

# FECCA launches the Multicultural Community Health Leaders Network



Today, the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) launched the 'Multicultural Community Health Leaders Network' at Parliament House with Minister the Hon. Mark Butler, Minister the Hon. Andrew Giles, and Assistant Minister the Hon. Ged Kearney.

FECCA gathered 28 community leaders from across the country who are playing an important role in engaging with their communities to provide culturally appropriate information about COVID-19 and encourage vaccination uptake. The purpose of the gathering was to share learnings and experience, and establish an ongoing Community Health Leaders Network.

The CALD COVID-19 Small Grants Project, funded by the Department of Health and Aged Care, has helped build trust in the COVID-19 vaccine as collective good by empowering communities to be at the core of communicating this message as an urgent public health intervention. Since its start in June 2021, the Project has supported over 300 communities across the country to develop culturally appropriate, language-specific messaging and outreach activities.

More importantly, the Project has formed the beginnings of grassroots communication infrastructures that are meaningful to culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse communities, effectively generating hundreds of 'sites of active health promotion'.

At the heart of these social infrastructures are Community Health Leaders who could help sustain and broaden community engagement, support, and response as Australia continues to face the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and potentially, public health emergencies in the future. In recent consultations, community leaders have expressed their commitment to helping their communities, but highlighted the need to build their capability to become more effective health communicators and community mobilisers.

The 'Multicultural Community Health Leaders Network' is a critical network to ensure multicultural communities are informed about health issues by trusted and well trained community leaders. The aim is to expand the network across the nation.

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) is the national peak body representing people from multicultural communities and their organisations across Australia. Through the membership of state, territory, and regional councils, we represent over 1500 community organisations and their members, as well as thousands of individual members.

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