

**Pennsylvania Department of Health  
(PADOH)**

**Office of Health Equity (OHE)**

**Environmental Justice Advisory Board  
(EJAB) and Citizens Advisory Board**

**Sept. 17, 2013**

**Dr. Hector Richard Ortiz  
Director, OHE**

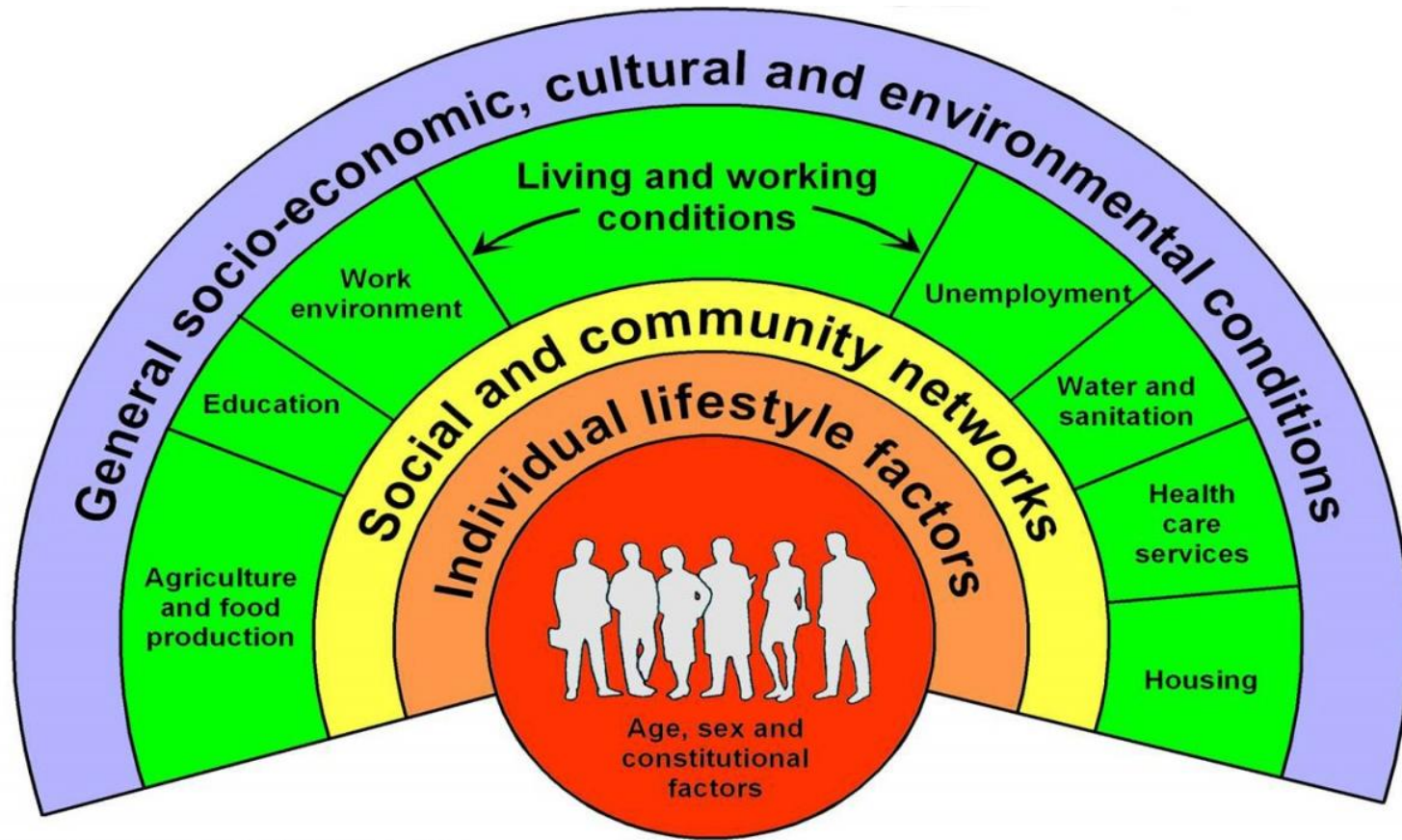
## Mission DOH-Office of Health Equity

To increase public awareness of health inequities, advocate for the development of programs and policies within the PADOH and collaborate with community-based organizations and other stakeholders to address health inequities in Pennsylvania

## Office of Health Equity (OHE)

- Funded through the Federal Office of Minority Health State Partnership Grant.
- Provides leadership to increase public awareness of health inequities.
- Promotes the development of programs and policies to address health inequities.

