



Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

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Refugee Health Care Employment And Training Opportunities: Climbing the Ladder

By Reva I. Allen, Ph.D., Maria L. Hein, M.S.W., David M. Rosenthal, Ph.D. & John F. Else, Ph.D.

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REFUGEE HEALTH CARE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES:

Climbing the Ladder



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*Institute for Social and
Economic Development*

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT'S REFUGEE WELFARE AND IMMIGRATION REFORM PROJECT

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ISED is a nationally recognized non-profit organization providing policy research, program evaluation, economic development, and consulting services to strengthen the social and economic well-being of individuals and communities. For additional information about this publication, please contact:

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DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and may not reflect the views of the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

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REFUGEE HEALTH CARE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES: CLIMBING THE LADDER

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this booklet is to encourage the creation of programs that help refugees prepare for and obtain careers in the health care field—a field in which there are rich opportunities to *climb the ladder* of economic self-sufficiency. In the booklet we describe some of the outstanding programs in the country that are preparing refugees for careers in health care. We invite readers to contact ISED East¹ or the programs listed in this compendium if they would like additional information.

THE HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY

The health care industry is a growing employment sector that offers large numbers of jobs that usually carry fringe benefits, opportunities to advance, and variety.

- The health care industry is already one of the largest employers in the U.S., with about 11.3 million jobs.
- The health care industry is expanding. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that about 14 percent of all jobs created between 1998 and 2008 will be in health services. Employment in this industry is projected to increase 26 percent during that time, compared to an average of 15 percent for all industries.²
- Most health care jobs require less than four years of college education.
- The diversity of jobs within the health care industry provides opportunities for individuals with a wide range of interests and skills (see Addendum).
- The health care industry offers many opportunities for educational and job advancement. A study analyzing data from the Census Bureau's 1990 Survey of Income and Program Participation found that low-wage earners in health care are more likely to move to a job with a higher wage than are workers in the other industries the study examined.
- Most full-time jobs in the health care industry carry a full range of fringe benefits, including access to health insurance.
- The level of job satisfaction is high in the health care industry. The Census Bureau data study reports that employees in long-term care positions cite as factors contributing to

¹ For ISED East contact information, see the Acknowledgments page (back of title page) of this report.

² In addition, 40 percent of the thirty occupations projected to grow the fastest are concentrated in the health care sector. For example, the number of jobs is expected to increase by 24 percent for nurse's and psychiatric aides, 48 percent for medical records and health information technicians, 59 percent for medical assistants, and 75 percent for personal care and home health aides.

their satisfaction the high level of responsibility of the work, the importance of caring for the elderly, and relationships they formed with patients.

- Health care settings need multilingual workers. Federal law requires that individuals with limited English proficiency have equal access—including linguistic access—to federally assisted health, medical, and social service programs, increasing the demand for competent multilingual professional staff.

REFUGEES AND HEALTH CAREERS

Employment in the health care sector matches the needs of many refugees. First, health care is a respected activity within many refugee communities. Employment in this sector—even at the lower end of the employment continuum—carries more prestige than that of many other entry-level jobs. Second, employment in the health care industry provides opportunities for refugees to move from entry level jobs (many with health benefits) to jobs that provide higher salaries that represent self-sufficiency level incomes. Third, for refugees who enter the U.S. with health care credentials that are not accepted here—for example, people who were physicians in their home countries—the field is varied enough that most can enter the field in some capacity while preparing for or participating in a recertification program.

SHORTCOMINGS OF HEALTH CARE EMPLOYMENT

While health care employment offers many advantages, it also has some shortcomings. Many health care jobs, particularly at the less skilled end of the continuum, are physically challenging. Certified nurse’s assistants, for example, often must lift and move patients. The pay scale for these less-skilled jobs may start at the minimum wage. Advancement to higher level positions, while possible, usually requires additional training, credentialing, and English language capacity beyond that needed to obtain the entry-level job. Furthermore, some health positions, such as medical interpreters, are often part-time contract work, which does not provide benefits.

For all these reasons, programs to help refugees enter health care careers are encouraged to continue their assistance beyond the first job. We recommend that job training content include information about jobs to which the individual may advance given additional training and stronger English language skills. We further recommend that programs be designed to provide post-employment services, including guidance in strategies for career advancement. In fact, it may be helpful to create career advancement programs focused specifically on refugees who are already in entry-level health care positions.

THIS COMPENDIUM

This compendium describes 16 programs that provide training and employment services to refugees who wish to enter the health care employment sector. We make no claim that this is a comprehensive description of such programs. These are simply some of the programs that we were able to identify and that were subsequently selected for inclusion because:

1. They identify refugees as a target consumer population. At least 25 percent of the consumers of all the programs are refugees.
2. They offer linguistically and culturally appropriate services.

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3. They have demonstrated positive outcomes in terms of graduation and employment rates.
4. They are affordable for refugee consumers.
5. They have minimal educational requirements.
6. Their program staff agreed to respond to requests for further information that might be generated by this publication.

We hope this compendium will stimulate your thinking in several ways. First, if there are no health careers employment and training programs for refugees in your community, we encourage you to explore the demand for and feasibility of creating such a program. Second, we encourage you to share copies of this publication with other organizations—such as community colleges, Workforce Investment Boards, or health care training institutions—that might be interested in it.³ Third, these programs may be used as models for developing training and employment programs in sectors other than health care. Similar programs may be established to meet the workforce demands of other industries in your community in which refugees may be assets.

These program descriptions highlight a number of characteristics of successful programs that should be considered by organizations considering such an initiative.

- Many of these programs are offered through collaborations of organizations—such as refugee service providers, health care agencies, the American Red Cross, community colleges, and local school districts, each of which brings something needed to the table.
- Successful programs design the training to meet both professional regulatory requirements—for example, they cover content of state certification examinations—and the specific demands of the jobs they are training people to fill. Involving potential employers in the program design process will ensure that needed skills are identified and included in training curricula and that employers know program graduates have the knowledge and skills necessary for the job.
- Most funding sources affect which populations the programs serve. For example, programs funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement can only serve refugees (and other immigrants treated by law like refugees). Programs funded by welfare-to-work dollars can be targeted to specific groups but must be open to all low-income people who meet their criteria.
- Many, if not most, refugees will need vocational English language instruction to complete the training program and obtain employment. Programs need to assure that such instruction is included in their program designs. Programs may also need to translate training documents and, at least in early phases, use interpreters. If interpreters are used, it is important to use interpreters who have enough medical training to convey technical information correctly.

³ You may photocopy this document, print copies from ISED's web site (www.ised.org), or request additional copies from ISED East (see Acknowledgments page for contact information).

REFERENCE NOTES

Employment statistics came from the April 19, 2000 edition of the Health Services section of the on-line *Career Guide to Industries* (part of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*), published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor. It is available at <http://stats.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs035.htm>.

