

Power & Politics

CBC's Power and Politics filmed a live segment at the University of Windsor of March 15, 2017. Hugo Vega, Chair of the Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership, participated as a member of a panel discussing Windsor's efforts to resettle Syrian Refugees. He was joined by Yousra Debduk and Obada Baghdadi, Syrian refugees, who spoke about their experiences in Canada thus far.



Rosemary Barton, host of the show, asked Hugo why Windsor is successful in integrating and welcoming so many refugees. Hugo cited the strength of WE LIP's 90 plus member organizations and its relationship with the City of Windsor municipal departments such as housing, child services and social services. Windsor Essex has been working on refugee issues for many years, resulting in a foundation and infrastructure that was already in place. When the Syrian crisis occurred, Windsor Essex responded by accelerating the work that was already being done.



When asked how refugees are handling the month 13 transition, Hugo stated that WE LIP has been working alongside the municipality to ensure a smooth transition. "We need to contextualize the settlement process for a lot of newcomers. This is a two to three to five-year process for most of them

to really land on their feet. I think we need to understand that that's where they're at; they're just one year in. Most families really thrive."



Hugo identified housing and mental health as issues that need attention. “The complexity of the resources that are needed go well beyond settlement. We have a great partnership locally with the Local Health Integration Network and we’ve been able to open up a Newcomer Health Clinic that serves newcomers specifically. It’s

a very unique model in the country and those are the sort of things we need to do; not just to ask for dollars but to also figure out how to streamline, how to work with other sectors to really support this in the best way we can.

“I would love to say that it (Syrian refugee story) is a success already. I want to look to the future. We have to look at this as a long-term plan...this is our Vietnamese Boat People for this generation and I think in 10, 20 years we’re going to look back and say we’ve done this well. Was it frustrating? Were there challenges? Absolutely, but I think in general we’ve done things relatively well.”

Please click on the following links to either view or listen to the segment in its entirety:

Video: <http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/898959939610/>

Podcast (1:21:40 mark):

http://podcast.cbc.ca/mp3/podcasts/cbcpowerandpolitics_20170315_41431.mp3

The Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership was invited to participate as panelists at the 2017 National Metropolis Conference in Montreal, Quebec. WE LIP council members and staff, Sarah May Garcia, Jon Jewell and Marina George, participated in a workshop entitled, *Cross-Sectoral Partnerships: Charting a Way Forward*. The session highlighted examples of cross-sectoral partnerships with non-traditional organizations and how they address challenges with serving newcomers.

The WE LIP ambassadors spoke to the collaborative efforts of the Windsor-Essex community that lead to the creation of VON Immigrant Health Clinic. The presentation included information about:

- Triggers leading to the partnership
- Developing best practices
- Challenges and solutions
- Indicators of success
- Lessons learned/Moving forward together




VON Immigrant Health Clinic – Case Study



“I am very thankful for the help of the people at the VON clinic. They have helped make it easier for our children to attend school, ensure that my family is healthy, and allow us to become a part of the community”
- Jamal Omais, VON Immigrant Health Clinic client

Indicators of Success



VON Immigrant Health Clinic (IHC) in numbers
Highlights - April 18, 2016 to February 28, 2017:

- 867 Total assessments conducted
- 171 Total outreach clinic assessments in Windsor and Essex county
- 712 Patients successfully connected to primary care