Research Needs on Respiratory Health in Migrant and Refugee Populations

An Official American Thoracic Society and European Respiratory Society Workshop Report

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Abstract

Migrants represent a diverse population comprising workers, students, undocumented individuals, and refugees. Worldwide, approximately 1 billion people were considered migrants in 2016. Notably, about 65 million of these migrants were forcibly displaced from their homes, and 20 million were considered refugees. While the geopolitical consequences of such migration continue to be considered, less is known about the impact of these events on the respiratory health of migrants and refugees. In recognition of this knowledge gap, the American Thoracic Society and the European Respiratory Society brought together investigators with diverse and relevant expertise to participate in a workshop and develop a consensus on research needs on the respiratory health of migrants and refugees. The workshop focused on environmental and occupational hazards, chronic noninfectious diseases, and

respiratory infectious diseases, which were presented by experts in three distinct sessions, each culminating with panel discussions. A writing committee collected summaries prepared by speakers and other participants, and the information was collated into a single document. Recommendations were formulated, and differences were resolved by discussion and consensus. The group identified important areas of research need, while emphasizing that reducing the burden of pulmonary, critical care, and sleep disorders in migrants and refugees will require a concerted effort by all stakeholders. Using best research practices, considering how research impacts policies affecting migrant and refugee populations, and developing new approaches to engage and fund trainees, clinical investigators, and public health practitioners to conduct high-quality research on respiratory health of migrants and refugees is essential.

Keywords: research needs; respiratory health; migrants; refugees

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Introduction

In 2016, approximately 1 billion people (more than 14% of the world's population) were migrants: 250 million international migrants and 763 million internal migrants. Notably, about 65 million migrants worldwide were forcibly displaced from

their homes; of these, 20 million people were considered refugees (1). Thus, migrants represent a diverse population comprising workers, students, undocumented individuals,

Migration is fueled by seeking better opportunities in wealthier countries or escaping conflict, persecution, or natural

disasters (2). The numbers of migrants, and countries affected by migration, are increasing. In 2008, approximately 31 million international migrants (or \sim 6% of the population) lived in the 27 states of the European Union (EU), and more than onehalf of those migrants originated from Central and Eastern Europe. Since 2010, there has been substantial migration into the EU from the Middle East and Africa; more than 120,000 people arrived in the EU by sea in 2016. On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, the United States is home to 47 million international migrants, with Mexicans accounting for approximately 28% of foreign-born people. An estimated 40% of transnational migration is between countries in the southern hemisphere.

Whereas considerable attention is given to the geopolitical consequences of migration, less is known about its impact on migrants' health or the health care systems of their host nations. Migrants to the United States or the EU, particularly those fleeing their countries because of poverty or conflict, are affected by medical conditions or behaviors that are common among residents of their host nation (e.g., tobacco use and asthma), which are influenced by their previous or current living circumstances, including infection (e.g., tuberculosis [TB]), sleep-related disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Moreover, migrants often have limited access to health care in their host country because of lack of health insurance, language and cultural barriers, challenges in the identification of undocumented or recent migrants, and limited policies or resources to address their medical needs (1). Such problems are accentuated when a host country has to care for large waves of refugees over a short period of time, as was the case when more than 400,000 Syrians sought asylum in Germany in 2015 (3).

In recognition of the need for improved understanding of the effects of migration on respiratory health, the American Thoracic Society (ATS) and the European Respiratory Society (ERS) brought together investigators with diverse expertise to develop a consensus on research needs related to respiratory health in migrants and refugees, with emphasis on international migration. To facilitate such consensus, the ATS and the ERS held a workshop focused on the topic during the ATS meeting in May 2017 in Washington, D.C., with a follow-up meeting during the ERS meeting in September 2017 in Milan (Italy).

Workshop Agenda

The workshop participants (see the online supplement) were chosen on the basis of their research expertise and interests, and were vetted for conflicts of interest according to the policies of the ATS and ERS. While recognizing that some migrants are healthy and may be at lower risk for respiratory diseases (the "healthy migrant" effect), the workshop largely addressed the detrimental effects of migration on respiratory health. The workshop thus focused on environmental and occupational hazards, chronic noninfectious diseases, and respiratory infectious diseases, which were discussed in three distinct sessions; each session concluded with panel discussions. Literature searches were conducted by group members, using traditional and biomedical search engines. Each of the three session leaders collected summaries from speakers and prepared document sections for review by the writing committee established among the co-chairs of the working groups. This committee collated the information into a single document. Recommendations were formulated and differences were resolved by discussion and consensus (see Table 1).

