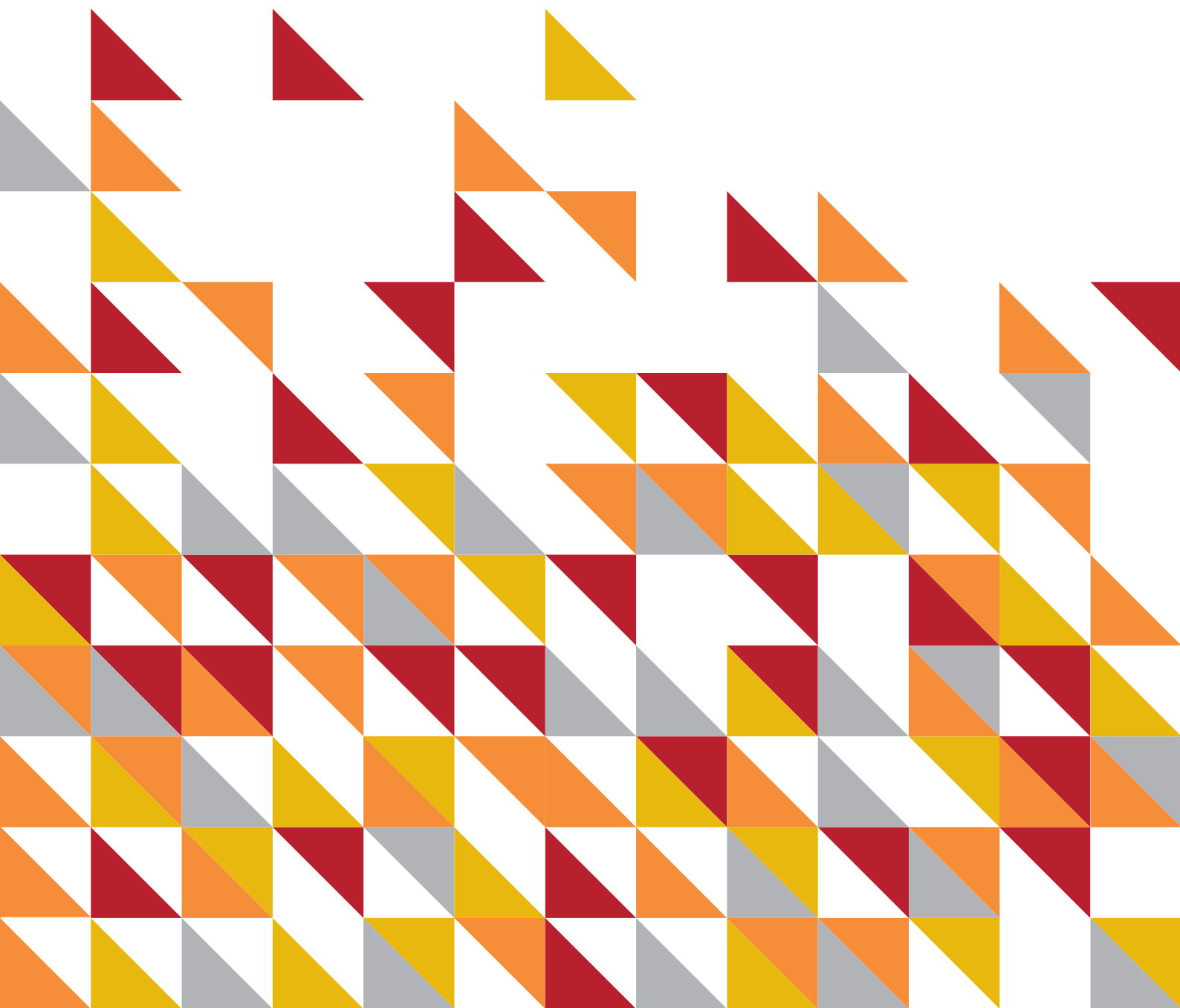


FECCA'S 2020 VISION FOR OLDER CALD AUSTRALIANS

Ageing with dignity, control and choice:

FECCA's vision for older culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Australians is that they live well, are able to contribute to, engage with, and enjoy their communities, and have access to support if and when they need it.



BACKGROUND

More than any other social policy issue in Australia, the issue of ageing for CALD Australians is one that is not only an imperative but also one in which the data demonstrates the importance of this segment across the breadth of ageing Australia.

