

Date: Thursday, December 17, 2015
To: All Central Zone Physicians and Emergency Departments
From: Dr. Digby Horne, Medical Officer of Health – Central Zone

Dear Colleague:

Approximately 250 privately sponsored and government Syrian refugees are expected to arrive in Central Zone from Dec. - March 2016. Settlement communities include Acme and Red Deer.

Alberta Health Services has a web page for refugees, agencies working with refugees, and health care providers, including information about accessing translation services: <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/refugee.aspx>

Recommended Infectious Disease Screening Tests in Alberta for Syrian refugees:

- Hepatitis B Serology (HBsAg, Anti-HBSAg, Anti-HBc total)
- Hepatitis C Serology
- If \geq 13 yrs: Varicella Zoster Virus (VZV) IgG (to determine immunization eligibility)
- If > 15 yrs: HIV and Syphilis Serology, Urine NAAT for Chlamydia and Gonorrhea

Screening for Latent Tuberculosis Infection is not recommended. If clinical concern for active tuberculosis exists, proceed with investigation as usual and consider TB services consult.

Recommended non-Infectious Disease Screening Tests in Alberta for Syrian refugees:

- CBC & Differential; if abnormal Hb or RBC indices, consider G6PD and Hemoglobinopathy Screen

The risk for MERs-CoV in this population is low. (ref.:

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/hp/phys/if-hp-phys-moh-advisory-mers-cov.pdf>)

However, if a patient presents with a compatible clinical syndrome, please contact the Central Zone MOH at 403-356-6430. For evidence-based checklists to guide these visits and further information on broader health issues in this population, please see below.

Refugees should please be directed to the local Public Health Centre to have their immunizations updated.

Additional resources:

1. <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/refugee.aspx>
2. <http://www.cmaj.ca/site/misc/caring-for-a-newly-arrived-syrian-refugee-family-cmaj.151422.xhtml>
3. http://www.cfpc.ca/Refugee_Health_Care/
4. http://www.ccirhken.ca/ccirh/checklist_website/index.html (Adult checklist)
5. <http://www.kidsnewtocanada.ca/e-checklist/initial-assessment> (Pediatric checklist)

This Bulletin is posted at the Central Zone MOH website shown at the bottom of the page.

Thank you for your attention and assistance.