Environmental and Occupational Exposures

Environmental and occupational exposures are major risk factors for the development and progression of respiratory disorders. Of these, workshop participants focused on climate change, air pollution, tobacco use, and occupational hazards.

Climate change. Global warming and related climate changes affect respiratory health directly through temperature, humidity, and extreme climate events (such as storms, floods, wildfires, and droughts), or indirectly by increasing air pollution, pollens, and molds, and by changing the habitat, thus promoting vectors for transmission of infectious diseases (4). Climate change may particularly impact migrants and refugees, due to coexisting exposure to environmental hazards (5) or inadequate access to health care (6). Forced displacement of people is associated with acute respiratory infections and tuberculosis (5), and migration from rural to urban areas has been linked to allergic diseases such as asthma (7). Over the coming decades, the number of people escaping

the consequences of climate change (desertification, famine, flooding, extreme weather, and natural disasters) will likely increase. Thus, research on this public health threat is needed (7).

Air pollution. Air pollution is a ubiquitous risk factor for morbidity and mortality from respiratory diseases (8). Global estimates of the populationattributable fractions of disability-adjusted life-years (DALYs) due to total occupational risks, and indoor and ambient air pollutants, are as follows: asthma, 44%; chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), 35%; lung cancer, 17-45%; and acute lower respiratory infections, 35% (9, 10). More than 4,241,000 deaths and 103 billion DALYs are attributed to ambient air pollution worldwide (11). In 2014, approximately 83% of Europeans lived in areas above the World Health Organization (WHO) Air Quality Guidelines for PM_{2.5}, and PM_{2.5} exposure was estimated to cause up to 428,000 premature deaths in 41 European countries (12). Moreover, people who migrate to industrialized nations such as the United States are more likely to be exposed to traffic-related air pollution than nonmigrants (13). Little is known about outdoor or indoor pollutants and respiratory health in migrants and refugees. In a Palestinian refugee camp, the prevalence and incidence of respiratory conditions (such as influenza, asthma, and bronchitis) were associated with poor housing conditions characterized by dampness and mold, dust and smoke, burning of biomass fuel, and crowding (14).

Tobacco use. Tobacco use is the main cause of preventable death worldwide. Immigrants to the United States from Latin America and Asia generally smoke at lower rates than white and black adults in the United States, but this phenomenon varies by sex, acculturation, and national origin.

Immigrant men tend to smoke at higher rates than women: in 2015, only 7% of Latinas and less than 3% of Asian women reported current smoking (15). However, acculturation was significantly associated with 1.12 to 1.57 increased odds of smoking among Latinas in two nationwide studies. Among Latinos and Asians of both sexes, acculturation is associated with unchanged or lower smoking rates, but tobacco use differs by national origin. Puerto Ricans or Cubans and Vietnamese or Koreans smoke at higher rates than other Latinos or Asians, respectively (16, 17). In the Hispanic

Table 1. Key recommendations for research on respiratory health in migrants and refugees

