



# Immigrant health service 2010

Department of General Medicine

## Background

At 1 January 2010, the number of 'people of concern' under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) mandate was estimated at 43.3 million worldwide. This includes refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people and stateless people. In 2009, the UNHCR identified 15.2 million refugees and 27.1 million internally displaced people.

Australia accepts around 13,500 refugees annually under the Humanitarian Program, around 3,500 of this group resettle in Victoria, and approximately half are aged < 19 years. Over 2009-10, people arriving under the Australian Humanitarian Program were from Africa, Middle Eastern and Asian source countries, in roughly equal proportions.

### Key achievements in 2010

- 1062 patient contact episodes
- Awarded recurrent funding for Refugee Health Fellow position by Department of Health at increased EFT
- Provision of 21 education sessions, including 14 external sessions across Victoria
- 5 publications (2 peer reviewed, 2 book chapters, 1 other)
- \$130,000 in research funding
- Increased focus on cross-cultural developmental and educational assessment and links with RCH Education Institute
- Continued involvement in State level policy on high dose vitamin D, and work on new Australasian Consensus Statement on Vitamin D in infants, children and adolescents
- Ongoing work with TB service (Refugee fellow placement in TB clinic) and Department of Gastroenterology and Clinical Nutrition (Gastroenterology fellow placement in Immigrant health clinic)
- Increased collaboration with the Royal Melbourne Hospital Refugee and Travel Clinic with commencement of project developing electronic health record across the four specialist refugee clinics in Victoria
- 3 babies born to clinic staff

## Service model

The immigrant health service includes a weekly outpatient clinic, inpatient consultations, education for service providers, and involvement in policy development at State and national level. There is an affiliation with, and contribution towards, the Victorian Paediatric Tuberculosis Service and the Western Region Health Centre Vitamin D Clinic.

The outpatient clinical service has transitioned from providing initial post-arrival health screening (although this is still provided if required) to acting as a tertiary consultation service for primary care providers; with an increased focus on cross-cultural educational and developmental assessment over 2010. Medical assessment, dental assessment, immunisation, pathology collection, radiology and pharmacy are provided onsite. We work closely with the Infectious Diseases, and TB clinics as well as the immunisation service, and increasingly with the RCH education Institute, and the Psychology Department.

