

Caring for Immigrant and Refugee Patients:

How to improve the experience for them (and you)

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Objectives

- A. Recognize obstacles in caring for immigrant and refugee populations.
- B. Find available resources for immigrant and refugee care.
- C. Develop strategies for troubleshooting obstacles to competent care.
- D. Acknowledge bias.
- E. Embrace cultural competency.

Disclosures

- None

Definitions

- Immigrant: a person who comes to a country to take up permanent residence
- Refugee: a person who flees to a foreign country or power to escape danger or persecution
- <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary>

Obstacles to Care

- Lack of Money (and Insurance)
- Lack of Connections
- Language Barrier
- Cultural Barriers

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- Virginia Minimum Wage currently \$7.25/hr.
 - Set to increase to \$9.50/hr May 1st, 2021.
 - Average cost of a doctor visit without insurance:
 - \$150-\$300-outpatient
 - \$375-\$700+ ER or hospital
 - <https://www.natlawreview.com/article/virginia-increases-its-minimum-wage-and-creates-new-wage-and-hour-claims>
 - <https://www.hrbsolutionsinc.com/how-much-does-a-doctor-visit-cost/>

Cost of Living

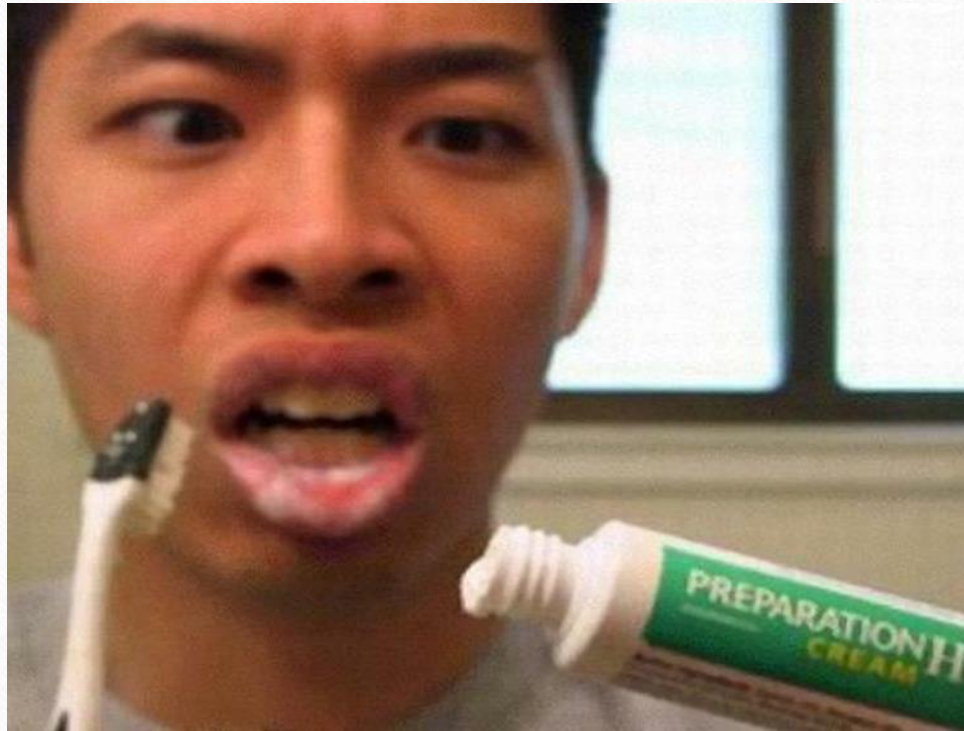
- Roanoke is 12% below national average and 19% below Virginia average.
- <https://www.areavibes.com/roanoke-va/cost-of-living/>

Lack of Connections

3% of the world's population lives outside the country where they were born.
Young and highly-skilled workers are the most likely to immigrate.

https://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/34990_book_item_34990.pdf

