

Nursing care for migrant and refugee families: emerging issue

Enfermagem no cuidado às famílias migrantes e refugiadas: tema emergente

Enfermería en el cuidado a las familias migrantes y refugiadas: tema emergente

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The impact of migratory movements is, worldwide, an emerging theme for nursing because of the health implications of individuals and their migrant or refugee families. These movements, whether voluntary or involuntary, are motivated by social, economic, cultural, religious or environmental factors.¹

International migration is a concern for achieving the goals of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and it is estimated that 258 million people live in a country other than their birth, of which 68.5 million are refugees and represents an increase of 49% since 2000.²

The terms migrants and refugees are used interchangeably, but their meanings are different. Refugees are out of their country of origin because they fear persecution, conflict, violence or other circumstances that impose the need for "international protection." Already, migrant individuals live a voluntary process; for example, someone who crosses a border in search of better economic opportunities.³

These movements bring significant socio-cultural impacts related to the abandonment of material goods; loss of employment; undocumented status, food insecurity, increased morbidity and mortality. In addition, the process of acculturation involves the rupture of social networks, changes in the way of life, uprooting, humiliation and the sensation of not belonging to any place. These are barriers that influence the level of health of families.⁴

As an answer to the global migratory crisis experienced by migrant and refugee individuals and families, the Nursing Practices Committee of the International Family Nursing Association (IFNA) has created a toolkit for caring for refugee/migrant families. These resources include: I) evidence-based studies of best practice to provide effective and quality care, current literature on evaluation, and family-

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focused, culturally sensitive and strength-based intervention; II) Statements of Position on families of immigrants and refugees; and III) Information on nursing and health organizations that are interested in the family health of refugees, providing documents and websites.⁴

IFNA is an international organization that brings together family nurses from around the world. Family nurses bring an acute awareness of the complex interactions between the individual, the family, and the broader social and cultural contexts in which refugees settle.

Among the recommendations made, the studies refer to family nurses as capable of providing culturally sensitive health care with respect to cultural beliefs, practices and values, regardless of age, gender, language, ethnic origin. As well as, prepared to offer the necessary support and able to recognize the complex experience of these families due to the nature of the migration and the process of acculturation. Encourage insertion into the new environment / context to increase adaptive capacity and reduce health risks at a time of extreme family fragility.⁴

References

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