Findings from the study analyzing data from the Census Bureau's 1990 Survey of Income and Program Participation are reported in *Industry and Cross-Industry Worker Mobility: Experiences, Trends, and Opportunities for Low-Wage Workers in Health Care, Hospitality, and Child Care*. It was written by N. Pindus, D. Dyer, C. Ratcliffe, J. Trurko, and K. Isbell and published by the Urban Institute. It is available online at <http://www.urban.org/health/occmobil.com> or for purchase (\$11) from the Urban Institute, Publication Sales Office, 2100 M. Street NW, Washington, DC 20037 (www.uipress.org).

Detailed information about the application of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act to health and social services programs funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is available at the DHHS Office of Civil Rights web site: <http://www.dhhs.gov/ocr>.

ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are used in this document.

CNA – Certified Nurse's Assistant

CPR – cardiopulmonary resuscitation

DHHS – Department of Health and Human Services

ESL – English as a Second Language

GED – General Educational Development (high school equivalency diploma)

ISED – Institute for Social and Economic Development

JTPA – Job Training Partnership Act

LPN – Licensed Practical Nurse

LVN – Licensed Vocational Nurse

NA/R – Nursing Assistant/Registered (Minnesota certification)

ORR – Office of Refugee Resettlement

VESL – Vocational English as a Second Language

*Refugee Health Careers
Employment and Training Programs*

CERTIFIED NURSE'S ASSISTANT

Basic Nurse Aide Training Program Jewish Vocational Service Chicago, Illinois

This program provides certified nurse's assistant (CNA) training necessary to work in long term care facilities, rehabilitation centers, and hospitals and as private duty CNAs. The program has been in operation since June 1998.

Outcomes: Of the students who graduated from the program between November 1998 and March 2000, 88 percent passed the state CNA certification test. Of the 89 participants who have enrolled in the program since its inception, 67 percent have obtained employment as a CNA. CNA salaries range from \$8 to \$10 per hour, and most positions include benefits.

Training services provided: The training is eight weeks long. During the first three weeks, students receive CNA training and VESL. The training curriculum is taught by registered nurses who are also trained ESL teachers and has been approved by the Illinois State Board of Professional Regulation. The content of the training includes anatomy, patient care, reading vital signs, feeding, and nutrition. During the last five weeks, students participate in a hands-on clinical practicum under the supervision of registered nurses. After completing their practicums, students take the state CNA certification test. The training is offered four or five times per year.

Employment services provided: Students attend a job readiness seminar, and job placement services are available. Some students are hired by the organization that helped to develop the training, the Council of Jewish Elderly.

Entry requirements: Initially, the program was for refugees only. Because of a change in the program's funding source, the program is no longer limited to refugees. Program participants must be low income (eligible for welfare), have a U.S. work authorization, be in good physical condition, and have a sixth grade English proficiency level, as measured by an Adult Basic Education test. Potential participants are required to take a math test, but they are not required to achieve a certain score. In addition, potential students must go through an assessment process to be accepted into the program, which includes interviews with a recruiter and a registered nurse. During the interviews, they are screened for program eligibility, availability, motivation to work as a CNA, understanding of the position, temperament, and interest in working with the elderly.

Geographic region served: the Chicago, Illinois area

Number of participants: In 1999, the program had 57 participants, most of whom were refugees.

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Program costs: With the exception of the cost of work uniforms, there are no costs to participants.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care services are offered.

Transportation: No transportation assistance is offered.

Tutoring: No formal tutoring services are offered, but the program’s small class size allows staff to address individual deficiencies.

Personal counseling: The program recruiter and the registered nurses are available to provide personal counseling as needed.

Other services: The program covers the cost of the state CNA test fee.

Funding source(s): The program was funded for two years by the Michael Reese Health Trust; this funding ended in the summer of 2000. Funding to continue the program is being provided by a discretionary grant from the State of Illinois and a Community Development Block Grant from the Mayor’s Office for Workforce Development.

Program contact information:

Richard Rotberg
1 S. Franklin Street
Chicago, IL 60606

Phone: 312-357-4504
Fax: 312-855-3282
E-mail: rrotberg@juf.org

Program’s web address: <http://www.jvschicago.org>

“Ms. Mujakic is a refugee from Eastern Europe. She had nursing experience in her native country but needed credentials and American experience to restart her career in the U.S. Ms. Mujakic’s English was limited as was her knowledge of technical equipment and terminology. Once enrolled in the Basic Nurse Aide Training Program, Ms. Mujakic made use of the Vocational English-as-a-Second Language module as well as the extra tutoring and support made possible by small class size and expert instruction. She passed the Basic Nurse Aide Training Program and the State licensing examination. With support from her family and her initial success with the Basic Nurse Aide Training Program, she has decided to go on for training as a Registered Nurse. She currently works as a certified nurse’s assistant while she pursues this goal.” *Richard Rotberg, Assistant Executive Director*



CERTIFIED NURSE'S ASSISTANT

Nurse's Aid Training Program Jewish Family Service Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Jewish Family Service provides refugees the training necessary to become certified nurse's assistants. After passing the state licensing exam, program graduates work for home health care agencies and long term care facilities. The program has been in operation off and on for seven years.

Outcomes: Ninety percent of the students who enroll in the training program complete it. Almost all of the program's graduates get jobs in health care. Most graduates start working part-time but are able to move to full-time hours, with benefits, in about one month. The entry level wage for certified nurse's assistants is \$7.50 per hour.

Training services provided: The training is four weeks (or approximately 120 hours) long. It is provided by the American Red Cross and follows state certification requirements. The class is interpreted by persons who have medical training. In addition, training materials are translated into the languages of participants if needed. After completing classroom work, students participate in an on-site internship. The training is offered twice a year.

Employment services provided: Clients who were referred to the program by Catholic Charities' Office of Migration and Refugee Services or Jewish Family Service receive job placement services from Jewish Family Service. Clients who were referred to the program by the International Services Center return to the Center for job placement services after they complete the training program. (Catholic Charities, Jewish Family Service, and the International Services Center form Cleveland's refugee coalition, which sponsors this program.)

Entry requirements: Program participants must be refugees who have lived in the U.S. less than five years. Participants must be motivated to take the course and must know English well enough to pass the state licensing exam.

Geographic region served: Cuyahoga County, Ohio

Number of participants: The program served approximately 16 refugees last year. About 250 refugees have been served since the program's inception.

Program costs: None.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care assistance is provided.

Transportation: Bus tickets are available as needed.

Tutoring: Tutoring is available as needed.

Personal counseling: If needed, participants are referred to appropriate Jewish Family Service staff for counseling.

Other services: ESL classes are available to students participating in the training, if needed. Most students are involved in ESL classes both prior to the training and after they complete it. The program covers the cost of a physical exam for the student, if needed, and the state CNA test fee.

