

Advanced Techniques in Mental Health Care for Newcomers

Part 2: In-Depth Treatment Considerations

A Companion Resource Sheet

Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma (<https://hpert-cambridge.org/about>)

The Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma (HPRT), originally founded at the Harvard School of Public Health, is a multidisciplinary program that has been pioneering the health and mental health care of traumatized refugees and civilians in areas of conflict, post-conflict, and natural disasters for over two decades. Its clinical program serves as a global model that has been replicated worldwide. HPRT designed and implemented the first curriculum for the mental health training of primary care practitioners in settings of human conflict, post-conflict, and natural disasters.

HPRT Harvard trauma questionnaire

The Harvard Trauma Questionnaire (HTQ) is a checklist written by HPRT, similar in design to the HSCL-25. It asks about a variety of trauma events, as well as the emotional symptoms considered to be uniquely associated with trauma.

[The HTQ-5: revision of the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire for measuring torture, trauma and DSM-5 PTSD symptoms in refugee populations](https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/cky256)
(<https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/cky256>)

Improving Well-Being for Refugees in Primary Care: A Toolkit for Providers

(https://cssmv.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/2019_healing-hearts-toolkit-pcp-providers.pdf)

This toolkit will address problems, solutions, challenges, and strengths when refugee patients and U.S. health care providers collaborate and bridge cultural divides to offer quality health care

Veterans Affairs: National Center for PTSD (<https://www.ptsd.va.gov/about/work/mission.asp>)

The mission of the National Center for PTSD is to advance the clinical care and social welfare of America's Veterans and others who have experienced trauma, or who suffer from PTSD, through research, education, and training in the science, diagnosis, and treatment of PTSD and stress-related disorders. The Center is organized to facilitate rapid translation of science into practice, ensuring that the latest research findings inform clinical care. The site offers access to publications, adult and child screening tools, apps, videos, and referral resources.

Refugee Health Screener – 15 (RHS-15) (<https://warsurvivors.org/other-resources/>)

The Refugee Health Screener-15 (RHS-15) was designed to be short (15 questions) with neutral language that does not directly address violence, torture, or trauma. The RHS-15 was empirically developed to be a valid, efficient, and effective screener for common mental disorders in refugees. The RHS-15 has been integrated into standard physical health screenings for newly arrived refugees in many states across the United States and has been used internationally to support asylum seekers.

Refugee Health Screener – 15 (RHS-15) (https://www.refugeehealthta.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/RHS15_Packet_PathwaysToWellness-1.pdf)

MDH: Mental Health Screening

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/rih/guide/10mentalhealth.html#tool>)

This resource page from the MN Center for Excellence includes recommendations for screening for mental health needs with newly arrived refugees. The page includes access to the Minnesota Wellbeing and Emotions Check (WE-Check) Screening tool, a culturally derived screener that includes common expressions of mental health distress among newcomer communities. The tool was developed through a collaborative study that included 13 focus groups with 111 refugees from Burma, Bhutan, Somali, and Ethiopia. The WE-Check is available in 16 different languages at the link below.

Video examples

Mental Health - Positive (<https://youtu.be/ucs5YeBPuaE>)

Mental Health - Negative (<https://youtu.be/XKBQGxhKqkk>)

Assessing Newcomer Health and Coordinating Care in Primary Care Settings

(https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p3d_x4WN-UqZkFkX3DJPlwKa4NBUlBZf/view)

The 2023 Presentation to Extension Community Health Outcomes (ECHO) includes recommendations for initial screening and effective care coordination in primary care settings. The information is tailored towards providers who are not mental health professionals and focuses on identifying newcomers in need of a mental health referral and successfully getting that individual into care.

APA: Cultural Formulation Interview

(https://www.psychiatry.org/File%20Library/Psychiatrists/Practice/DSM/APA_DSM5_Cultural-Formulation-Interview.pdf)

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) and the DSM-5 Cross-Cultural Issues Subgroup (DCCIS) collaborated to develop and disseminate the Cultural Formulation Interview (CFI). This evidence-based tool is composed of a series of questionnaires that assist clinicians in making person-centered cultural assessments to inform diagnosis and treatment planning.

