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RefuNet: emergency care of refugee children, a survey of practices around Europe

Dear colleagues,

The unparalleled stream of refugees entering the European Union, with its latest peak in 2015, is one of the most demanding challenges of our time. Many refugees are minors and in need of medical assistance, and many will present to emergency care facilities with acute health care needs. The medical care of young refugees is confronting physicians and public health services with unpredictable obstacles and comprehensive data about medical needs of refugee children in Europe are scarce, especially for hospital bound care.

Via this survey we aim to understand current health care needs of refugee children presenting to emergency care.

We would like to hear from clinicians dealing with emergency care of children from throughout Europe: what are the problems they are facing, what are the barriers in providing health care to this vulnerable group of children?

We would like to urge anyone to encourage clinicians from your home country to complete this survey. We realise that some of the most important countries dealing with refugee children might not be the easiest to be contacted. Working closely together with networks such as REPEM (Research in European Paediatric Emergency Medicine) and ESPID (European Society of Paediatric Infectious Diseases) we hope to engage with as many clinicians as possible.

We expect the survey to take about 15-20 minutes to complete.

The survey allows you to save data and complete your entry at a later stage.

This survey will not contain any patient data and has been designed purely to gain insight in current health care delivery systems and barriers to providing health care of refugee children.

Please feel free to contact us and share your experiences. We would also like to invite anyone with a research interest in this topic to get in touch to explore options for future collaborations.

Please Note: If you would like to leave your e-mail address at the end of the survey, we will make sure to keep you informed on the progress and outcomes of the survey. This is only an option and there is no obligation to leave any personal contact details to complete the survey.

This project is supported by a small grant award from the European Society of Paediatric Infectious Diseases.

We would like to thank you very much for your time and efforts to support this initiative!

With kind regards,

Ruud G Nijman (r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk)

Johanna Krone (Johanna.Krone@med.uni-muenchen.de)

Ulrich von Both (Ulrich.von.both@med.uni-muenchen.de)

Date of completing survey

Grade of person completing survey

- consultant in (paediatric) emergency care
- consultant in paediatrics
- consultant in (paediatric) infectious diseases
- consultant, other
- junior doctor or trainee (junior, SHO level, up to 3 years of experience in specialty)
- junior doctor or trainee (senior, SpR level, 4 or more years of experience in specialty)
- nurse
- paramedic
- health care manager
- other health care professional (please describe)

If Grade is 'Consultant, other' or 'Other health care professional'; please describe:

In which hospital do you work?

(Please provide the full name of your home institution: this will be key to interpreting the results of this survey.)

In which city and country is your hospital situated?

(Please provide the city and country of your home institution: these will be key to interpreting the results of this survey.)

Is your country part of the European Union?

Yes No

In what type of hospital do you work?

- general district hospital or non academic institution
- teaching or academic hospital
- other

if type of hospital is 'other'; please define:

How many children under the age of 18 live in your catchment area?

(* Only provide value if readily available)

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Which major transport links do you have in your geographical area?

- international airport
- national airport
- international harbour
- national harbour
- major connecting train station (including international trains)
- main train station
- local train station
- proximity to motorway (tick all that apply)

Is your hospital located in the vicinity of a refugee camp?

- Yes No
(* Within your geographical catchment area)

Comments on the geographical area of your hospital

(With geographical area we mean: a short description of the area your hospital is located. This could include important transport links, ethnic minorities, presence of refugee camp, size of your city, major religions, etc.)

In your hospital, where do you see children for non-planned emergency care

- paediatric emergency department
- mixed adult and paediatric emergency department
- outpatient clinics
- paediatric ward
- other (tick all that apply)

if 'other'; please describe:

In your hospital, who provides the emergency care for children?

