

## SEEKING EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

### 'OPTIMISE' refugee health project for GENERAL PRACTICES

Would you like to improve your practice's services for refugees and asylum seekers?  
Would you like to be part of a large scale research project that aims to increase the ability of general practices to deliver high quality primary care to refugees?

We would like to offer general practices the opportunity to take part in an important research project which aims to understand whether hands-on support from a refugee health facilitator creates positive change in primary care.

#### Participating practices will receive:

- Support from a 'facilitator', who is experienced in refugee health.
- Help to identify and plan what aspects of their service the practice will address
- Assistance and support including best-practice examples and resources
- Clinical support and advice from the facilitator, and support to access refugee health experts and other health professionals
- Access to results of enhanced refugee-specific PEN audit software during the project
- A financial contribution of \$2,000 to support and thank you for your involvement

#### Participating practices will need to:

- Develop a plan with their facilitator about what the practice will do to improve agreed aspects of their service
- Work with their facilitator over a six-month period to implement the actions within that plan
- Provide data at specific times before and after their six-month project, to support a rigorous evaluation

#### What is the OPTIMISE project?

OPTIMISE is a four-year NHMRC funded research project which brings together academics and organisations from within the refugee health sector to develop and test innovative solutions to improve the delivery of accessible, coordinated and high quality primary care to refugees and asylum seekers. We are implementing this model of practice facilitation across 3 regions in Australia that receive a high number of refugee and asylum seeker settlement: North Western Melbourne, South Eastern Melbourne, and South Western Sydney.

The partners in the North Western Melbourne region are La Trobe University, North Western Melbourne PHN (NWMPHN), cohealth, AMES Australia and Victorian Refugee Health Network. Together we have collected data about the region, identified specific health service practices that are important in refugee health, and pulled together best practice pathways and resources.

We are seeking to recruit 10-12 general practices in North Western Melbourne to work with a facilitator over a period of 6 months. Participating practices will focus on the following areas:

- ✓ Putting in place accurate and accessible mechanisms to **identify** and record refugee status.
- ✓ Putting in place systems and receiving education about how to access and **use interpreters** effectively (where required)
- ✓ Receiving education and putting in place systems which enable the practice to conduct **physical and mental health assessments for** refugees
- ✓ Support to understand referral pathways, including available services, eligibility requirements to access services, and referral processes in the region.

Practices which already have the systems above in place can still join: we will help you to ensure that your systems are in line with best practice. Practices may also **identify other areas of refugee and asylum seeker health** that are of interest to the practice e.g. clinical knowledge

## Practice Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to take part in this project, practices must:

- ✓ Be located in either Hume, Brimbank, Melton, Moreland or Wyndham (these are the geographic areas where high numbers of refugees are settling).
- ✓ Have patients from refugee backgrounds (may include asylum seekers)
- ✓ Be accredited and have been operating for at least 2 years.
- ✓ Be using Medical Director or Best Practice medical software (and have, or be willing to install PEN software [provided for free])
- ✓ Be willing to use or is already using interpreters.

## Practices who participate in this program are required to:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Work collaboratively with a facilitator over a 6-month period and complete the project</li> <li>✓ Identify a staff member to lead and coordinate the project</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Work on the 4 target areas (identification and recording refugee status, use of interpreters, conducting health assessments and referral to services).</li> <li>✓ Develop an action plan (with support from the Facilitator ) and implement those actions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Collect data using the surveys and methods required by the research team.</li> <li>✓ Install a refugee specific add-on onto their existing PEN tool, or install the PEN tool (free of charge) <i>and</i> the add-on</li> </ul> |
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## How to apply

Please send your expression of interest using the form provided to [m.arnold@nwmphn.org.au](mailto:m.arnold@nwmphn.org.au) or fax to (03) 9347. For further information call Samantha Milford or Maggie Arnold on (03) 9347 1188.

Researchers will conduct a site visit to discuss the project in further detail before you will be invited to commit to the project.

## OPTIMISE REFUGEE HEALTH PROJECT Expression of Interest

Applicant Name:			
Name of Practice:			
Practice Address:			LGA:
Contact Details:	Phone:	Email:	Fax:
Please tick to confirm that you fulfil the following mandatory criteria:			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Our practice is located in Hume, Brimbank, Melton, Moreland or Wyndham		
<input type="checkbox"/>	We are an accredited practice		
<input type="checkbox"/>	We currently have and are receiving refugees and/or asylum seeker patients at our practice (we estimate that _____ new refugees attend our practice per month.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	We have been operating for at least 2 years and intend to operate for at least 2 more years		
<input type="checkbox"/>	We use either Medical Director or Best Practice software		
<input type="checkbox"/>	We have PENCAT or are willing to install PENCAT, and will also install the refugee-specific add-on designed specifically for this project		
Please tick to confirm that you agree in principle to the following:			
	Our practice will:		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify a practice lead and project team (the team would include at least one GP, the practice manager, practice nurse (if practice has one) and an admin member e.g. receptionist		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get the whole practice on board - inform staff about project		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Work with a facilitator over a 6-month period		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide data at specific times before and after the 6-month project.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	With the assistance of the facilitator, at a minimum, our practice will work on ways to improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identification of refugees, and recording and retrieval of refugee specific information</li> <li>- use of interpreters, including systems in place for accessing interpreters.</li> <li>- the way we conduct refugee physical and mental health assessments</li> <li>- an understanding of referral pathways, including available services, eligibility requirements to access services, and referral processes in the region.</li> </ul>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop an action plan (with help from your facilitator) for these areas.		

Send your EOI application to [maggie.arnold@nwmpfn.org.au](mailto:maggie.arnold@nwmpfn.org.au) or fax to (03) 9347 7433 as soon as possible.

For further information call Maggie Arnold or Samantha Milford on (03) 9347 1188.