Culturally Relevant Lead Poisoning Prevention Strategies for Afghan Newcomer Communities

Oct. 18, 2023
About NRC-RIM

The National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants and Migrants
History

- Funded by CDC, housed at University of Minnesota
- Established in Oct. 2020 as part of COVID-19 response
- Work with organizations serving RIM communities that are disproportionately impacted by health inequities
Goals

- **Strengthen partnerships** between health departments + communities
- **Support health departments + CBOs** that work with refugees, immigrants, + migrants
- **Reduce health disparities** + increase health equity
What We Do

- Promising Practices + Toolkits
- Health Education + Communications
- Online Training
- Technical Assistance
- Pilot Projects
- Dissemination
Core Partners

- NACCHO
- IDEO.org
- Afghan Health Initiative
- International Rescue Committee
- Migrant Clinicians Network
- Department of Health
Our Work Today

- Continuing COVID-19 work on a smaller scale
- Public health needs of Afghan newcomers
- Health requirements for Ukrainian Parolees
Our Speakers

Matt Wilson
Seattle King County Public Health

Mohamed Ali
Seattle King County Public Health

Navid Hamidi
Afghan Health Initiative
Culturally Relevant Lead Poisoning Prevention Strategies for Afghan Newcomer Communities.

Mohamed Ali, Matt Wilson & Navid Hamidi
Public education about hazardous exposures, prevention methods, and safer alternatives and practices.

Hazardous waste disposal services for King County households and pre-qualified businesses.

Policy initiatives, like product stewardship, to address the production, use, and disposal of hazardous materials.

Prevention

Collection

Policy
Residential Services Program

Aim
Reduce human and environmental exposure to residential hazardous materials while focusing our efforts on protecting the most impacted and vulnerable communities.

Exposure Reduction
Reduce exposures to household hazardous materials through primary and secondary intervention strategies.

Community Partnership
Develop and maintain community partnerships and strengthen community capacity to identify and manage hazardous materials in and around homes.
Lead poisoning disproportionately impacts refugee and other newcomer children resettled in the United States.
Case Management Blood Lead Levels

• BLLs are notifiable conditions in Washington State.
• In King County, Washington, case investigations for children with BLLs at or above 5 μg/dL are led by investigators from the Hazardous Waste Management Program (Haz Waste).
Opportunities 2018

- 0.5 FTE staff 2018
- Tiered response above 10 μg/dL cases (~ 4 visits/month)
- Letters to parents (English/translations)
Opportunities and Challenges, 2018

- Language/Cultural barriers
- Lots lost to follow ups
- Huge eBLL case backlogs
- Directive of the Governor 16-06
- Haz Waste Racial Equity Implementation
- Haz Waste – 100% FTE increase
- Refugee Screening Clinic Partnership
- RFP for community partner
Public Health & Afghan Health Initiative

Navid Hamidi
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Community Health Advocate (CHA)

Who is the CHA?
• An individual with substantial social connections in the community.
• A natural convener.
• A trust builder.

What does the CHA do?
• Builds a bridge between our county partners, and the client.
• Accompanies county partners into client's home.
• Logistics, interpretation, and education.
Community Health Advocate (CHA)
Scope of Work

- Build Rapport and provide Pre-Visit Education.
- Schedule home-visit and provide assurance and information about the visit.
- Attend the visit, interpret, insure cultural appropriateness.
- Follow up with action plan, provide additional education, referrals, and often help establish care with a PCP at a home clinic.
- Serve as human touchpoint for follow-up questions and connection to additional resources as needed.
Community Reaction and Feedback

Initially:

• Families: unaware of lead, exposure sources, and how to prevent continuous exposure.

• Unaware of long-term mental and physical developmental delays that occur from lead.

• Gratitude toward CHA, and frustration with the situation.
Community Reaction and Feedback

Considerations for a new program:

• Immediately: families expressed fear and worry that they unknowingly did something wrong and there would be ramifications.

• Some hesitation from families in letting go of significant family heirlooms including Surma (traditional eyeliner, pressure cookers, etc.)

• Religious reasons for using surma (traditional eyeliner)- identification of safer alternatives helpful.
Culturally Appropriate BLL Case Management

Matt Wilson
# Public Health Response and Investigation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>✔ Healthcare providers test children</th>
<th>Health Environment Investigator (HEI) Provider communications</th>
<th>Community Health Advocate (CHA) - AHI Parent education.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔ Report to DOH</td>
<td>Education over phone and letter</td>
<td>In-language and In-culture education in-person or over phone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ DOH reports to PHSKC - Over 300 poisoned children are reported to us annually</td>
<td></td>
<td>Home visit scheduled</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Joint HEI & CHA Home Visit

Home assessments for lead

In-person education
Data Analysis and Action Plan

- XRF data assessments
- Environmental sample collection and lab analysis
- Develop action plan
- Nutritional assessment
- Linkage to developmental screening
- Monitoring & evaluations
- Closing
HEI and CHA
Communication with Provider and Family.
Identifying leaded cookware

Traditional cooker made in Afghanistan

Safer Pressure Cookers
Safer alternative exchange
2023 Prestige Awards
AGENTS OF CHANGE

AWARDED TO
KING COUNTY HAZARDOUS WASTE RESIDENTIAL SERVICES PROGRAM, RESEARCH TEAM & AFGHAN HEALTH INITIATIVE.
Acknowledgment

Our sincere thanks go out to the Research team, the exceptional individuals within RSP and AHI, and our partners in Lead & Toxics. Their collaborative efforts, expertise, and commitment have been instrumental in achieving the success of this project.
Learn from Communities

Content Advisors

- Achieved through listening sessions, community advisory boards, etc.
- Incorporate community perspectives
- Informs topics, framing, media, dissemination
Robust Translation & Cultural Validation

- Initial translation: Professional Translator
- Review: Linguist
- Proofread: Linguist
- Competency check: Community member
- Confirmation: Linguist
Extended Cultural Validation

Photos

Brand

Messages

Symbols
Afghan Cultural References

PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM LEAD

Support your child's healthy development by using cosmetics from American or European brands instead of Surma.

PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM LEAD

Cook delicious Afghan dishes like lubya or korma in pressure cookers made with stainless steel.

PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM LEAD

Follow the Afghan tradition of removing your shoes before entering a home and keeping rugs at entryways clean.
Topics covered

Prevention

Testing + Treatment
Formats to meet every need

Fact Sheets  Social Media  Audio  Video
Honoring oral traditions
Customizable Templates

Google Slides

Canva
Health Education Collections

- PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM LEAD
- 8 TIPS FOR HEAT SAFETY
- MANAGING STRESS IN A NEW COUNTRY

Lead Poisoning
Summer Safety
Mental Health
Health Education Collections

Respiratory Illnesses

Wildfire Smoke

Women’s Health
Want to learn more?

Center of Excellence in Newcomer Health Webinar
Guidelines on Maternal Lead Screening for Immigrant and Refugees
Monday, November 6, 2023
12 – 1 p.m. ET | 11 – 12 p.m. CT | 10 – 11 p.m. MT | 9 – 10 p.m. PT

Learning Objectives:
- To better identify who is at risk for elevated lead.
- To understand the effects of lead on pregnant women and the fetus.
- To review ACOG guidelines for prenatal lead screening
- To understand the best practices for obtaining lead samples
- To know what to do when a pregnant or lactating patient has an elevated blood level.

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