Funding source(s): The program is funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Program contact information:

Cheryl Lewis

2490 Lee Blvd., Suite 200

Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Program web address: None

Phone: 216-932-9200

Fax: 216-932-9213

E-mail: clewis@jfsa-cleveland.org

“Jewish Family Service’s Nurse Aid Training gives our newly arrived clients a marketable skill that allows them to obtain a full time job with benefits. Almost all clients that go through the program are employed within several months of completing the training. The course provides them with a feeling of accomplishment and in addition helps improve their English.” *Cheryl B. Lewis, Coordinator, Refugee Resettlement*



CERTIFIED NURSE'S ASSISTANT

Refugee Nursing Assistant Training Program International Institute of Minnesota St. Paul, Minnesota

This program provides training to prepare participants for Nursing Assistant/Registered (NA/R) certification (Minnesota's equivalent to the CNA) and work with the geriatric population. It has been in operation since 1990.

Outcomes: Almost all participants complete the program and pass the state NA/R certification examination. About 90% of program graduates obtain NA/R jobs, usually in long-term care facilities. The starting salary is approximately \$9.50 per hour.

Training services provided: Participants complete the NA/R training program in either eight or 11 weeks, depending on their English language proficiency. The eight-week program contains 180 hours of instruction, and the 11-week program contains 250 hours of instruction, both including ESL classes. The training program has three components: classroom NA/R and ESL instruction, lab, and clinicals. Nurses who are employed by the long-term care facility where participants complete their clinical experience teach the state's NA/R curriculum, and ESL instructors teach medical vocabulary. Participants complete a lab to practice the skills they learn in class. ESL instruction is carried over into the labs to help participants integrate their linguistic and medical skills. Participants then complete a clinical experience in a long-term care facility. ESL instructors visit the clinical setting to help participants learn to read work-related materials and encourage them to talk with patients. Five eight-week and four 11-week classes are offered each year.

Employment services provided: Participants complete mock interviews to learn interviewing skills and are taught to complete employment applications. An employment counselor maintains contact with a network of long-term care facilities and provides graduates a listing of available NA/R positions. In addition, the program sponsors job fairs, instructors write job references for program graduates, and participants practice employment-related conflict resolution scenarios in class. After graduates start working, a client advocate and the employment counselor are available to mediate between the graduate and the employer to resolve work-site difficulties.

Entry requirements: The program is open to refugees, asylees, lawful permanent residents, and naturalized citizens. Applicants receive an orientation to working as a NA/R and must pass a thorough screening process. Participants must be physically able to work as NA/Rs, interested in this type of work, and personally ready to complete the program. They must achieve a target score on an ESL screening test designed to assess the likelihood an individual will succeed in this particular program. They also must be willing to feed pork to patients and adapt their clothing to comply with employers' uniform requirements, if necessary.

Geographic region served: The Greater Minneapolis-St. Paul area

Number of participants: Over 450 individuals have completed the NA/R program, most of whom are refugees.

Program costs: There are no participant fees for this program. Students must pay for their own uniforms and chest x-rays, if required for tuberculosis screening.⁴

Services offered:

Child care: The client advocate helps participants locate and arrange for child care services.

Transportation: The client advocate helps participants locate and arrange for transportation services. ESL instructors can transport participants to NA/R certification examination sites, if necessary.

Tutoring: ESL instructors provide assistance to individuals who need extra help to complete the program.

Personal counseling: The client advocate helps participants who experience family and personal crises. Participants who need more intensive counseling services are referred to qualified providers in the community.

Other services: The client advocate helps participants obtain inexpensive or free chest X-rays and uniforms. The program covers the cost of participants' tuberculosis skin tests.

Funding source(s): The program is funded by the United Way of Minneapolis, the United Way of St. Paul, and Minnesota Refugee and Immigrant Services (using ORR funds).

Program contact information:

E-mail specific questions to rhamblen@iimn.org

Program web address: <http://www.iimn.org>

“We tell employers how valuable refugees are as health care employees. Many refugees grew up in cultures in which it was the norm to care for the elderly and find meaning in being able to attend to older people’s needs—especially since they are separated from their own elderly family members. And refugees can empathize with older people’s losses because they have lost so much themselves.” *Carol DaBruzzi, R.N., Medical Careers Advancement Coordinator*

⁴ Public assistance recipients may obtain free chest X-rays.



HOME HEALTH AIDE

Home Health Aide Program Federation Employment Guidance Service (FEGS) New York, New York

The Home Health Aide Program provides training necessary to obtain employment in home health care agencies. Some of the home health aide classes are exclusively for refugees; others are for welfare recipients only. The Home Health Aide Program has been in operation since 1994.

Outcomes: Ninety percent of the refugees who enroll in the program complete the training and obtain employment as home health aides. Their starting salary is \$6.50 per hour.

Training services provided: The training is nine weeks long. During the first six weeks, participants receive 90 hours of VESL and job readiness training. The content of this training includes English grammar and conversation, terminology relevant to home health care, job applications, resumes, job interviewing, and thank you letters. During the next three weeks, participants receive skills training full-time at a home health care agency. The training is offered four times per year.

Employment services provided: Participants who complete the skills training are hired by the home health agency that trained them. Post-employment job counseling is provided as needed.

Entry requirements: Refugee participants must be low income according to the program's income guidelines. They must have reached Level III of ESL proficiency.

Geographic region served: New York City (Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens, and Manhattan)

Number of participants: The Home Health Aide Program serves approximately 60 refugees per year. The program has served approximately 300 refugees since its inception.

Program costs: None.

Services offered:

Child care: The New York Association for New Americans (NYANA) helps participants secure child care.

Transportation: FEGS pays for the cost of participants' transportation to and from school.

Tutoring: Individuals who need additional assistance learning English may participate in FEGS's Partners in Conversation program. The program provides English language instruction and helps participants develop social skills.

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Personal counseling: Home health aide program participants may receive personal counseling services from NYANA.

Other services: NYANA provides case management services to help participants address barriers to program participation.

Funding source(s): The program is funded by the New York Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Affairs.

Program contact information:

Alexandra Arshavsky
315 Hudson Street
New York, NY 10013

Phone: 212-366-8581

Fax: 212-366-8266

E-mail: None

Program's web address: None

“What makes this program unique is the fact that almost everyone who goes through the program gets employed as a home health aide.” *Alexandra Arshavsky, Assistant Supervisor*



HOME HEALTH AIDE

Home Health Aide Program New York Association for New Americans (NYANA) New York, New York

The Home Health Aide Program trains refugees and welfare recipients to work as home health aides. Individuals who complete the program work for home health care agencies or long term care facilities. The Home Health Aide Program has been in operation since 1995.

Outcomes: Over 90 percent of program participants complete the training and obtain home health aide jobs.

Training services provided: First, program participants take part in an introductory training program in which they learn terminology relevant to working as a home health aide. Program participants spend anywhere from a few days to two weeks in the introductory training, depending on their needs. The introductory training is conducted by NYANA staff. Then participants enter a two-and-a-half week home health aide course offered by a local home health care agency. Participants who complete the home health aide course are employed as personal care attendants by the home health care agency that trained them. During their first 60 days of employment, a registered nurse conducts field visits to observe the participant's work. If the registered nurse is satisfied with the participant's performance during the field visits, the participant becomes certified as a home health aide. The Home Health Aide Program is offered on an as needed basis, whenever there are several students who are interested and qualify for the program.

