

# Refugee Health Assessment in General Practice – check list

### New Arrival Refugee Health Assessment

It is recommended that all people (adults and children) from refugee background, have a comprehensive post-arrival health assessment; ideally within 28 days, but otherwise as soon as possible after arrival.

### Health Undertakings:

- Identified by IOM during visa medical screening.
- Required for a variety of conditions including TB, Hepatitis B, HIV.
- Home Affairs arrange follow up soon after arrival.

### Pre- arrival screening:

- Everyone has a medical assessment to obtain a visa.
- Some people have pre-departure screening (within 72 hours of departure).
- Pre-departure screening may include immunisation, malaria testing, predeparture albendazole.

### Documentation:

- The patient may have medical records including pre-arrival screening reports issued by the Depart of Immigration.

### Interpreters:

- All doctors providing Medicare services can access free interpreters through the free Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National).
- Medical practitioners can register on the TIS National website. <https://www.tisnational.gov.au/>
- Free phone interpreting is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and on-site (face-to-face) interpreting is available during business hours.
- Some Allied health practitioners can also access TIS.

**FOR IMMEDIATE TELEPHONE INTERPRETERS: DOCTORS' PRIORITY LINE  
1300 655 070**

### Medicare eligibility for health assessment item numbers:

The health assessment, Item numbers **701,703,705,707** are available to people who have been in Australia for less than 12 months, with the following visas:

- **Subclass 200** (Refugee); **Subclass 201** (In-country special humanitarian); **Subclass 202** (Global Special Humanitarian); **Subclass 203** (Emergency Rescue); **Subclass 204** (Women at Risk).
- **Subclass 070** (Refugee Pending Bridging); **Subclass 695** (Return Pending)
- **Subclass 786** (Temporary Humanitarian Concern)
- **Subclass 866** (Protection)

A humanitarian entrant should be able to provide confirmation of their visa status and date of arrival or residence (date of visa granted) by one of the following documents:

- a travel card known as a Document for Travel to Australia (DFTTA).
- a travel document including a Passport, a Titre de Voyage or a Certificate of Identity.
- a Visa Evidence Card identified by the numbers PLO56 or M56
- a Permanent Resident Evidence Immi Card



Government  
of South Australia

**Health**

Central Adelaide  
Local Health Network

## OFFICIAL

Medical practitioners may telephone the Department of Human Services (Medicare) on 132 011, with the patient present, to check eligibility.

### **The Australasian Society of Infectious Disease (ASID) and RHEANA**

[‘Recommendations for a Comprehensive Post-Arrival Health Assessment for People from Refugee-like Backgrounds’](#) should be followed for health screening and management.

### **Components of the health assessment for people from refugee background:**

- Patient consent should be obtained and documented.
- [Refugee Health Assessment Template](#)
- The health assessment includes investigation for infectious diseases, chronic conditions, and nutritional / vitamin deficiencies.
- Medical history, including physical, psychological, and social functioning.
- Full examination including height, weight, BMI, skin, dental, evidence of torture or other injuries.
- Assessment of vision and hearing.
- Investigations vary with country of origin, age, gender, and current health issues.
- Preventive health screening and education as per RACGP guidelines (this may be done at a separate appointment).
- Management plan.

### **Recommended screening investigations for everyone:**

- FBC, E/LFT
- Iron studies, B12, Vitamin D
- Schistosomiasis & Strongyloidiasis Serology
- Hep BsAg, Hep BsAby, Hep BcAby, Hep C Aby

### **Age, country, or symptom specific screening:**

- Malaria: dependent on country of origin (there is Malaria in some areas of Afghanistan)
- HIV if > 15yo,
- Unaccompanied minors: HIV, syphilis serology
- Varicella serology if >14yo
- Faecal Examination for parasites: all children; only in adults with no pre-departure albendazole; investigation of eosinophilia
- Faecal H pylori Ag: if symptomatic or a family history of gastric cancer.
- STI Screen if at risk (<http://www.sti.guidelines.org.au/> )
  - Syphilis and HIV serology
  - Urine PCR – chlamydia/gonorrhoea

### **GP Management Plan:**

- A refugee health assessment should include a comprehensive management plan covering physical, psychological and social issues.
- Include immunisation catch up and TB screening referral.
- Should be developed in collaboration with the patient.
- A copy of the plan should be offered to the patient

## Immunisation

- All adults and children require an immunisation assessment and catch-up plan.
- COVID booster vaccination should be arranged as soon as possible.
- Some people have had COVID vaccines that are not recognised in Australia, so will need a primary course.
- Patients with a Health Care Card can be referred to the [New Arrival Refugee Immunisation \(NARI\) clinic](#) at Playford community clinics.
- If a patient has immunisation records, catch-up according to Australian Standards Vaccination Schedule
- If a patient does not have immunisation records, assume unimmunised and recommend full catch-up immunisation
- [Catch-up immunisations | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#)
- [Catch-up Calculator | The Australian Immunisation Handbook \(health.gov.au\)](#)

## Mental Health:

- Survivors of Torture and Trauma Rehabilitation Services (STTARS) **8206 8900**
- PHN Central Referral Unit
- For acute presentations contact Mental Health Triage **131465**

## Tuberculosis:

- Refer all clients for to [SA TB Services](#) for TB screening.
- Phone: 7117 2967 Fax: E: [health.rahthoracicmedicine@sa.gov.au](mailto:health.rahthoracicmedicine@sa.gov.au)

## Children:

- Refer all children under 5 to CYH for developmental screening - **1300 733 606**
- [CAMHS](#) provide mental health counselling and support for children and adolescents.
- See the [Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne webpage](#) for useful links

## Dental:

- [South Australian Dental Services](#) Community Dental Services
- [Lift the Lip](#) is a SADS early intervention program for 0-5 years.

## Women's Health:

- Most women will not have had any preventive health screening.
- Consider self-inserted CST and referral for mammogram as indicated.
- Contraception should be discussed as appropriate.
- If there are concerns about FGM/C then contact [Refugee Health Service](#).

## For clinical advice and information regarding patient management

Refugee Health Service  
21 Market Street Adelaide  
T: 82373900  
E: [health.adminmhs@sa.gov.au](mailto:health.adminmhs@sa.gov.au)  
[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au)

OFFICIAL