

Make your general practice refugee health ready

phn
NORTH WESTERN
MELBOURNE

An Australian Government Initiative

A guide to help general practices
identify and provide quality care
to people who have a refugee
background.



Your refugee health readiness checklist

Use this checklist to make your practice ready to support people who identify as refugees. For more information visit the new refugeehealthguide.org.au

Area	Activity
Complete your training module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Register for Practice Coaching online training: www.practicecoaching.com.au<input type="checkbox"/> Encourage staff in your practice to complete the training module for Refugee and Asylum Seeker Health
Use interpreters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Register with TIS National. tisonline.tisnational.gov.au/RegisterAgency<input type="checkbox"/> Use the National Doctors Priority line: 1300 131 450<input type="checkbox"/> Find out more: Practice Coaching, Doctors Priority Line Poster, Working with patients when there are language barriers<input type="checkbox"/> Promote that you use this service to your patients
Identify people and record data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Update your 'New Patient Form' to include more specific information to help you identify people who are from a refugee background (see page 5)<input type="checkbox"/> Record refugee status in your medical software - Best Practice and Medical Director (see cheat sheets, page 7 and 8)
Conduct a Refugee Health Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> A Refugee Health Assessment is available to the people with eligible visa numbers.<input type="checkbox"/> Find out how to do a Refugee Health Assessment: Practice Coaching, Refugee Health Assessment Guide<input type="checkbox"/> Upload the 2018 Refugee Health Assessment Template to your medical software:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Medical Director</i>: Read first - Template Import Instructions Copy link - Refugee Health Assessment Template (Do not open)• <i>Best Practice</i>: Read first - Template Import Instructions Copy link - Refugee Health Assessment Template (Do not open)<input type="checkbox"/> Access Medicare Benefits Schedule for a Refugee Health Assessment<input type="checkbox"/> Find out more: Practice Coaching, MBS Refugee Health Item No's
Find and access pre-departure medical records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Register with the Department of Home Affairs to request access to HAPlite. health@homeaffairs.gov.au<input type="checkbox"/> Create an ImmiAccount online.immi.gov.au/lusc/register<input type="checkbox"/> Access the Immigration Medical Examination (IME) Health Assessment Portal (HAP) to find patient records online.immi.gov.au/lusc/login

For more information

If you have any questions or would like further information please contact janet.cowell@nwmphn.org.au

Better care for refugees

Our aim is to support health care providers to identify people who are from a refugee and asylum seeker background, understand their needs, and provide culturally-appropriate health care.

A refugee is someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. [Refugee status](#) is given to applicants by the United Nations or by a third party country, such as Australia.

An asylum seeker is an individual who is seeking international protection. In countries with individualised procedures, an asylum seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which he or she has submitted it. Not every asylum seeker will ultimately be recognised as a refugee, but [every refugee is initially an asylum seeker](#).

The new Refugee Health Practice Guide

The Australian Refugee Health Practice Guide is for GPs, practice nurses, refugee health nurses, specialists and other primary care providers to inform on-arrival and ongoing health care for people from refugee backgrounds, including people seeking asylum. This includes topics such as:

- Approach to patient care,
- Refugee health assessment, referrals
- Common health concerns, populations

Visit refugeehealthguide.org.au

Secondary consultations and local services

The Australian Refugee Health Practice Guide also includes information about Victorian and local services. For secondary consultations contact:

- Refugee Health Nurses in the West, North and Central suburbs
- Victorian Refugee Fellows
- Victoria Settlement Health Coordinators

For contact details visit refugeehealthguide.org.au/referrals/victoria



Support agencies

- Foundation House: www.foundationhouse.org.au
- Victorian Refugee Health Network: refugeehealthnetwork.org.au
- Royal Children's Hospital - Immigrant Health Centre: www.rch.org.au/immigranthealth
- Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC): www.asrc.org.au
- Cabrini Asylum Seeker and Refugee Health Hub [Brunswick Site](#)

Healthpathways

HealthPathways Melbourne provides clinicians with a single website to access clinical referral pathways and resources.

