

Jessica Haight – University of Alberta

Project: Exploring a Model of Integrated Patient-Centered Care for Addressing Refugee Health

Background



Refugees often have complex health needs requiring urgent, trauma-informed care. However, on top of language and cultural barriers, it can be challenging to navigate primary care services in Canada, which are often disconnected from other health and social services. The lack of accessible services can lead

to worsened health outcomes and preventable system costs. In response to service fragmentation, dedicated primary care models for refugee health have emerged, which take a patient-centered and integrated approach, involving teamwork between family physicians and allied health professionals (e.g., nurses, therapists, social workers). The New Canadians Health Centre (NCHC) is a dedicated refugee community health centre in Edmonton which provides team-based, patient-centered, and culturally safe primary care services to government assisted refugees. Such models have shown progress in meeting health needs; however, some studies find gaps in model performance and health outcomes. Additionally, there is a lack of research evaluating the effectiveness of these models and their long-term impacts within the Canadian context. Therefore, this research will

explore the role of integrated patient-centered primary care services in supporting refugees, using the NCHC as a case site. This will involve a community-based participatory research study with refugee clients and NCHC staff. Interviews will be completed with refugees on their experiences with integrated primary care and with NCHC staff on enablers and barriers to interprofessional collaboration. This research will contribute to the development of effective primary care models to meet the needs of refugees. Findings can be scaled up to guide models across Canada.

Bio:

Jessica Haight is completing a PhD in Public Health at the University of Alberta. Her doctoral research is focused on the development and improvement of the dedicated refugee healthcare services. Her hope is to meaningfully contribute to the health systems landscape in Canada through the research on the development of health services that are effective and accessible for the populations they are serving. Previously, Jessica completed an MSc in Health Promotion at the University of Alberta and a BA in Psychology at McGill University.