1-21-2015

Evaluating Services for Bhutanese Elders at the Champlain Senior Center

Elizabeth Cochrane

Nazey Gulec

Dylan Hershkowitz

Mary Ledoux

Dale Lee

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/comphp_gallery

Part of the Community Health and Preventive Medicine Commons, and the Health Services Research Commons

Recommended Citation

Cochrane, Elizabeth; Gulec, Nazey; Hershkowitz, Dylan; Ledoux, Mary; Lee, Dale; Mertaban, Mohammad; Nunziato, Carl; Siani, Elena; Campono, Bonnie; and Hutchins, Jeanne, "Evaluating Services for Bhutanese Elders at the Champlain Senior Center" (2015). Public Health Projects, 2008-present. 210.
https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/comphp_gallery/210

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Public Health Projects, University of Vermont College of Medicine at ScholarWorks @ UVM. It has been accepted for inclusion in Public Health Projects, 2008-present by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ UVM. For more information, please contact donna.omalley@uvm.edu.
Evaluating Services for Bhutanese Elders at the Champlain Senior Center

Cochrane E¹, Gulec N³, Hershkowitz D¹, Ledoux M¹, Lee D¹, Mertaban M³, Nunziato C¹, Siani E¹, Campono B², Hutchins J²

WHERE? Bhutan

INTRODUCTION

• Bhutanese refugees have been living in Vermont since 2008. They constitute a vulnerable population due to lack of language skills, increased health care requirements and lack of access to transportation.

• The Champlain Senior Center (CSC) provides services and a community space for Bhutanese refugee elders (older than 55 years).

• We aimed to determine the necessity for the CSC in the elders’ wellbeing and to demonstrate that services are crucial to ensure this New American elderly population’s needs are being met.

BACKGROUND

• Ethnic conflict between Northern and Southern Bhutanese led to the mass deportation of over 100,000 Nepali speaking Bhutanese in the early 1990s. In 2012 there were about 93 Bhutanese refugees over the age of 60 years in Vermont.

METHODS

POPULATION IDENTIFICATION & QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

• Identified Bhutanese seniors attending CSC with the aid of the director and a refugee caseworker.

• Created questions to determine met and unmet needs focusing on:
  • Life before and after coming to the CSC
  • Impressions of CSC services and activities
  • Concerns and desires for the CSC

CONDUCTING FOCUS GROUPS

• Separated men and women into two different focus groups. Focus groups were conducted by medical students and anonymous responses were interpreted (via Nepalese interpreted) and transcribed.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

• Compared transcript to audio recording to ensure accuracy of transcription.

• Identified primary positive contentment and chief desires based on frequency of mention.

• There were eight women and ten men. The average time of attendance at the CSC was 1.87 years (range = 4 months to 3 years).

RESULTS

CONCLUSION

• Focus group participants overwhelmingly reported satisfaction with the CSC programming and considered the center important for maintaining social and cultural ties.

• Language is a major barrier to integration with local communities. Participants repeatedly cited desire for more formal English training from the CSC.

• Anxiety regarding citizenship status is a key stressor. The State Department Refugee Reception and Placement Program requires refugees to obtain citizenship or risk losing government assistance.

• Lack of transportation limits Bhutanese CSC participation, especially during winter months.

• Bhutanese cultural needs are being met.

• We urge the CSC to assess improving transportation services (especially in the winter) and to explore a means to meet the Bhutanese religious needs.

• We want to talk or interact with the Americans. We want to dance, sing and share the Nepalese culture with them. We want to learn their culture. Our language for them and their language for us. We need two hands to clap. —Bhutanese Elder at CSC

LIMITATIONS

1. Interpretation leaves potential for information to be lost in translation.

2. Focus Group selection depended on the seniors attending the CSC on the day of the Focus Group.

3. Transcription of the interpreter was performed by different medical students for each group.

REFERENCES

