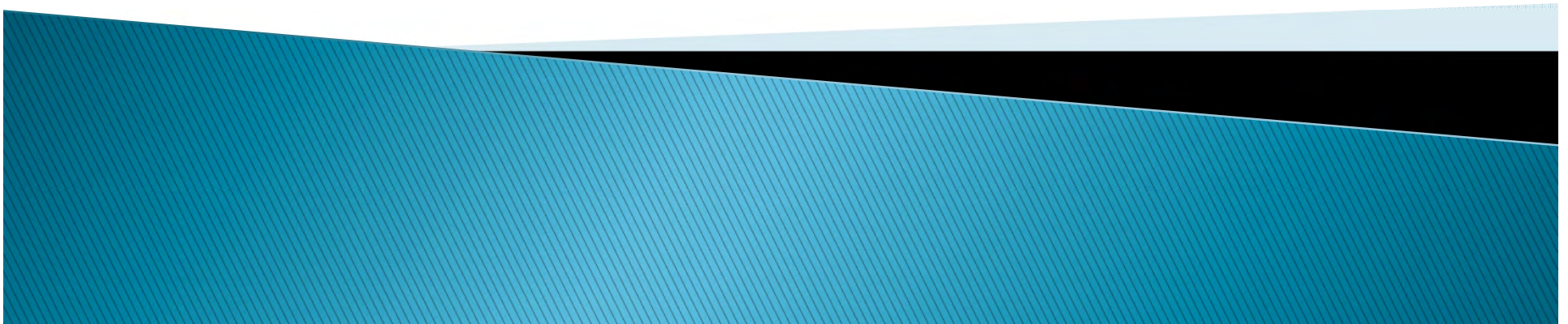


Initial Resettlement 101

LPH/VOLAG Forum
January 24th, 2012



VOL what??

- ▶ **Voluntary Agencies** (VOLAGS) are a group of 11 nonprofits in the U.S. who have contracts with the U.S government to provide “Reception and Placement” services to Refugees arriving in the United States through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program.
- ▶ There are representatives of 6 VOLAGs in 5 local offices in the Twin Cities: *Catholic Charities*, *International Institute*, *Lutheran Social Services*, *Minnesota Council of Churches* (who represent 2 national VOLAGS), and *World Relief Minnesota*.



Refugee Numbers in MN 10/1/2011 – 9/31/2012

- ▶ Catholic Charities: 350
- ▶ International Institute: 440
- ▶ Lutheran Social Service: 460 (300 Metro, 25 Pelican Rapids, 135 St. Cloud)
- ▶ Minnesota Council of Churches: 350
- ▶ World Relief: 328
 - MN TOTAL: 1928
- ▶ Nationally the President signed off on 76,000 arrivals but it is looking more likely that the total number will be between 49 – 50,000.




Cooperative Agreement

- ▶ An agreement between the State Department – Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration and VOLAGS each year.
- ▶ Outlines the goals of the program.
- ▶ We are each guided by the same goals but each agency takes different routes to these goals.



According to the CA ...

- ▶ VOLAGS are mandated to provide services for “initial 30–day period that can be extended up to 90 days after arrival should more than 30 days be required to completely R&P program requirements.”
 - ▶ PRM provides \$925 per individual refugee. Agencies are required to provide this money to, or spend this money on behalf of refugees.
 - Cash
 - Required Household supplies
 - Housing
 - ▶ An additional \$200 per refugee is provided to the agency to help meet needs of refugees over the course of the program year. Agency policy on using this money differs.
- 

over arching program goals...

- ▶ The CA mandates that certain activities (core services) are performed on a very brief time line.
- ▶ With the completion of these activities, refugees have as much understanding as possible about certain areas and can navigate them.



but remember...

- ▶ All these are happening
 - On a very short timeline (30 –90 days)
 - Within complex systems
 - With numbers of variables outside our control



By the end of the R&P period...

- ▶ Refugee is in safe, stable environment

This means...