Research Need	Recommendations	Examples	References
Understanding the consequences of indoor environmental exposures, air pollution, and climate change	Epidemiological studies of the indoor environment, air pollution, climate change, and respiratory diseases in migrant and refugee populations	Transnational longitudinal studies of traffic-related air pollution and airway diseases (i.e., across the U.SMexico border)	Annesi-Maesano et al., 2016 (4) D'Amato et al., 2015 (7) Thurston et al., 2017 (8) Cohen et al., 2017 (11)
Assessing the joint impact of acculturation, sex, country of origin, and socioeconomic status on tobacco use	 Determine both social and economic status (at the individual, family, and community levels) using validated instruments, while also examining sex, country of origin, and acculturation Capture basic measures of acculturation in all studies of migrant populations, and use comprehensive measures of acculturation for in-depth studies 	 Use of the MacArthur sociodemographic questionnaire, which captures data on resources, prestige, and perceived social status within the community Always include place of birth, place of origin, self-reported race/ ethnicity, and duration of residence and fluency in the predominant language in the adoptive country Bidimensional Acculturation Scale for Hispanics (BAS), Acculturation, Habits, and Interests Multicultural Scale (AHIMSA) 	Adler and Stewart (71) Marín and Gamba, 1996 (72) Unger et al., 2002 (73)
Studying effective smoking cessation interventions	Clinical trials of smoking cessation	Studies of pharmacological and nonpharmacological interventions	Kaplan et al., 2014 (16)
Assessing how to ameliorate working conditions for disease and injury prevention and health maintenance in migrant workers	Develop longitudinal studies of occupational disease in migrants	Studies of the impact of industrial hygiene on occupation respiratory diseases	Rabito et al., 2011 (74)
Examining the impact of governmental regulations (or deregulations) on the environment, tobacco use, and occupational safety on respiratory health	Long-term studies following changes in key government regulations	Studies of the impact of changes in thresholds for air pollutants	European Environment Agency, 2017 (12)
Understanding how urban and rural migration impact the development of asthma	Long-term longitudinal studies of migration and asthma in children and adults	Prospective studies of migration from rural to urban areas and asthma	Holguin et al., 2005 (29) Parsons et al., 2017 (75)
Gaining knowledge about nonsmoking risk factors for COPD	Longitudinal studies of migrants and refugees exposed to biomass smoke in their home countries	Prospective studies of prior biomass smoke exposure and COPD	Regalado <i>et al.</i> , 2006 (76) Díaz <i>et al.</i> , 2018 (35)
Alleviating the impact of forced migration on sleep quality	Design and implement behavioral interventions to prevent and treat sleep disorders	Clinical trials of cognitive behavioral treatments for insomnia	Fazel et al., 2005 (38)
Understanding the relation between unauthorized border crossings (UBCs) on critical illness at the U.SMexico border	Conduct longitudinal studies of UBCs and critical illnesses along the U.S.–Mexico border	Expansion of studies conducted by the Binational Migration Institute of the University of Arizona Mexican American Studies and Research Center	Rubio-Goldsmith <i>et al.</i> , 2006 (42) Wong <i>et al.</i> , 2015 (43)
Evaluating the impact of telemedicine- based approaches on critical care in areas affected by conflict or war	Develop and test telemedicine- based strategies to provide critical care to displaced persons in war zones	Telemedicine guiding critical care in Aleppo, Syria	Holguin <i>et al.</i> , 2017 (1)
Gaining knowledge of the scope and impact of screening and treating communicable diseases across countries		 European survey stimulating European cross-border collaboration E-DETECT project 	Dara et al., 2016 (47) European Union Health Programme, 2016 (54)
Developing, evaluating, and standardizing best practices to improve surveillance, timely screening, stigma prevention, access to treatment, and adequate infection control regarding TB	 Identify culturally appropriate strategies, which consider the needs and interests of the target populations 	E-DETECT project	Dara et al., 2016 (47) European Union Health Programme, 2016 (54)

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Research Need	Recommendations	Examples	References
Assessing the impact of HIV/AIDS, and investigating the development and implementation of practices designed to diagnose and treat HIV/AIDS	 Epidemiological studies of HIV/ AIDS in migrants and refugees Clinical trials of pharmacological and nonpharmacological interventions to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS in migrants and refugees 	Clinical trials of antiretroviral medications among HIV-infected refugees	Spiegel, 2004 (56) Mendelsohn <i>et al.</i> , 2014 (58)
Evaluating the burden of nontuberculous mycobacterial infections and related disorders	Epidemiological studies of non-TB mycobacterial infections in migrants and refugees	Prospective studies of non-TB mycobacterial infections in migrant populations being screened for TB	Griffith and Aksamit, 2016 (64)
Assessing the impact of social media approaches and multimedia marketing campaigns to help in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of infectious and noninfectious respiratory diseases in migrants and refugees	Use social media in campaigns for TB screening	Study of social media as part of a multimarketing campaign for HIV testing in young Latino migrant men who have sex with men	Solorio <i>et al.</i> , 2016 (77)

Definition of abbreviations: AHIMSA = Acculturation, Habits, and Interests Multicultural Scale; BAS = Bidimensional Acculturation Scale for Hispanics; COPD = chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; HIV/AIDS = human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome; TB = tuberculosis; UBCs = understanding the relation between unauthorized border crossings.

