



How prepared are healthcare workers?

Reception of refugee families with children in Sweden and Iceland.

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Thesis – aim and method

- The aim is to shed light on and identify factors with potential for improvement in the reception and treatment of refugee children and their families in Iceland and Sweden.
- This is a qualitative study and the results are based on 12 semi-structured interviews with Swedish and Icelandic healthcare professionals.





Background

- Berlin, Johansson & Törnkvist, 2006 – similar study investigating workplace conditions and cultural competence when interacting with children and families of foreign origin
- Organizational issues, cultural issues, competence issues, linguistic barriers





Themes

- Five distinct themes emerged:
 - organization
 - communication
 - cultural competence
 - culture
 - empathy, racism and prejudice





Organizational hindrances

- Frustration towards inadequacies of the healthcare systems
- Systems not ready for refugee families, with the big influx in 2014 and 2015 came a total collapse
- Lack of centralized information – need for creative solutions to resolve difficult situations





Linguistic barriers

- Largest obstacle for the administration of quality care
- A link between communication and satisfaction with healthcare
- Interpreters – lack of availability, cost issues and quality of interpretation





Culture and cultural competence

- General awareness – individual views, beliefs and values that may collide with theirs
- Lack of knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures
- Wish to gain cultural competence along with skills and knowledge





Empathy, racism and prejudice

- Empathy towards refugee children and families
- Feelings of sadness, anger and wanting to go the extra mile
- Views of refugee families as strong and powerful
- Feelings of being racist and being called racist





Result – is it any better 10 years later?

- Little has changed in the past 10 years:
- Universal needs and challenges that need to be addressed: cultural competence, linguistic services, a streamlined organizational system and an overall increase in global empathy