Employment services provided: Program participants are followed by a job counselor during the training and after they become employed. Program participants have access to a job bank of current job listings. NYANA identifies and recruits potential employers. Job developers sensitize employers to the cultural issues of the people they are hiring, and they mediate if difficulties occur after participants begin working.

Entry requirements: The program entry requirements vary depending on the funding source. Under three funding sources, program participants must be refugees. One source funds refugees within their first four months in the U.S., a second within their first two years, and the third within their first five years. A fourth funding source requires that program participants be welfare recipients. All program participants must be in good health and interested in being home health aides.

Geographic region served: New York City (all five burroughs)

Number of participants: Last year, 60 people participated in the Home Health Aide Program, 45 of whom were refugees. The program has served approximately 500 refugees since it began.

Program costs: None.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care assistance is offered.

Transportation: Participants are reimbursed for their transportation costs.

Tutoring: No tutoring services are offered.

Personal counseling: Participants who need personal counseling are referred to NYANA staff members trained to provide these services.

Other services: None.

Funding source(s): The Home Health Aide Program is funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement, the New York Bureau of Refugee and Immigration Affairs, the New York City Refugee/Entrant Targeted Assistant Program, and the Job Training Partnership Act.

Program outcome information:

Marty Hanfling

17 Battery Place

New York, NY 10004

Program web address: None

Phone: 212-898-7804

Fax: 212-425-7170

E-mail: None

“The employment opportunities offered by the home health care agencies with whom we have partnered have proven to represent an excellent entry into the workforce for our refugee population. It is a quick route into a new culture, enabling refugees to develop English language skills in a contextual setting while feeling comfortable administering to home health care agency clients who speak their native language—and quite a number have gone on to become licensed practical nurses.” *Marty Hanfling, Director, Employer Relations*



LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSE

Licensed Vocational Nurse Program Jewish Vocational Service San Francisco, California

The Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) program provides foreign-born nurses with a full review of nursing school curriculum to help them become licensed vocational nurses or registered nurses in the U.S. Individuals who complete the program are eligible to take state nursing credentialing exams and then to work in long term care facilities, hospitals, doctors' offices, outpatient clinics, and adult day care centers. The LVN program has been in operation since 1991.

Outcomes: Ninety-nine percent of those who enroll in the program graduate. Of those who graduate, 80 percent pass their LVN or RN exams and obtain jobs. Of those who obtain jobs, the job retention rate is ninety percent. Wages range from \$14 to \$24 per hour.

Training services provided: The program is nine months long. In the fall, students take a 12-week medical VESL course at Jewish Vocational Service. During the spring, students alternate between taking nursing theory and practice classes at City College of San Francisco's Licensed Vocational Nursing School and completing several clinical rotations at area hospitals. The program is offered once a year.

Employment services provided: Program graduates receive job placement services.

Entry requirements: The program is open to foreign-born people, including refugees, who have a nursing license in their country of origin. Participants must also have an ESL proficiency level of at least four.

Geographic region served: San Francisco Bay area, California

Number of participants: Approximately 25 to 45 refugees are trained in the program each year.

Program costs: None.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care assistance is provided.

Transportation: No transportation assistance is provided.

Tutoring: No tutoring services are provided.

Personal counseling: No personal counseling services are provided.

Other services: None.

Funding source(s): The program is funded by a variety of private foundations and the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Program contact information:

Naomi Marcus

717 Geary Street, Suite 401

San Francisco, CA 94108

Program's web address: <http://www.jvs.org>

Phone: 415-782-6218

Fax: 415-391-3617

E-mail: nmarcus@jvs.org

“If not for this program, I would have been lost when I applied for a hospital nursing position. Thanks to the LVN program, I knew what to expect when I walked into a job, and I knew what to do. The difference between the nursing profession in Russia and the nursing profession here is so great. I would have been lost without this program.” *Yelizaveta Emanuilova, Ukrainian refugee and program graduate*



MEDICAL INTERPRETER

Health Care Interpreter Program Alliance for Multicultural Community Services Houston, Texas

This program provides training participants need to become medical interpreters. The program also provides some training in school and court interpreting. Individuals who complete the program provide interpreter services in clinics, hospitals, and schools. The program has been in operation since December 1997.

Outcomes: During the past year, eight of the 12 participants completed the program. Interpreters hired by the Alliance for Multicultural Community Services are paid \$20 per hour when notified of the interpreter assignment at least 24 hours in advance and \$25 per hour when they receive less than 24 hours notice. Of the 120 interpreters who have been trained during the life of the program, 40 provide interpreter services for the Alliance regularly, and 20 additional interpreters work for the Alliance once or twice a month.

Training services provided: The program consists of 40 hours of classroom instruction followed by practical experience. Training content includes an orientation to interpreting, the interpreter's code of ethics, medical terminology, and the U.S. health care system. Role playing is used to practice interpreter skills. Students must complete the 40 hour course and pass the final exam to enter the practical experience component of the program. Students obtain six hours of practical experience in medical clinics, for which they are paid \$10 per hour. The training is offered every three or four months.

Employment services provided: Program graduates are hired as contract employees by the Alliance for Multicultural Community Services to work as on-call medical interpreters.

Entry requirements: Students must be legally residing in the U.S., age 18 or older, and high school graduates. Students must pass a pre-test to demonstrate familiarity with English and another language. They must also have a car so they are able to get to their assignments when they begin working.

Geographic region served: Harris County, Texas

Number of participants: Twelve people participated in the program during the year beginning July 1, 1999. Three participants were refugees.

Program costs: None. Some students may be paid to complete the training if there is a shortage of interpreters in the language they speak.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care assistance is provided.

Transportation: No transportation assistance is provided.

Tutoring: The trainer may spend extra time with a student as needed.

Personal counseling: No personal counseling is provided.

Other services: None.

Funding source(s): The program was initially funded by the Texas Department of Health. Currently, the program is funded through fees charged for interpreter services.

Program contact information:

Elvisa Albadyri
6440 Hillcrosst, Suite 41
Houston, TX 77081

Program web address: None

Phone: 713-776-4700

Fax: 713-776-4730

E-mail: ayad37@hotmail.com



MEDICAL INTERPRETER

Medical Interpreter Program Lutheran Social Service of New England West Springfield, Massachusetts

Graduates of the Lutheran Social Service Medical Interpreter Program work in doctors' offices and hospitals. This pilot program has been in operation for one year.

Outcomes: Most of the students who complete the training are placed in medical interpreter jobs. Medical interpreters work part-time or on-call and earn \$10 to \$13 per hour. They generally receive health insurance and other employment benefits.

Training services provided: The training is six weeks long. The content of the training includes the role of the interpreter, medical terminology, and confidentiality. Students participate in role-plays to practice their interpreting skills. The training is offered once a year.