Community Health Study/Study of Latinos, in which approximately 85% of participants were migrants, current smoking was highest in Puerto Ricans (men, 35.0%; women, 32.6%) and Cubans, and lowest in Dominicans, with intermediate estimates for Mexican Americans (men, 23.4%; women, 10.4%) (16).

Other migrant groups to the United States bring tobacco use behaviors from their native countries. Middle Eastern and North African immigrants often use both water pipes and combustible tobacco, predominantly in men. For example, among adults in a mid-Western U.S. city, current use of both cigarettes and water pipes was 2.3 times higher in foreign-born Arab Americans than in whites (7.9% vs. 3.5%) (18).

Cigarette smoking is often managed as a nicotine addiction, but nearly one-half of immigrants who smoke report fewer than five cigarettes per day or nondaily use (16). There are no clinical trials of pharmacological treatment of very light or nondaily smokers, and few behavioral interventions have been adapted.

Occupational hazards. During the twentieth century and early in the twenty-first century, Western European countries received impoverished workers from Central and Southern Europe, Turkey, the Middle East, and Africa. In 2008, nearly 31 million foreign citizens (or \sim 6% of the population) lived in the 27 states of the EU (19). Although nonuniform registration of migrants from different

countries is a barrier to understanding migrants' health in Europe (20), such migrants are often employed in jobs that are below their educational level and carry high risk of injury or disease, such as domestic work and cleaning; agriculture, horticulture, and forestry; hotel work, catering, and tourism; building and infrastructure; and transport.

Like their counterparts in Europe, immigrant workers in the United States are overrepresented in hazardous industries: agriculture, construction, and transportation. Moreover, immigrant workers have higher occupational fatality and injury rates than native workers (21). Although the overall occupational fatality rate in the United States has declined over the past two decades, the proportion of occupational fatalities among immigrant workers has markedly increased, likely due to lack of safety training and equipment, linguistic barriers, and precarious employment. This situation is even worse for undocumented immigrants, who risk losing work or deportation.

Data from specific industries illustrate the occupational risks of immigrants in the United States (22). In this country, approximately 60% of agricultural workers are immigrants who are at risk for noninfectious diseases (asthma, COPD, hypersensitivity pneumonitis, and interstitial fibrosis) and infectious respiratory illnesses (e.g., tuberculosis, which is more easily transmitted in

crowded housing or work conditions). Moreover, immigrant women employed in household cleaning are at increased risk of asthma.

Research needs in migrants and refugees.

- Examining the consequences of indoor and outdoor air pollutants, as well as climate change, through epidemiological surveys
- Understanding the interactions among age, sex, race/ethnicity, acculturation, country of origin, and socioeconomic status on use of tobacco and nontobacco (e.g., e-cigarette) products
- Implementing studies of effective smoking cessation interventions
- Assessing how to ameliorate working conditions for disease/injury prevention and health maintenance
- Engaging in longitudinal studies to elucidate the threats to the respiratory health of newly deported migrants over time
- Examining the impact of governmental regulations (or deregulations) on the environment, tobacco use, and occupational safety on respiratory health

Chronic (Noninfectious) Diseases

Noninfectious respiratory disorders that are common in the general population also affect migrants and refugees. Asthma, COPD, sleep disorders, and critical care illnesses are of particular interest because of their high prevalence.

Asthma. Childhood asthma is more common in high-income nations than in

low-middle-income countries. After migrating to industrialized nations, however, children born in developing countries acquire a greater risk of asthma over time, likely due to environmental and lifestyle changes (i.e., reduced physical activity and a "Westernized" diet) (23, 24). For example, migrant children living in Italy for less than 5 years had 41% lower odds of lifetime asthma than native children (95% confidence interval for odds ratio, 0.23-0.66), but those living in Italy for at least 5 years had an asthma risk close to that of native children (25). Similar results were found in Australian adolescents (26) and in Swedish children or young adults (27). This migration-related asthma risk may be greatest for those migrating before age 5 years, as early life is critical to immune system development (28). Moreover, individuals born to migrant parents in high-income countries are at greater risk of asthma than their foreign-born parents: Mexican Americans born in the United States have twice the odds of asthma as those born in Mexico (29).

