



GP Introductory Information Package

Refugee Health



Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to access these resources to optimise your service provision for people who have settled in North Queensland under the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP).

The purpose of this resource is to help reduce the barriers, sometimes perceived barriers, in welcoming new arrivals to your general practice.

This Information Package is a collation of approved existing online materials in the form of website links to information, forms, professional networks and contacts, relevant organisations, training videos, and clinical information. As an introduction to working with new arrivals, it aims to provide the most relevant, and where possible, most current information available.



NQPHN acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Nation Peoples and the Traditional Custodians of this land. We respect their continued connection to land and sea, country, kin, and community. We also pay our respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging as the custodians of knowledge and lore.




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QUALITY





Contents

General background	4
.....	
Resources	5
.....	
Free interpreting services	5
.....	
Setting up a culturally safe practice	5
.....	
Clinical support	6
.....	
MBS items and schedule of fees update	7
.....	
Training for GPs	8
.....	
Online	8
.....	
GP clinical phone support	8
.....	
The RACGP 2022 curriculum	8
.....	
Postgraduate certificate	8
.....	
Appendices	9
.....	
Appendix A: Relevant contacts	10
.....	
Appendix B: Website links	12
.....	
Appendix C: Online documents	14
.....	
Appendix D: Acronyms and abbreviations	16
.....	

 External resources and information within this document are hyperlinked for your convenience. Written URL links have been provided for printed/hard copies and can be found under Appendix B: Website links.



General background

New arrivals under the [Humanitarian Settlement Program \(HSP\)](#) are also referred to as people from a refugee background, with these terms often used interchangeably. [Multicultural Australia \(MA\)](#) subcontracts settlement programs to experienced providers in Cairns and Townsville.

New arrivals can access settlement services and support through [Centacare Far North Queensland \(FNQ\)](#) in Cairns and [Unify Intercultural Australia](#), formerly known as Townsville Multicultural Support Group (TMSG), in Townsville. Questions specific to a patient, who has arrived to Australia within the last twelve months, can be directed to the relevant settlement agency or [Queensland Health's Refugee health services](#). Queensland Health's Refugee Nurses can also be contacted directly. These details are listed in Appendix A: Relevant contacts.

[The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners \(RACGP\) Position Statement 'Healthcare for people from refugee backgrounds and people seeking asylum'](#) supports equity of access to confidential, quality healthcare for all people from a refugee background, including people seeking asylum.

ⓘ Action tips

- » Print and bind a copy of this Information Package (and PDFs relevant to your practice) and save an electronic copy in a central place on your server, for quick and easy reference.
- » Print and bind the Refugee Health Booklets [Why Focus on Refugee Health?](#), [Child and adolescent health](#), and [Experiences of torture and trauma](#), and save electronic copies in a central place on your server, for quick and easy reference.

The RACGP Position Statement PDF also lists links to resources, to guide culturally appropriate responses in clinical practice, in addition to resources only available via the member's login. Resource examples include, claiming time-tiered MBS items — [Inclusion of communication time when claiming time-tiered MBS items](#) and [Migrant and Refugee Health Partnership's Competency Standards Framework — Culturally Responsive Clinical Practice: Working with People from Migrant and Refugee Backgrounds](#).

Notably, the [Refugee Health and Wellbeing Policy and Action Plan 2022-2027](#) was released in late 2022 through a joint collaboration between [Refugee Health Network Queensland \(RHNQ\)](#) and Queensland Health (QH). RHNQ is funded by QH and supported by the Mater Brisbane and Queensland's Primary Health Networks (PHNs) with primary HSPs in their region.

This Information Package provides a collation of resources relevant to general practitioners (GPs) working in Cairns and Townsville. Whilst comprehensive at the introductory level, it is not exhaustive. Refer to the [RHNQ website](#) for Queensland specific information.

Resources

Free interpreting services

Translating and Interpreting Service

The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) provides private medical practitioners with access to its [Free Interpreting Service](#).

TIS National's **Medical Practitioner Priority Line: 1300 131 450**, is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Please note, each practitioner will require a unique client code to access the service. The Practice Team can utilise the GP TIS code when completing work on behalf of the GP (e.g. making reminder calls or undertaking practice nurse duties). To register for a client code, complete the [online client registration form](#) on the [TIS National website](#). If you require assistance, contact TIS National at tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au or call 1300 575 847.

Appointment Reminder Translation Tool

The New South Wales Multicultural Health Communication Service's online [Appointment Reminder Translation Tool](#) assists health services by instantly translating appointment bookings into their patient's language. It includes the capacity to send the translated appointment as an SMS or as a [downloaded PDF](#). The tool can translate content into 64 languages, via 15 appointment types. Please note, not all languages are available (e.g. Sango is not available).