Employment services provided: Job placement services are provided.

Entry requirements: The program is open only to refugees. Participants must be age 18 or older, low income (earn 150 percent of the federal poverty level or less), and have lived in the U.S. less than two years. Participants must be fluent in English.

Geographic region served: Western Massachusetts

Number of participants: The Medical Interpreter Program served five students during its first year.

Program costs: None.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care assistance is provided.

Transportation: No transportation assistance is provided.

Tutoring: Tutoring services are provided by volunteers.

Personal counseling: Program participants may receive personal counseling services from the program's partner organization, the West Springfield Counseling Center, if needed.

Other services: ESL classes are available to all participants.

Funding source(s): The program is funded by the Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants.

Program contact information:

Helen Czerniejewski

425 Union Street

West Springfield, MA 01089

Program's web address: None

Phone: 413-787-0725

Fax: 413-734-0859

E-mail: lsshelen@aol.com



MEDICAL INTERPRETER

Translation and Interpreter Network Catholic Charities of Ft. Worth Arlington, Texas

This program teaches participants the skills necessary to provide interpreter services in the medical, legal, and social service agency settings. The program has been in operation since January 2000.

Outcomes: Out of the 27 students who had enrolled in the course as of June 2000, 25 completed the course and passed the final exam. All 25 were hired as contract employees by the Translation and Interpreter Network. They are paid \$23 per hour and work on an on-call basis.

Training services provided: The 40-hour classroom training is based on the Cross Cultural Health Care Program's⁵ Bridging the Gap curriculum. The content of the curriculum includes the role of the interpreter, the U.S. health care system, medical terminology, an examination of culture as it applies to the role of the interpreter, communication skills and advocacy, and professional conduct. Students have the opportunity to work in groups with others who speak the same language, and role-plays are used to practice the skills learned. The training is offered every two to three months.

Employment services provided: Students who complete the 40 hour training and pass the final exam are hired by Catholic Charities as bilingual translators/interpreters. To maintain employment as translators/interpreters, they are required to obtain four units of continuing education per year, which is provided by the Translation and Interpreter Network.

Entry requirements: Students must be fluent in English and at least one language needed by the Translation and Interpreter Network. Interpreting experience is preferred.

Geographic region served: Dallas and Tarrant Counties, Texas

Number of participants: As of June 8, 2000, 25 students had completed the training and passed the final exam. Nineteen of these students were refugees.

Program costs: The fee for the training is \$50.

⁵ The Cross Cultural Health Care Program provides medical interpreter training and train-the-trainer services. To reach the Cross Cultural Health Care Program, write to 1200 12th Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98144 or call 206-621-4472.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care assistance is provided.

Transportation: No transportation assistance is provided.

Tutoring: No tutoring services are offered. Students who do not pass the final exam have the opportunity to retake it.

Personal counseling: No personal counseling is provided.

Other services: None.

Funding source(s): The program is funded by the Texas Department of Health. Program staff anticipate that the program will be funded solely by translation/interpreter fees by next year.

Program contact information:

Chris Aufdembrink or Sharon Bush
401 W. Sanford, Suite 2900
Arlington, TX 76011

Phone: 817-860-9915
Fax: 817-274-5445
E-mail: tinetwork@juno.com

Program's web address: <http://tinetwork.homestead.com/home.html>



MEDICAL SECRETARY

Medical Secretary Program Lutheran Social Service of New England West Springfield, Massachusetts

This program provides the training necessary for refugees to become medical secretaries. The program has been in operation for two years.

Outcomes: Most of the students who complete the training are placed in medical secretary jobs. They earn \$10 to \$12 per hour and receive health insurance and other employment benefits.

Training services provided: Lutheran Social Service staff recruit students for the program, provide them with basic computer training, and help them enroll in medical secretary training at the Massachusetts Career Development Institute. The medical secretary training includes three months of classroom training—which covers insurance coding, medical terminology, and record keeping—and a one month internship at a doctor’s office.

Employment services provided: Job placement services are provided by Lutheran Social Service.

Entry requirements: The program only serves refugees. Participants must be age 18 or older, low income (earn 150 percent of the federal poverty level or less), and have lived in the U.S. less than two years. Participants must be fluent in English.

Geographic region served: Western Massachusetts

Number of participants: The Medical Secretary Program served approximately 15 people last year. Thirty people have been served over the life of the program.

Program costs: None.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care assistance is provided.

Transportation: No transportation assistance is provided.

Tutoring: Tutoring services are provided by volunteers.

Personal counseling: Program participants may receive personal counseling services from the program’s partner organization, the West Springfield Counseling Center, if needed.

Other services: ESL classes are available to all participants.

Climbing the Ladder

Funding source(s): The program is funded by the Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants.

Program contact information:

Helen Czerniejewski

425 Union Street

West Springfield, MA 01089

Program's web address: None

Phone: 413-787-0725

Fax: 413-734-0859

E-mail: lsshelen@aol.com

“Many of our clients have children they need to feed and clothe. As such our training has to be intensive and prepare our clients in the shortest possible time frame to work in the highest paying jobs possible. The training empowers our clients with the necessary tools to be self-sufficient and helps them maintain a degree of dignity, self-reliance, and independence. The instructors are certified practicing professionals in their respective fields who are able to bring both theoretical concepts and practical aspects to the classroom. This will inevitably help our clients get a real grasp of the industry they are getting into.” *Olga Tkach, Job Developer, and Andrew Loke, Program Coordinator*



MULTIPLE CAREERS

Cambodian Community Employment Project Cambodian Association of America Long Beach, California

The Cambodian Community Employment Project prepares refugees for jobs in a variety of careers, including health care. Participants interested in health care have been trained as certified nurse's assistants, medical assistants, and clerks/receptionists in health care settings. The program has been in operation since October 1998.

Outcomes: Participants placed in health care positions earn \$8.65 to \$12.00 per hour and receive health care benefits.

Training services provided: First, participants receive job readiness training for three months to one year, depending on their needs. Job readiness training covers resume preparation, employment referral, interview preparation, communication skills, appropriate conduct in the work environment, and VESL specific to health care. The training is offered initially in a group and then through one-on-one appointments with case managers. Next, participants are placed with an employer for on-the-job training. The employer may choose to send the participant to classroom training (for example, CNA training). During on-the-job training, the participant's wages may be subsidized.⁶

Employment services provided: Job placement and retention services are provided.

Entry requirements: The program is open to refugees who receive welfare benefits, have been unemployed for the last twelve months, and do not have a college degree. Participants must also be at least 21 years old, with one exception: a person younger than age 21 can participate if that person is the head of the household. Participants must provide the following documents: a driver's license, green card, social security card, and documentation that they receive welfare.

Geographic region served: Greater Long Beach area, California

Number of participants: In the past year, approximately 25 refugees have been placed in jobs in health care settings.

Program costs: None.

⁶ The Cambodian Community Employment Project pays at least a portion of the program participant's wages while they work in subsidized jobs.