Adult migrants may not be as likely to develop asthma as migrating children, except for occupational asthma. In a 2001 study of adults living in 18 countries in the EU, there was no significant difference in bronchodilator responsiveness, atopy, or health care use for asthma between migrants and nonmigrants (30). In the United States, adult migrants are often employed as farm workers, which puts them at risk of chronic airflow obstruction and chronic bronchitis (31).

Little is known about respiratory diseases in refugee children. In a Palestinian study, children in refugee camps were at higher risk of asthma or asthma symptoms than those from neighboring villages or cities. Among refugee children, current wheeze (12.6%) and physician-diagnosed asthma (15.6%) were particularly common (32). Similar findings were obtained in a study of migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea into Italy, in which young children (≤5 yr) and unaccompanied minors were particularly vulnerable to respiratory illnesses such as asthma and respiratory infections (33). Additional studies are needed to identify the relative contribution of risk factors for asthma among migrants and refugees.

COPD. Nearly 29 million people may have COPD in the United States (34). Latinos, whose ancestry can be traced to the

former Spanish empire, are the largest minority group in the United States, constituting 17.6% of the nation's population (35). Latino migrants are diverse for racial ancestry, country of origin, birthplace, and area of residence.

Consistent with patterns for asthma prevalence (36) and smoking, there are marked differences in disease prevalence among Latino subgroups, with COPD more likely in Puerto Ricans and Cubans than in Mexicans; such differences may be partly explained by the asthma-COPD overlap syndrome in Puerto Ricans. In the United States, foreign-born Latino immigrants often lack health insurance (~55%), English proficiency, or high education, which affect health care access and quality (35).

Sleep disorders. Adequate sleep is vital to good health (37). Refugees commonly experience stress during and after relocation, along with traumas inducing them to migrate. Poor sleep after traumatic or stressful events is an independent risk factor for PTSD, impacting nearly 10% of refugees (a rate 10-fold higher than in the general population). PTSD itself further worsens sleep by causing insomnia and nightmares (the most refractory symptoms of this disorder) (38, 39). Inadequate resources have been invested in delivering effective behavioral treatments in languages spoken by refugees.

Immigrants in general also face stressors that adversely impact sleep, including discrimination, adverse neighborhoods, and high rates of shift work, underemployment, and unemployment. Nevertheless, immigrants often have better sleep than native-born residents of Western nations, perhaps due to lack of unhealthy sleep habits such as tobacco or caffeine use and screen time, or a belief system that values sleep. However, second-generation immigrants usually have worse sleep patterns than first-generation immigrants, possibly due to acculturation (40, 41).

Critical illness. Little is known about critical illness after unauthorized crossings along the U.S.–Mexico border. The Binational Migration Institute of the University of Arizona's Mexican American Studies and Research Center comprehensively reports annual unauthorized border crosser (UBC) deaths (42). Although these reports have linked a "funnel effect" created by U.S. immigration control policies and a marked increment

in known UBC deaths, such deaths are a poor surrogate for a spectrum of critical illness. A retrospective case review conducted at the University of Arizona School of Medicine–Tucson from 2010 to 2012 identified 55 admissions of UBCs to adult intensive care units, with one fatality (43). Several critical illnesses were identified, related mostly to exposure to a hot and dry environment, strenuous exercise, or dehydration.

The conflict in Syria has led to a humanitarian crisis and negative effects on health care (3), including critical care (44). In response to this crisis, some groups have used innovative methods to overcome lack of physicians and critical care expertise in a war-torn country (1, 44). In October 2012, Syrian-American physicians volunteered to train Syrian nurses on basic critical care skills in Turkey, and two nurses were initially chosen to start a remotely managed intensive care unit (ICU) in the governance of Idlib (1). Within 6 months, the program expanded to cover the ICU of every trauma hospital in eastern Aleppo, serving initially 2.5 million civilians with 11 to 15 remotely monitored ICU beds. Approximately 20 Arabic-speaking intensivists and other specialists from North America have volunteered to provide remote supervision and training to the nurses and medical students in the field. With their help, the program expanded to serve up to 40 ICU beds, using inexpensive communications technology (e.g., Internet protocol [IP] cameras and satellite Internet, and applications such as Skype and WhatsApp). The applicability and sustainability of this promising telemedicine model to other conflict zones have yet to be tested.

