

A MESSAGE FROM THE CO- CHAIRS

2021 presented another challenging year as we all endured the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic and multiple waves of new variants. Through this challenging time, however, the RHC saw many successes. In partnership with Migrante Alberta, we used a previously awarded anti-racism grant from the provincial government to develop two podcasts on the experiences of undocumented people accessing healthcare in Alberta. The first in the series highlighted stories from community members and clients of Migrante and how the pandemic has further complicated their healthcare. The second podcast interviewed healthcare providers and activists who support people who do not have health insurance.

The RHC was also excited to support the opening of the New Canadians Health Centre (NCHC), which has been a dream of the RHC since its inception. The NCHC is an important step in reducing the barriers that new Canadians' experience when accessing healthcare in Edmonton. We also continued initiatives through our working groups on education and community engagement. As we look forward to 2022, we are guided by the discussion and feedback of our membership and our Community Engagement Report which directs us towards ongoing advocacy, educational projects and issues of access and equity within the health care system.

JESSIE BRETON
RHIANNA CHARCHUK

*New members of our
community face
unique barriers to
health and
wellbeing. We aim to
forge a new path
together.*



EDUCATION

The education working group aims to increase the ability of healthcare providers to support refugees in the healthcare system. In 2021 we presented to the University of Alberta medical students and the South Primary Care Network on refugee health. The RHC started building partnerships with the University of Alberta's Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry to explore incorporating more curriculum on culturally appropriate care and healthcare for refugees. We also continued to build the content on our website to ensure resources are readily available. One of these resources is a pamphlet on the Interim Federal Health Program which the Education Working Group developed to help healthcare providers set up access to this insurance program. Moving forward, we hope to start on a healthcare system passport project to support newcomers with navigating the system.

Healthcare for All Podcast



“ They said health is wealth. How can you say health is wealth if there are only few people that can access it. It should be for everybody, it should be for all. With ongoing pandemic, how can we protect each one of us if there are people left behind. ”

Danilo, Non-status migrant

Listen to the Healthcare For All Podcast at: http://tiny.cc/HealthCare4All_Podcast01

  A Project of Migrante Alberta and Refugee Health Coalition

Undocumented migrants cannot access healthcare. In the times of the COVID-19 pandemic, they are one of the most vulnerable sectors. They are also essential service workers that sustain our communities but have been excluded from services and protections. This podcast is a project of [Migrante Alberta](#) and the Refugee Health Coalition. It is produced by Mubarik Adams.

[Join the Migrante Alberta Healthcare for All Campaign](#)



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement working group aims to build connections between the RHC and the broader Edmonton community, both those who work in healthcare and those in the settlement sector. The group helps to ensure the RHC is grounded in the reality of the community and responsive to their needs. In 2021, we presented to the Edmonton Local Immigration Partnership (ELIP) on the work of the RHC. We also connected with ASSIST, McCaffrey Consulting, the Edmonton Midwifery Cooperative and Meadowlark Midwifery, the Parenting in 2 Cultures program at CSS, Action for Healthy Communities, the Somali Canadian Cultural Society of Edmonton, and the Africa Centre.

Common themes for service and resource needs are:

- cultural competency and resource referral training for LINC instructors, medical office assistants, supplementary healthcare providers.
- workshop information or tools on personal advocacy in the healthcare sector, pre-engagement with medical resources, and systems navigation

Through these sessions and ongoing conversations, we hope to create an interactive map of Edmonton newcomer resources.



ADVOCACY & ANTI-RACISM

The RHC continued its advocacy work in 2021, with a focus on the disproportionate impact the COVID-19 pandemic has on newcomer populations. We provided support to Action for Healthy Communities, which played a major role in community vaccination access and improving vaccine willingness, and we helped to build connections with Alberta Health Services to ensure vaccines were reaching everyone. Partnerships built within the coalition were instrumental in creating barrier-free vaccination clinic at the Northeast Community Health Centre which was supported by the Edmonton Covid Rapid Response Collaborative (ECRRC). Furthermore, we were able to work with Alberta Health Services to help mitigate policies that deterred migrants and those with precarious immigration status from accessing vaccination. We continued to advocate to the provincial government to consider the impact that the removal of public health measures has on refugee and immigrant communities

(<https://www.refugeehealthcoalition.ca/post/impacts-of-changes-to-public-health-measures-on-refugee-and-immigrant-communities>).

The RHC also spent some time in 2021 reflecting on our role in reconciliation and how we can combat the systemic racism and discrimination that impacts the health and wellbeing of so many. We are involved with a community effort to explore the collection of identity-based data to highlight inequities in the systems.



Shared Values

Cultural Humility/Culturally Aware & Informed

We respect diverse stories, experiences and rich cultural backgrounds of people new to our community and keep this at the centre of our work.

Co-Learning/Collaboration/Reciprocity

We are committed to learning together, and honouring different paths to wellbeing, informed by the multiple voices of our communities.

Equity

We recognize that the unique structural barriers new members of our community face due to power disparity require different paths in order to meet them where they are.

Our Partners

Catholic Social Services
Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers
HIV Edmonton
Migrante Alberta
Multicultural Health Brokers
New Canadians Health Centre
University of Alberta

**AMISKWACIY-WÂSKAHIKAN (EDMONTON), ALBERTA
TREATY 6 TERRITORY**

Learn More:

<https://www.refugeehealthcoalition.ca/>

Contact: info@refugeehealthcoalition.ca

All RHC agendas and minutes are available online for members