# Social Determinants of Health



Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991

Health equity is the highest attainable standard of health experience for any group when compared to other populations.

# Health Disparities

Health disparities exist when one population or group of people experiences worse health outcomes or a lesser quality of health care when compared to other populations.

# Who Suffers from Health Disparities?

- Racial/ethnic minorities (such as Latino/Hispanic and Black/African-American)
- Immigrants, migrants and refugees
- People with physical or mental challenges
- Sexual minorities (gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender individuals)
- The elderly
- Those who live in rural areas

- The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has released findings that confirm:

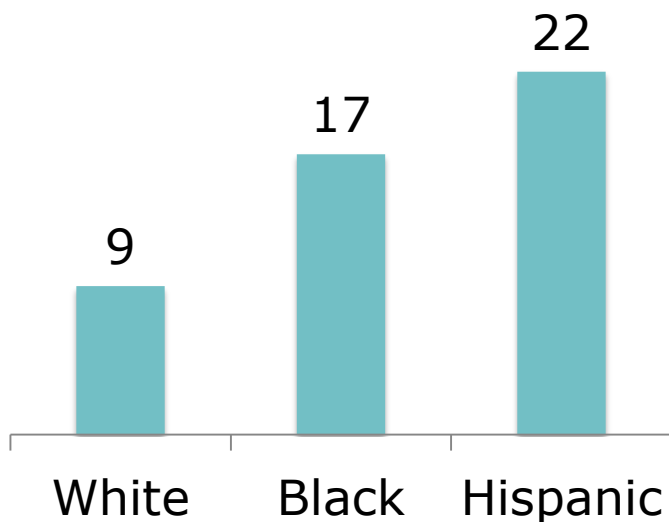
“Racial and ethnic minorities tend to receive lower-quality health care than whites do, even when insurance status, income, age and severity of conditions are comparable.”  
*(Unequal Treatment, IOM)*



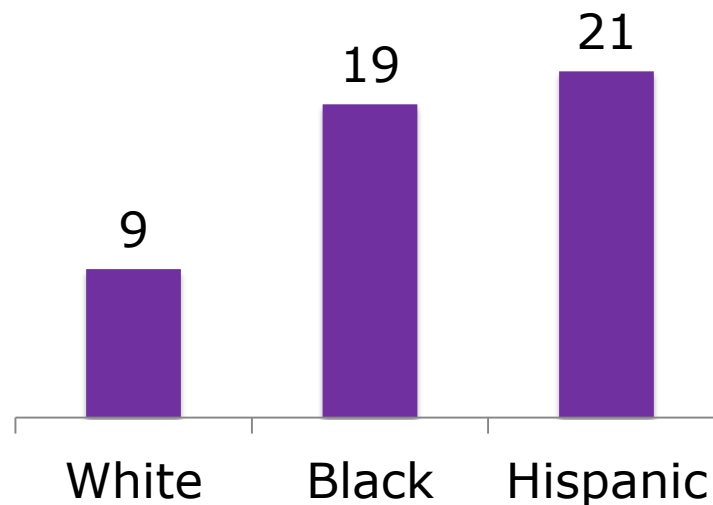
# Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS1) 2008-2010

## ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE (%)

**Does Not Have a  
Personal Care  
Provider**

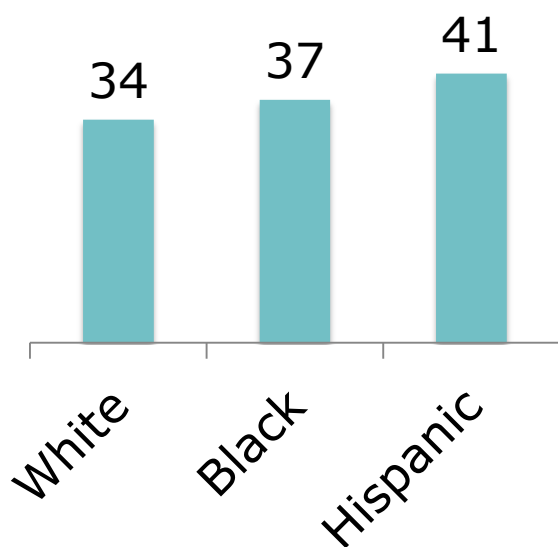


**Needed to See a  
Doctor But Could Not  
Due to Cost**

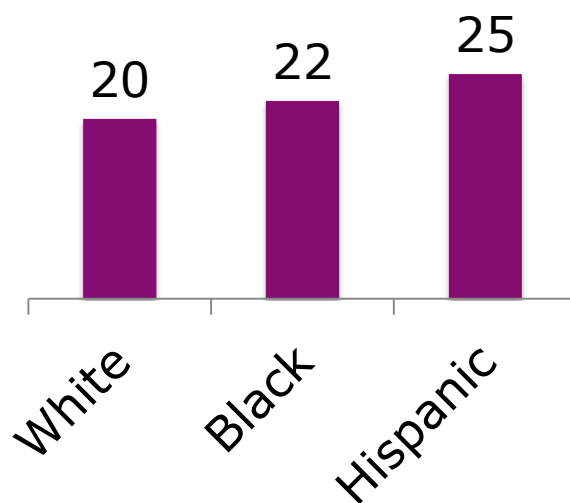


# Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 2008-2010

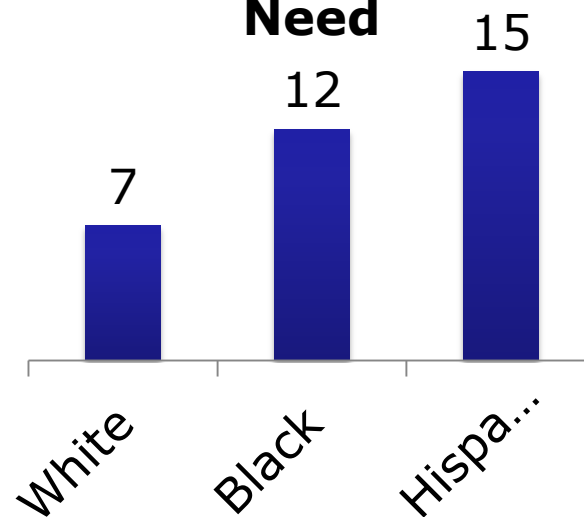
## Mental Health Not Good, 1+ Days in Past Month



## Limited Activity Due to Physical, Mental, or Emotional Problems



## Rarely or Never Get the Social or Emotional Support They Need



## What is culture?

- Traditions, behaviors, attitudes, languages, thoughts, beliefs, values and ways of communication in any group of people
- Culture acts like a template, shaping our behavior and beliefs from generation to generation

## Culture is comprised of:

- History/identity
- Norms and values
- Artifacts and products
- Basic assumptions
- Language
- Values and beliefs
- Customary behaviors
- Thought patterns

# Cultural Sensitivity

- Ability to understand physical and emotional needs of our own and others' cultures
- Acknowledges cultural differences/ similarities that influence individual and collective values, principles and experiences

- **Cultural Competency** is a set of outgoing actions, behaviors, attitudes and policies exercised to create effective communication and sociable cross-system interactions in an intercultural framework.

## CLAS STANDARDS

Culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS) are respectful of, and responsive to, individual cultural beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy levels and communication needs.

CLAS Standards are all about treating individuals with respect and in accordance with their culture and language.

# 15 CLAS Standards

## National CLAS Standards — Overview and Key Themes

1 Principle Standard

2-4 Governance, Leadership and Workforce Standards

5-8 Communication and Language Assistance Standards

9-15 Engagement, Continuous Improvement and Accountability Standards



# What is Diversity Awareness?

- Commitment to recognize similarities
- Willingness to celebrate differences
- Devotion to create inclusiveness
- Pledge to respect and appreciate diversity

# Recommendations

- Redirect our public health focus to include the family and community, rather than focus strictly on the individual
- Consider the physical, emotional and spiritual components of the body while treating patients

## Recommendations

- Become knowledgeable of cultural beliefs
- Better communication with patients
  - Patient's beliefs regarding health and health care
  - Patient's understanding of practitioner's diagnosis and instructions for treatment

# Refugee Health Program (RHP)

**Dr. Asresu Misikir**

State Refugee Health Coordinator

**Susan Johnston, MBA**

Public Health Program Administrator

**Krista Baney, MSW**

Mental Health Social Worker

# Partnerships

- Partnership between:
  - Federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)
  - Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare
  - PADOH
    - OHE
    - Bureau of Epidemiology

# Partnerships

The goal of this program is to ensure that all newly arriving refugees receive a comprehensive health screening as soon as possible after entering the United States.