Research needs in migrants and refugees.

- Engaging in longitudinal studies of the impact of urban and international migration or displacement on the development of asthma
- Implementing studies of nonsmoking risk factors for COPD (e.g., prior exposure to biomass- and traffic-related air pollution)
- Developing clinical trials of behavioral interventions to ameliorate sleep disorders
- Promoting longitudinal studies of the impact of unauthorized border crossings on critical illnesses along the U.S.–Mexico border

 Assessing the feasibility and effectiveness of telemedicine-based models to provide critical care in war or conflict zones

Respiratory Infectious Diseases

Respiratory infections that commonly affect migrants and refugees include tuberculosis, opportunistic respiratory infections associated with HIV infection, and infection with nontuberculous mycobacteria.

Tuberculosis. Communicable infectious diseases deserve attention when addressing migrant respiratory health; TB is perhaps the best studied, as it is most prevalent in low- and middle-income countries. TB incidence is increased by poverty, displacement, communal living, and malnutrition, circumstances commonly confronted by migrants and refugees. To address the worldwide impact of TB, the WHO developed a comprehensive strategy of TB control (the DOTS [directly observed treatment, short course] strategy) in 1995, focused on rapid diagnosis and treatment of infectious cases (45). Such approach then evolved toward the 2006 Stop TB strategy (including management of multidrugresistant disease and TB in HIV-infected individuals), and the 2014 End TB strategy, which consists of three pillars: 1) technical interventions (prevention, diagnosis, and treatment), 2) policies and supporting systems (e.g., universal health coverage, social protection, and poverty alleviation), and 3) research activities (46). The End TB strategy, aligned with sustainable development goals, includes the concept of TB elimination (defined as <1 case per million population), which needs to be pursued by countries of low tuberculosis incidence (<10 cases per 100,000 population) through implementing eight core activities (44); of these, activity 3 focuses on the needs of migrants and transborder issues, while activity 4 deals with the diagnosis and treatment of latent infection (47).

An ERS/WHO survey in Europe, besides presenting important country-specific differences, revealed that much less programmatic information is available for latent infection than for TB disease (48). A 2016 statement called for proper implementation of the End TB strategy, improved surveillance, timely screening, stigma prevention, universal access, and adequate infection control (49). Research evaluating best practices to accomplish the above goals throughout the affected regions,

and the cost-effectiveness of such interventions, is needed while south-north and east-west migration movements continue.

Efforts to screen and treat TB in migrants and refugees are of the utmost importance. In 2015, TB notification in the EU and European Economic Area (EU/EEA) countries was 11.7 per 100,000 population (range, 2.1-76.5), with an average of 29.8% of cases in persons of foreign origin (range, 0.2-89.5%) (50). In countries with a high proportion of TB cases in migrants, screening for active TB and/or latent TB infection (LTBI) is key to TB elimination (51-53). However, the actual implementation of TB/LTBI screening of migrants differs substantially in the EU/EEA (53). Published studies on the yield of migrant screening are so heterogeneous that no valid conclusions can be drawn on the most effective approach. Moreover, few EU/EEA countries have health information systems that can capture results of migrant TB/LTBI screening and evaluate the screening systematically. This has led to the identification of several research needs and initiatives, of which one is the E-DETECT TB project, cofinanced by the European Commission, which aims to use country screening data and develop a standardized protocol to collect indicators, share data, and build better systems at the national and international levels, with a long-term goal to initiate future routine reporting into a European database (54).

Limited information and standardization are also available regarding the screening and management of TB/LTBI among U.S. migrants, which depends on personnel and other resources. Refugees resettled in the state of Kentucky, for example, arrived from more than 30 different countries. The overall rate of LTBI among migrants and refugees resettling in Kentucky is 9% versus 5% among nativeborn U.S. citizens (55). Of the 581 refugees arriving between January 2013 and December 2014, 45 were eligible for treatment of LTBI, but only 12 (27%) completed treatment. Primary reasons for nonadherence to treatment included language barriers, work schedule conflicts, the perception that treatment was unnecessary, and difficulties in accessing medication. Key interventions implemented included 1) stakeholder meetings with representation from the

Kentucky Office for Refugees, the local health department, and academic leaders; 2) opening of a clinic focusing on treatment of LTBI; and 3) use of global health navigators as key personnel in centering care around the needs of the individual refugee. However, the impact of those interventions remains unclear.