- paediatric trainees (junior, SHO level, up to 3 years of experience in specialty)
- paediatric trainees (senior, SpR level, 4 or more years of experience in specialty)
- emergency care trainees (junior, SHO level, up to 3 years of experience in specialty)
- emergency care trainees (senior, SpR level, 4 or more years of experience in specialty)
- paediatric consultants
- paediatric emergency care consultants
- emergency care consultants
- nurse specialists practitioners in paediatric emergency care
- nurse specialists practitioners in emergency care
- other (tick all that apply)

if 'other'; please describe:

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RefuNet: healthcare system

The following questions address how your hospital has organised emergency care for refugee children

Throughout this questionnaire 'refugee children' are more broadly defined as 'Refugee and unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people (up to the age of 18 years)'. This excludes resident migrant children for the purposes of this survey.

Does your hospital have a guideline or a policy for refugee children (and):

immunisation status and catch up immunisations yes no unknown

if 'yes'; please shortly describe outline of this policy (if known):

(If a paper copy of the policy is available: please email to r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk, or upload the file below)

if 'yes'; please upload the file if available

((alternatively, email the file to r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk))

infection screening, including Tuberculosis screening yes no unknown

if 'yes'; please shortly describe outline of this policy (if known):

(If a paper copy of the policy is available: please email to r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk, or upload the file below)

if 'yes'; please upload the file if available

((alternatively, email the file to r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk))

safeguarding concerns and social care referral yes no unknown

if 'yes'; please shortly describe outline of this policy (if known):

(If a paper copy of the policy is available: please email to r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk, or upload the file below)

if 'yes'; please upload the file if available

((alternatively, email the file to r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk))

presenting to the emergency department yes no unknown

if 'yes'; please shortly describe outline of this policy (if known):

(If a paper copy of the policy is available: please email to r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk, or upload the file below)

if 'yes'; please upload the file if available

((alternatively, email the file to r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk))

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mental health issues and symptoms of post traumatic stress syndrome

yes no unknown

if 'yes'; please shortly describe available resources (if known):

if 'yes'; please upload the file if available

((alternatively, email the file to r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk))

Does your hospital routinely provide follow-up appointments in your hospital for refugee children after a first visit to the emergency department?

yes, always
 not routinely, but sometimes based on clinical indication
 never
 unknown

Does your hospital provide teaching sessions for physicians on how to manage refugee children in emergency care?

yes no unknown

if 'yes'; please shortly describe teaching strategy (if known):

Does your hospital have regular discussions with Public Health or other organisations concerning health care of refugee children?

yes no unknown

if 'yes'; please describe objectives and frequency of these discussions (if known):

if 'yes'; please upload the file if available

((alternatively, email the file to r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk))

Are there any organisations active in your region who provide support and health care for refugee children?

yes no unknown

Healthcare System: additional remarks

if 'yes'; please shortly describe (if known):

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RefuNet: barriers

Please indicate whether or not the following issues are perceived as a barrier to providing emergency care to refugee children in your hospital

In our hospital '-----' is/are (an) important barrier(s) to providing emergency care to refugee children

| | completely disagree | disagree | neither agree or disagree | agree | completely agree | don't know |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| language barriers | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| cultural differences influencing health care expectations | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| funding | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| organising follow-up appointments | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| problems with the social situation and safeguarding concerns | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| mental health problems, and inability to deal with these in the emergency department | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| the underlying pathology of presenting problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| the severity of illness | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| rare or drug resistant infectious diseases | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| not knowing previous medical history | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| giving appropriate safety netting advice (i.e.: medical advice given at time of discharge) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| the prescribing of medications | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| sexual health problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| dealing with symptoms of post traumatic stress syndrome | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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RefuNet: statements

Please indicate whether or not you agree with the following statements on emergency care of refugee children

In our emergency care facilities:

| | completely disagree | disagree | neither agree or disagree | agree | completely agree | don't know |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| we are well prepared for dealing with refugee children with acute health care problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| there is clear guidance on dealing with refugee children | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| there is a need for a clinical guideline for dealing with refugee children | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| there is a clear policy for infection screening amongst refugee children | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| a clear policy for infection screening amongst refugee children is needed | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| translation services or tools are available for language barriers | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

In paediatric emergency care dealing with refugee children:

| | completely disagree | disagree | neither agree or disagree | agree | completely agree | don't know |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| is a part of our daily clinical activities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| is more difficult because of the complexity of the social situation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| is more difficult because of the type of medical problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| is completely integrated in the routine flow of patient care | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

There is a need for specific training on dealing with refugee children in paediatric emergency care because of:

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| | completely disagree | disagree | neither agree or disagree | agree | completely agree | don't know |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| underlying medical problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| associated social problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| mental health problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| associated sexual health problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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RefuNet: country of origin

How many children (< 18 years) visit your hospital for emergency care annually?

