

National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)

RIM Monthly Newsletter

Updates and resources for SCALING UP COVID-19 PREVENTION AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES WITH REFUGEE, IMMIGRANT, AND MIGRANT (RIM) COMMUNITIES

August 2023

Highlights of the Month

Site Spotlight: Refugee Women's Network

Refugee Women's Network has been supporting refugee women and immigrant families in Georgia for 25 years. It's the only organization of its kind in Georgia. We sat down with Temple Moore, Program Manager of Community Health Promotion at Refugee Women's Network to hear a little bit about what they've been doing for the RIM communities in their area.

Refugee Women's Network covers a range of basic needs, including employment, education, and healthcare to name a few. Moore explained that they focus primarily on women because they found that "in the resettlement process, a lot of services, including employment and mental health services, were primarily given to the men." Moore explained that "the women are the bridge to community. They are the brokers of health for their families and therefore their communities, so by uplifting women, [they] are able to uplift the whole family and improve quality of life for the immigrant and refugee communities in Georgia."

Refugee Women's Network offers a variety of services, one of them being COVID education and vaccination. Moore emphasized building trust and being culturally responsive when going about COVID. Vaccine hesitancy is something they are very considerate of. "We want to make sure we are putting the community's dignity at the center. Rather than making assumptions about why they would or would not take a vaccine, we try to understand their perspective and give time so that with the right education and the right information, every woman and every family is going to make the right health decisions for themselves and their family." However, vaccine hesitancy goes beyond COVID. "Looking at it from a long-term strategy, if we can help people understand how vaccination works for COVID, they may be more likely to get the flu vaccine, the HPV vaccine," explained Moore. "It translates to preventative care overall."

Refugee Women’s Network hires trusted messengers from within the community to not only relay information to the communities at hand, but also help the organization truly understand the communities they are working with. “We’ve been able to put funds directly into the people that make the difference,” said Moore. These trusted messengers have already established relationships with community members which makes it easier to reach the people they need to reach.

Refugee Women’s Network offers an incredible number of services to enhance the life of refugee families in Georgia. To learn more about their work, visit their website [here](#).

News and Announcements

NACCHO's New Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant (RIM) Website



Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant (RIM) Programs

NACCHO RIM and its partners are dedicated to identifying and disseminating health communication and education resources that respect the diversity of cultures represented in RIM communities. Scan the QR code to learn more.

We are delighted to unveil the brand-new "RIM Website" – a dedicated online space tailored to the unique needs of Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant communities.

Discover the [RIM Website: Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant Programs - NACCHO](#)

The website highlights NACCHO's unwavering commitment to delivering pertinent and timely resources for LHDs and CBOs involved in the health and wellbeing of RIM communities. By visiting the RIM website, you will have access to an extensive array of resources, tools, and insights designed to support efforts in addressing the challenges faced by Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant populations.

Key Highlights of the RIM Website:

Tailored Resources: Explore a carefully curated selection of resources specifically geared towards promoting the health and well-being of Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant communities.

Interactive Learning: Engage in webinars and workshops that provide practical skills and knowledge aimed at improving health outcomes and fostering inclusivity within Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant populations.

Data Insights: Stay informed with the latest Emerging Promising Practices related to the health and challenges of RIM communities, enabling you to make informed decisions and develop effective interventions.

Exploring Program Sites: Gain deeper insights into our diverse portfolio of program sites, each meticulously tailored to meet the unique needs of Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant communities. These sites serve as dynamic hubs for specialized resources and initiatives, driving health equity and fostering inclusivity.

Site Spotlights: Immerse yourself in illuminating site spotlights that showcase our program sites and their multifaceted approach to enhancing well-being within Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant populations. These spotlights offer a firsthand look into innovative strategies and collaborative triumphs.

Conferences: Dive into a wealth of knowledge by exploring the diverse conferences that the RIM Program has attended. Learn more about enlightening discussions, transformative workshops, and informative panels.

As we continually update and expand this section, we highly value your feedback and suggestions to ensure that it remains an invaluable resource center for all matters pertaining to Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant community health.

Embedding Cultural Communications in Health Departments

Organizations that work with refugee, immigrant, and migrant (RIM) communities often face numerous linguistic and cultural challenges when communicating with these communities. Embedding and strengthening a cultural communications infrastructure within a health department helps to transmit timely, consistent, reliable, culturally, and linguistically appropriate information to RIM communities.

Learn how the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has taken steps to embed cultural communications in their work.

Conversations Guide: Coping with Stress

Afghan people who are forced to leave their country and start over in a new place have great strength and bravery. It is also a very difficult thing to do and can surface a lot of different emotions.

Our conversation guide equips service providers and bilingual community leaders to have conversations with Afghan clients about coping with stress while centering Afghan perspectives and cultural traditions. This is a preview to more mental health education materials to come.