! Action tips

- » Ensure all front line non-clinical staff are aware of available interpreter services and tools.
- » Print and display the Medical Practitioner Priority Line number in your practice's reception area, ensuring it's visible by all staff, improving recall.
- » Register all GPs in your practice for a unique client code with TIS National.
- » Support Practice Managers by providing training and resources.
- » Book interpreters in advance and ensure reception staff coordinate these appointments with GPs.

Setting up a culturally safe practice

Welcoming refugees involves the whole practice team, and there are many tools available to support each member of the team in playing their role.

Refugee Health Network Queensland (RHNQ)

RHNQ provides [Cultural Sensitivity](#) resources to build cultural awareness in the workplace and [Administration](#) resources to support your team, including patient records, booking and working with interpreters, and [general practice administration tips](#).

Brisbane South PHN (BSPHN)

BSPHN's [Multicultural health webpage](#) provides useful content and a [Quality Improvement Toolkit for General Practice](#), including self-assessments for your practice's cultural profile.

Victorian Refugee Health Network

[Resources](#) to engage and support general practice, including ideas on communication, coordination and management, and clinical care.

Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health (CCEH)

[CCEH's website](#) offers cultural competence training and resources created to help you understand and communicate better with people from other cultures, resulting in greater job satisfaction for staff, better services, and happier patients.

! Action tips

- » Print and display multiple copies of RHNQ's [Welcome poster](#) in high traffic areas of your clinic.
- » Print and save RHNQ's [Refugee Health Ready Practice Checklist](#) for your administration team's reference and use.



Clinical support

Refugee Health Assessment Tool

The Victorian Refugee Health Network's (VRHN's) Refugee Health Assessment template has been trialled in two primary care settings and is accepted as a clinical resource by the RACGP and endorsed by the Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association (APNA).

The Template supports the delivery of refugee health assessments in line with current clinical recommendations, to assist primary care providers to complete the [Medicare Benefits Schedule \(MBS\) Health assessment for refugees and other humanitarian entrants items](#).

A refugee health assessment should ideally be commenced within one month of arrival to Australia. Health assessments for refugees and other humanitarian entrants are funded up to one year post arrival to Australia. For details on eligible visas and MBS billing and visa requirements for MBS items 701, 703, 705, and 707, refer to the [MBS Health assessment for refugees and other humanitarian entrants Questions and Answers fact sheet](#).

More clinical support resources, in addition to the [Refugee Health Assessment Tool template](#), can be found on [VRNH's Clinical Quicklinks](#).

The template can be imported and used with Medical Director and Best Practice software.

HealthPathways

[HealthPathways](#) is a web-based portal providing localised information, to support primary care clinicians to make the right decisions, together with patients, at the point of care.

HealthPathways is an online platform designed and written by general practitioners, hospital clinicians, and a wide range of other health professionals, for use during a primary care consultation. Each Pathway (topic) provides evidence-based, clear, and concise information and guidance to assess and manage a patient with particular symptoms or conditions. The Pathways also include tailored information to access local services.

To access your local HealthPathways portal, register online for [Far North Queensland \(Cairns\)](#) or [Townsville](#). You can access the resources, once a username and password has been issued.

If you can't locate a topic, use the search function.

Cairns and Far North FNQ HealthPathways content

- » Refugee Health Assessment in Adults.
- » Refugee Health Services - Local information on allied health, mental health, refugee support, sexual health, torture and trauma and translation services.

Townsville HealthPathways content

- » Refugee Health Assessment — For assessing someone with a refugee background, primarily someone who has been in Australia for less than 12-months.
- » Refugee Health Care — Common conditions experienced by people with a refugee background.
- » Refugee Health Services — local information on allied health, mental health, refugee support, sexual health, torture and trauma and translation services.



MBS items and schedule of fees update

The Department of Health and Aged Care (DoHAC) has developed a [Health assessment for refugees and other humanitarian entrants fact sheet](#) detailing health assessments for refugees and other humanitarian entrants under Medicare items 701, 703, 705, and 707. Support staff should use the fact sheet to check Medicare eligibility. The latest update was made on 1 July 2023.

The MBS [online search function](#) allows staff to quickly locate relevant information for each item number.

Item 701

Fee: \$65.00

Benefit: 100% = \$65.00

Extended Medicare Safety Net Cap: \$195.00

Item 703

Fee: \$151.05

Benefit: 100% = \$151.05

Extended Medicare Safety Net Cap: \$453.15

Item 705

Fee: \$208.40

Benefit: 100% = \$208.40

Extended Medicare Safety Net Cap: \$500.00

Item 707

Fee: \$294.45

Benefit: 100% = \$294.45

Extended Medicare Safety Net Cap: \$500.00

[Medicare Safety Net threshold amounts](#) were updated on 1 January 2023.

