

# Comprehensive Health Assessments for people from refugee and asylum seeking background

### Who needs to have a health assessment?

All people from refugee and asylum seeking background should have a comprehensive health assessment.

Most humanitarian entrants have had pre-departure health screening. This may include Hep B, HIV and syphilis serology; immunisations (MMR, Polio, and Yellow Fever) and a pre-departure dose of Albendazole.

Health undertakings are identified by IOM in pre-departure screening and may be required for a variety of conditions including Tuberculosis, Hepatitis B and HIV. Follow up of health undertakings will be arranged by Immigration.

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** to the health assessment should be obtained.
- Use an **interpreter** – right gender, right language.
- Full history and examination including physical, psychological and social functioning.
- Psychological history should take into account the possibility of torture, trauma and gender based violence, although disclosure of these experiences may not occur initially.
- Full clinical examination including height, weight, hearing, vision, temperature, dental, skin and evidence of torture or other injuries.
- Preventative health screening should be offered as per RACGP guidelines.
- Investigations depend on country of origin, age, gender and any previous pathology tests, and include testing for infectious diseases, vitamin deficiencies and chronic disease

### Recommended screening investigations

- FBC , E/LFT
- Iron studies, B12 , Vitamin D
- Malaria thick and thin films and malaria Ag; dependent on country of origin (refer ASID guidelines).
- Hepatitis B sAg, Hepatitis B sAby, Hepatitis B cAby, Hepatitis C Aby
- Strongyloides serology
- Schistosomiasis serology (refer ASID guidelines)



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- HIV if > 15yo, or unaccompanied minors
- Faecal Examination for parasites – in children, 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 serology
  - Urine PCR – chlamydia/gonorrhoea

### GP Management Plan

- Develop in collaboration with the client (provide a copy to the client).
- Management of physical psychological and social issues.

### Immunisation

- A catch up plan is required for all adults and children
- Patients with a Health Care Card can be referred to a [SA Health New Arrival Refugee Immunisation \(NARI\) clinic](#).
- Use the online [Immunisation Catch Up calculator](#) tool to help determine an accurate vaccine schedule.
- MMR should be administered as soon as possible after arrival in Australia (if it was not provided pre-departure).
- If a patient does not have immunisation records, assume unimmunised and recommend full catch-up immunisation

### Tuberculosis

- People from refugee background generally come from countries with a high burden of TB.
- Refer all clients to [SA TB services](#) for TB screening. Phone 71172967
- People from refugee background are at increased risk of TB.
- [CDC TB Health Alert](#)

### Malaria

- Anyone who arrived less than 12 months prior from a malaria endemic country that presents has malaria until proven otherwise.
- If malaria is suspected seek specialist [Infectious Disease](#) consultant advice.

### 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

### Dental

- [South Australian Dental Services](#) Community Dental Services

### Mental Health

- Contact [Survivors of Torture and Trauma Rehabilitation Services](#) (STTARS) **8206 8900**
- For acute presentations contact regional mental health services

### Women's Health

- Provide screening and education re contraception if indicated.
- Be mindful of [FGM/C](#) and possible history of gender based violence.

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### Medicare item numbers for a refugee health assessment

Item numbers: **701,703,705,707**

Available to people who have been in the country for less than 12 months on specific visas including 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 695, 786, 866, 070

Documents which show proof of visa status and date of arrival or residence include

- Document for Travel to Australia (DFTTA);
- Passport, a Titre de Voyage or a Certificate of Identity;
- Visa Evidence Card identified by the numbers PLO56 or M56 or
- Permanent Resident Evidence ImmiCard

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

### For further clinical advice and information regarding patient management

Contact the RHS Senior Medical Officer or Nurse Consultant

T: 7133 9996

E: [health.adminmhs@sa.gov.au](mailto:health.adminmhs@sa.gov.au)

[health.calhnicrhnurses@sa.gov.au](mailto:health.calhnicrhnurses@sa.gov.au)

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