



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

F O U N D A T I O N

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Reproductive Health in Somali Refugees: Exploring women's views on birth spacing and modern contraception to inform culturally sensitive patient centered counseling (G1502RS)

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Abstract

Background: The U.S. resettles more refugees than any other developed country. These refugees are especially vulnerable to unmet social, cultural, and health needs after resettlement. In 2013-2014, Somali refugees have been the second largest refugee arrival group in the U.S. Studies show disparities in reproductive health and adverse pregnancy outcomes among Somali and other refugee women in the U.S.¹⁻³ Little is known about why these disparities exist and how the healthcare system, including providers, can address resettled refugees' reproductive health needs.

Objectives: We will explore Somali refugee women's knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes regarding birth spacing and modern contraception. We will identify and describe barriers and facilitators to modern contraceptive use among Somali refugee women.

Methods: This qualitative pilot study will use semi-structured focus group discussions to gather information pertaining to previously mentioned objectives. Data collection and analysis will be conducted in-line with grounded theory methodology.

Results/Dissemination: Results of the study will provide insight into factors influencing birth spacing and modern contraceptive use in Somali refugees. Our findings will inform culturally sensitive patient centered counseling on these topics. We will summarize results for publication and presentation at local and national conferences. We will also share findings with the Somali community and primary care providers caring for Somali patients.

Implications: Study results will provide pilot data for further theory and hypothesis generation, larger quantitative studies, and health services research. Our findings will aid in the design of clinical interventions aimed at improving the reproductive health of resettled Somali refugees in the U.S.