

RIM Monthly Newsletter

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

July 2023

Highlights of the Month

Site Spotlight: Cass County Health Department

This week, NACCHO had the opportunity to sit down with Delany Sieving, Director of Health Education and Outreach, and Bryanna Cloninger, Assistant Director of the Health Education and Outreach, from Cass County Health Department.

One of Cass County's most notable programs is the Welcoming Center. The Welcoming Center is "a one-stop center that provides linguistically and culturally sensitive case management services. [They] help immigrants and refugees secure basic services needed to become socially and economically self-sufficient." Sieving explained, "their sole purpose is to kind of help the population that is either new to the country or the area with all of the things, especially language resources, because a lot of our businesses and community organizations do not have Spanish, French, or Burmese speakers."

Both Sieving and Cloninger had a very active role in the department's COVID response. Sieving oversaw resource coordination, including their community health workers, and worked to address barriers that their RIM populations face. Every community health worker was chosen because of their pre-established role as a trusted messenger in their community.

Cloninger shared that the first contact tracer they hired "came to [them] with firsthand experience on how COVID had impacted her family." She explained that her mother was one of their first COVID cases and almost lost her life to it. Sieving and Cloninger emphasized their role in educating their community to make decisions with their health being at the forefront of their decision process.

Another success they had was their pop-up clinics. These clinics occurred on several different days at several different times to ensure they were reaching a wide audience and adhering to the needs of their community. They brought these clinics to places like churches, grocery stores, and coffee shops.

Throughout the pandemic, Cloninger ensured she was making beneficial relationships with other clinics, CBO's and neighboring organizations in the community.

They encourage other organizations to continue sharing information and best approaches to fighting misinformation, as learning from each other is undoubtedly helpful in making sure we serve our RIM communities in the best way possible.

To learn more about Cass County's work, check out their website [here](#).

News and Announcements

Survey to Improve Newcomer Health Guidance and Provider Trainings for U.S. health care providers and public health professionals

The Minnesota Center of Excellence in Newcomer Health is seeking input from health care providers and public health professionals who care for and support refugee and other newcomer populations nationwide. To ensure quality and equitable care across the country, we need to know the kind of support and education that would be helpful to your practices. It should only take around 10-15 minutes.

Please complete the brief survey by September 15, 2023:

[Survey for Health Care Providers and Public Health Professionals in the U.S. to Improve Newcomer Health Guidance and Provider Trainings](#)

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions regarding this survey: refugeehealth@state.mn.us.

NRC-RIM launches Summer Safety and Lead Poisoning Collections, presents at NARHC this week

The National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants and Migrants (NRC-RIM) published a collection of materials for its Afghan Health portfolio on lead poisoning prevention, testing and treatment.

The [Lead Poisoning Collection](#) includes practical resources to support organizations and individuals working to prevent and address lead exposure and poisoning among Afghan newcomers, including translated and customizable print materials, social media assets, text messages, and audio and video PSAs. They are based on guidance from the CDC and state health departments, and they include Afghan cultural references for a tailored approach. These resources are in addition to the previously published [conversation guide](#).

As a heat wave covers much of the U.S., more people are turning to NRC-RIM's [Summer Safety Collection](#). This collection of materials for Afghan newcomers includes tips for staying safe in hot temperatures as well as around bodies of water like pools and beaches. Organizations can share customizable and translated flyers, social media assets, and text messages with Afghan newcomers in your community. Translated flyers are also available in several languages that are common in other refugee and immigrant communities.

Both collections were created in partnership with the International Rescue Committee.

This week, NRC-RIM will have a booth and lead several presentations at the North American Refugee Health Conference (NARHC) in Calgary, AB, Canada. Presentation topics include health communications, community engagement for Ukrainian and Afghan communities, qualitative interviewing techniques and more. Booth materials, abstracts, slides, and other resources are available at nrcrim.org/NARHC.

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

Share Heat and Water Safety Tips with Afghan Newcomers

For many, summer means long hours spent outdoors, including swimming and playing in pools and other bodies of water. Many parts of the U.S. are much hotter than Afghanistan, and recurrent heat waves have brought additional safety concerns.

NRC-RIM's [summer safety collection](#) includes tips for staying safe in hot temperatures as well as around bodies of water like pools and beaches. Share customizable and translated flyers, social media assets, and text messages with Afghan newcomers in your community.

Translated flyers are also available in several languages that are common in other refugee and immigrant communities.

NRC-RIM: Tailored Prenatal Program for Pregnant People from Afghanistan

Many newly resettled Afghans in the United States came through [Operation Allies Welcome \(OAW\) Response](#), a coordinated interagency effort to resettle over 75,000 Afghans displaced by the Taliban takeover of Kabul in August 2021. In the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, resettlement agencies around the country had to work rapidly with federal partners, health systems, public health practitioners, social service and community-based organizations to support newly arrived Afghans. Newly arrived Afghans are simultaneously adapting to a new life, contributing their skills to their new communities, securing public benefits, seeking opportunities for the adults and children in their families, experiencing ongoing challenges related to the trauma of sudden displacement, and navigating health care as English language learners in new systems. One important health consideration for Afghan newcomers is accessing culturally appropriate prenatal care. [Read more about it here.](#)

Virtual Communities Info

Virtual Communities (VC) were created out of NACCHO's desire to foster a community-based platform that helps members better engage with their peers by networking, participating in discussions, and sharing resources. One of the primary goals of this project is to strengthen partnerships with local RIM communities and empower sites to establish deeper networks among themselves. This virtual community is intended to serve as a platform and repository for cross-communication between program sites to ask questions, share information, resources, toolkits, promising practices, and access program materials such as project templates, webinar recordings, newsletters, etc. We encourage multifaceted collaboration and communication between sites; this community is open to program sites and any partners involved in their respective projects, including non-local health departments and external consultants via invite.

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.