Language Barriers



- [Pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

Most Commonly Spoken Languages in the US

- 1. English
- 2. Spanish
- 3. Chinese
- 4. French
- 5. Tagalog

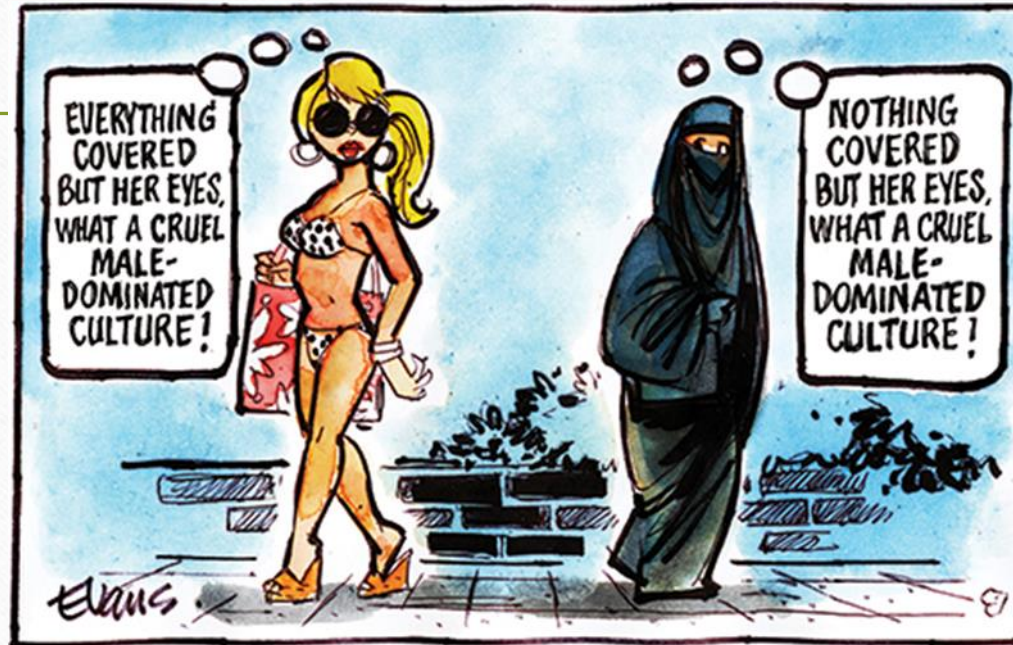
Most Commonly Spoken Languages in Europe

- 1. Russian
- 2. German
- 3. French
- 4. English
- 5. Turkish

Most Commonly Spoken Languages in the World

- 1. Madarin
 - 2. English
 - 3. Hindustani
 - 4. Spanish
 - 5. Arabic
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- <https://www.fluentin3months.com/most-spoken-languages/>

Cultural Barriers



- Open.edu

Resources

- US Department of Health and Human Services
- <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/about/what-we-do>
- Virginia Department of Social Services
- <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/ons/>
- Commonwealth Catholic Charities:
 - Roanoke Office
 - 820 Campbell Avenue SW
 - Roanoke, VA 24016-3536
 - Contact: Laura Murphy
 - Phone: (540) 342-7561

Translation

- Language lines provided by institution or for a fee.
- Patient brings an advocate or family member who speaks both languages.
- Healthcare provider or clinic/hospital staff speaks language.
- Medical student fluent in patient's spoken language.

<https://www.languageine.com/interpreting/on-demand/phone>

Transportation

- Private car
- Bus
- Bike routes
- Walkable neighborhoods
- Multispecialty/multi-resource facilities

Troubleshooting Strategies

- 1. Extra time for appointment if translation services are needed.
- 2. Written materials such as after visit summaries and discharge instructions in other languages.
- 3. Avoid using family members, particularly children, for translation services.
- 4. Secure language line availability in advance if possible.
- 5. Keep prescription instructions as simple as possible.

Troubleshooting

- 6. Ask about herbals and supplements patients are taking.
- 7. Have patients bring all herbals and supplements in to appointments with them.
- 8. If you don't recognize it, look it up.
- 9. Consider whether or not your patient has the ability to make it to therapy or specialist referrals.
- 10. Arrange with a colleague of the opposite sex to assist if necessary for any gender-sensitive examinations.

Bias

- We all have it.
- It actually serves a purpose.
- Own it. (Don't let it own you.)

Embracing Cultural Competency

- A bilingual 2 year old boy.

Cases

- Elevated total bilirubin in a Muslim man.
- Odd marks on an Asian child.
- Bruises on a Hispanic child.
- Drug interaction from herbal medication an Asian man is taking.

