

Finding the Care in Health Care

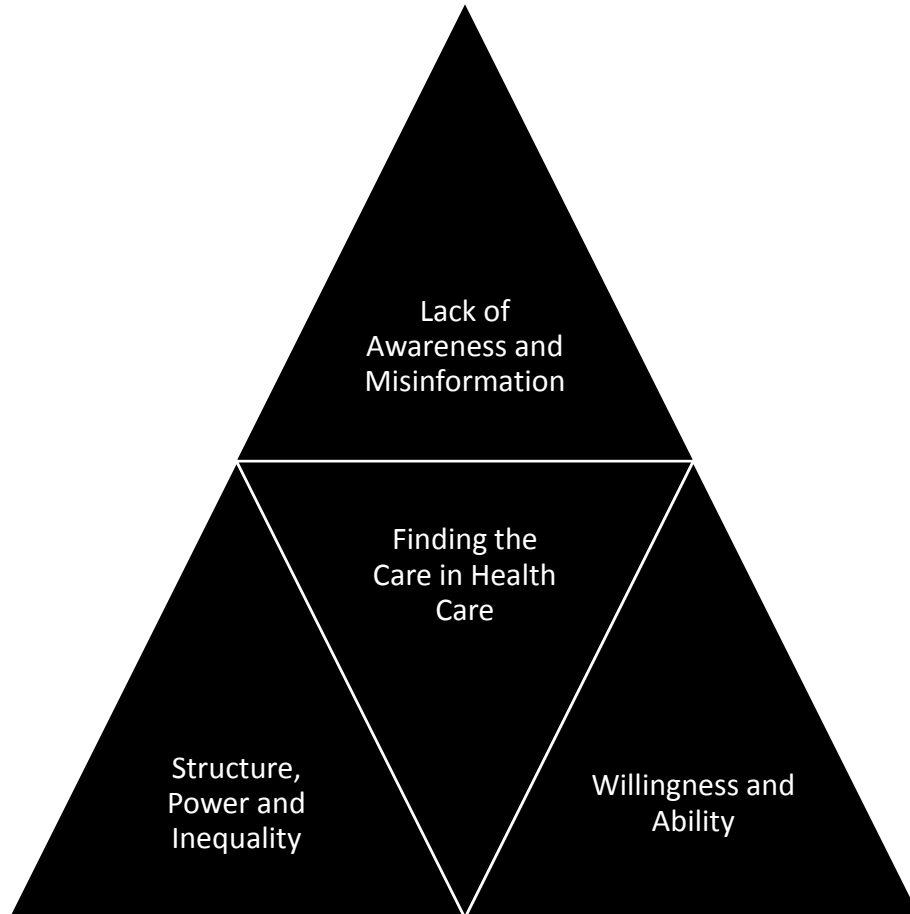
A Community Approach to Refugee Health

Refugee Claimants' Access to Primary Health Care (2011)

Problem: Identified barriers within the local health care system that excluded and limited their client's ability to access primary health care services.

- Service refusal
- Turned away after initial meet and greet appointments with physicians
- Refusal to book appointments by clinic staff
- Refusal to return phone calls for ongoing service
- Receiving bills for services

Findings



In Canada people who are wealthy, well spoken, and well connected have no trouble getting care. And they pretend that the rest of the community gets the same kind of care as they do...

(physician)

Recommendations

... so we just work toward a different future and equip people with education and experiences ... the fact is that it will be better in a decade than it is now. I have to believe that or else what is the point?

(Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness Employee)

1. Appeal Process
2. IFHP Reforms
3. Address Misinformation and Lack of Awareness
4. **Build a Bridge Clinic**

Taking a New Collaborative Approach to Refugee Health in Nova Scotia (ISANS 2011)

Goal: **Build a Bridge Clinic**

Collaboration

Process

Bridging

Events Leading up to the Creation of the Transitional Health Clinic for Refugees

- 2005 – Immigrant Health Task Force
- 2009-2011 – Pilot Project with North End Community Health Centre
- 2011 - Planning session held with key stakeholders
- 2011 – Stakeholders draft proposal to Dept. of Health
- 2011-2012 – ISANS secured funding to build business plan
- 2012 – Federal Government reduces scope of IFHP coverage
- 2012 – Proposal loses momentum with Dept. of Health
- 2013 – Nova Scotia Health Authority postpones funding of project
- 2014 – Closure of Lacewood Medical Clinic

Events Leading Up ... Continued

- Early 2014 - Dr. Holland expressed his commitment to volunteer his time
- Spring of 2014 - Began seeing patients using the ISANS space
- Fall 2014 - The NSHA and DHW renewed interest in the clinic proposal
- May 1st 2015 - The Agreement was signed between the DHW, ISANS, the HRC, and the physicians
- June 2014 - The clinic moved to the Mumford Professional Centre
- June 1st 2015 - Official clinic opening date

The **Clinic** Today

- Referrals from ISANS or HRC only
- Philosophy of Access and Inclusion
- Developed the Primary Care Resource Tool for all care providers
- April 2016: approx 1100 recorded patients
- Strong allies in raising awareness about refugee health

Reflections

“The fact that we got all what we asked for plus more is very unreal ... without Tim Holland volunteering, seeing the opportunity and jumping into this, [we] would not have pulled the last stretch of the way. He helped bring in other people within the health system and made the issue public, Department of Health and Wellness had to take notice.”

(Wenche, ISANS)

“Having the provincial immigration and health ministers at the opening of the clinic plus lots of media was also very unreal. Refugee health finally was a term, an issue that mattered. The Syrian crisis also helped fuel this attention as well.”

(Wenche, ISANS)

Ongoing Challenges

- Mental Health
- Dental Services
- Bridging to Community Care Providers
- IFHP Billing
- Continued Funding



CONCLUSION



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