

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Sexual health beliefs, practices and concerns for recent migrant women

Professor Janette Perz from the Centre for Health Research and an international research team* have been granted funding through the Australian Research Council's Linkage Projects scheme to investigate the sexual health beliefs and practices of recent migrant women in Australia and Canada. The project will look at how these beliefs and practices vary among women from different backgrounds, and whether agencies can improve these women's health outcomes.

'A significant number of recent migrants and temporary Australian residents are from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds', Professor Perz says. 'Over 27% of our population, 6.4 million people, was born overseas, including many non-English speaking countries. These people may face barriers when accessing sexual health services and information. CALD women have been shown to underuse sexual health services, which may have disastrous outcomes for their quality of life.' In particular, little is known about how or if recent immigrants to Australia from Africa and the Middle East are accessing services to improve their sexual health.

This comparative study will be conducted in Australia and Canada, which have different CALD populations. The focus will be on recent migrant women from Burma, Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Punjab region of India. Community based health professionals and other stakeholder will advise researchers of likely barriers to sexual health services CALD women face. Focus groups of migrant women will allow them to talk in detail about these issues, as will the optional one-on-one interviews with researchers.

A key outcome of this research will be the compilation of guidelines for improving sexual



health systems in Australia and Canada in ways that will help migrant women access them.

Project Title: Sexual health of migrant women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups: An international comparison

Funding has been set at: \$361,144

Contact Details: j.perz@uws.edu.au;
<http://www.uws.edu.au/centreforhealthresearch>

August 2015

***Research team:**

Professor Janette Perz, **Centre for Health Research**,
Professor Jane Ussher, **Centre for Health Research**
Dr Renu Narchal, **School of Social Sciences and Psychology**

Ms Jane Estoesta, **Family Planning NSW**

Ms Jane Wicks, **Family Planning NSW**

Ms Melissa Monteiro, **Migrant Community Resource Centre**

Professor Marina Morrow, **Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University, Canada**

Supported by: Family Planning NSW
Migrant Community Resource Centre
Centre for the Study of Gender, Social Inequities and Mental Health, Simon Fraser University