



Professional Enrichment Course

University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

Office of Medical Education

PEC Registrar – Denise Downs d downs@pitt.edu 412-648-8749

Course Name: Refugee Health

Enrollment Period:	Fall 2021
Course Dates:	September 7th, 14th, 21st (Tuesdays 5:30-7:30 pm) October – 1 individually scheduled shadowing session November – 1 individually scheduled small group workshop session
Student Max:	12
Class Year:	MS1 and MS2
Course Director:	Thuy Bui, MD (lvalloem2@upmc.edu)
Student Administrator:	Cameron Metz (Metz.Cameron@pitt.edu)
Location:	TBA
Registration:	Via Amp Up – Registration open date will be announced via email
Course Description:	<p>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.</p>
Objectives:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Describe the health and cultural profiles of key refugee groups in Pittsburgh, focusing on current health needs and priority health conditions2. Recognize health care access and challenges refugees face navigating the US health care system and access community resources to help refugees overcome barriers to care3. Identify various health and social services agencies that are involved in resettling refugees4. Describe the common physical and psychological issues affecting refugees such as PTSD and how these are affected by resettlement

	<p>5. Communicate effectively with patients from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including the use of interpreters</p> <p>6. Develop interpersonal skills and a deeper understanding of refugees by having in-person experiences with members of the refugee population</p>
Pre-Requisites:	None
Requirements:	Attend all sessions and read the brief assignment for each session
Texts:	See Syllabus Below

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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:

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Cameron Metz, student coordinator, cameron.metz@pitt.edu

Registration: Denise Downs, Office of Medical Education ddowns@medschool.pitt.edu - Registration Via Amp Up

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COURSE OUTLINE: Refugee Health Mini-Elective

LOCATION:

Session 1, 2 & 3 – 4th floor lecture hall, Scaife

Session 4 - South Hills Interfaith Movement (SHIM),

Session 5 - Squirrel Hill Health Center

Session 1: Overview of Refugee Health Services in Pittsburgh/ Healthcare for Asylum Seekers (9/7)

Students will be given a brief overview of refugee health in Pittsburgh and the many unique factors to consider in caring for these patients. We will have a discussion of healthcare for asylum seekers, healthcare exams for asylees, and asylum clinic initiatives at the University of Pittsburgh. Next, students will watch a short documentary and have a discussion afterwards.

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: Challenges in Caring for Immigrants and Refugees (9/14)

Students will have the opportunity to hear from Dr. Andrea Fox, medical director of the Squirrel Hill Health Center and an expert on refugee health in Pittsburgh, about the unique challenges of the refugee population in Pittsburgh. 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: I-Hao Cheng, Ann Drillich and Peter Schattner. Refugee experiences of general practice in countries of resettlement: a literature review. *British Journal of General Practice* 2015; 65 (632): e171-e176. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp15X683977>

Session 3: Refugee Transition Period: Beyond Healthcare (9/21)

ISAC (Immigrant Services and Connections) is an immigrant support organization that has an array of services from legal to housing to employment etc. They strive to 1) help immigrants and refugees living in Allegheny County with barriers of language and/or culture overcome the challenges of connecting to existing services, programs, resources, and communities, 2) educate Allegheny County service providers about immigrant and refugee populations in our region, their needs and rights regarding culturally and linguistically appropriate services, and 3) support and strengthen the region's ethnic communities. A guest speaker from ISAC will be detailing what refugee families experience during the transition period, talking about the challenges in overcoming different social determinants of health beyond health care access.

Reading: Nicole Dubus (2018) Integration or Building Resilience: What Should the Goal Be in Refugee Resettlement?, *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 16:4, 413-429, DOI: 10.1080/15562948.2017.1358409

Session 4: SHIM After-School program (individual scheduling TBD, month of October – could be a Saturday morning)

Students will have the opportunity to interact with and teach children of refugee families during an afterschool program. Students will combine their health and refugee knowledge, collaborating in teams of 3 to 4 to present a health related workshop to the children. An activity guide with different workshop ideas to select from will be available.

Assignment: Appropriate health-related children's activity. See guide for ideas.

Optional Reading: Cohen, E., Gadassi, R. The Function of Play for Coping and Therapy with Children Exposed to Disasters and Political Violence. *Curr Psychiatry Rep* 20, 31 (2018).

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11920-018-0895-x>

Session 5: Navigating Healthcare for Refugee Population (Individual scheduling TBD, month of November)

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:

- 1) <http://squirrelhillhealthcenter.org/>
- 2) <https://ethnomed.org/>