The Refugee Health section has a number of pathways including: health assessment, refugee health in children, refugee health in adults, refugee health referrals.

For more information

Visit nwmphn.org.au/healthpathways or contact info@healthpathwaysmelbourne.org.au for access to melbourne.healthpathways.org.au

Other tools:

- Immunisation Catchup: [Vaccinations and catchup Refugee and Asylum Seeker](#)
- Teach-Back: www.teachbacktraining.org



Five activities to make your practice refugee health ready

Training



Practice Coaching is a free e-learning website for general practice. The Refugee and Asylum Seeker training module includes topics such as:

- Identifying refugees and asylum seekers in your general practice
- Working with interpreters and ensuring effective communication
- Conducting a refugee health assessment and common illness
- Immunisation for asylum seekers and refugees
- Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS): Focus on refugee health

How to access Practice Coaching

Staff can register to the Practice Coaching website

- Go to the www.practicecoaching.com.au
- Record staff who have completed the training and print the certificate
- Collect CPD points and store the certificate for accreditation purposes

Practice Coaching has been developed by South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN). The e-learning modules were co-developed by North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network and SEMPHN.

Translating and Interpreting Service



National Doctors Priority Line is a free phone and face-to-face interpreting service for medical practitioners in private practice. It is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Each GP, nurse or other staff, who wants to use this service will need their own online account.

What you can do

1. Ask the patient if they require interpreter services and let them know that this is free.
2. Register with Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) to access free interpreter:
 - Check if you are already registered
 - If not, register your details tisonline.tisnational.gov.au/RegisterAgency
3. Call the Doctors Priority Line: 1300 131 450
The service uses more than 2600 professional interpreters and covers more than 160 languages and dialects. Find out more: [Doctors Priority Line Poster](#), or [Working with patients when there are language barriers](#)
4. Book a phone interpreter or book an on-site interpreter. Visit www.tisnational.gov.au

Refugees may be highly vulnerable, and often have complex health needs

Identify people and record data



Refugees and Asylum seekers health needs are not easily recorded. Practices should have accurate and accessible mechanisms in place to identify, record and retrieve data.

What you can do

1. Update your 'New Patient Registration Form' to capture the following information:
 - Country of birth
 - Ethnicity
 - Year of arrival
 - Need for interpreter
 - Preferred language
 - Visa type
 - Refugee or asylum seeker status
 - Referral source
 - Case manager details
2. Record refugee status in your software.
Use this easy guide to record refugee status in [Best Practice or Medical Director software](#).

Refugee Health Assessment



People who are refugees should have a Refugee Health Assessment (RHA) within 12 months of arrival.

A Refugee Health Assessment can be conducted over three consultations. The practice nurse can complete most of the Refugee Health Assessment.

Refugees often suffer from chronic and complex health problems and mental health issues. You may also consider a Chronic Disease Plan and a Mental Health Plan.

People seeking asylum are not eligible for the Refugee Health Assessment under the Medical Benefits Schedule (MBS).

What you can do

Refugee Health Assessment Eligibility

A Refugee Health Assessment is available to people with the following visas;

- [Eligible visa numbers](#)
- Find out how to do a Refugee Health Assessment using the [Refugee Health Assessment Guide](#)

Template

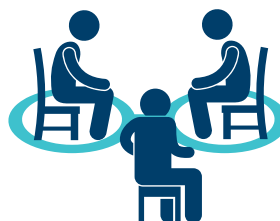
Upload the 2018 RHA Template to your software. Available in Medical Director and Best Practice only.

- *Medical Director:*
Read first - [Template Import Instructions](#)
Copy link - [Refugee Health Assessment Template](#) (Do not open)
- *Best Practice:*
Read first - [Template Import Instructions](#)
Copy link - [Refugee Health Assessment Template](#) (Do not open)

MBS Items for a Refugee Health Assessment

MBS item numbers that can be billed by practice nurse and GP

- Visit the [MBS Refugee Health Item Numbers](#)





Find pre-departure medical records

Refugees who have received a pre-departure health check, also called an Immigration Medical Examination (IME), have a HAPlite ID.

