



IMMIGRATION, HEALTH INTERVENTIONS AND GENDER- SENSITIVE POLICIES

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TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS RELEVANT TO IMMIGRANT HEALTH:

- **Health care services**
 - Individual-level intervention
- **Community Programs**
 - Programs, support networks
- **National/Provincial Policy**
 - Migration and public health policies



FOUR BROAD TYPES OF POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

- **Timely access** to health care and services
 - Eg: Limitation of coverage to essential services only, Wait period for access to services
- **Gender-sensitive** health interventions
 - Eg: Cervical cancer screening
- **Migration/Culturally/ linguistically-sensitive interventions**
 - Eg: Mental health services
- **Long-term health interventions** and practices, rather than focus solely on health at time of entry.
 - Eg: continuity of care



SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERVENTIONS—MIGRATION AND WOMEN'S HEALTH

- Searched known interventions systematic review sites using key terms
- Reviewed the results of the search for
 - strength of evidence of effectiveness
 - sensitivity to migration
 - cultural/ethnic groups using sensitivity indicators / outcomes relevant to cultural group/s
- Provide recommendations to fill gap areas relating to 'best practices' among immigrant women



SYSTEMATIC REVIEW – PRELIMINARY RESULTS

- Although not limited to, the focus was on key chronic diseases and their risk factors – Assessment of 130 systematic reviews
- Very few studies dealing with 'migrants' as main study participants
- Studies often treated immigrant populations as one and the same with ethnic/cultural/minority populations
 - **no systematic acknowledgement of women and men nor gender sensitivity.**
- **Very few** studies made any **concrete recommendations/ suggestions** for 'innovative', culturally-specific, migration and gender sensitive interventions, mostly because the design did not take into account these elements.



FUTURE RESEARCH TO INFORM POLICY

- Focus beyond description of health status of migrants to intervention research:
 - eg clinical practice guidelines, effective community programs
 - Surveillance of use and access to services over time after migration
- Focus on health behaviours, health promotion, etc. (not just health care)



FUTURE RESEARCH TO INFORM POLICY (cont'd)

- Consider immigrant women as a diverse group
 - by gender, country of origin, entry class (i.e. economic, family, refugee), length of time in new country, levels of acculturation and cultural retention, previous health habits
- Consider and study the determinants of migrant health
 - Effects and types of social determinants usually vary among migrant groups
 - Need to explore simultaneously effects of gender, ethnicity and time in host country



CONCLUSIONS – Research and Policy Gaps

- Intervention Research
 - Gender specific evidence of effectiveness of population/community level interventions is scarce even among general population
- Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Activities
 - Need to be more gender sensitive generally, and especially among migrants
- Health care
 - coverage for vulnerable groups (eg refugee claimants) and gender / culturally sensitive care





Thank you!

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