- < 5000
 5000 - 10000
 10000 - 25000
 25000 - 50000
 >50000

How many refugee children visited your hospital in the last 12 months for emergency care (estimated)?

- nil
 < 25
 25 - 100
 100 - 500
 >500
 unknown

(This concerns children seen for emergency care only; NOT children referred for planned outpatient or screening appointments)

You have indicated you do not see any refugee children in your emergency care facilities: please continue to the next form.

Please tick the (up to) three countries from which you see refugee children most often

- Syria
 Afghanistan
 Pakistan
 Iraq
 Iran
 Somalia
 Eritrea
 Ethiopia
 Ivory Coast
 Guinea
 Gambia
 Sudan
 Egypt
 Libya
 Nigeria
 Ukraine
 Albania
 Balkan States
 Other
 not applicable
 unknown

(Please tick up to a maximum of three countries)

Country of origin: if 'other'; please define: _____

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RefuNet: presentation

How do refugee children present to your emergency care facilities?

- Self-referred
 - GP referred
 - Private paediatrician
 - Ambulance
 - Specific services for refugees
 - Referred by public health authorities
 - other
 - not applicable
 - unknown
- (tick all that apply)

if 'other'; please describe:

Which services are responsible for conducting routine, standardised point of entry screening and medical assessments of refugee children (non acute care)?

- This does not happen in an organised manner in our area
 - Paediatric outpatient clinics (hospital)
 - Primary care paediatricians (community)
 - General practitioners
 - Public health services
 - Emergency care departments or other acute care facilities
 - Third party organisations (Red Cross, Medicines Sans Frontiers)
 - Other
 - Unknown
- (tick all that apply)

if 'other'; please describe:

Would you describe these presenting signs and symptoms as '(more) typical' for refugee children compared with presenting symptoms of other children?

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| | much less common | less common | just as common | more common | much more common | don't know |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| minor injuries and trauma | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| skin and soft tissue infections | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| vomiting and/or diarrhea | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| dehydration | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| fever | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| headache | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| major trauma | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| respiratory problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| (any) rash | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| allergic reactions | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| mental health problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| safeguarding concerns | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| ear ache | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| abdominal pain | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| chest pain or hyperventilation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| musculoskeletal (non traumatic: eg. limp, joint swelling, back pain) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| sore throat | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| weight loss | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| jaundice | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| general unwell being, lethargy | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| metabolic disorders (such as exacerbated Type I DM, including ketoacidosis) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| sexual health problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| referral for routine screening (referral by other health care professional) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

please describe any other presenting signs and symptoms which you would describe as typical for refugee children

Presentation: additional remarks

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RefuNet: data availability

Would you be able to provide more detailed data on:

| | yes, these are readily available | yes, but only with additional research support | no | don't know |
|--|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Exact number of refugee children visiting emergency care facilities of your hospital | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Ethnic and geographic background of refugee children visiting your emergency department | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Ways of presenting to the emergency care facilities of your hospital | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Presenting signs and symptoms of refugee children in your emergency care facilities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Follow-up arrangements, including hospital admission, of refugee children after discharge from your emergency department | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Routine (non-acute) point of entry screening and medical assessments of refugee children | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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RefuNet: contact

Additional comments:

Additionally, you can send any relevant documents, such as available guidelines or screening tools, and direct any comments or questions to: r.nijman@imperial.ac.uk

If you would like to be informed on the outcomes of this survey, or would like to participate in future studies on child health care of migrant and refugee children, please provide us with your e-mail address:
