

No place for racism in response to coronavirus

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) today called on Australians not to tolerate anti-Asian language or behaviour in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.

The call comes after Asian Australians have reported to FECCA a spike in racism and Sinophobia directed towards them that has made them feel unsafe.

FECCA Chairperson Mary Patetsos said the coronavirus must not be allowed to be used as an excuse for racist behaviour.

"We have heard reports from Asian Australians that there has been an increase in racism and anti-Asian language and behaviour in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak," she said.

"This type of language and behaviour makes people feel unsafe and as a society we cannot allow it to become normalised.

"We cannot sit back and let people who hold racist views use the coronavirus as an excuse to vilify members of the community. Our leaders and indeed all Australians must call out racism whenever, and wherever they see it.

"It's also important that our leaders follow the medical advice in relation to coronavirus containment measures and avoid any comments or actions that may be inflammatory or prejudicial to Chinese Australians.

"Going beyond the medical advice does nothing to improve public health outcomes or the containment of the coronavirus.

"On behalf of Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse communities I want to wish anyone affected a speedy recovery."