

Guidelines on Adapting the Pathways to Wellness Toolkit for Primary Care

Disclaimer:

Counties and states differ on how they implement refugee health screening.

Therefore, this toolkit may not be appropriate or accurate for your locale.

Please see our Guidelines for replicating this toolkit in your community.

The Toolkit for Primary Care is being used at Public Health Seattle & King County, in Washington State. Content contributors and staff evaluators are testing the effectiveness of the intervention. Once the toolkit is evaluated, materials for implementation and technical assistance will be made public.

Guidelines

These guidelines can help you to develop a similar toolkit in your community.

1. Identify who the refugee health screening entity is in your community.

Note: *In King County, health screening occurs at Public Health Seattle & King County.*

2. Convene stakeholders in your community to develop the toolkit. Suggestions of who to include are: primary care doctors, the refugee health-screening entity, and resettlement agencies. Have them review the toolkit and offer content changes specific to your community. This committee will also be critical in overseeing the implementation and distribution of the Toolkit.

a. Modify specific toolkit elements, including: the Community Resource List and the Language ID card. The Checklist recommendations will also likely be revised depending on how health screening is conducted in your community.

Note: *In King County, the Pathways team convened a group of expert doctors, nurses, social workers and resettlement staff serving refugee populations.*

3. Decide how the Toolkit will be distributed in your community. For example, it could be distributed as part of health orientation at the resettlement agency, at the department for public health, or through community outreach.

Note: *In King County, refugees are given a folder that contains the Toolkit, and all supporting health screening material from their public health screening and overseas exam. They are encouraged to bring this folder with them when they visit their primary care doctor.*

4. Please consider reporting specific recommendations to our Pathways team so we can continue to revise and reform this toolkit. Any suggestions will enable us to adopt instructions for implementing the toolkit across different settings. The Pathways team can be reached at 206-816-3252.

Note: *Pathways has also developed a Provider survey to assess the effectiveness of the toolkit in King County.*



More about *Pathways to Wellness*

***Pathways to Wellness* supports the emotional well-being of refugees by enhancing adjustment, increasing capacity for self-sufficiency, and coordinating care through the primary health care system. *Pathways* is a pioneering effort linking mental and primary healthcare systems, and creating opportunities for better coordination and collaboration, resource sharing, and the emergence of more holistic best practices.**

TOOLKIT DEVELOPMENT

The Centers for Disease Controls (CDC) states that, “because of the very difficult living conditions refugees are exposed to, they are especially vulnerable to illness and poor health.” Current efforts in global health acknowledge that resource-poor countries endure marked disparities in infectious and chronic diseases like HIV, TB, and malnutrition. Community healthcare providers and mental health practitioners working with refugees often feel overwhelmed by the complex needs of a refugee patient. Some health providers are unfamiliar with refugee resettlement, overseas health screening and domestic health screening.

In King County, the Pathways team noted a lack of coordination between/among both the systems that serve refugees during their initial resettlement, making refugees vulnerable to:

- Increased adverse experiences when entering primary care environments
- Lack of culturally/linguistically appropriate care at the primary care clinics
- Community clinics having limited access to materials, information and resources on treating the refugee patient
- Costly duplications in health services due to lack of communication between providers

This toolkit was developed to address these disparities and to improve health care for refugees. Health screening for refugees entering their new communities differs across the United States. The Toolkit for Primary Care was created in King County and reflects conditions solely in this community site.



THE “PATHWAYS TO WELLNESS PROGRAM” DEVELOPED THIS TOOLKIT IN CONJUNCTION WITH MEDICAL STAFF FROM HARBORVIEW MEDICAL CENTER.