Services offered:

Child care: If participants are not able to secure child care on their own, case managers will help them find child care.

Transportation: If participants do not have transportation, case managers transport them to job readiness training and job interviews.

Tutoring: No tutoring services are offered.

Personal counseling: Personal counseling services are provided as needed.

Other services: None.

Funding sources(s): The program is funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Program contact information:

Kimthai R. Kuoch
2547 Atlantic Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90806
Program's web address: None

Phone: 562-427-6196
Fax: 562-424-4339
E-mail: None



MULTIPLE CAREERS

Home Health Aide and Certified Nurse's Assistant Program Corporation for Public Management Springfield, Massachusetts

This program provides training and employment services to help refugees become employed in a variety of careers, including home health aide and certified nurse's assistant (CNA). Persons who complete the program work in long term care facilities and home health agencies. The program has been in operation since January 2000.

Outcomes: All of the program graduates have obtained employment as home health aides. Entry-level home health aides earn about \$9 per hour, and CNAs earn about \$8.50 per hour. Both home health aides and CNAs receive health insurance and other employment benefits. The job retention rate is 100 percent.

Training services provided: The program includes classroom training, social events, and job shadowing. Classes cover job readiness skills, general ESL, and VESL for health careers. Classroom training usually lasts 12 weeks, though it can be extended to build participants' English language proficiency. Social events are designed to build participants' social skills and help staff get to know them well enough to match participants with specific jobs. Next, participants are placed in jobs at either a rehabilitation center or a long term care facility, where they shadow current employees. The employer trains the participant to work as a home health aide and then, in some cases, as a certified nurse's assistant. Students may also participate in post-employment English language training and attend workshops on topics such as saving money, nutrition, and personal health. The training is available on an ongoing basis.

Employment services provided: A job counselor works with participants to identify their career interests and accompanies them to job interviews. A job developer identifies job opportunities in the community and posts current job listings. Staff can provide on-the-job mediation as needed.

Entry requirements: The program is open to refugees who have lived in the U.S. for 18 months to five years.

Geographic region served: Westfield, Massachusetts

Number of participants: In August of 2000, eight refugees were participating in the health care training program.

Program costs: None.

Services offered:

Child care: Child care vouchers are available.

Transportation: If needed, the job counselor will drive clients to interviews. The training location is on a bus line.

Tutoring: Volunteers provide one-on-one tutoring services during the CNA training, if requested.

Personal counseling: A certified mental health counselor is available to identify and address clients' barriers to completing the program.

Other services: A fuel assistance program is available, if needed, to help clients pay their home heating bills.

Funding source(s): The Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants (MORI) receives a Targeted Assistance Grant from the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement to fund this program. MORI contracts with the City of Westfield to deliver training and employment services to refugees, and the City subcontracts with the Corporation for Public Management.

Program contact information:

Gale Flood

1628 Main Street

Springfield, MA 01103

E-mail: gfflood@partnersforcommunity.org

Program's web address: <http://www.partnersforcommunity.org>

Phone: 413-272-2294

Fax: 413-731-5399

“The Targeted Assistance Grant program, administered by the Corporation for Public Management, is successfully delivering employment and educational services to the Russian refugee population in the City of Westfield. This program has provided English language training, job skills, support and development, and vocational training to well over 60 clients in less than a year with nearly 75 percent of clients retaining employment after 90 days. We look forward to another year of collaboration with the City of Westfield, Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants, and our clients.” *Gale Flood, Director of Special Projects*



MULTIPLE CAREERS

Home Health Aide/Certified Nurse's Assistant Program Lutheran Social Service of New England West Springfield, Massachusetts

The Home Health Aide/CNA Program prepares students to work as home health aides or certified nurse's assistants. The program has been in operation for five years.

Outcomes: Most of the students who complete the program are placed in CNA and home health aide jobs. The starting salary for home health aides is \$9.00 per hour. The starting salary for CNAs ranges from \$7.50 to \$11.00 per hour. Generally, CNAs who work in hospitals are paid more than those who work in long term care facilities. Home health aides and CNAs receive health insurance and other benefits if they work full-time.

Training services provided: The training is nine weeks long. During the first six weeks, Lutheran Social Service staff teach the participants medical terminology in their own language and English. Next, the participants are referred to Caregivers, a certified training program, for three weeks of training to learn the skills needed to be a home health aide and certified nurse's assistant. The Home Health Aide/CNA program is offered three times a year.

Employment services provided: Job placement services are provided by Lutheran Social Service.

Entry requirements: The program is open to refugees only. Participants must be age 18 or older, low income (earn 150 percent of the federal poverty level or less), and have lived in the U.S. less than five years.

Geographic region served: Western Massachusetts

Number of participants: The Home Health Aide/CNA Program served 30 participants last year. One-hundred and fifty refugees have been served over the life of the program.

Program costs: None.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care assistance is provided.

Transportation: No transportation assistance is provided.

Tutoring: Tutoring services are provided by volunteers.

Climbing the Ladder

Personal counseling: Program participants may receive personal counseling services from the program's partner organization, the West Springfield Counseling Center, if needed.

Other services: ESL classes are available to all participants.

Funding source(s): The program is funded by the Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants.

Program contact information:

Helen Czerniejewski

425 Union Street

West Springfield, MA 01089

Program's web address: None

Phone: 413-787-0725

Fax: 413-734-0859

E-mail: lsshelen@aol.com

"I am a working mother with four children. I was working in a factory and the salary was not so good. I was always tired when I reached home and never had enough time to spend with my family. I wanted a better job and more money. I went to Lutheran Social Service and because I do not have many skills, they trained me in the Home Health Aide/CNA class. Now I am working in a home health agency and I make \$9 per hour with benefits. After my probationary period, my pay will increase to \$10 per hour. Now I am happier and I thank Lutheran Social Service for helping me and my family have a better life." *Oksana Shapovalova, program graduate*



MULTIPLE CAREERS

Medical Biller/Clerical Assistant Program Federation Employment Guidance Service (FEGS) Trades and Business School New York, New York

The Medical Biller/Clerical Assistant Program trains participants to work as medical billers and medical clerical assistants in doctors' offices, dentists' offices, and hospitals. The Medical Biller/Clerical Assistant Program has been in operation since March 1995.

Outcomes: Eighty-five percent of the students who enroll in the program complete it. Of the students who complete the program, seventy-six percent obtain medical biller or clerical assistant positions. Medical biller salaries range from \$20,000 to \$27,000 per year. Clerical assistant salaries range from \$11,000 to \$22,000 per year.

Training services provided: The training is 26 weeks (or 780 hours) long. It includes classes in keyboarding and other computer skills, anatomy and physiology, coding, medical office procedures, and getting a job in health care. Included in the 780 hours is a 180-hour internship. The training is offered two or three times per year, depending on funding availability.

Employment services provided: A job developer identifies job opportunities in the community. Job counselors help students write cover letters and resumes and record mock interviews on videotape.

