

BACKGROUND PAPER 7

HEALTH COVERAGE PROVIDED FOR REFUGEE CLAIMANTS

The Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) provides temporary coverage for refugee claimants. This coverage stops when claimants are accepted as refugees and can then access the provincial health card.

The IFH Program provides the following:

1. only essential and emergency health services for treatment and prevention of serious medical conditions and the treatment of emergency dental conditions;
2. contraception, prenatal and obstetrical care;
3. essential prescription medication;
4. and costs related to the Immigration Medical Examination by a Designated Medical Practitioner.

There are no exceptions or additional resources foreseen in the IFHP for separated child refugee claimants. In Quebec, for example, the only advantage separated children have when compared to adult refugee claimants with respect to their health needs, is that SARIMM social workers may be able to provide, on a case by case basis, resources for their health needs not covered by the IFH Program. These health needs usually are related to physical health, dental treatment and drugs not covered by the IFHP.

Normally only one session for psychiatric assessment is covered by the IFHP, except if the treating doctor asks for a special authorization for payment for additional sessions. With regard to the mental health coverage, in Quebec, many separated child refugee claimants get referred to the Montreal Children's Hospital or to psychologists at the Réseau des intervenants auprès des personnes ayant subi la violence organisée (RIVO) for a psychosocial follow up.