

Abstract: 2020 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Showcase

The Clinic for International Trauma Survivors

Speaker: Dr. Sophia Banu

Abstract: The Clinic for International Trauma Survivors (CITS) at BCM is part of the newly formed Division of Global Mental Health. CITS was developed in 2012 in collaboration with Harris Health System, primarily treating refugees and survivors of torture from all over the world. We collaborate with refugee resettlement agencies across Houston to provide evidence based mental health services to adults and children who have fled violence or been persecuted due to their religious, political or gender status. Trainees across disciplines treat our patients with cultural humility and trauma informed care. Resiliency and post traumatic growth are areas of focus in stabilizing patients who are often marginalized because of their minority status. Partners in occupational and vocational rehabilitation, social work and other medical disciplines offer vulnerable populations the opportunity to excel bio-psycho-socially in the United States. We advocate for these clients in partnering with services that provide legal needs, including the medical student run Physician's for Human Rights Asylum Clinic. Outreach and education are crucial to improving access to this population and we offer these services in both refugee communities as well as through hosting the Houston Refugee Mental Health Care Conference. We collaborate with UN offices and NGOs to ensure patients have access to the rights they deserve. Peer reviewed publications and a textbook on refugee mental health have allowed us to offer gold standard recommendations to the international healthcare community that serves these patients. Our staff is comprised of a diverse population including professionals who are refugees.