Entry requirements: Program participants do not have to be refugees or foreign-born persons. Participants with high school diplomas or GEDs are preferred. Those who do not have a high school diploma or GED must take a test to determine whether they would benefit from the program. Those who make a sufficient score on the test may enter the program. Students need to be able to speak and understand English.

Geographic region served: New York City (all five burroughs)

Number of participants: During the last fiscal year, 30 of the 58 trainees were refugees.

Program costs: None.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care assistance is provided.

Transportation: No transportation assistance is provided.

Tutoring: No tutoring services are provided.

Climbing the Ladder

Personal counseling: Participants who need personal counseling are referred to FEGS human service workers.

Other services: None.

Funding source(s): The program is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, New York Association for New Americans, U.S. Veterans Administration, New York Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Affairs, and New York Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities.

Program contact information:

Linda Napolitano or Denise Dunn
80 Vandam Street
New York, NY 10013
Program's web address: None

Phone: 212-366-8450
Fax: 212-366-8336
E-mail: Lnapolitano@fegs.org

“The Medical Biller/Clerical Assistant program is wonderful because it helps students get good jobs. Medical biller jobs are plentiful and offer good salaries, job security, and opportunities for advancement.” *Linda Napolitano, School Director*



MULTIPLE CAREERS

Medical Careers Advancement Program International Institute of Minnesota St. Paul, Minnesota

This program prepares refugees already working in health careers to enter and complete training programs leading to more advanced credentials. It has been in operation since August 1998.

Outcomes: About one-fourth of the participants are already enrolled in training programs that prepare them for careers in health care; these careers currently include LPN, RN, surgical technician, dentist, and respiratory therapist. By the end of the year 2000, at least five participants will have completed training programs.

Training services provided: This program prepares participants to enroll in health careers training programs offered by local colleges and universities and provides emotional support and concrete assistance to them as they move through the training programs. The program coordinator completes a comprehensive assessment of potential participants' educational, emotional, and situational readiness to enter the program and uses the results to develop individualized educational plans. Participants receive information about health career employment opportunities, career entry requirements, and local colleges and universities that offer training programs, as well as enrollment assistance. Participants may enroll in the International Institute of Minnesota's 160-hour Academic ESL for Medical Career Advancement class, which focuses on skills needed to succeed in academic classes (for example, vocabulary acquisition, academic reading, the mechanics of writing) and incorporates medical concepts and vocabulary.

Employment services provided: Program staff help participants locate and apply for jobs. They also monitor participants' early job performance and can offer mediation services.

Entry requirements: The program is open to refugees, asylees, lawful permanent residents, and naturalized citizens who are not native English speakers or who have limited English language skills. Participants must be working in a health care position; most are NA/Rs⁷ or home health aides when they enter the program. They must have strong employer recommendations and the ability to speak English well enough to take and pass college classes or to develop this skill by taking academic ESL classes.

Geographic region served: The Greater Minneapolis-St. Paul area

⁷ The Nursing Assistant/Registered (NA/R) certificate is Minnesota's equivalent to the CNA.

Number of participants: In August, 2000, the program had 83 participants, 34 of whom were refugees or asylees.

Program costs: There are no participant fees for this program.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care assistance is offered.

Transportation: No transportation assistance is offered.

Tutoring: The program coordinator provides tutoring assistance as needed.

Personal counseling: Supportive counseling is provided. Participants who need more intensive counseling services are referred to qualified providers in the community.

Other services: Program staff help students access financial aid to cover college/university expenses, including scholarships available through the International Institute and potential employers (certain long-term care facilities).

Funding source(s): The program is funded by the United Way and Minnesota Refugee and Immigrant Services (using ORR funds). A private donor provided money for scholarships, and United Way and a foundation funded a new computer lab for use by program clients.

Program contact information:

E-mail specific questions to rhamblen@iimn.org

Program web address: <http://www.iimn.org>

“Participants have told us that they had wanted for years to become nurses but didn’t know how to start or didn’t have the courage to do it. This flexible, responsive, truly individualized program helps them prepare in every way for entering the world of American higher education and gives them a taste of success.” *Carol DaBruzzi, R.N., Medical Careers Advancement Coordinator*



MULTIPLE CAREERS

Montgomery County Refugee Training Program Montgomery County Public Schools Silver Spring, Maryland

The Montgomery County Refugee Training Program provides refugees and asylees the training necessary to become geriatric nursing assistants and to be qualified to take the state CNA licensing exam. Program graduates work for long term care facilities, hospitals, and home health care agencies.⁸ The geriatric nursing assistant training has been offered since April 1997 and will end December 30, 2000.

Outcomes: The pay for geriatric nursing assistants and certified nurse's assistants starts at \$7 to \$8 per hour, and both positions offer medical and other employment benefits. Some program graduates opt to work as home health aides. The pay for home health aides ranges from \$7 to \$9 per hour, but home health aides generally do not receive employment benefits.

Training services provided: The course is about 112 hours long. First, participants receive 75 hours of classroom training, using a curriculum that has been approved by the state. Topics covered in the curriculum include anatomy, disease, body alignment, weight measurement, mouth care, transferring patients, safety, confidentiality, mental health, spiritual care, and the health care team. Next, participants receive 37½ hours of skills training at a local long term care facility. Participants who successfully complete the written and skills tests at the end of the course become geriatric nursing assistants. Graduates who pass the state CNA exam become certified nurse's assistants.

Employment services provided: Participants receive assistance during the job search process. After they become licensed, program staff help the participants fill out practice applications. A database of potential employers is available; it provides information about salaries and benefits and comments about graduates' experiences working for the employer. Post-employment services are also offered. After participants have been working as certified nurse's assistants for a while, program staff encourage them to consider obtaining further education in the health care field to progress to a higher paying job.

Entry requirements: Course participants must be refugees or asylees. Before enrolling, they must pass a test to demonstrate their knowledge of nursing-related terms in English. The Montgomery County Public Schools offers courses, such as "ESL for Jobs" and "Health Care English Class," to help students gain the English skills needed to pass the test.

⁸ Many employers in Maryland will hire geriatric nursing assistants or certified nurse's assistants to fill home health aide positions.

Geographic region served: Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties, Maryland

Number of participants: About 160 people have attended the course, an average of about 46 participants per year.

Program costs: Program participants must pay for the cost of their uniforms. Most participants must also pay for their textbooks.⁹ The cost of the test fees is covered by the program.

Services offered:

Child care: No child care assistance is provided.

Transportation: No transportation assistance is provided.

Tutoring: Tutors are provided if needed.

Personal counseling: Personal counseling is provided if needed.

Other services: None.

Funding source(s): The Montgomery County Refugee Training Program is funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Program contact information:

Donna Kinerney

12518 Greenley Street

Silver Spring, MD 20906

E-mail: donna_kinerney@fc.mcps.k12.md.us

Program’s web address: <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/adulted/refugee.html>

Phone: 301-929-2025

Fax: 301-929-2099

“Students loved the geriatric nursing assistant class! The clinical portion of the training gives them a good idea of life on the job. The students enjoy working with other people from around the world. One student from Africa told me that at home the different groups would be fighting, but here they needed to work together.” *Donna Kinerney, Refugee Program Specialist*



⁹ The Montgomery Country Refugee Training Program covers the cost of welfare recipients’ textbooks.