## Definition of a Refugee

A person who is outside his or her own country of nationality and who is unable or unwilling to return to that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership into a particular social group

## Mission of the RHP

To ensure that refugee arrivals receive a comprehensive health assessment after entry into the U.S. for the protection of public health against communicable diseases, as well as to identify and treat health conditions or health-related issues that could delay successful resettlement



# Who is served in the RHP

- Refugees
- Asylees
- Cuban/Haitian entrants
- Amerasians
- Victims of human trafficking
- Unaccompanied alien children
- Survivors of torture

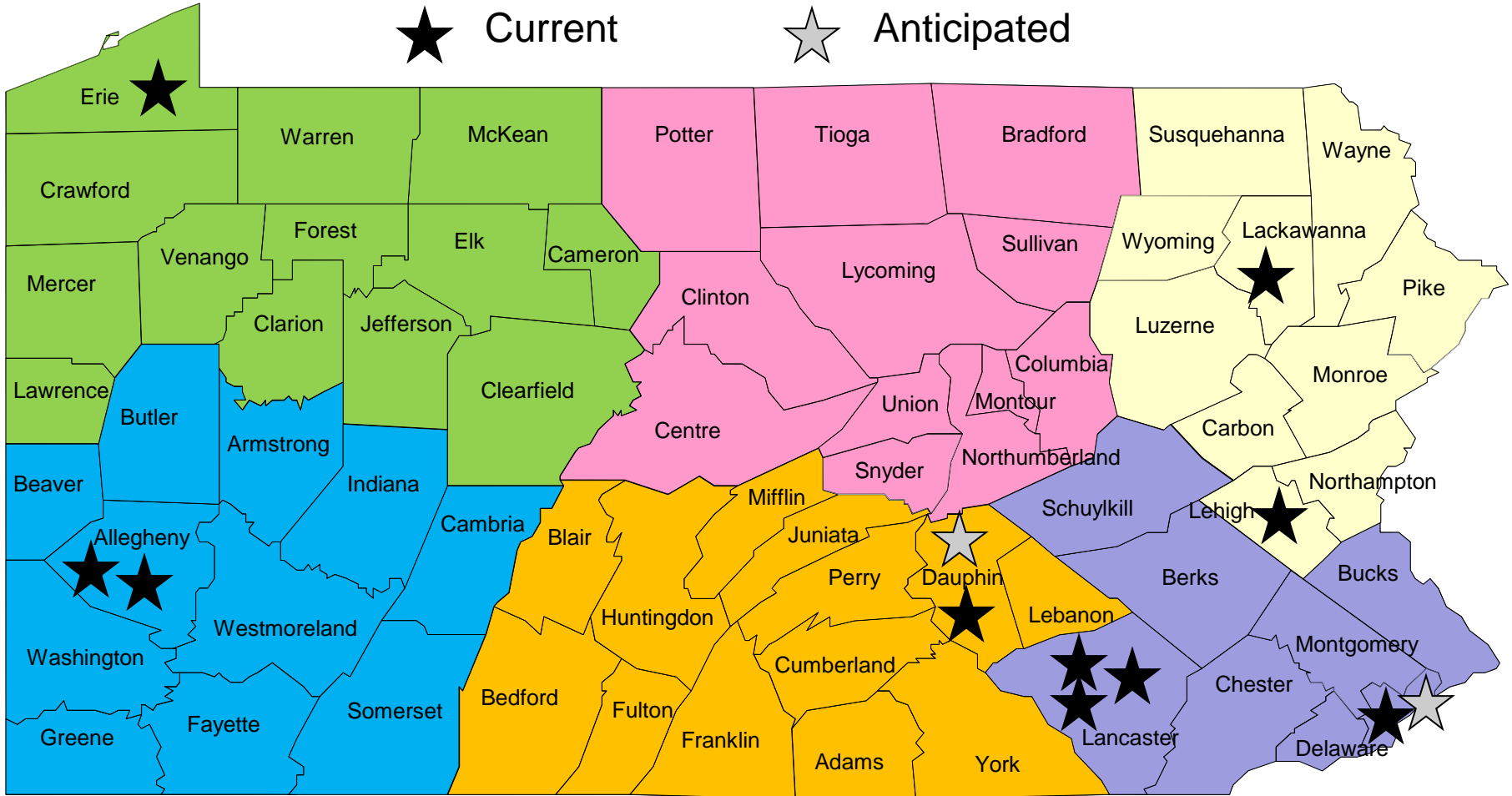
# Primary Components of the Health Assessment

- Medical history and physical examination
- Tuberculosis screening
- Hepatitis screening
- Sexually transmitted infections
- HIV screening
- Intestinal parasite screening
- Immunizations
- Mental health screening and referral

