



Stanford
MEDICINE

2022 20th Annual Community Health Symposium

AUTHORS

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TITLE

Refugee Health Alliance: Borderless Medicine

ABSTRACT

(1) The Refugee Health Alliance (RHA) was organized in 2018 in response to increasing medical need at the US-Mexico Border. Patients receiving care are: Vulnerable and marginalized. They are families, children, pregnant women and LGBTQ individuals. They have been displaced, deported from the US, and politically and socially excluded. They are refugees and asylum seekers fleeing structural and non-structural violence. Our main aims are to: Sustain the provision of ethical, culturally competent, holistic and trauma informed care to our patient population. Empower affected individuals to advocate for their own medical and legal rights. Connect individuals and families to resources, including: Substance use disorder treatment HIV care TB diagnosis and medical care Legal services Mental health resources Dental health resources

(2) Refugee Health Alliance: <https://www.refugeehealthalliance.org> Al Otro Lado: <https://alotrolado.org> Prevencasa: <https://www.facebook.com/prevencasateam/>

(3) Collaborate with relevant local community organizations, like "Al Otro Lado," to address the social determinants of health, including: Economic disparities Homelessness Food insecurity Legal barriers Structural violence Human rights Education Gender Identity Race/Ethnicity Mobilize a dynamic network of volunteers, interprofessional clinicians, undergraduate/graduate students, and advocates from Mexico to promote the wellbeing of under-resourced populations. Promote ongoing discussion of the public health implications of such a large population of displaced individuals/families through research, advocacy, and educational initiatives. Saturday Outreach clinics: We have volunteers help on Saturdays to be able to increase shelter outreach to more shelters and to increase our frequency from bi-weekly visits to every Saturday. WATER WORKS PROJECT: This project now provides clean drinking water to underserved populations throughout Tijuana, Mexico. The first installation at our main clinic site provides 90 gallons of drinkable water per day to a population that was previously forced to use canal water. The community laundry and shower service project is underway. Personal hygiene is a crucial determinant of physical and mental health and can reduce the risk of disease and transmission to others.

(4) Over the course of a full weekend, we are able to visit four shelter sites and provide care to 300-400 patients! The public water fountain and refill station are the first of its kind in the city of Tijuana, but certainly not the last. We will be moving forward with more installations in the coming months. The populations we serve can benefit immensely from access to hygiene resources. This community space, upwards of 1800 sq. ft., contains 6 personal shower spaces, 4 sets of washers and dryers, and we provide clothing donations for those in need. The Tijuana homeless population and those who cannot afford running water are able to clean and wash nearby the clinic, providing a proactive solution to infections and other illnesses that arise from lack of cleanliness.

(5) "As you listen to the migrants you work with, instead of viewing them as someone to "save," see them as equals who are courageous models of being vulnerable and asking for help despite being in completely new territory with people they do not know."

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COMMUNITY PARTNER

Refugee Health Alliance

CATEGORY

Improving Health Equity, Healthcare Access, Service, and Quality,
Promotion of Health Awareness and Healthcare Access Through Education,
Building Capacity Locally and Globally