NRC-RIM and Partners Offer New Resources for Newcomers and Organizations that Serve Them

The National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants and Migrants (NRC-RIM) is partnering with the International Rescue Committee to provide information on health-related concerns to Afghan and Ukrainian newcomers via the Virtual Resettlement Hotline (VRL).

The VRL is a one-stop resource for any Ukrainian or Afghan newcomer who is not yet connected to a resettlement agency or who is struggling to access benefits or resources in their community. In addition to health topics, callers can get information in Dari, Pashto, Ukrainian and Russian about federal benefits, food resources, cash assistance, local community resources and more.

One health concern that has been getting more attention is COVID-19. When COVID-19 waves happen, organizations and local governments may respond by prioritizing messaging that encourages people to choose preventative measures like masking, testing, and boosters. View translated resources, partnership ideas, and more on NRC-RIM's toolkit on COVID-19 waves.

Health departments and community organizations can access an extensive array of resources, tools, and insights designed to support their public health response in refugee, immigrant, and migrant communities in a [new website hosted by NACCHO](#). The website emerged from NRC-RIM's ongoing partnership with NACCHO and features a number of NRC-RIM resources and recommendations. This new tool is aimed at building the capacity of health departments to respond to the public health needs of RIM communities in innovative ways.

NRC-RIM's communications strategist will be a guest speaker at a webinar hosted by the Public Health Communications Collaborative on Sept. 21 called [Culturally Driven Strategies: Tailoring Health Communications to Build Understanding and Trust](#). The webinar will highlight NRC-RIM's efforts to culturally validate translations and design elements in NRC-RIM's [health communications portfolio](#) that serves Afghan newcomer communities.

For more information, visit their [website](#), sign up for [their newsletter](#), and follow them on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

New Virtual Resettlement Line for Afghan and Ukrainian Newcomers

NRC-RIM is partnering with the International Rescue Committee to provide information on health-related concerns to Afghan and Ukrainian newcomers via the Virtual Resettlement Line (VRL).

VRL is staffed by multilingual community navigators who speak Ukrainian, Russian, Dari or Pashto and leverage the partnership and expertise of NRC-RIM to provide callers with the most up-to-date information on health-related concerns. Other topics include:

- Assistance in accessing federal mainstream and refugee benefits
- Support in meeting immediate needs such as food insecurity
- Connecting callers to resources in their community
- Direct referrals and warm handoffs to local resettlement agencies for eligible clients
- Cash assistance for eligible callers
- Answering general questions

[Learn More.](#)

NRC-RIM Releases New Resources that Support Mental Health for Afghans; More to Come

The National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants and Migrants (NRC-RIM) released a [conversation guide](#) that equips service providers and bilingual community leaders to have conversations with Afghan newcomers about coping with stress after moving to a new country. This is the first of several resources to come that offer mental health education while centering Afghan perspectives and cultural traditions.

Culturally appropriate [mental health and social support programming](#) empowers Afghan newcomers to cope with challenges, rebuild their lives, and thrive in their new homes. Learn how Afghan Health Initiative and Alight have been providing social support programs for Afghan newcomers in this [promising practice](#).

Organizations wishing to strengthen their public health response in refugee, immigrant and migrant communities can learn from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), which has worked to embed a [cultural communications infrastructure](#) in their department. Their approach to cultural communications goes beyond translations to intentionally integrate cultural nuance in messaging.

NRC-RIM also worked with partners at the International Rescue Committee to develop materials in support of Ukrainian newcomers. A guide for [conducting community mapping](#) and engaging with newly arrived Ukrainians complements a [guide for providers](#) explaining the health requirements for Ukrainians in order to maintain their humanitarian parole status. Learn more about the requirements for humanitarian parole and access translated and customizable community-facing resources [on the NRC-RIM website](#).

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Health Equity Resources and News

Staying Safe in the Summer: Water and Extreme Heat

Many newly arriving refugees and humanitarian parolees are about to experience their first summer in the United States. Depending on where they have settled, they may find themselves in an unfamiliar weather environment with new summer activities available to them. These new environments may include exposure to extreme and prolonged heat, different UV indexes, and having the opportunity to play in or near water. [Read about it here](#).

How to Get Interpretation and Translation at Your Medical Appointments

English

Dari

Pashto

Russian

Ukrainian

Afghanistan

Virtual Communities Info

How to Sign Up for Virtual Communities (VC)

- Email membership@naccho.org requesting an account
- Once membership has created you an account, email RIM@naccho.org to be added to the group
- You will then be added to the VC page and sent instructions on using the page
- It takes 24-72 hours to enroll in the VC after membership creates an account for you



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to improve the health of communities by strengthening and advocating for local health departments.