

RIM Monthly Newsletter

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

February 2023

COVID-19 CDC Data Updates

US COVID-19 data: Number of Confirmed Cases in the past 7 days: 295,140

US Monkey Pox data: Total confirmed monkeypox/orthopoxviral cases: 30,093

Highlights of the Month

Open Path Resources

Open Path Resources (OPR) is a Minnesota-based nonprofit that serves East African immigrant families and community-led centers by building their capacity to have greater influence upon public policies that affect their current and future interests. This month, NACCHO had the opportunity to sit down with Dr. Mike Van Keulen and Imam Sharif A. Mohamed to talk a little bit about Open Path Resources and the amazing work they've been doing.

"OPR, a 501c3, was founded as an extension of the values expressed by their sister organization, Islamic Civic Society of America, which is a faith-based organization. Both organizations work to advance the community's values and ideas," said Van Keulen. "We use faith as an asset, not as a challenge or an obstacle for public health," Mohamed chimed in. For example, many of the immigrant community members didn't feel comfortable receiving the COVID-19 vaccine in a hospital, so Van Keulen and Mohamed had the brilliant idea of making the vaccine available within the mosque. This helped community members to feel safer and culturally cared for. At OPR, they focus on meeting their community where they are rather than forcing them out of their comfort zones.

What we found most inspiring was the way in which they approach organizing with their community members. OPR emphasizes a two-way line of communication- people need the right information so they can develop informed questions and opinions. They do everything they can to foster discussion rather than perpetuating an environment in which they are being told information and not allowed control over the development of their own wellbeing.

OPR invests in community influencers, trusted people within the community, to help spread information and resources. Rather than putting pressure on those individuals as liaisons, they simply serve as added tools within the community to add a layer of comfortability and connection. As Van Keulen and Mohamed noted, influencers tend to take a stance and see it through, making them even more trusted and consistent in their community.

Mohamed also emphasized the importance of acknowledging the whole of individuals and institutions. “We don’t see the patient as an individual—we see the patient as a whole, as a collective, as a part of the community.” This approach creates an atmosphere of respect and care, two things OPR is clearly make the center of their work.

The work OPR is doing is invaluable in their community. The relationships they’ve created and strengthened, the resources they’ve provided, and their dedication to the RIM community serve as a reminder of what compassion, trust, and passion can do for all people in society.

News and Announcements

NRC-RIM releases COVID-19 information for newcomers

The National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants and Migrants (NRC-RIM) partnered with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to create a booklet highlighting the most important information about COVID-19 for new arrivals to the United States. It covers a number of topics, including:

- The importance of staying up-to-date on vaccines
- Other mitigation measures like masking, social distancing, and air circulation
- Options for COVID-19 testing
- What to do if you get sick
- Staying safe while traveling
- Accessing healthcare in the United States

To accommodate readers who rely on a more oral tradition and readers of all literacy levels, each page of the booklet includes a QR code that directs to an audio recording of the content on that page. Currently available in Dari, English, Spanish, Somali and Pashto, the booklet will soon be available in 19 languages total.

The Migrant Clinicians Network, an NRC-RIM partner, wrote a blog on how migrant and immigrant healthcare access will change after the end of the public health emergency. Over the next several months, NRC-RIM intends to work with partners like the International Rescue Committee (IRC) on client-facing materials that prepare them for this change.

For more information, visit their website, sign up for their newsletter, and follow them on Twitter or Facebook.

NRC-RIM announces focus on new arrival communities

In its third year, the National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants and Migrants (NRC-RIM) is focusing on Afghan and Ukrainian new arrivals with \$13.5M in new funding from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to address the public health needs in these communities.

New features on the NRC-RIM website include:

- An overview of Afghan new arrivals
- Promotional tools for the interactive Settle In platform for Afghans and Ukrainians
- COVID-19 resources for Afghan and Ukrainian new arrivals
- Curated health resources for Afghans on a variety of topics
- Public health initiatives for Afghans
- Opportunities to request technical assistance

NRC-RIM supports new arrivals with key information and translated health resources

NRC-RIM is also continuing its COVID-19 work on a smaller scale in other immigrant communities disproportionately affected by health inequities. In the works is a COVID-19 guide for newcomers. Currently available in English and Spanish, this guide will eventually be published in 19 languages with written and audio components.

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The National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants and Migrants (NRC-RIM) last week published an overview of health benefits and requirements for people who have arrived in the U.S. through the Uniting for Ukraine program, along with links to detailed information in English, Ukrainian and Russian.

