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| **Congress Stream:** | Stream 5: Rural health research in practice – connecting for change |
| **Alternate Stream:** | Stream 3: Social determinants of health in the bush – the changing landscape |
| **Abstract title:** | Improving the management of refugee patients in Australian hospitals |
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| **Background**:  13,750 refugees are granted protection in Australia each year with 30% resettling in NSW. Significant proportions resettle in regional areas, impacting on health delivery. Refugees frequently have complex health needs. Hospitals and primary care settings are often first to help with these presentations. It is important that healthcare professionals understand healthcare system arrangements and feel confident to manage this unique patient group. Literature suggests that GPs should refer to public health services, as financial constraints usually exist, yet, sparse data exists regarding experiences of nurses, midwives and allied health with refugees in Australia. We sought to determine the knowledge and attitudes of nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare staff regarding the management of refugee patients in both regional and urban settings. | |
| **Approach**:  100-150 anonymous questionnaires were distributed to nursing, midwifery and allied health staff at a regional public hospital, an urban public hospital and a regional private hospital. | |
| **Outcomes/results:**  Most respondents feel confident managing medical/physical issues and less confident managing psychological and social issues. Language barriers, inadequate knowledge of existing services and inadequate understanding of medical entitlements exist. Most respondents desire more support when helping refugees. | |
| **Take home messages:**   1. Refugees present unique challenges to the Australian healthcare system. 2. This information provides direction for improved services for this demographic within our community. | |