

Tips for Mental Health Providers Assisting Afghanistan Refugees

The New York State Office of Mental Health believes everyone should have an equal opportunity for mental wellness. As a mental health provider in New York State, you may encounter recent refugees from Afghanistan. **We need to be aware of their experiences and cultural differences:**



More than half the Afghan population struggles with depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress, but **less than 10 percent get the help and support they need.**



Train your staff to acknowledge and understand relevant cultural traits (religion, gender roles, beliefs about medical care). **Culture plays a powerful role in how Afghan people seek, receive, and use mental health services.**



Afghan refugees may not trust systems of care because of their immigration status, cultural stigma, and lack of education on mental health.

Afghanistan is a multilingual country with two widely used languages: Pashto and Dari. Make sure your signage and public health messages are available in these languages. Service providers should also ensure access to face-to-face interpretation, phone/video interpretation and written translation.

More Information: https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/cultural_competence/exec_order_26/index.html

Help is Available:

(all resources provide language access services)

Keep these resources on hand to help the refugees you meet:

Office for New Americans: 1-800-566-7636

Get help navigating the services and supports available for New Americans

NYS Office of Mental Health's Customer Relations: 1-800-597-8481

Ask questions, report concerns and get help accessing New York State services

NY Project Hope COVID-19 Emotional Support Helpline: 1-844-863-9314

NY's free, confidential COVID-19 crisis counseling helpline

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or text Got5 to 741741

Confidential support and crisis resources

OMH Field Offices (Talk to someone about referrals and local services):

Central New York Field Office
Phone: (315) 426-3930

Hudson River Field Office
Phone: (845) 454-8229

Long Island Field Office
Phone: (631) 761-2508

New York City Field Office
Phone: (212) 330-1650

Western New York Field Office
Phone: (716) 533-4075



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