

FECCAe-NEWS

The Newsletter of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia

FECCA 2015 National Biennial Conference

Join us as we reflect on our unique diversity, the legacy of 40 years of multicultural policy, and pathways to building a better future for all. Visit the FECCA Conference website to see who will be speaking and read up on their biographies. More information can be found on the Conference [here](#).



On the second day of the conference FECCA has partnered with Our Watch, and put together a panel on the prevention of violence against women. Conference delegates will have an opportunity to hear some of the countries' leaders speak about the issue and the particular challenges for CALD communities. Attendees will gain an understanding of the role of prevention in tackling this issue, and reflect on what they can do in their sphere of influence; where they live work and play.

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From the FECCA Chair



Welcome to FECCA's October 2015 update.

This month has seen a resurgence in the debate on section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act. FECCA strongly believes that

reopening the conversation could impact deeply on Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse communities. This matter was thoroughly discussed during the 2014 year and an overwhelmingly majority of communities rejected the watering down of this legislation. Many communities expressed fears that the repeal of section 18C would strip protections from some of the most marginalised members of our society, posing a threat to social cohesion.

FECCA would also like to urge the Australian community to come together in a show of strength and unity, following the tragic shooting in Parramatta earlier this month. It is important that as a multicultural society we work towards building a cohesive and unified Australia.

At FECCA we are very concerned over the progressively hostile attitudes towards Muslim Australians and other minority groups, following the rise in anti-Islam protests and rallies. We would like to stress the importance of respect and social inclusion to foster harmony and acceptance throughout Australia's culturally diverse society.

Registration for the FECCA Conference is still open. Anyone wishing to attend the Conference is eligible to purchase tickets [here](#). The Conference will be held in Sydney, NSW, on 5-6 November 2015, at Sheraton on the Park. This year's conference is organised jointly by FECCA and the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW (ECC NSW).

I also invite you to join us for the Conference Dinner, which will be the highlight of our social program. Held at the Sydney Town Hall, the Conference Dinner will be a chance to join your fellow delegates in a relaxed atmosphere, where you will experience some great food and entertainment. We are thrilled to announce the host of the FECCA Conference Dinner is Walkley-

nominated SBS reporter and producer, Patrick Abboud. As one of the presenters of SBS2's 'The Feed', Patrick is sure to bring some light, comic relief to the Conference Dinner, so make sure you get a [ticket!](#)

On Saturday 17 October I was delighted to open the Griffith Multicultural Festival. There was a Flag March, led by the Griffith Mayor, Cr John Dal Broi, Cr Dino Zappacosta and myself, followed by 50 flag bearers representing all the different cultures that make up Griffith.



It was attended by thousands of local people and was a wonderful celebration of the area's unique cultural diversity.

Joseph Caputo OAM JP

Employment participation of culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability

FECCA Disability Advisory Committee successfully organised a productive discussion on creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds with the participation of a number of stakeholders. The participants of the meeting included a number of representatives from the Disability Employment Services, Department of Employment, Australian Public Service Commission and representatives from private disability employment sector. The discussion focused on low employment outcomes for people from CALD backgrounds, gaps in the existing system and the need for reforms.

Lack of robust advocacy services for CALD clients, insufficiency of information with regards to disability employment services provided by government which results in underutilisation of these resources, limited number of CALD specific disability employment providers, work right limitations placed on those on certain types of visas and international students with disabilities and lack of or limited appropriate employment opportunities for people with disability who possess tertiary or higher educational qualifications were highlighted as the most pressing barriers specific to CALD people with disabilities who are attempting to enter the Australian workforce.

The meeting provided an overview of the ongoing work of the Taskforce and on the main themes that emerged from the series of consultations. The comments and feedback received during the consultation process around the strengths and weaknesses in the existing disability employment framework were very much consistent across the country. Certain new changes are underway to create more job opportunities that are available to a wider range of people with disabilities.

The effectiveness and understanding as to the use of 'wage subsidy' among various employers were considered to be an area that the government

could look into in order to improve and increase employment of CALD people with disabilities. Although larger corporations do not often apply for the wage subsidy, a substantial proportion of the small enterprises or businesses use the subsidy when recruiting people with disability. However, misconceptions about the administration of wage subsidy including the belief that the wage subsidy is only applicable towards reducing the wages limit the application of the government provided subsidy. Thus it is imperative to educate the employers that the wage subsidy can be utilised for other purposes such as workplace arrangements and education.¹

The current service provision model encourages disability employment service providers by providing incentives based on employment outcomes. This inadvertently results in creating an environment where service providers are inclined to dedicate more resources and energy to place individuals with disabilities who are more likely to be employed as opposed to others who possess more complex needs. However, the participants were informed that such differentiation of clients will have an impact on the 'star rating'² of the employment service provider in the long run and will also be detected during the business reallocation evaluation conducted by the department every 18 months.

A number of new programs and strategies have been adopted to improve the employment outcomes for people with disabilities. A new budgetary measure introduced this year enables the department to work with individuals with disability whilst while they are still at school. This will result in a smooth transition into employment.

Another successful program is the 'Reasonable

1 See further: https://docs.employment.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/wage_subsidy_scheme.pdf

2 For more information about the Disability Employment Services Star Rating please visit <https://www.employment.gov.au/disability-employment-services-star-ratings> and https://docs.employment.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/disability_employment_services_star_ratings_methodology_advice.pdf

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Adjustments Passport' implemented last November with the Department of Defence. This program enables employees who have an injury, ill health or disability the opportunity to document any form of agreed assistance or adjustments in or around the workplace to reduce or eliminate barriers to work. Employees will not need to repeatedly disclose and renegotiate their arrangements each time they have a change in manager or when they transfer to a new role. The Passport will support continuity of any arrangements that are required for the employee in the workplace. The Passport will also document when workplace assessments took place and when or if further assessments are required.³ The department intends to make the reasonable adjustments passport widely available to all employers.

Focusing on job shaping to match the educational and professional qualifications and the preferred career of a person with a disability, long term career planning, increasing more culturally sensitive service providers, minimising red-tape, increase flexible working conditions including options such as working from home and job sharing and identifying role models and developing case studies to be distributed to prospective employers were discussed as practical solutions to increase employment of CALD people with disabilities.

FECCA thanks the representatives from the Department of Social Services, Department of Employment, Enabled Employment and Australian Public Service Commission for their participation and invaluable contributions.

FECCA visits Access Community Services Limited

FECCA was delighted to have visited Access Community Services Limited, who are one of the leaders in settlement, employment, training and youth support services to migrants, refugees and mainstream clients in Queensland.

We visited Access Education and Orientation Centre, where we met Anna Rolandsen, Educational Support Services Coordination HUB, who showed us community initiatives, such as life skills development and community literacy classes. On the visit we also had the opportunity to meet with some newly arrived migrants and hear their personal experiences.

We also visited the newly acquired Gould Adam's Community Centre in Kingston, where we were met by Etienne Roux, the General Manager Service Development, who gave us an overview of the Multicultural Sports Club and Multicultural Youth Queensland initiatives held at the centre.

Lunch was provided by Access' social enterprise café, 'Harmony on Carmody', where we had the opportunity to find out about a new social venture known as 'The Spice Exchange' and heard about the current initiatives that the team are involved with.

Thanks to Gail Ker OAM, Mirjana Vukovic, Stephan Faichaney, Tianna Dencher, Trent Ker, Evan Alexander, Jo, Robert, Garry and Marida for hosting us.

³ See further : <http://www.defence.gov.au/dmo/NewsMedia/DMOBulletin/Diversity-and-inclusion-an-integral-part-of-the-DMO>

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FECCA ageing and aged care consultations in Wangaratta

FECCA is holding ageing and aged care consultations in partnership with the North East Multicultural Association (NEMA) in Wangaratta on Wednesday 9 December 2015 from 11.00 am to 1.00 pm.

Consultations will focus on experiences people have with a family member or friend who use aged care services, or are ageing and will be entering the aged care system.

FECCA will also seek views on what people think it will be like for them, in the future, as they age, and whether they are aware of available services and programs. The target groups for the consultation are people aged 40-65. For more information and to RSVP please contact: Nikolaus Rittinghausen on nikolaus@fecca.org.au or (02) 6282 5755.

Ageing and aged care team update

Consultations

FECCA will hold consultations in ageing and aged care in the coming months.

The aim of these consultations is to attain grassroots input from CALD people, to inform FECCA's advocacy on their behalf and to communicate consumer perspectives to Government. FECCA will also provide information to assist people to better understand the Australian aged care system.

Consultations will focus on experiences people have with a family member or friend who use aged care services, or are ageing and will be entering the aged care system.

FECCA will also seek views on what people think it will be like for them, in the future, as they age, and whether they are aware of available services and programs. This will include CALD people who no longer have parents, or whose parents do not live in Australia.

Themes for consultation will include people's experiences in calling or accessing the MyAgedCare contact centre or website on behalf of a relative or person who they care for, experiences with the Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT), attitudes towards Consumer Directed Care (CDC) and issues relating to access to interpreting services. The target groups for the consultation are people aged 40-65. Consultations are planned on the Gold Coast, in Wangaratta, Wollongong, Darwin and Melbourne.

Submission on Increasing Choice in Home Care

The Australian Government's Department of Social Services has released a Discussion Paper on the Budget measure Increasing Choice in Home Care, with a focus on the February 2017 changes in aged care. Funding for a home care package will be following the consumer who will be able to select and to change their provider. [Click here](#) to read the Discussion Paper.

Quality in Aged Care

The Australian Aged Care Quality Agency (AACQA) is asking for feedback on quality in aged care. The aim of the feedback process is to discuss, explore, define and monitor quality in aged care services. For further information, please access the [AACQA website](#).

Multicultural app in dementia care

FECCA is represented at the Alzheimer's Australia SA Multicultural App Project National Advisory Group. The purpose of the advisory group is to support the project in developing and disseminating an app that assists aged care staff to deliver culturally sensitive dementia care.

The app is designed to identify cultural similarities and differences of people living with dementia, to identify possible barriers when providing services and to gain general information on the cultural needs of CALD consumers.

For further information on FECCA's work in ageing and aged care, please contact Liz Pugh, Senior Policy Officer, Health and Ageing on liz@fecca.org.au or Nikolaus Rittinghausen or call 02 6282 5755.

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

- ◆ Are you aged between 40 and 65, and have questions about the Australian aged care system?
- ◆ Do you have a parent or relative who uses aged care services, or will they be entering the aged care system?
- ◆ Are you aware of available aged care services and programs?
- ◆ Tell us what you think your ageing experience will be like.

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) is holding consultations with the Multicultural Communities Council of Gold Coast (MCCGC).

Date: Tuesday 15 December
When: 10.30 am - 1:00 pm
Where: 1 Dominions Road,
Ashmore QLD 4214

Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP for catering purposes.

For more information and to RSVP please contact:
Rose Vearing on RoseV@mccgc.com.au or (07) 5527 8011.
Nikolaus Rittinghausen on nikolaus@fecca.org.au or (02) 6282 5755.



STAKEHOLDER UPDATES

Finding your family
after 17 years apart...



Photo: Rodney Dekker

How would
YOU feel?

Find out from the people who know at:

The Right to Know: 100 Years of the Australian Red Cross International Tracing Service

A special exhibition at the Melbourne Immigration Museum

1 July-25 October 2015

Melania was only 13 when she was separated from her family during Burundi's civil war.

After 17 years apart, Australian Red Cross helped her finally reunite with her sister.

In 2015, the Australian Red Cross International Tracing Service celebrates 100 years of reconnecting loved ones separated by war, conflict, disaster and migration.

To mark this centenary, Australian Red Cross has created a **moving exhibition** to showcase the history of the service and the stories of those it has helped.

Discover more about the tracing service and the exhibition by visiting:

www.redcross.org.au/tracingcentenary



the
power of
humanity



STAKEHOLDER UPDATES



**ADVERTISING
STANDARDS
BUREAU**

Expressions of Interest – Join the ADVERTISING STANDARDS BOARD

Are you interested in making sure that advertising in Australia meets the prescribed standards? Become a member of the Advertising Standards Board!

The Advertising Standards Board operates in a sensitive and occasionally high profile environment. The Board was established by the advertising industry to consider complaints made by the public about advertisements and to provide an accessible and transparent complaints process.

The Board includes people from a broad range of age groups and backgrounds and is gender balanced – representative of the diversity of Australian society. We are seeking to expand the diversity of the Board membership and seek expressions of interest from people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Please note: this is a paid Board position.

For information about this opportunity as well as about the Board and the advertising self-regulation system, please visit www.adstandards.com.au and then email Sandy Rose (srose@adstandards.com.au) for a copy of the selection criteria.

the
power of
humanity



Australian Red Cross International Tracing Service

Every year, countless families across the world are separated by conflict, disaster and migration. The Red Cross International Tracing Service aims to re-establish contact between separated family members and clarify the fate of the missing. 2015 marks 100 years of this service in Australia. If you, or someone you know, has lost contact with family members overseas as a result of war, conflict, disaster or migration, please contact the Red Cross Tracing service in your state or territory.

Please contact tracing@redcross.org.au or visit www.redcross.org.au/eligibility.aspx.

Australia@2015 Survey

Australia@2015 is a first in Australian public opinion surveys. For the first time, an Australian survey will be conducted in English and a broad range of community languages. The survey will help to understand the outlook of Australian-born and immigrants at this important time in our history – a time of rapid population growth, rising security concerns and questioning of the working of Australian democracy.

The Australia@2015 flyers are available in 20 languages (including English).

It is critical that all participants finish the survey in its entirety, otherwise the data will not be recorded.

If you would like to be sent a copy of the survey, please contact media@fecca.org.au.

For more information please do not hesitate to contact: Dr Miriam Munz, Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation, Monash University on (03) 9903 5004.

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The United Nations 59th Commission on the Status of Women

The United Nations 59th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 59) marked the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA) a visionary global policy framework for gender equality and women empowerment, with 12 key areas covering

- Women and poverty
- Education and training of women
- Women and health
- Violence against women
- Women and armed conflict
- Women and the economy
- Women in power and decision-making
- Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- Human rights of women
- Women and the media
- Women and the environment
- The girl child

I remember the excitement twenty years ago as hundreds of Australian women went to Beijing to be part of the global movement seeking equality for women and girls and I thought about these women as I fulfilled my lifelong dream of going to the United Nations.

Women attend the CSW59 for a myriad of reasons: to hear about progress, to be inspired, to network and build connections, to showcase good practice, share experiences and to hold governments to account on their progress on gender equality. With well over 11,000 delegates, 200 side events and 400 parallel events over the two weeks it would be easy to be overwhelmed. I attended more than thirty workshops and events on a diverse range of topics covering women's economic empowerment, gender based violence, poverty alleviation programs, sexual and reproductive health, women's leadership, Women, Peace and Security and met many courageous and strong women from around the globe. There were so many highlights but some of the stand out forums was:

- The strong presence of young women and girls

presenting as leaders of today- they're not waiting for tomorrow.

- The transformative and brave work of women human rights defenders working in post conflict situations in Somaliland, a country with zero tolerance of female genital mutilation and cutting and where young people want the practice stopped.
- Against the backdrop of continuing conflict and war, women came from South Sudan to proudly present their Women's Agenda for Peace and Sustainable Development.
- How research into the intersection of Islam and women's human rights is shaping a feminist analysis of the Qur'an and exploring gender equality within the Islamic framework.
- The successful poverty alleviation programs in Ethiopia where thousands of rural women are moving out of poverty through the simple act of being included on land titles, as the Chair of the event stated ... "if you want to remove poverty you need women involved and Africa cannot rise without women";
- The emergent programs working with men and boys as allies in changing social norms for gender equality, as the co-founder of MenEngage said 'Men of Quality are not afraid of equality'; and
- Celebrating International Women's Day, marching from the UN Headquarters to Times Square with thousands of women, calling for gender equality of '50-50 by 2030'.



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As I reflect on this global stock take of the BFA it is pleasing to note that over the past 20 years much has been achieved in gender equality but there is still a great deal of work to do. The BFA still stands as a very important global roadmap for women's equality but its implementation must be supported by strong leadership, commitment and sustainability. Indigenous women felt they were left out of the BFA and twenty years later they are still struggling for their voices to be heard, as are women with a disability and GLBTQ women.

There was one consistent thread throughout CSW59 that was both troubling and a signpost for change: the level of violence against women and girls is endemic and the common denominator for successfully countering this violence is a vibrant strong feminist civil society.

Since attending CSW59 in March I have spoken with many women's groups across Australia and have enjoyed sharing the experience with women in the Pilbara region of WA.

- Maria Osman

Australians homeless for the first time in later life

Older people have historically not been a focus in homelessness research and policy. However, as a result of a growing awareness of the ageing of the population, the pioneering work of organisations, and research providing fresh understanding there is increased recognition. A vital task has been to highlight the distinctive nature of older people's homelessness and how service responses need to be shaped by the current needs alongside the life history of the person in housing crisis. Culture is an important under recognised element to this social issue.

Research undertaken in Australia and internationally has consistently shown there are distinct pathways into later life homelessness. Recent research utilising the client records of 561 older people in housing crisis around Australia assisted by Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged (ACHA), found 69% of the sample were identified as first-time homeless; 23% as long-term homeless; and 9% as transients¹:

1. The first-time homeless had a conventional housing history. Most were private renters and largely had long-term stability in work and housing.
2. The long-term homeless had experienced iterative homelessness which continued into later life. This group of people often has complex needs often associated with substance misuse, and poor physical and mental health.
3. Transients including itinerant workers and people who had lived abroad for long periods. This transient lifestyle continued in older age or resulted in housing insecurity.

This project particular focus was on the first group: people who were homeless for the first time in their later years. The table below sets out the critical housing incidents that resulted in older people presenting for assistance with housing (and support) from ACHA agencies. This table shows the importance of cultural background to the critical housing incidence. It is important to note the high proportion of older people from a CALD background who are unable to continue to live with family (74.3%). Across all categories of older people with a conventional housing history, those from a CALD background form a large proportion of clients experiencing a critical housing incident.

Table 1: Conventional housing history, by country of birth

Disruption to conventional housing	n	Australia %	Other countries %
Notice to vacate	76	64.5	35.5
Unable to live with family	74	25.7	74.3
Unaffordable	70	47.1	52.9
Inaccessible	66	60.6	39.4
Relationship breakdown	30	60.0	40.0
Other	58	46.6	53.4
Total n	374	186	188

There are 14 records missing from this table, as cultural background was not recorded on all client record forms

There is an important need for further research to address the lack of knowledge of intergenerational families, culture, and risks of homelessness for older people. This knowledge will sit alongside the growing body of research highlighting that unaffordable and inaccessible housing, limited availability of social housing, and the precarious nature of private rental market are instrumental in older Australians being at risk of homelessness.

- Maree Petersen PhD, Institute for Social Science Research, The University of Queensland.

¹ Petersen, M., C. Parsell, R. Phillips and G. White (2014). Preventing first time homelessness amongst older Australians. AHURI Final Report No. 222. Melbourne, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute.

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QLD Muslim Women's CAMS Service

The Islamic Women's Association of Queensland is very pleased to have recently been approved by the Queensland Government to deliver state-wide services for Muslim women under the Community Action for a Multicultural Society (CAMS) program. Activities that we will focus on in the first year are those that respond to local needs and include:

Activity 1: Address discrimination and promote education to reduce attacks on Muslim Women - in Qld there have been numerous incidents where Muslim women wearing a Hijab have been subject to public attacks and verbal abuse. IWAQ will seek to educate the community and change misconceptions about Islam in order to reduce subsequent violent attacks across Queensland. This will be undertaken through the conduct of workshops across schools and community sites with people from different ages and backgrounds to develop an understanding of common stereotypes and myths that contribute to negative views regarding Muslims. This information will be used to inform the production of a video that addresses common misconceptions and provides an ongoing information and education tool for the community



Activity 2: Family Violence Prevention/Support – IWAQ will aim to reduce the incidence of family violence within the Muslim community by:

- Improving the understanding and knowledge of newly arrived migrants regarding domestic violence laws,
- Identifying cultural practices that might give rise to family violence and training elders and leaders

to become champions against violence and

- Educating young people about the principles of respectful relationships



Activity 3: Community Education and Advocacy

Community consultations will be undertaken with relevant government agencies, community organisations and elders to identify key issues of concern relating to the Muslim community. IWAQ will organise and host a conference on these key issues, bringing together community organisations, government agencies and community leaders to jointly identify strategies and solutions. These outcomes will inform the key priority projects and activities to be undertaken over the next two years.



National Guidelines for Spiritual Care in Aged Care

Spirituality can be broadly defined as that which gives meaning, purpose and connectedness; and spiritual care as supporting and facilitating spirituality. In a multi-faith and multi-cultural society, 'spirituality' has a variety of expressions. At present, there are no Australian national guidelines for the provision of spiritual care in aged care. In 2015, Pastoral and Spiritual Care for Older People (PASCOP) and Spiritual Health Victoria obtained a grant from the Department of Social Services (DSS) to develop national guidelines for spiritual care in aged care (residential and home care). The National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) is responsible for managing the project.

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The aim of this project is to develop the guidelines using synthesis of existing evidence, stakeholder consultation and expert opinion. The Guidelines will be based on the assumption that cultural and spiritual dimensions of every individual are unique and therefore spiritual care must be tailored to individuals. For some people, cultural, spiritual and faith dimensions are interwoven in the fabric of all aspects of life. Whereas, for others who may not have religious beliefs still have a spiritual dimension that needs to be recognised and nurtured. The National Guidelines for Spiritual Care in Aged Care are intended to articulate best practice in spiritual care from an organisational perspective. The Guidelines will be written to ensure aged care providers recognise cultural and religious diversity in the provision of spiritual care.

The consultation phase for the project is almost complete. The focus groups were selected to ensure cultural and religious diversity in mainstream groups, but also through the participation of cultural diverse organisations. In the industry-wide survey with 720 responses, 20% of responders identified as having a culturally and linguistically diverse background. The Project methodology is committed to ensuring the Guidelines reflect cultural, religious and spiritual diversity.

The Guidelines will be piloted early next year and expected to be published in July 2016. For more information visit <http://nationalguidelines.pascop.org.au/>.

Baptcare celebrates innovative partnership with Maltese community

Community services organisation and aged care provider, Baptcare, today celebrated a new partnership approach to provide Home Care packages to the Maltese community at an official welcome event held in Keilor East.

Baptcare has a long history of providing aged care services to support the lives of older people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds and recognises the importance of providing culturally appropriate care.

Baptcare Chief Executive, Graham Dangerfield said the organisation is delighted to partner with the Maltese Council to offer the highest possible care

to the community. "Baptcare and the Maltese Council will combine expertise in the delivery of care with the support and provision of services that are closely aligned to the values, beliefs and traditions of the Maltese community."

The partnership represents a new paradigm of working that closely aligns with Baptcare's Consumer Directed Care Approach which empowers clients and their families with the choice of care and how the care is delivered.

"The innovative partnership has already been of immense benefit with Baptcare facilitating access to higher levels of care for those eligible," Mr Dangerfield said.

"Baptcare is passionate about working together with the Maltese Community of Victoria to develop and train our staff to deliver care that closely aligns with the values, beliefs and traditions of our Maltese clients," he said.

Maltese Community Council of Victoria President (MCCV), Victor Borg said "Baptcare has a great team who is committed to providing the best possible care and we thank you for what you are doing for the Maltese community."

The partnership is strongly aligned to Baptcare's mission of Partnering for fullness of life with people of all ages, cultures, beliefs and circumstances.



Victor Borg, Maltese Community Council of Victoria President with Graham Dangerfield, Baptcare CEO.

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Raising an understanding of autism in diverse communities

Positive Partnerships is a federally funded project that aims to improve educational outcomes for students with autism through workshops for parents/carers and schools, along with online resources. The primary goal is to strengthen parent-school partnerships. We have focused on culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities since 2013.

Disabilities are perceived differently around the world. Different cultures have different knowledge and understanding of complex conditions like autism spectrum disorder. In many cultures, the causes are poorly understood.

Stigma and inaccurate beliefs about autism can lead to families avoiding assessment and diagnosis and the use of inappropriate treatments that are without an evidence base. This can mean that the child and family miss out on the support and intervention they need. Those supporting families may not always understand the challenges families face and what information and supports could be relevant and helpful.

When differences have not been diagnosed or addressed in early childhood, schools may play an important role in identifying difficulties and working with parents.

The Positive Partnerships CALD model has information and resources to help parents and schools talk about and plan for the needs of the student and the family. Workshop sessions have been delivered in language with language facilitators for a range of audiences. This has helped to increase understanding of autism and its impact and raise an awareness of who or what could help. The information and resources are now translated into multiple languages and are available on our website: www.positivepartnerships.com.au.

New South Wales Police Forces' Mental Health Intervention Team (MHIT) Training Multi-Cultural Module

This article was produced by Ms Maria Cassaniti, Ms Nadia Garan and Dr Roy Laube.

As first responders, police officers have a significant role in responding to and managing situations involving people who are experiencing mental health issues.

Police officer's role in managing people with mental health problems is to ensure the safety for all concerned.

Since 2013, the Transcultural Mental Health Centre (TMHC) has assisted in preparing police to respond effectively to situations involving people experiencing mental health problems through the Mental Health Intervention Team (MHIT) Training Multi-Cultural Module.

NSW Police Force's MHIT has been delivering a four day mental health training program for Police Officers across NSW since 2007. The training is aimed at assisting Officers to better manage people experiencing a mental health emergency.

To-date over 1,675 NSW Police Officers and hosted police and health professionals from across Australia and New Zealand have completed the training equating to more than 10% of its operational workforce completing the MHIT program.

Following a review of the MHIT training package by NSW Police, NSW Police determined that a multi-cultural mental health component should be added to further enhance the training.

The MHIT team approached TMHC in NSW to assist with the development of an education module to complement its four day training program, specifically focussing on the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse consumers and their families.

The module developed by TMHC aims to assist police to understand the wide variety of views of mental illness and treatment that exist in diverse cultures as well as to enable officers to use appropriate strategies and resources to respond to situations that may be complicated by cultural and language barriers.

The module includes a Transcultural Explanatory Framework which is an easy reference guide for Police Officers to refer to in the field. This guide includes prompt questions to assist Officers to engage culturally and linguistically diverse consumers with mental health issues; it provides interpreter contact numbers and organisations to which police officers can refer consumers for further assistance.

This collaboration between the NSW Police Force and TMHC is an exciting development that can only improve care for people with mental health problems across our culturally diverse communities. The TMHC and the NSW Police Force look forward to collaborating in the future as the training continues to be delivered to police officers across NSW.

MULTICULTURAL NEWS & EVENTS

Have your say about lifelong economic wellbeing of women in Australia

From 29th September until mid November, eS4W is encouraging all women to have their say about their lifelong economic wellbeing. eS4W is seeking women's views on their economic empowerment; their ability to cope with changing conditions in the economy; their participation in paid work and their income in later life into retirement.

Economic empowerment

eS4W is exploring the capacity of women in Australia to participate in, contribute to and benefit from growth processes in ways that recognise the value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth. Economic empowerment increases women's access to economic resources and opportunities including jobs, financial services, property and other productive assets, skills development and market information.

Please participate and promote the online survey

eS4W is inviting all women in Australia, young and not so young, to the online survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/eS4W>

The online survey will take approximately ten minutes; it will provide an opportunity for women to identify their top five concerns about their lifelong economic wellbeing and to raise other relevant issues.

Outcome

Based on the results of this survey, eS4W will outline what women consider should be the priorities for government, for business and for families to reduce the gap between the numbers of men and women in work or looking for work and to overcome the gender gap in retirement incomes.



North East Multicultural Association Inc. (NEMA) established in February 2005, celebrates its 10th ANNIVERSARY.

The anniversary is celebrated on 17 October 2015 at 6.30pm at the Da Vinci Social Club on Pyles Lane (off Greta Rd) in Wangaratta.

Cost are \$45 for 2-course meal and supper

Please RSVP by 13 October 2015 to 03 5721 2090 or nema@nema.org.au.

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4th National Elder Abuse Conference 2016

23 - 25 February 2016, Melbourne, Australia

4th National Elder Abuse Conference 2016

The 4th National Elder Abuse Conference hosted by Seniors Rights Victoria, will be taking place from 23 -25 February 2016 at the Pullman Melbourne on the Park, Australia.

The Conference will focus on the rights of older people to live life free from ageism and elder abuse. From preventative programs, to early interventions and later responses, speakers will share stories about the ways we can observe the rights of older people, which include identifying and meeting the wishes of older people as well as ensuring their safety. For more information visit the website - <http://elderabuseconference.org.au/>.

Alzheimer's Australia Vic on 'CALD dementia friendly communities'

For the month of September, Alzheimer's Australia Vic with the support of the City of Whittlesea and the Municipal Association of Victoria, hosted Dementia Awareness Month 2015 – Creating a Dementia-Friendly Nation.

Alzheimer's Australia Vic has a vision to develop dementia-friendly communities and organisations across Victoria.

A dementia-friendly community is one in which people living with dementia are supported to live a high quality of life with meaning, purpose and value. It is a place where people are aware of and understand dementia, where people with dementia feel included and involved and where they have control over their day-to-day lives.

The month comprised 29 events and activities across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

In South Morang on Tuesday 15 September the organisation hosted a free event entitled 'CALD Dementia-Friendly Communities' - a forum for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse groups to learn about positive attitudes towards people with dementia.

Over 130 people attended from multiple CALD groups including Chinese (Mandarin), Tamil, Sinhala, Macedonian, Egyptian, Iranian, Italian, German and Maltese.

Claire Emmanuel, Diversity Officer at Alzheimer's Australia Vic addressed the audience about the importance of community leadership in driving strategies to achieve a dementia-friendly community.



MULTICULTURAL NEWS & EVENTS

Ms Emmanuel pointed out that CALD community members are agents of change and emphasised the motto, "If we know better, we can do better".

"We need to mobilise communities to take action and reduce stigma about dementia," said Ms Emmanuel. "There needs a concerted effort by people of all ages, as well as CALD business people."

Other topics covered included Positive Ageing, presented by the City of Whittlesea. There were also group discussions during which participants shared their own opinions and ideas for dementia-friendly strategies that could be driven in their own communities.



Ms Emmanuel continued, "We were delighted with the event. Attendance was high and feedback from participants was incredibly positive. What's more, we managed to collect some valuable insights into what might help enable CALD groups to become more dementia-friendly in the future."

AfroCare

AfroCare is a not-for profit organisation based in Melbourne, Australia.. AfroCare aims to facilitate social change within African communities in Australia and beyond by providing education, stimulating dialogue and raising awareness on all issues relating to mental health. Our grass roots approach to mental health in African communities is centred on the use of culturally and religiously appropriate tools. This assists us in effectively reaching out to those affected by mental health.

AfroCare believes in the importance of empowering communities with the knowledge to educate and raise awareness about mental health issues. With this at the core of our organisation, we provide a service that

connects people affected by mental health with relevant professional services so that they have access to help and support. We also aim to eliminate any pre-existing stigmas attached to mental health and wellbeing within the African community.

Through a process of extensive community consultation utilising social media, surveys, focus groups and word of mouth AfroCare held an event to explore issues of concern for the community. The eight-hour event was held in March, in collaboration with In Our Own Words, the event was titled 'Inside African Minds'. The event began with a community BBQ, with community members then entering one of seven workshops that explored issues such as racism and bullying, black musicality, religion, suicide, depression, domestic violence, intergenerational conflict and white-beauty standards. The event brought together more than 150 members of the African community between the ages of 5 and 60.

In Addition to this, AfroCare runs ongoing workshops in local schools to address issues that are affecting African students, the workshops range from race-based bullying, bystander intervention and healthy/positive relationships. Through these workshops, AfroCare aims to provide a supportive network where young Africans can share their experiences whilst finding positive solutions in a safe and comfortable space.

AfroCare's main project currently is the production of a documentary called 'Speaking Our Truth', which is a means of raising awareness on mental health issues within the African community through enabling young people of Afro-decent to share their mental health experiences. The purpose of this documentary is to stimulate conversation around mental wellbeing within African communities in Australia in order to raise awareness about these issues and reduce any existing stigmas associated with mental health. We plan to launch this documentary in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide early next year.

This documentary is a means of reaching out to people and providing examples of solutions to mental health issues facing our community, to further raise awareness and facilitate empowerment and education. We are currently raising money via our Gofundme page, www.gofundme.com/afrocare to assist with the production of our film.