

P-432 - INVESTIGATING THE MENTAL HEALTH OF REFUGEES RECENTLY ARRIVED IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Introduction: Previous studies indicate elevated rates of psychopathology, particularly posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression, in refugee populations although reported rates vary widely and generally relate to single ethnic groups.

Objectives: To assess the level of psychological distress in adult refugees of multiple ethnic groups recently arrived in Western Australia via the United Nations Humanitarian Program.

Methods: Adult refugees undergoing routine medical assessment were invited to participate. Assessment was via use of the Kessler 10 (K10) and the World Health Organisation PTSD Screener. A range of demographic data was collected.

Results: 300 refugees consented to participate (146 male, 154 female), mean age 34yrs. 24% had some level of probable mental disorder via K10, and 17% had probable current PTSD. Region of origin differences were significant with refugees from the Middle East/Western Asia having significantly higher levels of psychopathology than those from Africa or South East Asia. No relationship was found with age, gender, marital status or educational level.

Conclusions: This refugee population shows elevated rates of psychopathology, notably PTSD by comparison with national data for the general population. There are significant differences when region of origin is taken into consideration. These data will inform local service development.