



The Power of Partnerships

**Refugee
Service Coordination
Project**

HealthWest

- **Strategic Initiative:**
 - WestBay and Brimbank Melton PCPs
- **Involves 5 LGAS:**
 - Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay, Wyndham, Brimbank and Melton
- **Includes members from:**
 - local government
 - health
 - community
 - ethno-specific agencies
 - welfare
 - disability



Refugees in Victoria

- 30% of Australia's humanitarian entrants
- 33% of these settle in the 5 LGAs of HealthWest
- Multiple agencies responding to refugee's needs
- Communities establishing support groups



Refugee Health Service Coordination Project

- DHS funding initiative
- Allocated to 8 PCPs where initial Refugee Health Nurses employed
- Aimed to:
 - Reduce duplicative practices
 - Increase understanding of referral pathways
 - Improve service coordination
 - Increase integrated health promotion practice



Participants

- Western Region Health Centre
- ISIS Primary Care
- AMES North West MRC
- WMDGP, Westgate DGP
- Royal Melbourne Hospital
- Royal Children's Hospital
- Western Health
- Western English Language School
- Foundation House
- Maribyrnong Council
- Brimbank Council
- Royal Women's Hospital
- New Hope Foundation
- Karen Refugee Rep
- Dinka Refugee Rep
- Individual GPs
- DIAC
- DHS

Approach

- Service system redevelopment
- Engaged players across the continuum of care
- Included practitioners and managers
- Looked at all elements of system



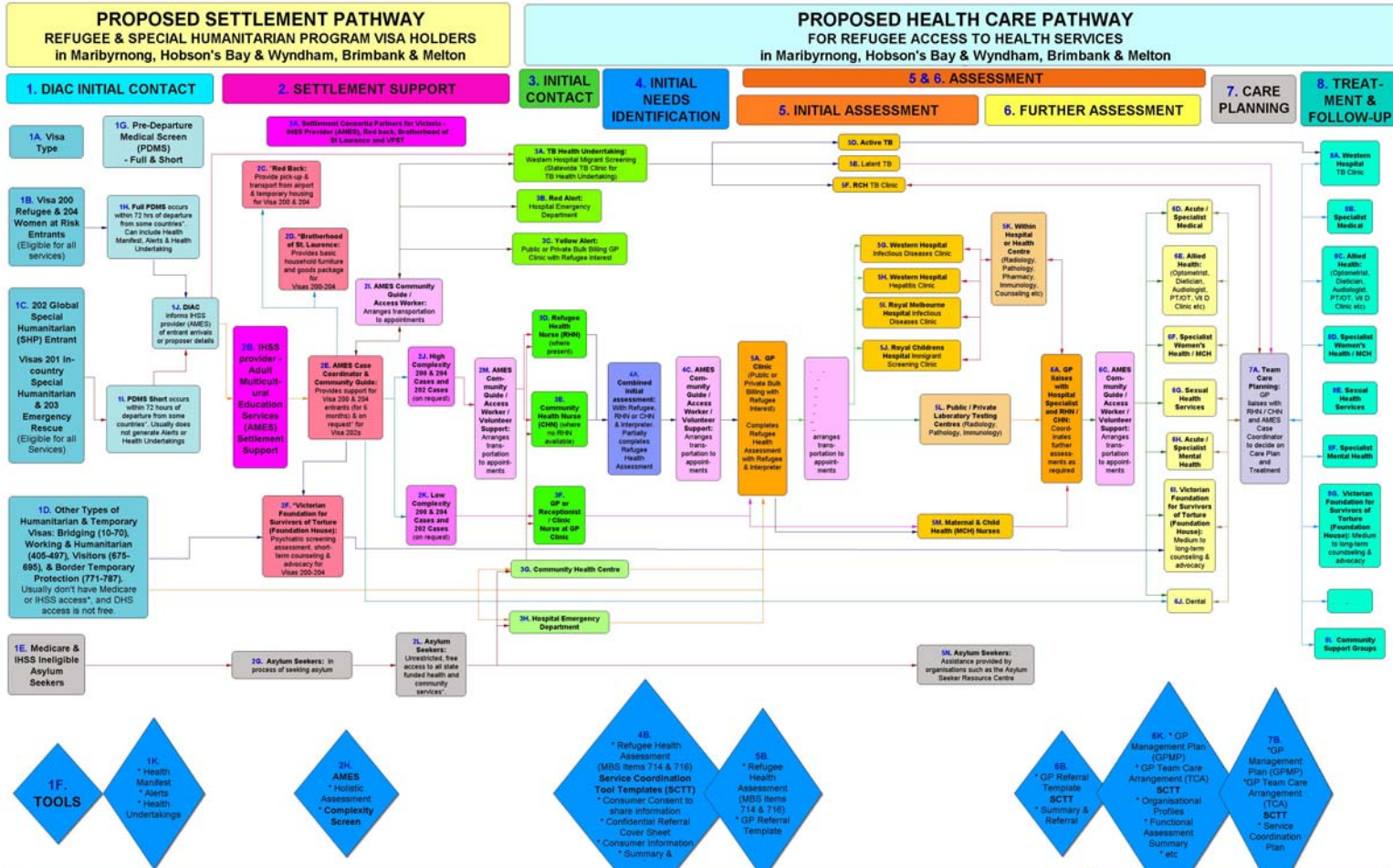
Process

- Identified issues through interviews
- Workshopped and problem solved with practitioners and managers
- Developed and trialed solutions
- Gained protocol 'sign-off' by participating agencies
- Focused on sustainability

Project Outcomes 1

- Agreed Care Pathway

Refugee Health Service Coordination REFUGEE CARE PATHWAY



Project Outcomes 2

- Complexity Screening Tool
 - Built on success of diabetes calculator developed in previous project with both health and social characteristics acknowledged
- Consideration is made of the refugees:
 - Previous education
 - pre-arrival war experience
 - family composition
 - living situation post-arrival
 - health needs

Project Outcomes 3

- All the work underpinned by protocol
- Increased awareness of refugee issues
- Improved health access for refugees
- Improved understanding of agency roles, service provision processes and new partnerships
- Successful resettlement



Future

- Refugee Health Service Coordination a priority
- Extension of principles to newly funded areas
 - Support for new refugee health nurses
 - Development of resource manual
 - Workshops for local agencies
- Pilot the use of eReferral for refugee health providers in the west



In summary

- PCP's can provide a neutral environment for service improvement
- Complex work often cannot be done without a partnership approach
- Partnerships enable reform in ways that may not have been previously explored
- Resources are limited, so we have to be smart about how we use them

