

*We may have them .... Refugees may not.*

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# Highlights of 2007

by Ariana Yaftali

"My relatives are scheduled for their interview with a Canadian visa officer. Is there anything we need to do to help them prepare?" asked Jansinta. I referred her to John Peters. He provided interview guidelines she could discuss with her sponsored relatives.

Jansinta's relatives were accepted to come to Canada as refugees. They arrived in Winnipeg in October, 2007. She is thrilled to be reunited with her family!

One of the important things we did last year was provide the local relatives of sponsored refugees with tools to prepare for eligibility interviews overseas. The feedback from different people from various communities was very positive. The guide we provided really helped refugees to be well prepared for their interview. It was exciting to hear when refugees did well at their interview and were accepted.

During 2007, we received copies of many interview notices sent to sponsored refugees by various visa posts. Some visa posts started sending interview notices electronically. We forwarded these interview notices to our respective constituent group representatives, and provided them with the names and telephone numbers of the relatives in Winnipeg. The community representatives then forwarded the interview notices to the local relatives.

This was a positive step in the refugee sponsorship process. It is great to receive timely interview notices from various visa posts. It gives us the chance to assist our sponsored refugees. First, we can make sure they are aware of the date, time, and place of

their interview. Secondly, we can brief their local relatives on how to help the refugees prepare for their interview. Lastly, we can make sure any new family members have been declared.

Since interviews results proved more positive as a result of these changes, more refugee newcomers were welcomed to our city last year. The refugee sponsorship team – Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc., the constituent groups, and the local relatives of sponsored refugees – welcomed close to 300 refugee newcomers to Winnipeg in 2007. It certainly was a busy year for all of us helping sponsored refugees prepare for their interviews.

"I am so happy that my family is arriving soon. I have made all necessary arrangements to welcome them," said Mehari.

Soon after the local relatives of sponsored refugees receive their copy of the notice of arrival, they contact us for an appointment to bring the refugee newcomers to MIIC (Welcome Place). In the case of Mehari, he called and brought his family the very next day.

Mehari was happy to see his relatives after so many years of separation. He said that his community is supportive and some of the community members are willing to help him in terms of housing, employment, interpretation, and getting them around the city.

It is common among newcomer communities in Winnipeg to support and help community members who have just arrived. They feel that they have been here for a while and know how they can help the newcomers. It's a positive thing when community members want newcomers to do well and settle smoothly. Community support is always important as newcomers settle in their new homes.

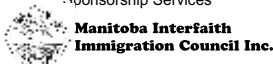
In a number of ways, 2007 was a positive and good year for us. Older cases have started to move forward in the overseas refugee determination process. Visa posts are focusing on clearing up more of their backlog. More refugees passed their interviews and arrived in Winnipeg.

A publication of the



For comments/questions/suggestions  
please contact

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# *Patient safety* for newcomers

Have you been a patient of Winnipeg's health services? Have you had something happen to you while you were a patient that caused you serious harm? Do you want to help prevent "critical incidents" from happening again?\*

The Patient Safety Advisory Council (PSAC) wants to increase the diversity on their Council. This Council consists of a group of highly dedicated people committed to improving the safety of patients throughout Winnipeg. They want to help reduce unnecessary patient injuries and deaths. Their goal is a harm free healthcare system.

Currently the Council has 18 members, and is looking to add more members to bring greater diversity to the group. Patients who have been seriously affected by something that happened while receiving health services are given the opportunity to share their experience. This can provide learning for healthcare providers.

The ultimate goal is reducing unnecessary patient injuries and deaths. The Council aims to have patient and family input throughout every level of service provision, programming, and healthcare sites in Winnipeg in order to build collaborative relationships in the name of safe, effective, patient centered, timely, efficient, and equitable care.

Those interested in becoming a member of the Patient Safety Advisory Council are encouraged to contact Corinne Stevens by telephone at 926-7122, or by email at [csstevens1@wrha.mb.ca](mailto:csstevens1@wrha.mb.ca).

For more information about the Patient Safety Advisory Council you can visit their web site at:  
<http://www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/patientsafety/psac.php>.

*At the April 2007 meeting of the Manitoba Refugee Sponsors group, Corinne Stevens made a brief presentation about her program. It was suggested that the above information about the Patient Safety Advisory Council be distributed. This notice was compiled from information provided by Corinne Stevens.*

\*If you've seen a critical incident, call the 24 hour critical incident line at 788-8222 and a trained operator will assist you.



## Sponsored refugees need help filling forms

Refugees sponsored by local groups are likely to need assistance with completing the forms all sponsored refugees are required to submit. Relatives or sponsoring group members in Manitoba may be willing to assist, but may not be all that familiar with the forms sponsored refugees need to complete.

To provide the tools to those who want to help sponsored refugees complete their forms, Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. (Welcome Place) is offering a 2.5 hour workshop on **Saturday, February 23, 2008**. We will focus on how to complete the "Application for Permanent Residence in Canada" (IMM 0008) form. The workshop will begin at **2:00 p. m.** and will be held at MIIC (Welcome Place), 397 Carlton Street, just south of Cumberland Avenue.

Everyone who could be involved in sponsoring refugees in 2008 and beyond is encouraged to register.

This workshop will provide participants with the information and the confidence to assist sponsored refugees complete their "IMM8s", as we often call them.

Completing the IMM8s accurately, fully and carefully can make a big difference. Unnecessary delays and rejections can be minimized. This is particularly important because there is no process in place by which eligibility decisions can be appealed.

Register now and be prepared to assist sponsored refugees complete their IMM8s. We look forward to seeing you at the workshop.