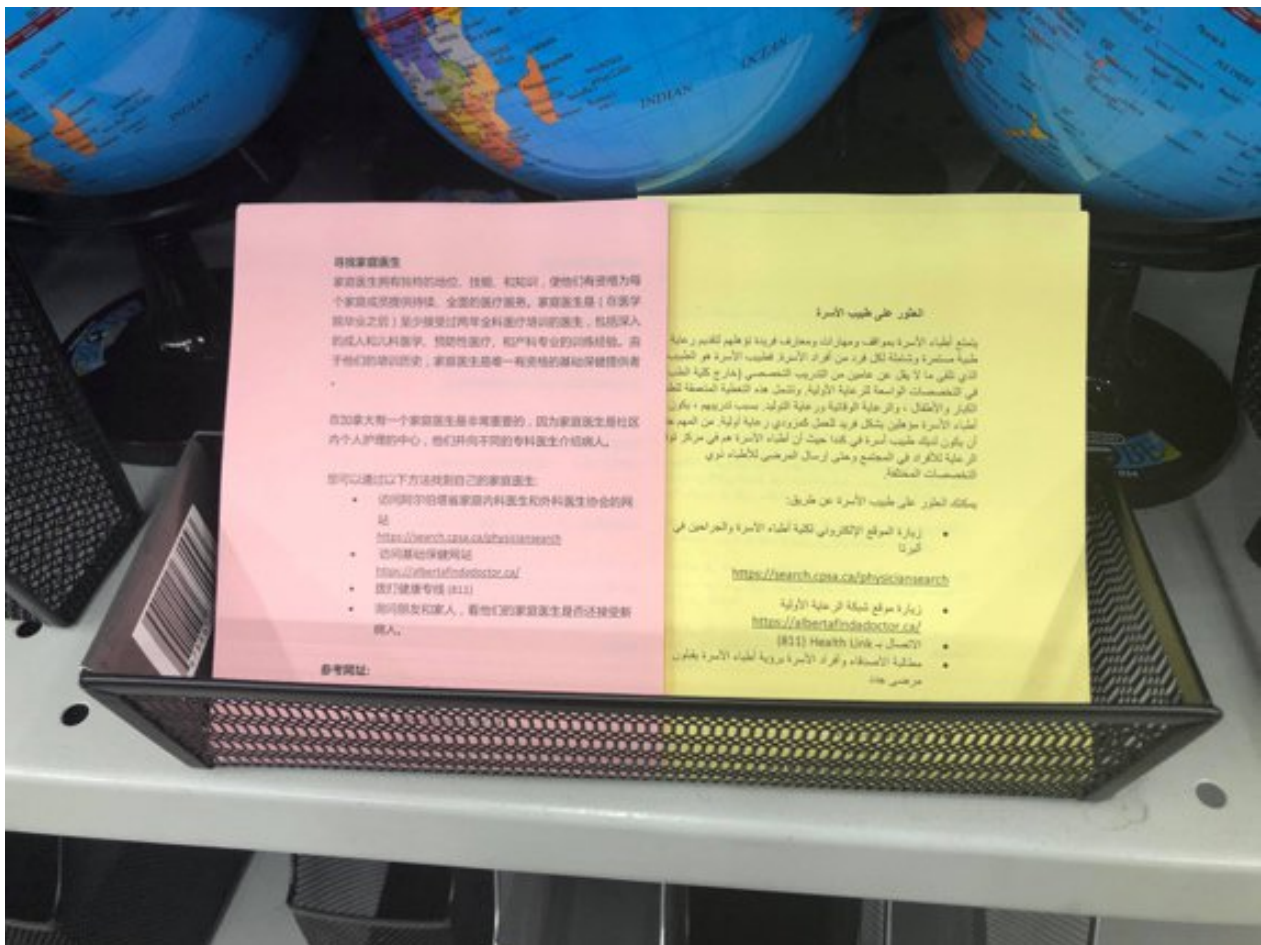


Alberta Doctors' Digest

Introduction of Canadian health care system to new immigrants

In fall 2019, Dr. Reza Ojaghi (currently post-grad year two, orthopedic surgery, University of Ottawa) was the recipient of an Emerging Leaders in Health Promotion (ELiHP) grant which he applied to a project intended to “[connect] with a group of adult new immigrants in Calgary to educate and assist them in finding a family physician.”

With the objectives of raising awareness among new immigrants in Calgary regarding the importance of having a family physician and “developing a sustainable mechanism (tool) to provide this information” for current and future immigrants, Dr. Ojaghi selected two venues as his main points of contact with new immigrants: [Immigration Services Calgary](#) and [Mosaic Primary Care Network](#).



Health care information has been translated and distributed in four languages (Arabic, Chinese, English and Punjabi)

Dr. Ojaghi translated his two messages – under the headings “Finding a Family Physician” and “Canada’s Universal Health Care System” – into four languages (Arabic, Chinese, English and Punjabi) and printed them on colored paper cut to a convenient mini-poster size. Displayed neatly and prominently in trays near high-traffic areas in the two venues, Dr. Ojaghi appreciated and relied on the collaboration and support of staff to assist with promotion and distribution of the notices to clients and patients.

Placement of the materials in the Mosaic PCN – with its steady flow of patients attending the walk-in clinic – helped greatly with distribution. Dr. Ojaghi’s project ended up reaching over 100 individuals instead of the 30 it was originally planned to reach.

Mentorship

Dr. Amy Tan (at the time an associate professor at the Cumming School of Medicine and a family physician at the Sunridge Family Medicine Teaching Centre and, since November 2020, Medical Director, Victoria Hospice, Victoria, B.C.) provided her expertise in primary care and her experience in and dedication to advocacy for marginalized populations to help Dr. Ojaghi identify the details and logistics of the project.

“Dr. Tan was a major asset in helping me understand how I could provide this information to new immigrants in Calgary,” says Dr. Ojaghi. “The project provided ample opportunities for me to take a leadership role in promoting access to health care in marginalized populations,” he continues.

Upon reflection and as a word of advice, if he (or anyone else) were to undertake a similar project in the future, Dr. Ojaghi says, “The involvement of immigrants at the brainstorming stage – listening to how they would like to receive information – can add significantly to the extent of mutual communication.”

About the Emerging Leaders in Health Promotion grant program

The Emerging Leaders in Health Promotion (ELiHP) grant program provides funding to help medical students and resident physicians conceive and implement health promotion projects in support of the development of their [CanMEDS/FM](#) core competencies, particularly health advocacy.

Sponsored by the Alberta Medical Association and [MD Financial Management](#), ELiHP projects facilitate the growth of physician leadership and advocacy skills in a mentored environment, while enhancing the well-being of the general Alberta population through education, advocacy and innovative care.

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