Older Australians make up an increasing proportion of our population. In turn, the backgrounds, lifestyle, culture, language, income levels and place of living of older Australians are growing increasingly diverse. Significantly, migrant communities are ageing at a much faster rate than the population at large. The 2011 Census indicated 20.1% of Australians 65+ were born in non-English speaking countries. On current projections, in 2020 30% of the population aged 65 years and above will be from CALD backgrounds.

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) is the peak, national body representing CALD Australians, their groups, communities and organisations. FECCA's role is to advocate and promote issues to government and the broader community, ensuring that the needs and aspirations of CALD Australians are given proper recognition in public policy. FECCA works to promote fairness and responsiveness in the delivery and design of government policies and programs, and to promote multiculturalism as a core value that defines what it means to be Australian in the 21st century. FECCA strongly believes that older CALD Australians should enjoy a positive life experience as they age.

Most focus on ageing issues has tended to be either from individual communities themselves or through state-wide organisations and structures. There has been a need for both national advocacy and the development of a national narrative to sit alongside to influence the development of aged care policy and practice at the Federal level.

FECCA has moved into the gap and has been involved in policy and systemic advocacy on ageing and aged care issues for older CALD Australians especially over the last six years.

FECCA has become the leading stakeholder in CALD ageing and aged care policy:

- FECCA undertook the consultations to inform the *National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy for People from CALD Backgrounds*, and co-authored the final Strategy.
- FECCA has been a significant contributor to a range of collaborations including the National Aged Care Alliance and its working groups, and partnerships with other national peak bodies, to achieve the inclusion and empowerment of older CALD Australians.
- FECCA has developed and been funded to implement a number of large-scale, dedicated projects in the ageing and aged care area.

FECCA's policy and advocacy work is underpinned by research and consultations with older CALD Australians and their communities¹. Older CALD Australians experience considerable disadvantage as they age because of language barriers, lack of awareness of available services, a mistrust of government institutions, limited access to the internet, and lack of both skills in, and access to, information technology. In addition, the particular issues for some Australians in older age such as low levels of home ownership, low superannuation balances and low levels of other savings are likely to be compounded for many older CALD Australians whose lifetime earnings have been severely restricted by the process of migration and re-settlement.

¹ *Review of Australian Research on Older People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds*, March 2015; annual consultations with CALD communities and service providers on ageing and aged care for older CALD Australians; and annual consultations on equitable access to, and experience of, government services and supports under the Multicultural Access and Equity Framework.

In supporting the values of multiculturalism, FECCA is committed to:

- promoting the active ageing of older CALD Australians²;
- ensuring that the cultural and language needs of older CALD Australians are recognised and supported;
- enabling both equity of access to services and support, and quality of experience; and
- supporting an holistic and wellbeing-based approach to ageing including the support of family reunification, and access to language, culture and community life.

FECCA'S 2020 VISION

Ageing with dignity, control and choice: FECCA's vision for older CALD Australians is that they live well, are able to contribute to, engage with, and enjoy their communities, and have access to support if and when they need it.

FECCA will work to achieve this vision through key strategic priorities:

- Working to ensure that older CALD Australians have equal access to adequate income and housing, the full range of health and aged care services including preventive and restorative services, and opportunities to be an active part of their communities.
- Advocating for older CALD Australians to have access to information, advice and advocacy—in their own language or through interpreting services—to support the service choices they make. Services must be easy to navigate, provide accurate and timely information about service availability and quality, and address diverse needs and choices.
- Fostering capacity building so that older CALD Australians are empowered to choose services that meet their needs, including through appropriate assessment of needs and flexibility to select the right services at the right time.
- Encouraging community capacity building that will result in communities that welcome and enable the full participation of older CALD Australians, including through the cultural communities to which older CALD Australians belong.
- Monitoring and encouraging the development of adequate safeguards for older CALD Australians to ensure that their rights, security and well-being are protected and supported.
- Working to ensure that the wellbeing and satisfaction of older CALD Australians is measured, analysed and reported, and they are involved in the co-design of services.
- Advocating for a continuous focus on service design and development that engages CALD communities, and references innovation, better practice and an emerging evidence base, and that ultimately meets their needs.

² Active Ageing is defined by the World Health Organisation as 'the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age' (WHO reference number: WHO/NMH/NPH/02.8, 2002, p12).

THE FRAMEWORK

Based on our vision, FECCA has developed a five-year Framework for older CALD Australians that covers five broad action areas.

1. POLICY AND ADVOCACY

To be effective, policy and practice needs to both reflect and accommodate the needs of CALD communities.