NRC-RIM's curated health resources for Afghan new arrivals also continue to be popular. This collection of fact sheets, posters, videos, audio recordings and other resources supports the public health needs of Afghan new arrivals and the providers who serve them free of charge. These materials cover a variety of topics, from lead poisoning, pregnancy, MMR, polio and COVID-19.

One particularly noteworthy resource was published last week by NRC-RIM partners at Switchboard: a guide to faith-based healing among Afghan muslims. This guide supports refugee service providers' knowledge on how faith can help clients cope with trauma and promote healing.

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From the Field: Research, Policy, and Project Updates

Why Advancing Health Literacy Equals Better Public Health

Check out Suzanne Manneh's latest blog post entitled "[Why Advancing Health Literacy Equals Better Public Health](#)," featured on The Health Literacy Solutions Center website!

Health Equity Resources and News

WHO Releases One-Stop Resource Toolkit on Refugee and Migrant Health

WHO has developed a [Refugee and migrant health toolkit](#), a web-based one-stop comprehensive platform of tools and resources, to support the global, regional, and country efforts in implementing health and migration-related activities.

Migration and displacement often impact people's physical and mental health and well-being, especially for those who were forced to flee their homes. It can leave particular impact on people displaced across borders or within their own country and those in an irregular situation or with vulnerabilities and specific health and protection needs.

Refugee and migrants could face many factors such as their migratory status; national migration policies; and linguistic, cultural, economic, and social barriers that often hinder their access to health services.

It is essential that countries have strong and inclusive health systems equipped with the necessary knowledge and tools to help decision-makers and health personnel meet the health needs and rights of these populations and advance the health and migration agenda.

"We developed the toolkit to assist countries in designing, developing, and implementing health and migration policies, strategies and services based on evidence and technical soundness," said Dr Santino Severoni, Director of the WHO Health and Migration Programme. "We hope that Member States will use this single-source, operational and user-friendly toolkit in the implementation of health and migration-related activities, including the Global Action Plan (GAP) "Promoting the health of refugees and migrants, 2019-2023", and regional action plans with similar goals."

A one-stop source of information, guidance and tools

The toolkit contains modules for each of the six priorities of the Global Action Plan 2019-2023, along with 18 tools:

1. Module 1: short- and long-term public health interventions to promote refugee and migrant health. This module's tools highlight common communicable and noncommunicable diseases, including mental health, public health emergencies, and immunization.
2. Module 2: mainstreaming refugee and migrant health in the global, regional, and country agenda and access to inclusive people-centered health services. Tools in this module discuss how to mainstream refugees and migrants into plans and initiatives; access to primary health care and infrastructure; maternal and child health; and sexual and reproductive health, along with gender-based violence.
3. Module 3: tackling the social determinants of health and workers' and occupational health and safety. Tools in this module highlight urban health, climate change, water and sanitation, occupational and workers' health and safety, and how these sectors can help close the health equity gap amongst migrants and the overall population.
4. Module 4: country assessment, health monitoring, and health information systems. Tools in this module aim to strengthen the data collection methodology, analytics, health information systems, monitoring, and evaluation of migrant health.
5. Module 5: communication, countering misperception, and increasing community engagement. Tools in this module tackle communication and countering misinformation and the engagement of refugees and migrants in decision-making processes and campaigns at national and local levels for the successful implementation of public health programs.
6. Module 6: collaboration and partnership. This module provides guidance on mechanisms and strategies to enhance cooperation and partnerships across countries, regions, UN system agencies, and other stakeholders to work toward global health and humanitarian collaboration.

Each module includes a summary of key topics, a list of actions for consideration for stakeholders, links to the latest available guidance, case studies and reports, training materials, and other WHO publications on relevant themes. An introductory section provides essential knowledge concerning refugees' and migrants' health, addressing definitions, global trends, legal frameworks, and resolutions.

The tools are not prescriptive. They can be adapted to each specific context, region, and community to inform context-specific analysis and approaches to refugee and migrant health.

The go-to platform for policymakers, planners, and implementers

WHO Member States, WHO country offices, United Nations partners, and nongovernmental actors working in refugee and migrant health can use the Refugee and migrant health toolkit to implement health programs that are truly equitable and inclusive and to evaluate and bolster national health plans and strategies that promote the health of refugees and migrants and host populations.

LINKS: [One-stop resource toolkit launched on refugee and migrant health \(who.int\)](#)

[Refugee and Migrant Health Toolkit \(who.int\)](#)

Virtual Communities Info

Join our Virtual Communities!

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.