⚠ Action tips

- » Print and save a copy of the [Health assessment for refugees and other humanitarian entrants fact sheet](#), for quick and easy access.
- » Print and save a copy of the [MBS Health assessment for refugees and other humanitarian entrants Questions and Answers fact sheet](#), for quick and easy access.

Training for GPs

Online

Refugee Health Network Queensland have developed a series of short [educational modules](#) on refugee health care, with clinical staff, focusing on primary health care.

Topics

- » [Module 1: An Overview of Refugee Health - Context and Important Considerations, Dr Rebecca Farley](#) (17:53 mins)
- » [Module 2: Cultural and language considerations in consultations, Dr Rachel Claydon](#) (21:27 mins)
- » [Module 3: Trauma informed care, Dr Rebecca Farley](#) (19:49 mins)
- » [Module 4: Comprehensive refugee health assessment, Dr Rebecca Farley](#) (23:49 mins)
- » [Module 5: Management of common refugee health conditions, Dr Rachel Claydon](#) (18:10 mins)

GP clinical phone support

While the first point of contact should be the Refugee Health Nurses, additional clinical support is available from General Practitioner Dr Rachel Claydon, who is available on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. Dr Claydon's contact details are listed as the Refugee Doctor under Appendix A: Relevant contacts.

The RACGP 2022 curriculum

The RACGP 2022 curriculum and syllabus for Australian general practice contains a contextual unit on [migrant, refugee, and asylum seeker health](#). Local educators from James Cook University (JCU) are planning to provide further training for registrars, alongside their supervisors, in the near future.

Upcoming webinars

Online refugee health education sessions for GP registrars and GP supervisors are planned for the Townsville and Cairns regions.

The Townsville region webinar will be held in October 2023, with the Cairns webinar details to be advised.

Postgraduate certificate

JCU Australia offers a [Graduate Certificate of Disaster Health and Humanitarian Assistance](#) course (previously Refugee Health And Disaster Management). Please note, the focus of the course is on displaced populations, rather than new arrivals in Australia.

! Action tips

- » Print/save a copy of the Australian Refugee Health Practice Guide. For a printed copy, contact your region's Refugee Health Nurse.
- » Nominate a staff member as your practice's Refugee Health Champion to complete the training modules and collate resources and information relevant to your practice.



Appendices

[Appendix A: Relevant contacts](#)

[Appendix B: Website links](#)

[Appendix C: Online documents](#)

[Appendix D: Acronyms and abbreviations](#)

Appendix A: Relevant contacts

Refugee Health Nurses

Cairns

Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service

Refugee Health Services Cairns
p. (07) 4226 4633
a. 381 Sheridan Street, Cairns, Queensland 4870

Amy Ryan

Refugee Health Nurse
e: CYFH_refugeenurse@health.qld.gov.au

Julie Rees

Manager
e. julie.rees@health.qld.gov.au

Townsville

Townsville Hospital and Health Service

Townsville Community Health Services
m. 0499 816 827
e. TCHSrefugeenurse@health.qld.gov.au
w. www.health.qld.gov.au/townsville

Heather Cameron

Refugee Health Clinical Nurse
e. heather.cameron@health.qld.gov.au

Christine Steward

Refugee Health Clinical Nurse
e. christine.steward@health.qld.gov.au

Carmel Wright

Refugee Health Nurse Manager
e. carmel.wright@health.qld.gov.au

Multicultural Mental Health

Cairns

The Multicultural Mental Health Service in Cairns is not available; however, there are plans for its establishment.

Townsville

Townsville Hospital and Health Service

Mental Health Resource and Specialist Team
p. (07) 4433 9480
w. www.townsville.health.qld.gov.au/services/mental-health/specialist-mental-health-clinicians/consultation-liaison-and-resource-team/
a. 59 Cambridge Street, Vincent, Queensland 4814

Chloe Woods

Multicultural Mental Health Coordinator
Consultation Liaison and Resource Team
m. 0437 322 563
e. chloe.healy@health.qld.gov.au

Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT)

Cairns

Natalie Youssef

North Queensland Team Leader
m. 0481 965 551
e. natalieyoussef@qpastt.org.au

Townsville

Natalie Youssef

North Queensland Team Leader
m. 0481 965 551
e. natalieyoussef@qpastt.org.au

Queensland

QPASTT Support line

p. (07) 3391 6677
Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, Wednesday, 1pm to 5pm

Settlement Agency

Cairns

Centacare Far North Queensland

p. (07) 4044 0130
e. cms@centacarefnq.org
w. www.centacarecairns.org
a. 212 McCormack Street, Manunda, Queensland 4870

Andrea Obeyesekere

Multicultural Services Manager
p. (07) 4242 1058
m. 0427 867 942
e. andrea.obeyesekere@centacarefnq.org

Australia-wide

Multicultural Australia

p. (07) 3337 5400
e. welcome@mcaus.org.au
w. www.multiculturalaustralia.org.au

Refugee Doctor

Queensland

Mater Refugee Complex Care Clinic

Available to GPs for professional discussions.