Cultural Formulation Interview Supplementary Module 11

<https://www.psychiatry.org/getmedia/aca8f5a2-9b1b-456c-a3b7-f7f852edcf7c/APA-DSM5TR-CulturalFormulationInterviewSupplementaryModules.pdf>

These modules supplement the core Cultural Formulation Interview and can help clinicians conduct a more comprehensive cultural assessment. The first eight supplementary modules explore the domains of the core CFI in greater depth. The next three modules focus on populations with specific needs, such as children and adolescents, older adults, and immigrants and refugees. The last module examines the experiences and perspectives of individuals who perform caregiving functions, aiming to clarify the nature and cultural context of caregiving and its impact on social support within the immediate environment of the individual receiving care.

Trauma-Informed Care Implementation Resource Center

<https://www.traumainformedcare.chcs.org/>

This site curates resources from experts in the field of trauma-informed care nationwide and also draws largely from the experiences of healthcare organizations that participated in Advancing Trauma-Informed Care.

On this website you will find:

- Foundational knowledge regarding the impact of trauma on health and trauma-informed care.
 - In-the-field examples illustrating how trauma-informed care can be integrated into health care settings; and
 - Practical strategies and tools for implementing trauma-informed approaches to care.
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McLean: Refugee Mental Health (<https://www.mcleanhospital.org/essential/refugee-mental-health>)

McLean Hospital—a Harvard Medical School teaching hospital—provides professional education and resources for a wide range of mental health care professionals. McLean Hospital’s free online resources for professionals working with refugees and other newcomers explore strategies for navigating stigma and promoting mental wellbeing.

Research

- [The relationship between post-migration stress and psychological disorders in refugees and asylum seekers](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305460557_The_Relationship_Between_Post-Migration_Stress_and_Psychological_Disorders_in_Refugees_and_Asylum_Seekers) (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305460557_The_Relationship_Between_Post-Migration_Stress_and_Psychological_Disorders_in_Refugees_and_Asylum_Seekers)
- [War exposure, daily stressors, and mental health in conflict and post-conflict settings: Bridging the divide between trauma-focused and psychosocial frameworks](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/38034001_War_Exposure_Daily_Stressors_and_Mental_Health_in_Conflict_and_Post-Conflict_Settings_Bridging_the_Divide_between_Trauma-Focused_and_Psychosocial_Frameworks) (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/38034001_War_Exposure_Daily_Stressors_and_Mental_Health_in_Conflict_and_Post-Conflict_Settings_Bridging_the_Divide_between_Trauma-Focused_and_Psychosocial_Frameworks)
- [Assessing trauma in a transcultural context: Challenges in mental health care with immigrants and refugees](https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1186/s40985-018-0102-y.pdf) (<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1186/s40985-018-0102-y.pdf>)

- [Refugee mental health: Culturally relevant considerations](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2352250X22001506) (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2352250X22001506>)
 - [Counseling torture survivors in contexts of ongoing threat: Narratives from sub-Saharan Africa](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263916190) (<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263916190> Counseling torture survivors in contexts of ongoing threat Narratives from sub-Saharan Africa)
 - [Mental health of refugee children and youth: Epidemiology, interventions and future directions](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9307067/pdf/nihms-1810178.pdf) (<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9307067/pdf/nihms-1810178.pdf>)
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Books

- Dalenberg, C. J. (2000). Countertransference and the treatment of trauma. American Psychological Association.
 - Herman, J. L. (2015). Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence; from domestic abuse to political terror.
 - Lipsky, L. van D., & Burk, C. (2009). Trauma stewardship: an everyday guide to caring for self while caring for others. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
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Further Training

- [APA: Narrative Exposure Therapy \(NET\)](https://www.apa.org/ptsd-guideline/treatments/narrative-exposure-therapy) (<https://www.apa.org/ptsd-guideline/treatments/narrative-exposure-therapy>)
- For tailored trainings, people can contact training@cvt.org
- For asynchronous learning, webinars, and access to trainings put out by the National Capacity Building Project (a part of CVT), you can register at www.healtorture.org
 - The website is currently under construction will be up and running again in the next week or two