

Co-creating Arabic language resources to support carers of people with intellectual disability from refugee backgrounds

Dr. Louisa Smith, Disability & Inclusion, Deakin

louisa.smith@deakin.edu.au

Other Researchers:

Mr. Mahmoud Murad, A/Prof Angela Dew, Dr. Jo Watson



Limited knowledge of people with disability from refugee backgrounds



Soldatic et al., 2015; Crock et al., 2017; Dew et al., 2020, 2021; Refugee Council of Australia, 2019; Smith et al., 2022; Wells et al., 2021



INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH
TRANSFORMATION



Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code 00113B

Co-design of Arabic-language resources: Four step research design

Step 1: Desk based:
Identify information
and resource access
gaps and barriers:
previous research;
literature review

Step 2: Workshops
with people with
disability and carers
from refugee
background: identify
information needed to
access services and
supports

Step 3: Co-design
group: resource
content and format

Step 4: Knowledge
exchange



INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH
TRANSFORMATION



Priority areas

NDIS

Health

Family stress

Housing



INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH
TRANSFORMATION



Inclusive co-design

- Co-researcher
- Graphic illustrator
- Voice-over artists
- Engagement of partner organisations – refugee (bi-lingual workers) and disability services



Art work by Mr Nasan Isber



INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH
TRANSFORMATION



Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code 00113B

Key challenges: Literacy for service access

- English language
- Literacy in language of origins
- Obstacles to language learning due to carer responsibilities or disability



INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH
TRANSFORMATION

Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code 00113B



Wanted resources they could access

- In Arabic
- Videos or visuals
- Peer support groups
- Through trusted channels
- Cultural competency

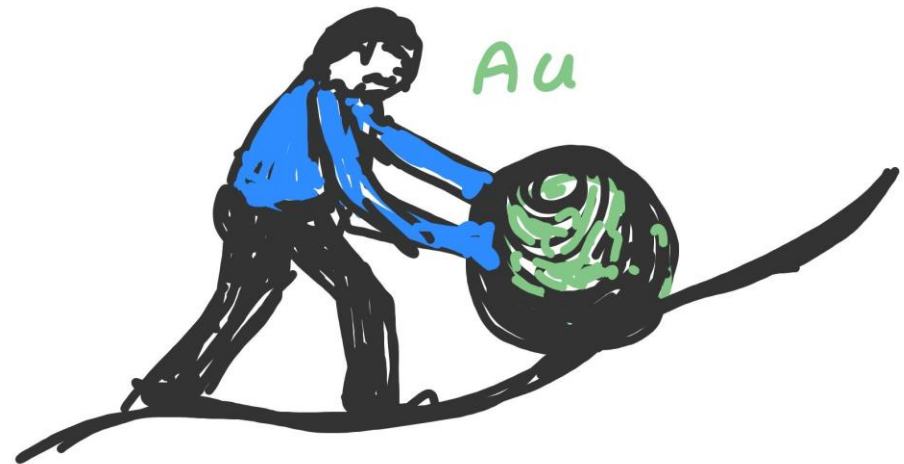


INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH
TRANSFORMATION



Carer group: Co-design resources

- Video on a carers journey and stigma, access and possibility
- VALID (Victorian Advocacy Group) ran a half day introduction to 'Family Succession Planning' with an Arabic interpreter in June 2022



INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH
TRANSFORMATION



Families/Carer video

‘Whatever I experienced in my country is nothing in comparison to what I experienced from the NDIS’

‘I didn’t know there were supports for carers’

‘Being a part of this group has been the best carer support I’ve had’

‘We want some hope’



Art work by Mr Nasan Isber



INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH
TRANSFORMATION



Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code 00113B

Take aways

- Invaluable involvement of people with lived experience in co-design for access and literacy
- High levels of powerlessness, despite huge efforts to advocate in an unknown system
- Access and literacy involves going on a journey with people – not just about a resource



INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH
TRANSFORMATION

Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code 00113B



References*

- Australian Government (2012). Australian Government response to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration report: Enabling Australia - Inquiry into the Migration Treatment of Disability. Retrieved from <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/ReportsandPublications/Documents/review-s-andinquiries/joint-standing-comm-enabling-australia.pdf>
- Crock, M., Smith-Khan, L., McCallum, R., Saul, B. (2017). The legal protection of refugees with disabilities: Forgotten and invisible? UK: Edgar Elgar.
- **Dew, A., Watson, J., Smith, L., & Murad, M. (2022a). *Small changes could bridge communication and cultural gaps for people from refugee backgrounds who need disability support*. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/small-changes-could-bridge-communication-and-cultural-gaps-for-people-from-refugee-backgrounds-who-need-disability-support-185405>**
- **Dew, A., Lenette, C., Wells, R., Higgins, M., McMahan, T., Coello, M., Momartin, S., Raman, S., Bibby, H., Smith, L., & Boydell, K. (2022b). "In the beginning it was difficult but things got easier": Service use experiences of family members of people with disability from Iraqi and Syrian refugee backgrounds. *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disability*, 1-12. DOI: 10.1111/jppi.12424. Special Issue on Family Support Interventions in Culturally Diverse and Low-Resource Communities. Open Access.**
- Dew, A., Lenette, C., Smith, L., Boydell, K., Bibby, H., Lappin, J., Coello, M., Raman, S., Velkou, K., Wells, R., Momartin, S., Blunden, H., Higgins, M., Murad, M., Barry, J., & Mohammad, Y. (2021). "To the Arabic community disability is not normal": Multiple stakeholder perceptions of the understandings of disability among Iraqi and Syrian people from refugee backgrounds. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 34(3), 2849–2870. DOI: 10.1093/jrs/feaa111.
- Hassan, G., Ventevogel, P., Jefee-Bahloul, H., Barkil-Oteo, A., & Kirmayer, L. (2016). Mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of Syrians affected by armed conflict. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences*, 25(2), 129-141. DOI:10.1017/S2045796016000044
- Heenan, R.C., Volkman, T., Stokes, S., Tosif, S., Graham, H., Smith, A., Tran, D. & Paxton, G. (2018) 'I think we've had a health screen': New offshore screening, new refugee health guidelines, new Syrian and Iraqi cohorts: Recommendations, reality, results and review. *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health*, 55: 95-103. DOI: 10.1111/jpc.14142.
- Levesque, J-F., Harris, M., & Russell, G. (2013). Patient-centred access to health care: Conceptualising access at the interface of health systems and populations. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 12:18. <http://www.equityhealthj.com/content/12/1/18>
- Refugee Council of Australia (2019). Barriers and exclusions: The support needs of newly arrived refugees with disabilities. Surry Hills, NSW
- Refugee Council of Australia (2017a). Briefing paper on 2017-2018 refugee & humanitarian program submission. Sydney, NSW: Refugee Council of Australia. Retrieved from: <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/publications/briefing-paper-2017-2018-intake-submission/>
- Refugee Council of Australia (2017b). Improving access to disability support for refugees and humanitarian entrants. Sydney, NSW: Refugee Council of Australia. Retrieved from: <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/resources/publications-external/diversitat-disability-support/>
- Soldatic, K., Somers, K., Buckley, A., & Fleay, C. (2015). 'Nowhere to be found': Disabled refugees and asylum seekers within the Australian resettlement landscape. *Disability and the Global South*, 2(1), 501-522.
- **Smith, L., Chester, I., Dew, A., Higgins, M., Lenette, C., Wells, R., & Boydell, K. (2022). Key characteristics of the refugee journey for Iraqi and Syrian family members who support someone with disability. *Disability & Society*. Ahead of Print 1-23. DOI: 10.1080/09687599.2022.2045189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2022.2045189>**
- **Wells, R., Murad, M., Higgins, M., Smith, L., Lenette, C., Lappin, J., Dew, A., Boydell, K., Bibby, H., Cassaniti, M., Isaacs, D., Raman, S., & Zwi, K. (2021). Exploring the intersection of human rights, health, disability and refugee status: An arts-based approach. *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 26(3), 387-404. DOI: [10.1080/1323238X.2021.1882044](https://doi.org/10.1080/1323238X.2021.1882044).**

* project team publications bolded



INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH
TRANSFORMATION



Partners and Funder



Funding provided by the National Disability Research Partnership, hosted by the University of Melbourne and funded by the Department of Social Services.



Thank you

louisa.smith@deakin.edu.au



iht.deakin.edu.au

Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code 00113B