

Talking to migrant and refugee young people about sexual health in general practice

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BACKGROUND/AIMS & METHODS:

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Primary aim:

Explore how and why (or why not) migrant and refugee young people access sexual & reproductive health care

Method:

Interviews with 27 migrant and refugee young people (16-24 years)

Key theme:

General practice was raised frequently in interviews



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RESULTS:

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Majority of participants familiar with, and had been to, a GP

...the GPs are the only people that we know. And it's a place that any young person, any person can go to, and they have the biggest capacity to actually help" (Liz, 21, African heritage)

Those with a 'family doctor' reported positive experiences generally, however most reluctant to discuss sexual health due to concerns about judgement and confidentiality.

"My GP, I reckon wouldn't be so sensitive slash open (about sexual health)... A bit more judgmental I reckon... It's just the truth though, he has been judgmental in the past, so what difference is it to this situation" (James, 21, Southeast Asian heritage);

"...my parents use the same GP... he might just slip up" (Denise, 20, African heritage)

Most also described negative experiences with more 'anonymous' GPs for sexual health matters, including not being listened to or being rushed through the appointment

"I went to a male doctor about my cramps, and he was like 'You don't feel that... just practice a few breathing exercises, do a little bit of meditation, it's all right. You'll be fine'" (Julia, 22, East Asian heritage);

"I went in there with the purpose of contraception... But like I wasn't really educated about like I guess any other forms of contraception (besides the pill). It was just sort of whatever the doctors prescribed, and yeah, in a way I think big medical centres like that are kind of like the McDonalds of medical care... it can feel like a fast food service in a way" (Gloria, 22, East Asian heritage)

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CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS:

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- General practice is a known and accessible service for migrant and refugee young people
- Lack of effective engagement in relation to sexual and reproductive health
- Important to build skills and confidence of GPs in this area, to...
 - Initiate sexual health discussions
 - Provide opportunistic sexual health information and support
 - Emphasise confidentiality and trustworthiness



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- **Participants and key informants**
- **Youth Advisory Group:** Doris, Lauren, Marvin, Victoria, Sam
- **Partner organisations:** Family Planning NSW; High St Youth Health Service; NSW Refugee Health Service; South Western Sydney Sexual Health Service; Western Sydney Sexual Health Centre; Sydney Sexual Health Centre; UNSW Sydney
- **Investigators:** Prof Anthony Zwi, A/Prof Christy Newman, Dr Alison Rutherford (up to April 2016), Dr Christopher Carmody (from May 2016), Dr Catriona Ooi, Dr Melissa Kang, Dr Mitchell Smith, Dr Deborah Bateson, Mr Brendan Crozier, Ms Katherine Bennett, Ms Jessica Botfield
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