



Health services for refugees in Turkey

As part of the whole-of-Syria approach, the WHO Country Office in Turkey with its field office in Gaziantep delivered the following support.

Mental health. For World Health Day (April 7th), WHO worked with its mental health partners to organize community awareness-raising events about **depression**, the theme of the day. Hundreds of Syrian refugees in south-eastern Turkey attended events with role-playing, video screenings, question-and-answer periods and more. They received information on how to spot depression in family members and where to go for help.

WHO worked with Turkey’s Ministry of Health to distribute Turkish and Arabic language materials about depression in the country’s public health facilities and refugee clinics. The materials give guidance on how to handle depression

in children, adults and the elderly.

*“There’s great stigma around depression. Refugees say, ‘We’re not crazy.’ We try to normalize mental health issues – like when you have a headache, you go to a doctor.”
Community mental health worker, south-eastern Turkey*

In April, WHO also coordinated training for more than 100 Turkish family physicians in its Mental Health Gap programme. The doctors learned how to identify and treat depression, psychoses, suicidal thoughts and more.

Primary health care. In April, 240 Syrian doctors and 205 nurses completed the practical training component of WHO-supported adaptation courses in seven of Turkey’s refugee clinics.

When Syrian health professionals successfully complete this **on-the-job training**, they are eligible for employment in Turkish health facilities serving refugees.



A psychologist talks to Syrian refugees about depression at a community centre near the Syrian border. Photo: WHO/Sheahen



2.95 million Syrian refugees are in Turkey



445 Syrian staff completed practical training



15+ community events held about depression

Funding

Out of a total of **US\$ 11.8 million** needed for its lifesaving work to help Syrian refugees in Turkey in 2017, WHO has received **US\$ 800 000**.

Donors

WHO refugee programmes in Turkey are funded by European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), the United States Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (BPRM), and the governments of China, Kuwait and Norway.



Health services for northern Syria

Responding to chemical attack. Following an aerial attack on 4 April, more than 500 people from the Syrian town of Khan Sheikhoun showed symptoms of **chemical exposure** and 87 died. WHO immediately released antidotes from a medical warehouse in the area and shipped additional emergency medicines, while partners treated hundreds of patients. WHO chemical agent experts arrived in southern Turkey to assess needs and update a preparedness plan for future events. WHO is purchasing and shipping 1000 additional suits, masks and other gear to protect health workers against nerve agents. WHO continues its ongoing courses to train health workers in treating victims of chemical attacks.



Using a dummy during a WHO Gaziantep trauma training session, doctors practise decontaminating a victim of chemical exposure.

*“If health workers feel secure about their personal protective equipment, they’ll be able to respond more effectively.”
Dr Mohammed El Gazzar,
WHO Health Officer*

Aid to evacuees. WHO health partners continued responding to the health needs of evacuees from **besieged neighbourhoods**. Partner ambulances take evacuees needing care to hospitals in

northern Syria, and teams vaccinate children who may have missed out on immunization. In mid-April, partners helped more than 250 evacuees injured by a car bomb while waiting at a transit point.

Medical supplies. WHO delivered 62 tonnes of **medicine, burn kits** and other items to 100 facilities in northern Syria. These supplies, worth \$ 613 374, will aid 537 755 treatments.

Vaccination. Routine immunizations for children against **tuberculosis, measles, diphtheria** and other diseases restarted in 19 centres in northern Syria. In late April, partners began a polio campaign that vaccinated 77 000 children on its first day.

Noncommunicable diseases. In April, WHO provided online refresher training to more than 120 doctors and nurses in besieged areas. They updated their knowledge of how to diagnose and treat **diabetes, asthma** and other noncommunicable diseases.

Mental health. In besieged and other areas of northern Syria, WHO provided online mental health training courses for nurses and doctors. WHO also supported awareness-raising sessions about **depression** in community centres.



62 tonnes of medical supplies sent



88 000+ children vaccinated



350+ evacuees aided

Funding

Out of a revised total of **US\$ 63 000 000** needed for northern Syria in 2017, WHO has received **US\$ 11 000 000**.

Donors

WHO programmes in northern Syria are funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) (United Kingdom), European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) pooled funds, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the governments of China, Japan, Kuwait and Norway.