Improving immunisation coverage for newly arrived refugees through co-location and partnership

Our integrated model of care:

• Mater Refugee Health Service is integrated within GP practices in areas of high settlement by co-locating specialist Refugee Health Nurses (RHNs) in these practices

• Partner with PHNs to identify refugee-friendly practices

• All new refugee arrivals referred to these practices for Refugee Health Assessment and followed by RHNs in practice for 6 months

What support do we provide to GP practices?

• Refugee Health Connect – one point of call advice line

• Suite of resources on Refugee Health Network Queensland website
What are our results?

Patient cohort

• 1st January – 30th June 2017
• **194 patients** linked to 7 GP practices with RHN across Brisbane North and South
• Age range 8 months – 79 years
• Average number of days from Refugee Health Assessment to completed imms catch-up = 138 days

6 out of 194 could not be vaccinated

182 out of 188 who could be vaccinated completed catch up imms
What does this mean?

• A population recognised as having multiple access issues in primary care are receiving high levels of immunisation coverage across all age ranges.

• GP practices in areas of high settlement have the skills and resources to provide quality immunisation service to refugees.

• Newly arrived refugees are supported to engage with and become well linked with local GP practice.

Recommendations

• Co-location of specialist refugee health nurses in GP practices in areas of high refugee settlement facilitates high vaccination coverage rates and assists with linking people to primary care.

• Multi-agency support is important to provide resources and sustainability for practices.