Dr Rachel Claydon

Chair Refugee Health Network Queensland Clinical Advisory Group
GP Mater Refugee Complex Care Clinic, Mater Health Services
p. (07) 3163 2880
m. 0401 318 664
e. rachel.claydon@mater.org.au

e. mrccc@mater.org.au

w. www.materonline.org.au/services/refugee-services/mater-refugee-complex-care-clinic

TIS National

Medical Practitioner Priority Line

p. 1300 131 450 (24/7)

Support

p. 1300 575 847
e. tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au

Townsville

Unify Intercultural Australia

(Formerly Townsville Multicultural Support Group)

p. (07) 4775 1588
e. admin@unifyia.org.au
w. www.unifyia.org.au
a. 63 Ross River Road, Mundingburra, Queensland 4812

Tra Nguyen

Humanitarian Settlement Program Manager
p. (07) 4775 1588
m. 0405 005 477
e. tranguyen@tmsg.org.au



Appendix B: Website links

BSPHN's Multicultural health page

bspn.org.au/community-health/commissioning/multicultural-health

Centacare Far North Queensland's Settlement Services

www.centacarefnq.org/settlement-services

Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health website

www.ceh.org.au

HealthPathways

HealthPathways main site

clinicalexcellence.qld.gov.au/resources/clinical-prioritisation-criteria/healthpathways

Far North Queensland (Cairns) HealthPathways

fnq.communityhealthpathways.org/LoginFiles/Logon.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f

Townsville HealthPathways

townsville.communityhealthpathways.org/300262.htm

Humanitarian Settlement Program

immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/humanitarian-settlement-program

JCU Graduate Certificate of Disaster Health and Humanitarian Assistance course:

www.jcu.edu.au/courses/graduate-certificate-of-disaster-health-and-humanitarian-assistance

Multicultural Australia

www.multiculturalaustralia.org.au

Multicultural Health Communication Services online Appointment translator

www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au/publications/appointment-reminder-translation-tool/create_an_appointment

MBS online

Inclusion of communication time when claiming time-tiered MBS items

www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/Factsheet-time-tiered-MBS-items

MBS online Search function

www9.health.gov.au/mbs/search.cfm

Medicare Safety Net threshold amounts

www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/Factsheet-EMSN-1Jan2023

Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Health assessment for refugees and other humanitarian entrants items


www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/mbsprimarycare_mbsitem_refugees

Migrant and Refugee Health Partnership

culturaldiversityhealth.org.au

Queensland Health's Refugee health services

www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/groups/multicultural/refugee-services/refugee-and-asylum-seeker-services



RACGP 2022 curriculum and syllabus for Australian general practice: Migrant, refugee and asylum seeker health
www.racgp.org.au/education/education-providers/curriculum/curriculum-and-syllabus/units/migrant-refugee-and-asylum-seeker-health

Refugee Health Network Queensland

Main site

www.refugeehealthnetworkqld.org.au

Administration resources

www.refugeehealthnetworkqld.org.au/resources/administration

Cultural Sensitivity resources

www.refugeehealthnetworkqld.org.au/cultural-sensitivity

Education Modules: Training modules for GPs

www.refugeehealthnetworkqld.org.au/training-for-gps

Module 1: An Overview of Refugee Health – Context and Important Considerations: youtu.be/FgdY6PhWOU0

Module 2: Cultural and language considerations in consultations: youtu.be/Z79H7jIAPUk

Module 3: Trauma informed care: youtu.be/Tmd8MEQOBK4

Module 4: Comprehensive refugee health assessment: youtu.be/h6T0StFGp0w

Module 5: Management of common refugee health conditions: youtu.be/Sp9pz31975o

TIS National

Main site

www.tisnational.gov.au

Online client registration form

tisonline.tisnational.gov.au/RegisterAgency

Free Interpreting Service for private medical practitioners

www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Agencies/Charges-and-free-services/About-the-Free-Interpreting-Service/Free-Interpreting-Service-for-Private-Medical-Practitioners

