



SPECIAL POPULATION FOCUS: DISPLACED POPULATIONS FLASH GUIDE

As part of the National Outreach Initiative (NOI), ASDA seeks to highlight special populations that may have unique care needs. This Chapter Flash Guide is meant to serve as an aid to ASDA members and leaders by providing background on ways to reach out to displaced populations. This includes refugees, homeless people and those forced to leave their homes due to natural disasters.

UNESCO defines displacement as the forced movement of people from their environment and occupational activities. Displacement is most commonly caused by armed conflict, but may also be caused by natural disasters, famine, development and economic changes.¹ According to the UN Refugee Agency, 68.5 million people have been forcibly displaced from home; 25.4 million among them are refugees, and more than half are under the age of 18.²

Displaced populations have a high burden of unmet oral health needs and face various barriers to accessing oral health care. Refugee populations may not have had access to preventive measures, or previous experiences of trauma may create a fear of seeking dental care.³ Barriers to oral health care for homeless populations include limited financial resources, low health literacy and inadequate transportation. Maintaining Medicaid coverage is difficult due to a lack of a permanent home address.⁴

It is the hope of the Council on Professional Issues, through the NOI, that chapters will create events to reach out to displaced populations and help address oral health and social needs. Look at an example of such an event on page 2.

There are many resources available for chapters in implementing community outreach. Refer to ASDA's chapter how-to guide: [Community Service](#) for additional aid in getting your event off the ground. Please also [reach out to Colgate](#), the official partner of the NOI, who is graciously offering oral hygiene kits to participating chapters.

Contact the Council on Professional Issues at professionalissues@ASDAnet.org with questions.

¹. Migrant | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Retrieved from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/migrant/>

². United Nations. Figures at a Glance. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html>

³. Riggs, E., Rajan, S., Casey, S., & Kilpatrick, N. (2016). Refugee child oral health. *Oral Diseases*, 23(3), 292-299. doi:10.1111/odi.12530

⁴. Dolce, M. C., et al. (2018). A cooperative education model for promoting oral health and primary care integration within a healthcare for the homeless program. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* 29(2), 591-600. Johns Hopkins University Press.

ASDA chapters are encouraged to create events to engage this special population and address its dental and social needs. Here are three examples of events that serve this diverse group:

Name of project: Fluoride, Leadership and Outreach Series (FLOS)

ASDA chapter: Midwestern-Arizona

Description: Health Outreach through Medicine and Education (H.O.M.E.) is a student-run organization at Midwestern University in Arizona that provides free medical care to people in homeless shelters under a volunteering physician's supervision. Students from various health programs work together to see 10-20 patients on any given clinic night. In partnership with H.O.M.E., MWU ASDA provided preventive dental services for the homeless men, women and children at Phoenix homeless shelters. In the course of six nights, MWU ASDA provided oral hygiene education, limited exams, fluoride varnishes, reduced fee dental clinic resources, and free Crest Oral-B oral hygiene supplies/educational handouts to more than 150 homeless men, women and children of various ages and ethnic backgrounds.

Target audience: Homeless men, women and children

Other participating groups: Health Outreach through Medicine and Education (H.O.M.E.)

Name of project: Puerto Rico Benefit fundraiser(s)

ASDA chapter/district: District 5

Description: Money is donated using an online conduit (YouCaring) to be used by the leadership of ASDA under the supervision of school administration and dean to benefit the students of the University of Puerto Rico Dental School. The goal is to provide an expedited return to normalcy to get students back into a school setting through consistent, quality meals. Marketing included personal calls/texts/emails by district trustee and inclusion of all donations and amounts on social media thanking those who donated.

Target audience: Dental students and staff affected by Hurricane Maria

Other participating groups: ASDA chapters and trustees around the country

ASDA Chapter: Texas-Houston

Description: A task force, with members from District 9, was created specifically to organize and coordinate relief effort for those affected by Tropical Storm Harvey. A donation link was created, and the chapter website was used to organize several volunteer crews to serve at the GRB convention center. Volunteer services also included sending students to schools where supplies were donated and organizing clean-up crews to send to several homes. Visa gift cards were donated specifically to UTSD faculty, staff and students who were identified as being severely affected. These were gifted to them in November to use during the holidays. A school supply drive was organized to donate items to several area schools. Food and non-perishable items donated from the LSU campus were distributed to local churches and shelters that were hosting hurricane victims. The remainder of canned food items was sent to the Houston Food Bank.

Target audience: Victims of Hurricane Harvey in the greater Houston area

Other participating groups: General volunteer crews; other contributing ASDA chapters
