



University
of
Pittsburgh

School
of
Medicine

Office
of
Medical
Education

www.omed.pitt.edu

412.648.8714

Refugee Health Mini-Elective SPRING 2019

Course Dates: February 6*, 13*, TBD (evening/Saturday AM), +
1 individual session
*Wednesdays, 5:00-7:00 PM

Maximum Students: 10

Class Year: MS1 and MS2

Course Director: Thuy Bui, MD
Associate Professor of Medicine
Global Health Track Residency Director,
Division of General Internal Medicine

Contact Information: Thuy Bui, MD buit@upmc.edu
Anna Leone aml227@pitt.edu
Katie Martin kcm35@pitt.edu
Carolyn Windler cmw185@pitt.edu

Registration: Betsy Nero, Office of Medical Education
betsy@medschool.pitt.edu

Description:

Pittsburgh is home to over 26,000 foreign-born residents and 4,500 refugees who have resettled in the last decade. The refugee population in Pittsburgh includes members from Bhutan, Burma, Somalia, Iraq, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Syria. As these refugees reside permanently in the U.S., they face unique health challenges such as psychological trauma from conflict and displacement, language and cultural barriers, and understanding of the U.S. healthcare system. Through hands-on experiences and community field trips, this course introduces medical students to the basic health requirements of refugees living in Pittsburgh and brings awareness to some of their access barriers and available resources.

Course Objectives:

1. Describe the health and cultural profiles of key refugee groups in Pittsburgh, focusing on current health needs and priority health conditions
2. Recognize health care access and challenges refugees face navigating the US health care system and access community resources to help refugees overcome barriers to care
3. Identify various health and social services agencies that are involved in resettling refugees
4. Describe the common physical and psychological issues affecting refugees such as PTSD and how these are affected by resettlement
5. Communicate effectively with patients from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including the use of interpreters
6. Develop interpersonal skills and a deeper understanding of refugees by having in-person experiences with members of the refugee population

Requirements:

Attend all 4 sessions and read the brief assignment for each session

COURSE OUTLINE

REFUGEE HEALTH MINI-ELECTIVE

LOCATION:

Session 1 & 2- Scaife Hall 510-511, 5:00-7:00 PM

Session 3-TBD

Session 4- SHHC

Session 1: Overview of Refugee Health and Refugee Services in Pittsburgh (2/6)

Students will have the opportunity to first hear from Dr. Bui, an expert on refugee health in Pittsburgh, about an overview and unique challenges of the refugee population in Pittsburgh. After a brief presentation, the session will be discussion-based and student-centered. Other topics discussed will include the blue interpreter phone, cultural sensitivity and adjustments based on ethnicity (ex. in the Arab culture, physical contact in the form of a handshake is considered disrespectful), and providing refugee patients with appropriate resources for mental, emotional, and community needs.

Reading: Crosby SS. Primary Care Management of non-English-speaking refugees who have experienced trauma. A clinical review. JAMA 2013; 310(5):519-528

Session 2: Movie Screening and Discussion (2/13)

Documentary Discussion Students will watch a short documentary and have a discussion afterwards. There will be a cultural potluck in order to spread cultural awareness amongst the students.

Documentary: This Is Home

Session 3: Refugee Support Group (TBD – could be a Saturday morning)

Students will visit a community support group one evening or Saturday morning to talk with refugees about their experiences in Pittsburgh. The students may be required to prepare a short (10-15 minute) presentation on a health topic that the refugees would like to learn more about. The list of potential topics will be given to students at the beginning of the mini-elective to allow time for them to prepare prior to attending the support group.

Reading: Appropriate research regarding health topic chosen

Session 4: Navigating Healthcare for Refugee Population (Individual session: TBD)

Students will have an opportunity to go to the Squirrel Hill Health Center (SHHC) to talk to healthcare providers for the refugee population and learn about common themes in working with refugee patients. Space and time permitting, students will also be able to shadow one of the healthcare providers at SHHC to gain a further insight on the unique challenges and health issues that refugees face in navigating the healthcare system in the United States.

Reading: <http://squirrelhillhealthcenter.org/>