

All parties must ensure equity of access, experience and outcomes across social policy and practice this Federal Election

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) calls for all parties to adopt targeted, inclusive and responsive programs to empower culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Australians through equity of access, experience and outcomes, across social policy and practice.

Aged Care

Older Australians from CALD backgrounds will require additional support in increasing consumer choice and flexibility in receipt of a Commonwealth funded Home Care Package through the *My Aged Care Gateway*. This includes communication of Consumer Directed Care, strengthening capacity to navigate the system to make informed choices, ensuring access to quality support, negotiating changes to services, and enabling the provision of feedback. High quality consumer directed care must respond to cultural, linguistic, and spiritual diversity and needs. Successful aged care sector reform will require the expertise and guidance of the multicultural ageing sector, through dedicated funding, that will be supported by ongoing specialist assistance.

Mental Health

Research in Australia indicates that people from CALD backgrounds are a vulnerable group in the mental health system, but are also less likely to seek help. They require unique mental health provision, with their needs to be met in a culturally sensitive and appropriate way. Specialist consideration in reforms should be given to new migrants and refugees, and experiences of torture and trauma. Older people from CALD backgrounds are also considered to be at greater risk of suffering from mental illness, including those living in rural or remote areas. Given this, it is essential there is tailored access to mental health services for CALD individuals and families.

Child Care

FECCA reiterates that any activity test must not disproportionately affect migrant and refugee families, given that a high proportion of CALD workers, particularly women, are in insecure, casualised and variable employment. We are concerned about the way that the Child Care reforms will affect children from migrant and refugee backgrounds and call for all parties to restore 24 hours of subsidised child care per week, irrespective of whether the parent is able to meet the activity test.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The NDIS provides people with disability independence through its central tenant of 'choice and control'. To respond to the needs and choice of participants from CALD backgrounds, the implementation of the NDIS must ensure equity in availability and accessibility of support. This includes community engagement, considering language and communication barriers, strengthening the capacity of individuals to make informed choices and ensuring services are responsive to cultural needs. The critical role of multicultural sector organisations in providing culturally sensitive and appropriate support is vital in this regard.

Women's Safety

The Second Action Plan of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022* recognises the complex challenges faced by CALD women. Women from CALD backgrounds face intersectional barriers. To address family violence in multicultural communities requires an innovative, inclusive and tailored approach, which challenges stigma and recognises the impact of migration on the experience of violence, along with economic and social factors. Issues of access to justice, including availability of quality language services, culturally sensitive health and domestic violence services, and affordable housing options for women escaping violence are key factors impacting on CALD women's safety.

We reiterate our call for all women escaping violence to be entitled to crisis payments, regardless of their visa status. Access to crisis payments ensures that women on temporary visas are financially supported while they seek assistance following a violent relationship, this can include accessing legal and justice support and meeting the basic needs of their children.

FECCA is seeking all parties' commitment to adopt a targeted, inclusive and responsive social policy. With sufficient evidence and research to indicate Australia's migrants and refugees continue to face multiple disadvantages across a number of indicators, it is imperative these are addressed through all government policies and programs to eliminate disparities in equity of

access, participation and outcomes.

You can find all your latest multicultural election content on the [Federal Election 2016 webpage on the FECCA website](#).

FECCA's election priorities: [Governing for All Australians: A Policy Platform to Respond to Australia's Cultural and Linguistic Diversity](#).

Major parties' responses: [Federal Election 2016: Multicultural policy commitments from the major parties](#).

Media Comments: FECCA Office – (02) 6282 5755 or media@fecca.org.au.