

January 20, 2016

Dear Colleague:

RE: Changes to Routine Refugee Screening Process for Syrian Refugees at the New Canadians Clinic

Syrian refugees are now arriving in Edmonton and many Zone physicians have generously agreed to accept them into their practices. Approximately 2500 Syrian refugees are expected to arrive in Alberta by March 31, 2016. Usually refugees who are initially seen at the New Canadians Clinic have a medical history and symptom inquiry performed by nursing staff as well as a panel of routine blood testing. Due to the overwhelming numbers of arrivals this process will be amended for the Syrian refugees as follows:

- Providing that the patient/client remains well, routine screening (by history and by lab testing) will be deferred to a primary care practitioner or practice where they will have a long-lasting relationship;
- The recommended infectious disease screening panel for asymptomatic refugees remains the same as in the MOH letter to physicians dated December 15, 2015 available at: www.albertahealthservices.ca/medstaff/Page7082.aspx; and
- Prior to entering longer term primary care, the New Canadians Clinic emphasis for the Syrian refugees will be on updating immunizations, including influenza, and orientation to community based infection control measures.

The usual Edmonton Zone New Canadians Clinic refugee screening panel and process will continue to be used for those arriving from other countries.

This letter can also be found on the AHS website at: www.albertahealthservices.ca/medstaff/Page7082.aspx. Thank you for your continued support in this endeavour.