- New arrivals are picked up at the airport by someone who can speak their language.
- Families are in a safe home that they know how to pay for.
- They have basic necessities (as outlined by the Cooperative agreement)



For a Case Manager this could mean coordinating ...

- Finding housing
- Negotiating with landlords
- Furnishing the home
- Shopping for necessities
- Providing food for the first few days.
- Providing appropriate clothing
- Training on rights and responsibilities of renting.

Difficulties:


- Rental rates are higher than Public Assistance
- U.S. Tie preferences
- Refugee Choice
- They might be fine for 90 days – but then what?



By the end of the R&P Period...

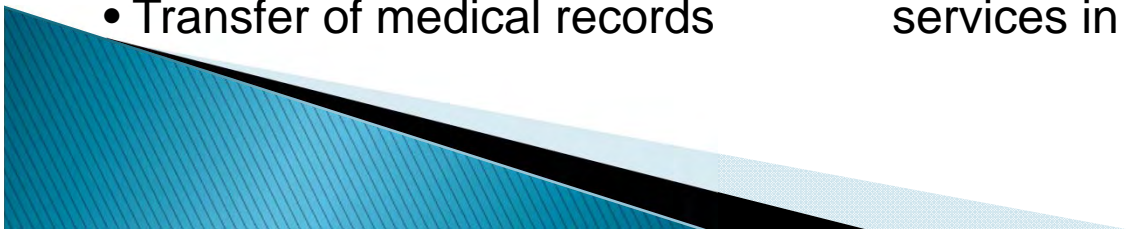
- ▶ Refugee can navigate appropriate and relevant systems

This means...

- A household knows how to get around
 - A household knows how to shop for groceries and other necessities
 - Individuals have a social security card and other identification needed
 - A household can make medical appointments, get to the doctor and navigate the health care system.
 - Families can access emergency services
 - Children are enrolled in School
 - Parents understand legal status and how to bring family members to the U.S.
 - Families know who can help them with translation.
- 

For a Case Manager this could mean coordinating...

- Providing bus cards, bus training to get to multiple locations
- Orientation to US grocery stores and food preparation.
- Setting up appointments, translation, education, advocacy.
- Connection to health screening
- Setting up primary care appointments
- Transportation to appointments
- Transfer of medical records
- Education about US emergency systems.
- School registration, transportation, education of parents about school systems.
- Education on immigration status and timelines; connection to legal services
- Education on laws for interpretation
- Identification of systems and services in family or community.



Difficulties:

- Systems that are not responsive to refugee needs
- Lack of medical expertise
- Refugee Choice
- Complex systems
- Lack of system coordination



By the end of the R&P Period...

- ▶ Refugee family is connected to means of ongoing support for self/family

This mean...


- The family is connected to services they are eligible for
- Families are financially supported (or self-sufficient); and
- The household can explain where the household money will come from after the R&P period.



For a Case Manager this could mean coordinating...

- Taking a family to multiple PA appointments,
- Helping them navigate paperwork and endless letters.
- Enrolling adults in ESL
- Identifying needs and finding services to meet these needs
- Extensive budgeting and financial planning
- Education/support navigating various systems a family is connected to.

Difficulties:

- Needs emerging after 90 days.
 - Complex financial systems
 - Families with different priorities for their money
 - Public assistance doesn't cover needs
 - Services created to service non-refugee populations
- 

By the end of the R&P period...

- ▶ **Refugee understands surroundings and situation**

This means

- A family knows where they live, how to make a phone call and how to be reached.
- A household understands the effects of moving;
- Families know the role of the agency and expectations of the agency and self;
- Families have a basic understanding of U.S. laws and cultural practices.



For a Case Manager this could mean coordinating...

- Identifying needs and finding services to meet these needs
- Assisting families to buy and set up a phone
- Extensive budgeting and financial planning
- Evaluating each families previous experience and knowledge and supporting them as they learn laws and customs
- Educating about US customs
- Teaching new arrival classes

Difficulties:

- Systems that are not responsive to refugee needs
- Refugees with very different backgrounds
- Families with different priorities

