits

Commission for Children and Young People, Victoria: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, Mar 2014 – ongoing (GP) – meetings bimonthly

Victorian Refugee Health Network (VRHN) (GP, KK, SO) – meetings quarterly

VRHN Immunisation Working Group (GP Chair, KK, SO) – meetings bimonthly

Refugee Health Network of Australia (RHeaNA) (GP) – meetings bimonthly

RCH Cultural Diversity Working Group (GP) – meetings monthly from Aug 2016

RCH Cultural Diversity in Mental Health Committee (KK, SO) – meetings quarterly

AMES Disability Action Group (KK) – meetings bimonthly

Outer North Regional Health Network (KK) – meetings bimonthly.

Regular clinical meetings

- Weekly supervision meetings with fellows
- Fortnightly clinical audit meeting
- Fortnightly secondary consultations: RCH Integrated Mental Health and RCH teacher.

Other meetings

20/01/16	VRHN - PHNs general practice (GP) educational strategy meeting (KK)
02/02/16	Eastern Melbourne PHN (EMPHN), health pathways for refugee children (KK)
11/02/16	VRHN reference group (GP, SO, KK) - quarterly
14/02/16	Northwest Melbourne PHN (NWMPHN) – GP educational planning meeting (KK)
19/02/16	Centre Ethnicity and Health, VRHN - catch-up immunisation fact sheet (SO, KK)
19/02/16	Stephanie McArdle, RCH interpreter services (KK)
25/02/16	VRHN Immunisation Working Group (GP, SO, KK) - bimonthly
01/03/16	RHEANA teleconference
04/03/16	Jane Yelland and Elisha Riggs, research opportunities (SO, KK)
07/03/16	Cultural diversity in mental health RCH (SO, KK) – quarterly
09/03/16	CALD Strategic Partnership Advisory Committee (GP) - bimonthly
16/03/16	Stephanie McArdle, RCH interpreter services (KK)
17/03/16	Dianella Community Health refugee health nurses (SO, KK)
17/03/16	Lindy Marlow and coHealth Footscray refugee health nurses (SO, KK)
17/03/16	ISIS-PC Sunshine refugee health nurses (SO, KK)
22/03/16	Meeting South Eastern Melbourne PHN – immunisation catch-up calculator (GP)
24/03/16	Plenty Valley Community Health refugee health partnership consultation (KK)
24/03/16	Eastern Melbourne PHN (EMPHN), health pathways for refugee children (KK)
21/04/16	Outer North Refugee Health Network (KK) - bimonthly
24/04/16	VRHN Immunisation Working Group (GP, KK) - bimonthly

28/04/16 AMES Disability Action Group (KK) - bimonthly
 16/05/16 CALD Strategic Partnership Advisory Committee (GP) - bimonthly
 19/05/16 Hume City Council multicultural working group (KK)
 19/05/16 Interpreter utilization – Jenny Ryan, Mater Health Services (KK)
 24/05/16 RHEANA teleconference
 25/05/16 NW Melbourne PHN – GP educational planning meeting (KK)
 26/05/16 VRHN Reference Group (GP, KK) – quarterly
 06/06/16 DHHS refugee health fellow meeting, Melbourne (SO, KK, GP)
 14/06/16 Refugee Council of Australia - Settlement Practice Network - Disability (GP)
 22/06/16 VRHN Immunisation Working Group (SO, GP) - bimonthly
 27/06/16 Western Health Primary Care Population Health Advisory Consultation (SO)
 28/06/16 Emily McCallef, Monash Health interpreter utilization research (KK)
 05/07/16 Project Advisory Group for Refugee Health Practice Guide (GP)
 27/07/16 Kathryn Hamilton, Vicki Young, RCH Diabetic Educator/Nurse (SO, KK)
 28/07/16 AMES Disability Action Group (KK) - bimonthly
 11/08/16 Eastern Melbourne PHN (EMPHN), health pathways for refugee children (KK, GP)
 15/08/16 CALD Strategic Partnership Advisory Committee (GP) - bimonthly
 17/08/16 Emma Jones, RCH Interpreter Services (KK, KS)
 24/08/16 Kylie Moon and Georgie McAuley - RCH Speciality Clinic waitlist audit (SO, KK, GP)
 25/08/16 AMES Disability Action Group (KK) - bimonthly
 25/08/16 VRHN Reference Group (GP, SO, KK) – quarterly
 31/08/16 Stephen Ratcliffe, Quality and improvement (KK)
 06/09/16 Cultural diversity in mental health RCH (SO) – quarterly
 13/09/16 RHEANA teleconference (GP)
 20/09/16 Project Advisory Group for Refugee Health Practice Guide (GP)
 03/10/16 Kate Temby and Helena Scorra, Dept of Education (SO, KK)
 05/10/16 NW Melbourne PHN – GP educational planning meeting (SO, KK)
 06/10/16 Cultural Diversity Working Group, RCH (GP) - bimonthly
 12/10/16 CALD Strategic Partnership Advisory Committee (GP) – bimonthly
 14/10/16 Wendy Cisar, Plenty Valley Community Health (SO, KK)
 17/10/16 Craigieburn Health Services (SO, KK)
 18/10/16 Dani Smith, Director of Ambulatory Services (KK)
 26/10/16 Dianella Refugee Health Nurses (SO, KK)
 27/10/16 AMES Disability Action Group (KK) - bimonthly
 28/10/16 Foundation House (GP, SO, KK)
 28/10/16 Northern Health Interpreter Services and Director, Ambulatory Services (SO, KK)
 28/10/16 Dr David Tran, Director of Paediatric Services, Northern Health (SO, KK)
 07/11/16 Lindy Marlow, RHN Facilitator (SO, KK, GP)
 07/11/16 Helena Zeweri - research on forced marriage
 10/11/16 VRHN Reference Group (GP, SO, KK) – quarterly
 14/11/16 DHHS Refugee Health Fellow meeting, Melbourne (GP, SO, KK)
 16/11/16 VRHN Immunisation Working Group (GP, KK) – bimonthly
 20/11/16 Project Advisory Group for Refugee Health Practice Guide (GP)
 23/11/16 Sarah Daly and Poly Kigaya, AMES settlement agency (KK)
 24/11/16 Outer North Refugee Health Network (KK) – bimonthly
 29/11/16 VRHN Post-merits Review/Finally Determined (KK)
 01/12/16 AMES Disability Action Group (KK) – bimonthly
 05/12/16 Cultural diversity in mental health RCH (SO)
 14/12/16 Emma Jones, RCH Interpreter Services (GP, SO, KS, KK)
 28/12/16 Louise Sharkey, Plenty Valley Community Health (KK).