MULTIPLE CAREERS

Refugees in Health Care Jobs La Maestra Family Clinic San Diego, California

The Refugees in Health Care Jobs program provides refugees with the training necessary to work in a variety of health care positions, including hospital support staff, patient representative, medical interpreter, health education assistant, appointment clerk, dental office assistant, receptionist, outreach worker, and home health worker. Settings in which program graduates work include hospitals, public health clinics, home health care agencies, and facilities for the developmentally disabled. The Refugees in Health Care Jobs program has been in operation since October 1998.

Outcomes: Seventy-five percent of those who enroll in the program complete it. All of the participants who complete the program obtain unsubsidized jobs. Most salaries are in the \$8.00 to \$8.50 per hour range.

Training services provided: The training is ten months long and is composed of four phases. During phase one, participants receive one month (128 hours) of classroom training, which covers medical terminology, expectations of the American workplace, receptionist skills, nutrition, safety skills, CPR, first aid, home health care, and filing procedures. During phase two, which lasts three months, participants continue to receive classroom training for three hours per day and work in subsidized jobs¹⁰ for four hours per day. During phase three, which lasts six months, participants work full-time in subsidized jobs. During phase four, participants are hired as full-time, unsubsidized employees.¹¹ The training is available on an ongoing basis.

Employment services provided: During phase two of the training, participants are linked with subsidized jobs that match their skills and interests. They are placed with employers that: (1) anticipate being able to hire the individual in an unsubsidized position at the end of phase three and (2) are likely to accommodate their cultural practices. Generally, participants stay at the same work site during phases two through four. Clinic staff recruit employers for the program and serve as liaisons between the employer and the employee if problems occur.

¹⁰ The Refugees in Health Care Jobs program pays at least a portion of the program participant's wages while they work in subsidized jobs.

¹¹ During phase four, the employer pays 100 percent of the employee's wages.

Climbing the Ladder

Entry requirements: The program only serves refugees. To participate in the program, the refugee must have lived in the U.S. for at least eight months and not have become a U.S. citizen. Program participants must be at least 21 years old. Participants must take an English proficiency course before entering the program. If their English skills are poor, they are required to take an ESL class before they enter the program.

Geographic region served: San Diego, California

Number of participants: The program has served approximately 200 refugees since its inception.

Program costs: None.

Services offered:

Child care: Program staff help participants access programs to help with the cost of child care.

Transportation: Program staff help participants find solutions to transportation difficulties as they arise.

Tutoring: Instructors spend extra time with students on an individual basis if needed.

Personal counseling: Participants who need personal counseling are referred to other organizations for these services.

Other services: None.

Funding source(s): The program is funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Program contact information:

Jeff Suchland or Silva Jurich

4185 Fairmount Avenue

San Diego, CA 92105

Program's web address: None

Phone: 619-281-3673

Fax: 619-281-6738

E-mail: None



PATIENT CARE TECHNICIAN

Patient Care Technician Program (with dialysis sub-specialty) Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission (EOC) Fresno, California

This program trains refugees to become patient care technicians in dialysis units. Participants receive on-the-job training and then are hired by the employer that trained them. Fresno County EOC is also in the process of developing training opportunities in other health care related sub-specialties. The program has been in operation since August 1999.

Outcomes: Individuals who work for the Fresno/Madera Dialysis Clinics as patient care technicians earn \$8.87 per hour and receive health, dental, and life insurance.

Training services provided: Participants receive 12 months of on-the-job training at the Fresno/Madera Dialysis Clinics, during which time they are paid a subsidized wage.¹² The clinic provides students with assistance they need to pass the state's patient care technician certification exam.

Employment services provided: Participants who complete the on-the-job training and pass the certification exam are hired for an unsubsidized position by the Fresno/Madera Dialysis Clinics.

Entry requirements: The program is only open to refugees. Participants must be able to speak to patients in and read English.

Geographic region served: Fresno, California

Number of participants: Six refugees have participated in the patient care technician training since the program's inception.

Program costs: None.

Services offered:

Child care: If child care costs are a barrier to participating in the program, the costs of the participant's child care are reimbursed.

Transportation: Bus tokens or bus passes are provided if needed.

Tutoring: Participants may receive additional assistance from clinic staff to help them pass the certification exam.

¹² The Patient Care Technician Program pays at least a portion of the program participant's wages.

Personal counseling: Fresno County EOC staff provide services needed to address participants' barriers to completing the program.

Other services: The program provides an ESL instructor at the training site if needed.

Funding source(s): The program is funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Program contact information:

Lalo Acevedo

1900 Mariposa Mall, Suite 111

Fresno, CA 93721

Program web address: None

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“The Community Service Employment Opportunities Program¹³ has opened a door for many refugees here in Fresno who had thought that they would never find a job because of their limited skills and English. Now with this program, they can see that there is still hope in getting a job and getting a start on becoming self-sufficient. I feel a sense of joy inside when I see a client smile when they find out that they've been hired for a position. I know that putting refugees to work raises their self-esteem because they are now able to say that they've earned their own money and have brought their own bread (rice) home.” *Souksavanh Mouanoutoua, Employment Services Representative*



¹³ The Patient Care Technician Program is a component of the Community Service Employment Opportunities Program.

ADDENDUM

A SAMPLING OF HEALTH CARE OCCUPATIONS

Professional Specialties

Audiologist
Dentist
Dietician
Nutritionist
Occupational therapist
Pharmacist
Physical therapist
Physician
Physician assistant
Registered nurse
Respiratory therapist
Social worker
Speech-language pathologist

Service Careers

Dental assistant
Food and beverage service occupations
Food preparation workers
Guards
Home health/personal care aides
Janitors and cleaners (including housekeeping)
Medical assistant
Nursing aide
Pharmacy assistant
Physical therapy assistant/aide
Psychiatric aide

Technicians and Support Specialties

Clinical laboratory technologist/technician
Dental hygienist
Dispensing optician
Emergency medical technician
Health information technician
Licensed practical nurse
Medical records technician
Psychiatric technician
Radiologic technologist/technician
Surgical technologist

Administrative Support Careers

Billing, cost, and rate clerk
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerk
General office clerk
General office secretary
Medical secretary
Supervisors and managers
Receptionist/information clerk

Executive, Administrative, and Managerial Careers

Health services manager
General manager
Executive officer

This career list appears in the Health Services section of the on-line *Career Guide to Industries* (part of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*), published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor. Additional information about these occupations (for example, nature of the work, working conditions, training requirements and other qualifications, job outlook, advancement possibilities, and earnings) is available at the *Career Guide to Industries* web site: <http://stats.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs035.htm#occupations> and <http://stats.bls.gov/oco/ocoiab.htm>.



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