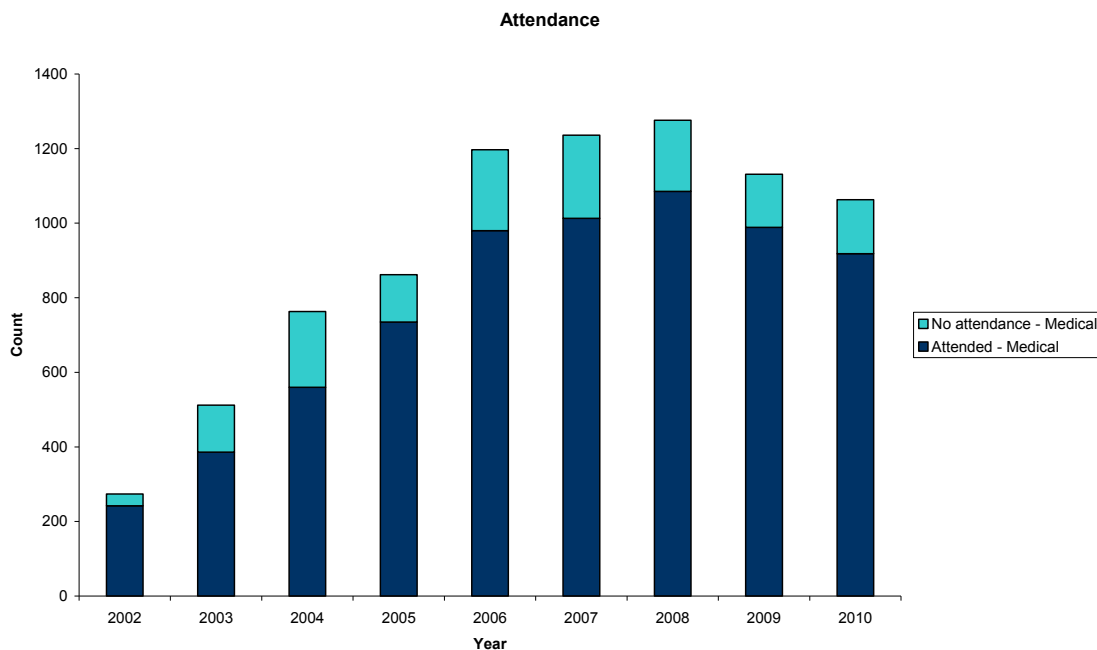
## Staffing

Position	Staff member	EFT	Notes
Clinic coordinator	Helen Milton	0.4	Ongoing
Medical lead	Georgie Paxton	0.1	M/L Jan - May
FFS consultant	Georgie Paxton	-	
FFS consultant	Andy Smith	-	M/L June - Dec
FFS consultant	Steve Graham	-	
FFS consultant	Dave Burgner	-	
Fellow	Kirsty Walsh	0.4	Started March
Registrar	Jane Standish	0.1	(Gen Med Fellow)
Dental therapist	Tatiana Polizzi	0.05	Ongoing
Community worker	Nagaha Idris	0.05	Ongoing
Volunteers	Elly Woudstra, others	-	Ongoing
Research nurse	Katrina Sangster	0.1	M/L June - Dec

## Affiliated services/work

- Tuberculosis clinic: Dr Kirsty Walsh, Dr Steve Graham
- Western Region Health Centre Vitamin D clinic: Dr Kirsty Walsh and Dr Dave Tickell
- Darebin Community Health Centre: Dr Kate Thomson
- Craigieburn Community Health Centre: Dr Jo Fraser
- Dandenong Hospital Refugee Health Clinic: Dr Danni Bao
- Authorised prescribing high dose vitamin D: Application through HREC and TGA for authorized prescribing of high dose vitamin D tablets in the community

## Clinic demographics



## Clinical services provided in conjunction with other services

180 additional direct patient contacts were made by the Immigrant Health Team during 2010.

## Key points - clinic demographics

- Clinic attendance rates have remained stable at 86%
- The number of consultations has reduced, related to change in service model with an increased number of single complex consultations, and a contribution through staffing arrangements due to leave
- 54% of our consultations in 2009 required the help of an interpreter; this is lower than previous years
- In 2010, we saw children from more than 37 countries speaking 25 languages

## Funding

Department of Health recurrent funding received 2010- \$100,000 (Refugee Health Fellow)

## Education/presentations

- 1 conference presentation
- 6 internal education sessions (nursing, medical, pathology collection, FEAT, paediatric update)
- 14 external education sessions (General Practice Divisions, other public hospitals, refugee health nurses, primary nurses, schools, community groups, other specialists) across a range of topics.

## Research/grants

- Windermere Health Services Fellowship 2010. Dr Georgie Paxton. \$80,000
- IBES seed funding – Refugee electronic health record. Dr Georgie Paxton. \$50,000

## Publications

- Murray R, Davis J, Krause V, Biggs BA, Lemoh C, Benson J, Paxton G, Buttery J, Hansen-Knarhoi, Burgner D. Diagnosis, management and prevention of infections in recently arrived refugees. Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases Dreamweaver Publishing Pty Ltd; 2009. Available at: [www.asid.net.au/downloads/RefugeeGuidelines.pdf](http://www.asid.net.au/downloads/RefugeeGuidelines.pdf)
- Woodland L, Burgner D, Paxton G and Zwi K. Health service delivery for newly arrived refugee children: a framework for good practice. J Paediatr Child Health 2010; 46(10):560-67.
- Zwi K, Raman S, Osbourne M, Burgner D, Paxton G. Broader protection, not just border protection. RACP News, August 2010. Available at: <http://www.racp.edu.au/index.cfm?objectid=D7FAA69C-ABB0-2F9EB112E8426974B7E0>
- Paxton G and Burgner D. Refugee health. Book Chapter In: South M and Isaacs D. (Eds) Practical Paediatrics, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Elsevier 2010 (in press).
- Schulz T, Paxton G, and Biggs B. Infectious Diseases. Book Chapter. In: Loue S and Sajatovic M. (Eds). Encyclopedia of Immigrant Health. Springer, 2010 (in press).

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