Policy

RCH Immigrant Health has provided input into policy related to refugee and asylum seeker child health in multiple areas – immunisation, tuberculosis screening, offshore health screening, onshore health screening, the response to the Syrian intake, data and ascertainment, and child protection.

Key contributions include:

ASID/RHeaNA Refugee health screening guidelines – released April 2016. Sections authored by, or having significant input from RCH Immigrant Health: introduction, vitamin D, immunisation skin infections, prevalence, mental health (including child development); contributions: women’s health, tuberculosis; also editing and review.

Immunisation including work to detail the impact of the Commonwealth ‘No Jab, No Pay’ and Victorian ‘No Jab, No Play’ legislation. This body of work has largely been completed through the VRHN immunisation working group. Output includes:

- **Policy briefing** [‘No Jab, No Pay’ and implications for service providers and communities](#) Mar 2016
- **Policy briefing** - [ACIR – Issues Arising](#) Jun 2016
- **Fact sheet - patients** [Catch-up vaccinations](#) collaboration with CEH, Health translations, Jun 2016
- **Fact sheet - caseworkers and health service staff** - [immunisation](#) Apr 2016
- **Fact sheet - immunisation providers** - [catch-up vaccination and new immunisation policies](#) May 2016
- **Liaison with ACIR** staff, management, and Department of Health (Canberra) Feb - Aug 2016
- **Presentation of issues to Commonwealth Department of Health** as part of discussion on planning for new Syrian cohorts, Apr 2016
- **Med J Aust perspective piece** ‘No Jab, No Pay’ – Mar 2016, published Oct 2016
- **Manuscript drafted:** Catching up with catch-up - immunisation in refugees and asylum seekers in Victoria (for submission)
- **[A needs analysis of catch-up immunisation in refugee-background and asylum seeker communities in Victoria](#)** (submitted DH May 2014, published May 2016)
- **Offshore immunisation** for Humanitarian entrants - comments for Department of Health Aug 2016.

Policy analysis on NDIS for refugee and asylum seeker patients provided for Department of Health (Jul 2016), new website on NDIS created, general medicine presentation (Sep 2016), participation in Refugee Council of Australia forum on disabilities (Jun 2016) - SO, KK, GP

Senate Inquiry - RCH provided a submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee Inquiry into the conditions and treatment of asylum seekers and refugees at the regional processing centres in the Republic of Nauru and Papua New Guinea, May 2016

Contribution to draft cultural diversity indicators - Office for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, Department of Premier and Cabinet (Jun 2016) - GP

Briefing and presentation on refugee health prepared for Victorian Children’s Council, Oct 2016 - GP

Website

- New**
- [Disability](#) (GP, KK)
 - [Mental health](#) being developed (KK, GP)

- Key updates**
- [Initial assessment](#) (GP) - to reflect new ASID/RHeaNA screening guidelines
 - [Tuberculosis screening](#) (GP)
 - [Catch-up immunisations](#) (GP)
 - [Recent policy changes](#) (GP)
 - [Asylum seekers](#) (GP)
 - [Syrian refugees](#) (GP)
 - [Translated resources](#) (KK) - relevant translated information for CALD communities.
 - [Talk bank](#) (KK)

Future directions

- Expanding education provision – as settlement of Syrian and Iraqi refugees progresses
- Expanding regional education provision – anticipated changes related to Safe Haven Enterprise Visas
- Adapting to the roll-out of the NDIS, and informing work on CALD communities and new arrivals referred to NDIS
- Evaluation of Victorian administrative datasets in relation to Refugee and Asylum seeker health (GP, Sabbatical 2016 – Victorian Department of Health)
- Hospitals, Settlement and Immigration linkage project, for progress in 2017.
- Health systems – patient satisfaction, interpreter access, length of stay, GP details (KK, Dr Rachel Heenan (fellow 2017)
- Evaluation of Schistosoma management (Dr Tom Volkman (fellow 2017) VC, KK, GP)
- Resilience in Children – NHMRC grant – based at MCRI
- Framework for assessing refugee background children with learning issues – (GP, HG, ST, KK and collaboration with Dr Ida Kaplan and Dr Yvonne Stolk, VFST and Dr Rowena Conroy, RCH)
- Developing pathways for specialist assessment for all unaccompanied minors in Victoria (we remain determined!)

On behalf of RCH Immigrant health - thank-you to our patients and their families for working with our service and helping us to understand more about health and healthcare; we are indebted to our interpreting colleagues, and would like to formally acknowledge their skills, professionalism, support, and essential contribution to our work; and we would like to thank our mental health colleagues for their support and advice. We are grateful to the Department of General Medicine, and to the Department of Health, Victoria, who provide funding for our service.

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