

Private Sponsor Ethical Boundaries

HEALTH 101



OTTAWA NEWCOMER
HEALTH CENTRE

CENTRE DE SANTÉ POUR
NOUVEAUX ARRIVANTS D'OTTAWA

Case Scenario- Registration

Sarah and her family (privately sponsored refugees-PSRs) were accompanied by Jack (private sponsor) and a neighbor who spoke Arabic to their medical appointment. To save time and speed up the registration process, Jack took the initiative of answering questions and filling out the intake/registration form on behalf of the client, based on what he knew from their medical examination reports from Syria. The intake form included sections on personal information, medical history and also included a section explaining the rights and responsibility of clients, and finally a section on privacy and confidentiality. Once completed, Sarah and her family signed the forms and waited to see Dr Sushi. Seeing that Jack filled out the forms, the medical secretary asked Jack some follow-up questions. Once in a while the neighbour jumped in to help interpret and facilitate the dialogue. While in the waiting area, Jack started briefing the neighbour about concerns he had about Sarah and her family: the family eats a lot of fast food, the husband seems to be a bit depressed and one of the boys seemed to have ADHD. The neighbour agreed that these would be important issues to bring up at the appointment.

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Case Scenario- Exam room

Before long, Sarah's family was called in to the exam room. In the room sat Dr. Sushi, neighbor, Jack and the PSR family. After a quick round of introductions, the doctor started asking about any immediate health concerns. The neighbour jumped in and mentioned the concerns him and Jack spoke about. Dr Sushi kept interrupting the neighbour to ask Sarah and her husband questions pertaining to the concerns brought up by the neighbour, but both Sarah and her husband seemed confused. Dr Sushi then moved on to ask further questions about their medical history. She asked both adults if they smoked. Both said no. Jack had seen Sarah smoke in the balcony of their home once or twice. So Jack quickly asked Dr. Sushi about the program as he was concerned with Sarah not being honest. Plus, as a smoker himself, Jack was also interested in the program. Dr Sushi explained about the program and then rushed to complete the assessments on the kids. At one point, Dr Sushi hesitated to continue typing as she felt that the family didn't seem to respond to her questions appropriately. Dr Sushi noticed that the neighbour would have several dialogues with the family before responding to the questions being asked. The medical appointment took longer than expected because of the language barrier. After the appointment, Jack and the neighbour went to the front desk to book follow up appointments for the family. They both checked their schedule to ensure that they will be both available to accompany the family.

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Ethical Principles

1. Self-determination
2. Privacy
3. Competence
4. Transparency
5. Equity
6. Financial Integrity

Source: Canadian Council for Refugees, *Code of Ethics for Groups Involved in the Private Sponsorship of Refugees*

Ethical Principles

- System in Syria

- Different understanding of confidentiality and privacy

For example: Medical charts are kept by patient, OR it's rude to say no

- System in Canada

- Privacy and confidentiality very important
- Medical charts are kept by the clinic (generally)
- It's ok to say no or refuse

Advocate, Empower and Facilitate

- Sponsors are bridges between New Canadians and their neighbourhood, community, province and nation.
- Sponsors enable newcomers to gain greater control over their environment and attain their aspirations.

Advocate, Empower and Facilitate

- Providing and advocating for culturally appropriate service
- Awareness of cultural biases one possesses
- Understanding that there will be differences
- Decreasing assumptions
 - “I guess they all marry much younger women”
 - “I don’t know how his name is John, even though he’s Syrian”

Advocate, Empower and Facilitate

A power imbalance exists between sponsors and refugees

Possibilities to consider:

- Newcomers may not feel comfortable saying “no” (although some will be!)
- Newcomers may not feel comfortable vocalizing concerns or discomfort

Advocate, Empower and Facilitate

- Doing with them may be better than doing for them
- Ask them what their short/mid term goals are. How can you help them achieve their own goals?
- Ask them how frequently they want you to visit? How much independence/privacy do they want to have?

In closing...

Remember

- Consider privacy and confidentiality
- Listen and provide options, not solutions
- Focus on strengths and the future
- Empower them to make active decisions that affect them (regain control)
- Facilitate conversations
- Advocate for culturally appropriate services, where possible



A person wearing a light blue shirt is holding a white rectangular sign. The sign has the words 'THANK YOU' written in large, colorful, 3D block letters. 'THANK' is in blue, red, yellow, orange, and yellow letters, and 'YOU' is in purple, green, and green letters. The background is a solid grey.

THANK
YOU

By: Ghufran Alkenany



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