Case 1

Mohamed Mohamed is a 56 yo man who presents to your clinic for labwork on April 28th. For the most part, his results looked good, but his total bilirubin was slightly elevated at 1.5. He is originally from Somalia and is a devout Muslim. What most likely diagnosis should be considered given this information?

- A. Excessive alcohol consumption from a month-long celebration.
- B. Hepatitis C given high rates in his native country
- C. Gilbert's syndrome accentuated by fasting
- D. Schistosomiasis infection

Answer

- C. Gilbert's syndrome-3-7% of Americans, with some estimates as high as 13%. Often diagnosed from elevated bilirubin on fasting labwork. May be accentuated by fasting.
- Ramadan 2021: April 12-May 12
- Fasting during daytime is typical, so with early-morning labwork requiring overnight fasting, Mr. Mohamed may not have eaten in >24 hours.

Case 2

- Rebecca Nguyen is a 2yo girl who presents to the primary care clinic accompanied by her mother and translator. She's originally from Vietnam and presents today with complaint of cough and wheezing for the past week. On physical examination, you note erythematous streaks all across her back. What is most likely going on with her?
- A. Viral exanthema
- B. Child abuse
- C. Coining
- D. Cupping

Answer

- C. Coining



- Dermnetnz.org

Case 3

- Diego Reyes is a 12 month old boy who is brought to the clinic by his mother for a wellness visit. His family is originally from Honduras. On physical examination, dark macules resembling bruises are noted over his back. What is most likely going on?
- A. Child abuse
- B. Mongolian (Indian) spots
- C. Inherited bleeding disorder
- D. Melanoma

Answer

- B. Mongolian (Indian) spots (dermal melanosis)



- Dermnetnz.org

Case 4

- Arthur Liu is a 64 yo man, originally from China, who presents to the clinic for follow-up on hypertension. You started him on anti-hypertensive medication one month ago, but his blood pressure remains elevated. In fact, it's higher than it was prior to initiating the medication. He's only been in the United States for two years and is accompanied by a translator, as he struggles with his English. His translator tells you that he's been taking a traditional Chinese medication to help him lose weight. Which herbal is he most likely taking?
- A. Ma huang
- B. Gingko biloba
- C. Yohimbe
- D. Korean red ginseng

Answer

- A. Ma huang (ephedra)
- Uses-energy booster; weight loss
- Potential side effects include elevated blood pressure and heart rate, palpitations, nausea and vomiting.
- Rarely, more serious side effects such as heart attacks, strokes, seizures and sudden death have been reported.

Ingroups and Outgroups

- “The Robber’s Cave” Experiment
- Muzafer Sherif
- 200 acre Boy Scouts of America camp
- Robber’s Cave State Park, Oklahoma
- 1954
- 22 boys
- 11 in Eagles group
- 11 in Rattlers group
- Similar backgrounds
- None knew each other prior to the experiment.

The Experiment

- Phase 1-bonding activities such as hiking, swimming, etc with teammates. (Other group unknown to them at this point.)
 - Phase 2-introduction to and competition with other team-baseball, tug-of-war, etc. Prizes to winners.
 - Phase 3-cooperation-working together to pull the bus
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- <https://www.simplypsychology.org/robbers-cave.html>

The Good Samaritan and the Late Samaritan

- The Good Samaritan:
- Luke 10: 25-37
- “And who is my neighbor?”
- Man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho is attacked by robbers and left for dead.
- Priest-passed by and didn’t help.
- Levite-passed by and didn’t help.
- Samaritan-had mercy on him. Gave time. Gave money (2 days wages). Provided medical care. Put him on his own donkey.

The Late Samaritan

- “From Jerusalem to Jericho”: A Study of Situational and Dispositional Variables in Helping Behavior.
- Seminary students began the experiment in one building and were told they had to go to another building to continue.
- Along the way, they encountered a man sitting slumped in a doorway who moaned and coughed twice as they passed by.
- Urgency and task varied.
- In low-hurry situations, 63% helped the man.
- In high-hurry situations, only 10% helped.
- http://faculty.babson.edu/krollag/org_site/soc_psych/darley_samarit.html

Investment Strategy

Lago de Yojoa, Honduras-1955

Final Thoughts...

- “Goolah aw cah mwah”

Questions?



References

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