**Refugee Health Care Mini-Elective**

**Spring 2015**

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Course Dates:</strong></th>
<th>January 5, 12, February 9, 16 Mondays, 5:00-7:00 PM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum Students:</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
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<td><strong>Class Year:</strong></td>
<td>MS1 and MS2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Course Director:** | Thuy Bui, MD  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
Medical Director, Program for Health Care to Underserved Populations |
| **Contact Information:** | Thuy Bui, MD  
buit@upmc.edu  
Mercy Baffour, MS2  
baffour.mercy@medstudent.pitt.edu  
Breonna Slocum, MS2  
slocum.breonna@medstudent.pitt.edu |
| **Registration:** | Betsy Nero, Office of Medical Education  
betsy@medschool.pitt.edu |

**Description:**
Pittsburgh is home to 51,175 foreign-born residents, of whom more than 4,500 refugees resettled in the past decade. The growing refugee population in Pittsburgh includes members from Bhutan, Burma, Somalia, Iraq, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. As these refugees reside permanently in the U.S., they face unique health challenges stemming from the psychological impact of conflict and displacement, sanitation and hygiene issues in temporary settlement camps, language and cultural barriers, and challenges navigating the U.S healthcare system.

This course will introduce medical students to the concept of “refugee,” their basic health requirements, and the coordination of their care. Progressing chronologically through the resettlement process, we will examine the causes of conflict and population displacement, healthcare challenges confronted by refugees during daily living in temporary settlement camps, and language and health care access barriers during the resettlement period. Finally, we will end with a panel of community leaders within the various refugee communities in Pittsburgh who will offer background on their cultures and the health needs most pertinent to their communities.

**Course Objectives:**
1. Define “refugee” and differentiate it from other terms for displaced populations.
2. Describe the health and nutrition needs of refugees in temporary settlement camps and during the resettlement period.
3. Identify the agencies that are involved in resettling refugees.
4. Describe the common physical and psychological issues affecting refugees such as PTSD and abuse, and how these are affected by resettlement.
5. Describe the health and cultural profiles of key refugee groups in Pittsburgh, focusing on current health needs and priority health conditions.
6. Communicate effectively with patients from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including the use of interpreters.
7. Recognize health care access and challenges refugees face navigating the U.S. health care system and be able to access community resources to help refugees overcome barriers to care.

Requirements:
Attend all 4 sessions. Read brief assignments for each lecture which will be provided to the students in advance.

Course Outline
Refugee Health Care

Course Directors:
Thuy Bui, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine
Medical Director, Program for Health Care to Underserved Populations
buit@upmc.edu

Mercy Baffour, MS2
baffour.mercy@medstudent.pitt.edu

Breonna Slocum, MS2
slocum.breonna@medstudent.pitt.edu

Location: Scaife Hall Rooms 502 & 503

Session 1: January 5th, 2015
Causes of Conflict and Population Displacement - Who is a Refugee?
Clarify the definitions of refugee, immigrant, asylum seekers, and internally displaced populations. Explore political, economic, and social environments that lead to displacement of people, and how this impacts their health, focusing on the major refugee populations here in Pittsburgh.
Suggested reading:
UNHCR. Refugee or migrant. Refugees 2007; 148:4-11

Session 2: January 12th, 2015
Health Issues of Populations in War-Torn Areas, Refugee Camps, and Other Temporary Settlements
Explore public health concerns in war-torn areas, refugee camps and other temporary settlements. If possible, focus specifically on water, sanitation, hygiene issues, and concerns of infection.
Suggested reading:
Session 3: February 9th, 2015
Resettlement Process and Refugee Health Principles
Provide brief outline of the resettlement process, focusing on barriers to health care access and utilization, language and cultural barriers, and chronic health issues in context of adjustments to American lifestyle and its impact on health. Give overview of refugee health concerns once resettled, discussing the difficulty often encountered with the concept of preventative care and navigation of the US health care system. If possible, further explore the prevalence of depression and PTSD among refugees, and the importance of mental health care.
Suggested reading: “Immigrants and Refugees in Pittsburgh- Needs Assessment” and “Health Barriers of Refugees Post-Resettlement”
CDC. Guidelines for the U.S. domestic medical examination for newly arriving refugees.

Session 4: February 16th, 2015
Health Perspectives: Voices of Pittsburgh’s Refugee Communities
Panel of members from refugee communities in Pittsburgh. Students will have the opportunity to hear refugee members speak on their group origins, culture, beliefs, and health needs most pertinent to their communities.
Possible panel members:
Somali Bantu mother of six who is really active in her community
Bhutanese Community Association (BCAP), www.bhutanesecap.org
Congolese Union of Pittsburgh, bijoulendo@gmail.com

Suggested reading: CDC: “The Somali Bantu: Their History and Culture” and Bhutanese Refugee Health Profile (http://www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/profiles/index.html)