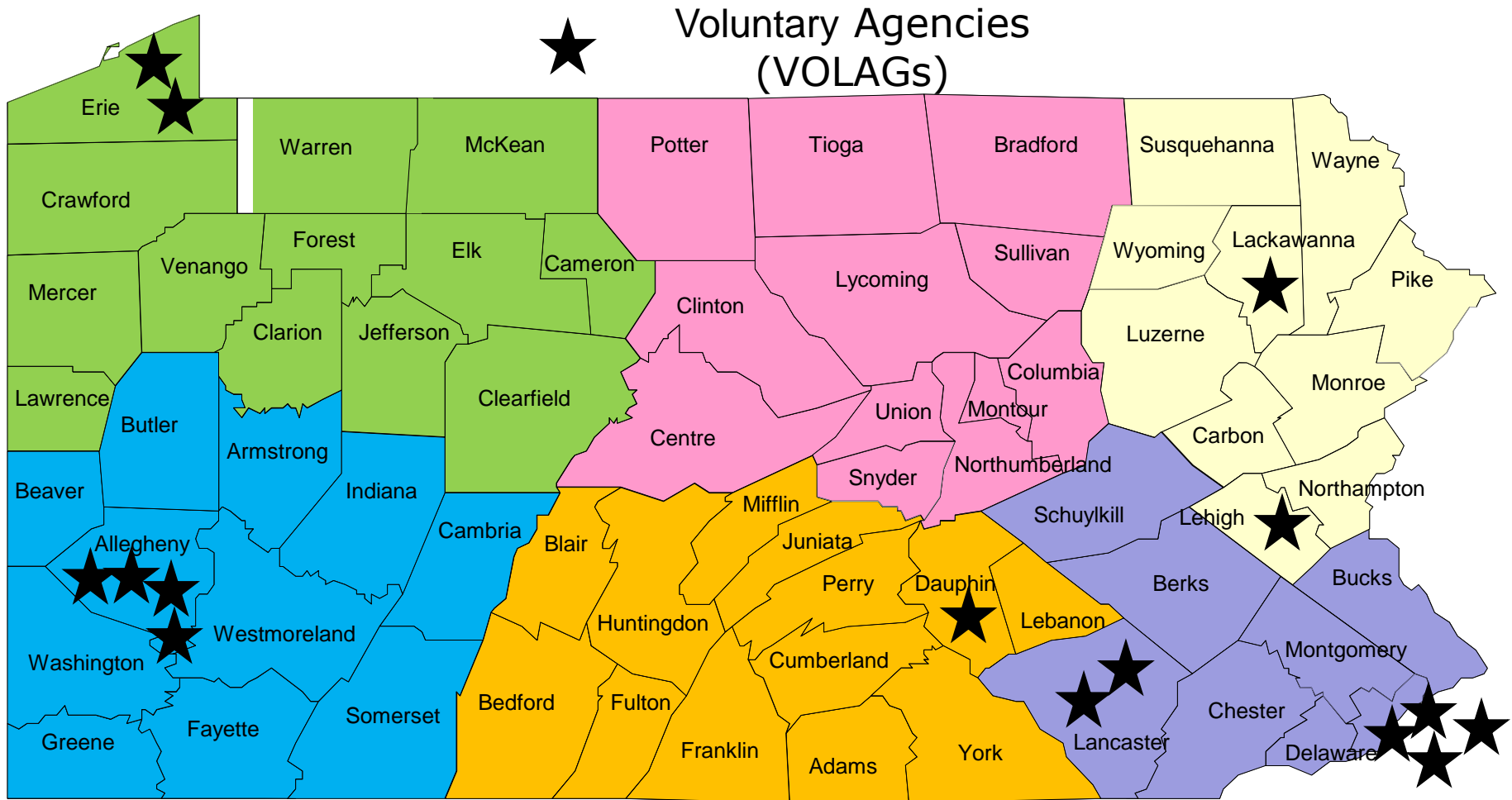
# Medical providers by region

★ Current

☆ Anticipated



# VOLAGs by region



# Pa. eShare RHP Assessment System

## PADOH-RHP Participating Provider Agreement (PPA)

- The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) refugee health screening consists of the medical visits and mental health assessments for each refugee.
- Certain medical assessments are required to be performed for each visit.
- Currently, a participating provider completes a Pennsylvania Initial Refugee Health Assessment Form on each refugee and sends this to the RHP coordinator.
- Providers are reimbursed for their services.

## Pa. eShare RHP Assessment System

### PADOH-RHP Participating Provider Agreement (PPA)

- The RHP ensures medical screenings are performed in accordance with this contractual agreement and epidemiological data is collected and sent to the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

No later than 10/01/2013

### Pa. eShare Refugee Health Program Assessment System

[https://apps.health.pa.gov/PAeShare/PAeShare/IRHA\\_Form/Logon.aspx](https://apps.health.pa.gov/PAeShare/PAeShare/IRHA_Form/Logon.aspx)





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## **PADOH**

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**<http://www.health.state.pa.us/healthequity>**