

July 25, 2017

**Subject: Bridge Clinic for Refugees**

Since 2004, Vancouver Coastal Health's Bridge Clinic has been the only service within B.C. with a specific mandate to provide for the initial health assessment, mental health screening, public health assessment and immunizations, and primary health care for refugees upon arrival to Vancouver.

Bridge Clinic has successfully assisted over 50,000 refugees to access services in their chosen communities. Its main priority is to ensure these new refugees receive the highest level and quality of health care when it comes to these initial services and to make sure health connections are established with providers in the Lower Mainland communities where most reside.

In January 2017, the opening of the ISSBC Welcome Centre Medical Clinic saw initial screening and health care of Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) arriving in BC redirected from Bridge Clinic.


Given this and the fact that Bridge's current clients are ready to transition to care in their home communities, services at Bridge Clinic will ramp down by November 3, 2017 and the expertise of staff and physicians spread across VCH Vancouver's primary care clinics in the community. VCH will also work with a network of local family physicians who are passionate about the work in order to increase overall capacity for refugee health in Vancouver.

Bridge will continue to accept new clients until August 18, 2017. Over the next few weeks, we will be creating a customized transition care plan for each current client to ensure they continue to receive the services they need throughout the transition process. We are also working with Fraser Health to ensure clients receive the information they need to be transitioned to care resources in their home community.

After August 18, refugees will be referred directly to VCH primary care clinics or Fraser Health clinics in the community where they reside. More information will be provided by Bridge staff as to where new refugees can access care.

As a valued partner/stakeholder, we will be sure to keep you informed as plans for ramping down clinic services occur. In the meantime, if you should have any questions, please contact Jill Doctoroff, Manager for Bridge Clinic, at 604-833-0192.

Sincerely,



Lizzy Ambler  
Director, Public Health  
Vancouver Community  
Vancouver Coastal Health