Unify Intercultural Australia

www.unifyia.org.au

Victorian Refugee Health Network

Resources for engaging and supporting general practice

refugeehealthnetwork.org.au/resources-referrals-2/?_sft_tool_for_clinician=resources-and-support

Clinical Quicklinks

refugeehealthnetwork.org.au/clinical-quicklinks

Appendix C: Online documents

APNA and RACGP Conducting quality health assessments in general practice information sheet

nqphn.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/APNA-RACGP%20Quality%20health%20assessment%20info%20sheet.pdf

Appointment Reminder Translation Tool PDF (example)

nqphn.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/Example%20of%20Appointment%20Translation%20Tool%20Service.pdf

Australian Refugee Health Practice Guide (online)

refugeehealthguide.org.au

Australian Refugee Health Practice Guide: Why Focus on Refugee Health?

nqphn.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/ARHPG_Why-focus-on-refugee-health.pdf

Australian Refugee Health Practice Guide: Child and adolescent health

nqphn.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/ARHPG_Child-and-adolescent-health.pdf

Australian Refugee Health Practice Guide: Experiences of torture and trauma

nqphn.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/ARHPG_Experiences%20of%20torture%20and%20trauma.pdf

BSPHN's Quality Improvement Toolkit for General Practice

bsphn.org.au/documents/quality-improvement/example-pdsa-recording-patients-ethnicity.pdf

Culturally Responsive Clinical Practice: Working with People from Migrant and Refugee Backgrounds PDF

culturaldiversityhealth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Culturally-responsive-clinical-practice-Working-with-people-from-migrant-and-refugee-backgrounds-Jan2019.pdf

Free Interpreting Service for private medical practitioners information sheet

nqphn.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/Free%20Interpreting%20Service%20-%20private%20medical%20practitioners%20information%20sheet.pdf

Health assessment for refugees and other humanitarian entrants fact sheet

[www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/68FECE01C3274245CA257BF0001E02BB/\\$File/Medicare-Benefits-Schedule.pdf](http://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/68FECE01C3274245CA257BF0001E02BB/$File/Medicare-Benefits-Schedule.pdf)

JCU Graduate Certificate of Disaster Health and Humanitarian Assistance course brochure

nqphn.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/JCU%20Online-Course-Brochure-GC-Disaster-Health-and-Humanitarian-Assistance.pdf

MBS Health assessment for refugees and other humanitarian entrants Questions and Answers fact sheet


nqphn.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/Medicare%20Health%20Assessment_Q%26A%20factsheet.PDF

Refugee Health Assessment Tool

refugeehealthguide.org.au/refugee-health-assessment/

Refugee Health and Wellbeing Policy and Action Plan 2022-2027

www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0033/1197447/Refugee-Health-and-Wellbeing-Policy-and-Action-Plan-2022-2027.pdf



RACGP 2022 curriculum and syllabus for Australian general practice: Migrant, refugee and asylum seeker health
nqphn.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/RACGP%20Curriculum%202022-Migrant%20refugee%20and%20asylum%20seeker%20health.pdf

RACGP Position Statement 'Healthcare for people from refugee backgrounds and people seeking asylum'
www.racgp.org.au/getmedia/8b2a8600-9915-4a57-b612-a625e9163f1a/RACGP-Position-Statement-Healthcare-for-people-from-refugee-backgrounds-and-people-seeking-asy.pdf.aspx

Refugee Health Ready Practice Checklist
nqphn.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/Refugee%20Health-Ready%20practice%20checklist.pdf

Tips for GP Admin working with refugee background patients
www.refugeehealthnetworkqld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Tips-for-GP-Admin-working-with-refugee-background-patients.pdf

Welcome poster
nqphn.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/GP%20Welcome%20Poster.pdf

WHO International Toolkit
www.who.int/tools/refugee-and-migrant-health-toolkit

Appendix D: Acronyms and abbreviations

Acronym/abbreviation	Definition
APNA	Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association
BSPHN	Brisbane South Primary Health Network
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CCEH	Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health
DoHAC	Department of Health and Aged Care
FNQ	Far North Queensland
GPs	General practitioners
HSP	Humanitarian Settlement Program
MA	Multicultural Australia
MBS	Medicare Benefits Schedule
NQPHN	Northern Queensland Primary Health Network
PDF	Portable Document Format
PHN	Primary Health Network
QH	Queensland Health
QPASTT	Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma
RACGP	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
RHNQ	Refugee Health Network Queensland
SMS	Short Message Service
TIS National	Translating and Interpreting Service
TMSG	Townsville Multicultural Support Group
WHO	World Health Organisation



