

# Refugee Health Microlearning Series: Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Transcript

UPDATED 7/22/2022

## Slide 1

### Refugee Health Screening: Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

- Hello and welcome to the micro-learning series presented by the Refugee Health Program at the Minnesota Department of Health. This series is meant to help providers, clinical teams, and public health better understand best practices for refugee health screenings. This video focuses on **Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing** screening guidance during refugee health assessments.

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### What do you need to know

#### Who?

- All arrivals ages 18 or older should be screened for mental health and emotional wellbeing.

#### What?

- Providers should screen eligible individuals by using the Minnesota's five to six question tool called the Well-being and Emotions Check, also called the *WE-Check*.

#### When?

- Mental health and emotional wellbeing checks should occur during the initial refugee health screening and any findings should receive appropriate follow up.

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### *WE-Check*: Minnesota Well-being and Emotions Check

- The Minnesota Well-being and Emotions Check has five main questions, with one additional question if any of the previous five is endorsed. The questions are:
  - In the past month, have you felt too sad?
  - In the past month, have you been worrying or thinking too much?
  - In the past month, have thoughts about the past kept you from doing things or spending time with others?
  - In the past month, did you have sleep problems?

- In the past month, did you have any memory problems?
- And if any of the above were endorsed, we ask a supplemental functionality item:
  - Did any of the above stop you from doing things you need to do every day?

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### Updates in Guidance

#### Is this different from previous MDH guidance?

- This is a new topic to Minnesota refugee health screening guidance.

#### Is this different from national guidance?

- Although screening recommendations are the same for national guidance, Minnesota's Refugee Health Program suggests using the Minnesota-developed assessment tool, and we also have Minnesota-specific reporting requirements and resources.

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### Report Screening Results

- As part of the paperwork for the Refugee Health Assessment that is submitted to the Refugee Health Program, there is a section where status of screening completion, as well as results for each individual question, can be recorded.
- It is very important to capture the screening as well as follow-up results. Please make sure this section is being filled out appropriately.

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### Interpretation of Results

- If a patient endorses any two items, that generally indicates a positive screening result.
- Clinical judgment should be used to verify the screening interpretation as well as supplement any symptoms not endorsed.
  - For example, if someone says no to all items but is visibly distraught, that may still be a positive result and need subsequent referral or follow-up.

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### If Screening is Positive

- If screening is positive, assess risk of suicide, self-harm, or harm to others.

- Be aware of referral options and resources. We listed a directory with health services that serve diverse communities in our resource slides.
- Inform patients that mental health care is covered in the same way physical health care is.
- Since mental health can often be a confusing topic for many patients, we recommend the teach back method to ensure patients understand and agree with the proposed care plan.

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### If Screening is Negative

- If a patient endorses one item or less, that generally indicates a negative screen.
- Mental health needs change over the resettlement process, so you should consider integrating mental health screening or discussion into ongoing care.

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### Follow-up

- Level of need and urgency should be assessed when creating a follow-up plan.
- Any emergent needs should follow safety and best practice protocols of the clinic.
- Appropriate follow-up should be considered, whether that be a referral to a mental health professional, following up with primary care, or connecting to social support systems.

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### Screening Examples

- Two screening examples using interpreters are available to better understand how to integrate the Well-being and Emotions Check assessment into the flow of an initial health screening.

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### Resources

- If you're interested in learning more, please look at the full screening guidance and other resources outlined in this page.

## Slide 12

### Thank you

- The well-being of all Minnesotans, including those with refugee status, depends on the work and dedication of our partners. Thank you so much for your work.

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Minnesota Department of Health  
Refugee Health Program  
PO Box 64975  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975  
651-201-5414  
[health.refugee@state.mn.us](mailto:health.refugee@state.mn.us)  
[www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us)

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*To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5414*