FECCA's systemic advocacy will support the values of multiculturalism and the active ageing of older CALD Australians. FECCA will support older CALD Australians and their families to set high expectations for participation in community life with support, as required, from aged care, health and other services. Including through networking with other key organisations and the cultural communities of Australia, FECCA will support older CALD Australians as part of a powerful consumer movement that maximises peer support, uses the strength of local communities, and restores the balance of power between people and services.

Specific advocacy areas will include equitable language services supporting older CALD Australians at the point of access to, and throughout their participation in, aged care and other services, as well as multiple avenues for providing information, to ensure informed decision making and quality of the ageing experience.

2. AWARENESS RAISING

Choice and control can only be exercised through individual capacity to know about, and understand how to access, the aged care service system.

Dedicated strategies are required to drive cultural change in expectations and attitudes to ageing—among older people themselves, within their families and networks, and the broader community. FECCA will continue to support work that enhances the ageing experience for older CALD Australians by raising awareness of the value of healthy, engaged lives, and by extending the opportunities available to people as they age. FECCA will continue to promote the issues and special needs of older CALD Australians, along with the benefits of ensuring that services are responsive to our population diversity. FECCA will inform the service delivery sector about best practice, leading edge service design and the importance of cultural communities in supporting ageing for CALD Australians. Quality services should be consumer-driven and recognise specific cultural, spiritual, ethical and privacy considerations, with a view to overcoming barriers to access and achieving equity of outcomes.

3. CAPACITY BUILDING

CALD community capacity building and participation in aged care remains a universal community objective and desire.

FECCA will continue to engage with ethno-specific and multicultural organisations and groups to address identified needs of older CALD Australians, and to enhance their capacity to support their communities. With progressive implementation of changes in services such as aged care, older CALD Australians may need support to make decisions about the services they require to live well and with dignity as they age. FECCA will continue its work with Commonwealth, State and Local Governments to ensure that the needs of older CALD Australians are addressed and that the experience of services by older CALD Australians is equal to that of older non-CALD Australians.

FECCA will pay particular attention to advocating for information and service navigation—of adequate quality, extent, accessibility, and in appropriate languages and formats—to connect people to the services they need and choose. Another key part of capacity building is to enable older CALD Australians to manage their own lives to the extent possible, including by giving and receiving peer support. Those currently approaching the aged care system are more likely to be aware of their needs and opportunities, and to advocate for their entitlements. This capacity needs to be supported and harnessed.

4. LEADERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

There is a need for continuous, informed and legitimate policy leadership championing CALD ageing issues.

FECCA will provide a unified national voice by maintaining and enhancing productive relationships with Members and the broader diversity sector with an interest in ageing and aged care issues for older CALD Australians. We will facilitate engagement with CALD community groups, older CALD Australians, stakeholders and service providers.

FECCA will utilise a number of platforms to ensure an holistic approach to systemic advocacy in ageing and aged care, including:

- our support structures, including FECCA Member organisations and other relevant national peak bodies;
- research collaborations to provide evidence-based input into service design and aged care reform planning and implementation;
- participation on ageing reference and expert groups, including NACA and its working groups;
- participation on the Working Group for the *National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy for People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Backgrounds*;
- engagement with the Aged Care Sector Committee; and
- engagement with the Australian Government Department of Health and other relevant Government agencies.

FECCA's participation in ageing and aged care policy is underpinned by the Healthy Ageing Reference Network (HARN) made up of a wide range of representatives of CALD communities and ethno-specific service providers from throughout Australia including regional and rural areas. The HARN provides a diversity of voices and includes our Members, Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care (PICAC) programs, and national peak consumer organisations in the health and ageing sector such as COTA Australia, Alzheimer's Australia, Carers Australia, and Palliative Care Australia. FECCA will also consult with its Members, consumer representative groups and service providers, and ensure direct access to older CALD Australians through those groups.

5. PARTNERSHIPS, CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATIONS AND EVIDENCE-BASED IMPLEMENTATION

Strength in unity is equally applicable to the area of ageing and creating a consolidated strong voice for system change as greater access and equity for older CALD Australians.

FECCA commits to maximising opportunities to work in partnership with others to achieve its vision. FECCA complements its State/Territory/Regional membership by building significant extended networks and collaborations to enhance its representation in the ageing and aged care sectors. Further, FECCA will strengthen partnerships with the broader community and private sectors in this area.

NEXT STEPS

In consultation with the HARN and in line with this 2020 Vision, FECCA will develop **2 Year Priorities for Action**. These priorities will include a focus on the current aged care reform process, advocacy for access to language services and engagement in retirement income issues for older CALD Australians.

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