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Normalized Healthcare Utilization Among Refugees Resettled in Philadelphia, 2007-2016

Kaushal Desai, MPH

Thomas Jefferson University, kaushal.desai@jefferson.edu

Colleen Payton, PhD, MPH, CHES

Moravian College

Kevin Scott, MD

Thomas Jefferson University, Kevin.Scott@jefferson.edu

Brandon George, PhD, MS

Thomas Jefferson University, brandon.george@jefferson.edu

Marc Altshuler, MD

Thomas Jefferson University, marc.altshuler@jefferson.edu

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Normalized Healthcare Utilization Among Refugees Resettled in Philadelphia, 2007-2016

K Desai, Payton C, Scott K, George B, Altshuler M

Background/Purpose: About 70,000 new refugees are resettled in the United States each year, of which approximately 600 are resettled in Philadelphia. This project seeks to better understand the patterns of healthcare utilization, including primary care, emergency, and hospitalization, among refugees resettled in Philadelphia, PA, between 2007 and 2016. **Methods:** Demographic and healthcare utilization data for 1,144 refugees seen at Jefferson Family Medical Associates were compiled from the Jefferson Longitudinal Refugee Health Registry. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the refugee population. Negative binomial count regressions were used to test for significant correlations between major demographic variables and healthcare utilization. **Results:** Refugees had an average of 7.24 (SD = 9.35) and a median of 4 primary care visits. Visits rates were highest during the first eight months post resettlement and declined significantly after expiration of Refugee Medical Assistance. Country of origin and year of arrival were significantly associated with differing rates of healthcare utilization. **Discussion:** Overall, refugees utilized primary healthcare services at a slightly higher rate than the U.S. average. There are differences in utilization among various sub-populations within the refugee community. Future studies should further explore these differences in healthcare utilization patterns among recently resettled refugees.