These examinations are stored on the Health Assessment Portal (HAP) as electronic health records that can include images, radiology and background documents. These can be downloaded and stored.

GPs will need to obtain the persons HAPlite ID to view the persons Immigration Medical Examinations in the Health Assessment Portal.

What about Asylum Seekers?

The medical records of asylum seekers are not accessible to the Refugee Health Programs and GPs through HAPlite. They will have information on the HAP system, but it is only accessible to people contracted to do migration screening. Visit refugeehealthguide.org.au/asylum-seekers

For more information

If you have any questions or would like further information regarding this document, please contact: janet.cowell@nwmphn.org.au

How to access Immigration Medical Records

1. Register with the Department of Home Affairs
 - Email health@homeaffairs.gov.au who will provide an individual HAPlite ID for each GP
2. Tip sheets for HAPlite
 - Frequently asked questions - [HAP for refugee clinics and general practitioners](#)
 - [Creating an account to access HAPlite](#)
 - [Log in to HAPlite](#)
 - Search and view [health case in HAPlite](#) (Note: additional suggestion added - how to print the full report in one step)
3. Contacts for HSP providers - to obtain HAP numbers
 - See DSS information - Service provider locations- which unfortunately does not provide phone numbers - we are following this up.
 - Victorian contacts (AMES) - ask for the intake case coordinator, who will be able to look up the individual in the HSP system:
 - Dallas
 - Footscray
 - Noble Park
 - Other (not all of these sites handle settlement services).

In practice, there appear to be challenges accessing the HAP identification numbers - If there are issues accessing health information, feedback can be provided to the DHA on health@homeaffairs.gov.au.

Recording refugee status in Medical Director

1

Country of birth:	_____
Year of arrival:	_____
Spoken Language/s	_____
Preferred language:	_____
Refugee or asylum seeker on arrival in Australia?	Yes/No
Interpreter services needed?	Yes/No

1. **Update the Practice Patient Registration Form** to include information to include demographic and their information - see image 1.

2. **Enter information into pracsoft**

2 a)

a) When GP or nurse has confirmed a patient's refugee or asylum seeker status, GP should type 'Refugee' or 'Asylum Seeker' in the free text for the consultation. This will allow the PEN system to pull out refugee or asylum seeker status

b) The GP or nurse should also go to 'Reason' tab and add code for 'Refugee' or 'Asylum Seeker'. This will allow you to undertake a search for all refugee / asylum seeker patients through Medical Director later.

3. **Record refugee status and interpreter needs in 'Warnings'** so that it's highlighted at each visit. PEN pulls out the free text in the warning box.

2 b)

3

Recording refugee status in Best Practice

1

Country of birth:	_____
Year of arrival:	_____
Spoken Language/s	_____
Preferred language:	_____
Refugee or asylum seeker on arrival in Australia?	Yes/No
Interpreter services needed?	Yes/No

1. **Update the Practice Patient Registration Form** to include information to include demographic and their information - see image 1

2. **Recording refugee status in Best Practice**

2 a)

a) When registering a patient in Best Practice ensure you complete the ethnicity field. Clicking 'Other' will allow you to choose from a variety of ethnicities.

b) When you have confirmed a patient's status as a refugee or asylum seeker record this in 'Family/ Social History' under 'Social', under 'On Screen Comment' with the standard format note adopted by your practice. For example: Refugee – requires a female Karen interpreter.

This note will then be immediately visible at each visit, and visible to receptionists who need this information to book appointments and interpreters.

2 b)

3. PEN CS system will also be able to extract this data. You can also add other relevant information (e.g. Country of Birth, Year of Arrival) in 'Other Social History' if you wish.

2 b)
note

3