HIV infection. Another important infectious disease in migrants and refugees is HIV/acquired immune-deficiency syndrome (AIDS). Although it is commonly believed that mobility, conflict, and displacement are associated with HIV transmission, the evidence that this translates into more infections is not uniformly supported by published data (56). Risk factors for HIV infection in migrants and refugees include breakdowns in social structures, sexual violence and abuse, and inadequate access to health care (56). However, what is often not assessed are protective factors against HIV transmission, such as decreased mobility, and even improved circumstances in some of the refugee camps regarding health, education, and social conditions. Important also are the HIV prevalence rates in the affected and in the surrounding host communities, as well as their interaction (56). The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, together with its various partners such as the United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS, has published guidelines regarding the rights of refugees and best practices to provide HIV-related services to both refugees and the surrounding host country populations (57). Refugees and internally displaced persons can achieve high adherence to antiretroviral therapy with associated viral suppression (58).

HIV infection in deportees is an emerging area of interest. Since 2007, more than 319,000 migrants, predominantly Mexican, have been deported annually from the United States (59). Such statistics have motivated research on the socioeconomic and health implications of deportation, especially as families are separated and communities on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border become destabilized. Migrants' forced displacement may result in the loss of social and economic resources (i.e., jobs), which may adversely affect the deportees' health (59-62). Studies conducted in a border metropolis (Tijuana, Mexico) have shown

that deportees are at high risk for HIV infection (63).

Nontuberculous mycobacteria. Pulmonary disease due to nontuberculous mycobacteria (NTM) is another increasingly prevalent condition (64). Although our understanding of this disease has improved, published evidence on its impact in migrants and refugees is minimal and largely restricted to case reports (65-67). Insufficient research on NTM in migrants may be explained by heterogeneous data on NTM-pulmonary disease (PD) epidemiology, in light of the geographic diversity of the NTM species (68); the fact that NTM-PD remains a not-reportable disease in most countries; and lack of concern for human-to-human transmission of NTM-PD, with conflicting evidence for possible transmission of Mycobacterium abscessus among patients with cystic

Research needs in migrants and refugees.

fibrosis (69, 70).

- Designing Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant and shareable national and international database systems to report the screening and treatment of communicable infectious diseases
- Developing, evaluating, and standardizing best practices to improve surveillance, timely screening, stigma prevention, access to treatment, and adequate infection control regarding tuberculosis, as well as the costeffectiveness of these interventions
- Assessing the impact of HIV/AIDS, and investigating the development and implementation of practices designed to diagnose and treat HIV/AIDS
- Developing epidemiological studies of NTM-related pulmonary diseases and related infectious disorders

Conclusions and Future Directions

Reducing the burden of pulmonary, critical care, and sleep disorders in migrants

and refugees will require a concerted effort by all stakeholders, including involvement of nongovernmental (e.g., the Gates Foundation) and governmental organizations, as well as consideration of successful approaches to nonrespiratory diseases in migrants. Moreover, developing, expanding, and maintaining easy-to-access interactive maps describing migration patterns (e.g., http://metrocosm.com/global-immigration-map) could help prioritize areas of greatest need.

Using best research practices, considering how research impacts policies affecting migrant and refugee populations, and developing new approaches to engage and fund trainees, clinical investigators, and public health practitioners to conduct high-quality research on the respiratory health of migrants and refugees is essential. The participants at this ATS/ERS workshop created a forum to discuss these issues and proposed key recommendations. Addressing these recommendations, together with continued and expanded advocacy by the ATS and the ERS, should help develop sound public policies and improve the respiratory health of migrants and refugees, ultimately reducing the global burden of respiratory diseases.

This Workshop Report was prepared by an *ad hoc* subcommittee of the American Thoracic Society and the European Respiratory Society.

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