

Asylum and Persecution | PHR Asylum Program

More than 1,700 health professionals across the United States are members of the PHR Asylum Network.



The asylum-seekers PHR volunteers helped in 2018 came from 67 countries around the world.

For more than 30 years, PHR's Asylum Network has supported survivors of torture and ill-treatment who seek refuge, safe haven, and an opportunity to recover in the United States from the trauma and injury they endured in their country of origin.

PHR's Asylum Network comprises more than 1,700 members nationwide who volunteer their time to provide pro bono forensic medical and psychological evaluations that can corroborate an asylum seeker's claim of having suffered violence and persecution. Every year, PHR facilitates more than 700 such evaluations, often requiring our volunteers to travel at short notice to conduct emergency evaluations for an asylum seeker about to be deported. We are the only organization in the United States that provides this service free of charge.

PHR offers **regular trainings** to ensure that our volunteer health professionals are well-equipped, that they are assigned to asylum cases that call for their particular skills and expertise, and that each health professional's evaluation, documentation, and testimony for every survivor we serve is timely, compelling, and of the highest quality.

The U.S. administration's crackdown on immigrants and asylum seekers has raised awareness among **health professionals** about the importance of advocating for this population. In 2018, more than 20,000 health professionals signed our **letter** to the Department of Homeland Security protesting the family separation policy, and PHR continues to work with Asylum Network members and **medical school clinics** to generate research and advocacy for policy change, in addition to individual evaluations.

The results of our program speak for themselves: 90 percent of reported asylum outcomes that include an evaluation performed by a PHR Asylum Network volunteer are successful, compared to a national average of barely 30 percent.

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