

victorian refugee health network

State-wide Meeting

November 2024

Acknowledgement of Country



Agenda | 2:00pm - 4:00pm

Time	Agenda item	Speaker
2:10pm	National Policy Update	Rebecca Eckard Refugee Council of Australia
2:25pm	Settlement Service Update	Gerard Murren AMES
2:40pm	Victorian Settlement Data	Samina Hassan Victorian Refugee Health Network
2.50pm	Break (10 mins)	
3:00pm	Rural and Regional Update	Kath Desmyth Rural and Regional Working Group Representative
3:15pm	 Interpreters, Language and Communication Advocacy at the Network Bicultural Health Navigator Program at Whittlesea Community Connections Sector Resources on Language and Communication 	Samina Hassan Victorian Refugee Health Network
		Hiba Ayass Whittlesea Community Connections
		Spase Veljanovski Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health (CEH)
		Discussion / Q&A
3:50pm	Evaluation via SurveyMonkey	All



National Policy Update

14 November 2024

Rebecca Eckard Refugee Council of Australia

Key issues and updates

1. Humanitarian crises arrivals

2. Immigration detention

3. Offshore Processing

4. Fast Track Processing & SRSS

Arrivals from humanitarian crises



- **Ukraine**: Government inviting people from Ukraine on Temporary Humanitarian Concern (786) visas to apply for a Resolution of Status (RoS) permanent visa
 - Case-by-case
- **Palestinians and Israelis**: Government seeking expressions of interest and making offers of a 3-year Temporary Humanitarian Concern (786) visa (449 visa required first)
 - Contact Refugee Legal
 - > Can support people with health needs to minimise Medicare gap
- People from other crises (Sudan, Myanmar, Lebanon) not able to access
- Work underway developing principles and a policy framework for Australia's response to humanitarian crises: driven by Australian civil society and diaspora communities

Immigration detention



- 31 May 2024, **883 people** in locked detention; average time in detention **595 days**
- 30 Sep 2024, **984 people** in locked detention; average time in detention **513 days**
- High Court case last week: YBFZ Unconstitutional for Government to punish people by using electronic monitoring and curfews
- Government responded by creating a new regulation to impose monitoring conditions (already in effect)
- New legislation before Parliament: risk of sending people to third countries (like Nauru); overturn protection findings; indefinite detention; family separation; applicable to BVR holders and others
- New contracted healthcare provider for immigration detention: Healthcare Australia

Solutions for refugees in offshore processing

- **~1,100 people remain** 87 in Nauru (arrivals in 2023 & 2024), 42 in PNG (plus 50 partners & children), 941 people remain who were transferred to Australia for medical reasons
- Insufficient resettlement options available (>700 places)
- NZ winding up very soon, as people must travel to NZ by 30/6/2025
- Concern about latest legislation and potential use among this group

PNG:

- > Situation in PNG deteriorated further and concerns about support to be provided
- Support via PNG Immigration officers to be provided to most unwell men in PNG and no consideration of medical evacuation

Fast track processing and SRSS



- Information from last week's Senate Estimates revealed that the Minister is considering fast track cohort limited to:
 - People who arrived as unaccompanied children
 - ➤ People who arrived pre-2010
- Concerns about Ministerial Intervention applications and loss of work rights (and connected loss of Medicare access)
- SRSS Program will be under review in 2025
 - Agencies putting forward recommendations now in relation to people in crisis, including urgent health needs



Questions?

Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP)



Estimated Planning Levels 2024/25

Estimated Planning Levels			
Settlement Location	2024-25EPLs		
Melbourne	3870		
Geelong	150		
Mildura	70		
Shepparton	200		
Wodonga	70		

- Estimated planning levels (EPL) the EPLs are the estimated number of referrals for each location. These will not necessarily equate to an arrival this program year
- Slight reduction in offshore numbers, but the overall Humanitarian Program is the same.



Transition from IOM to TOLL

- Some challenges that has meant lower than normal arrivals
- Large number of offshore cases being transitioned from IOM to TOLL
- Amendments and rescheduling of flights due to exit permit issues,
 ImmiCards not yet activated, or some not having ImmiCards
- Expect normal arrivals from January/February next year



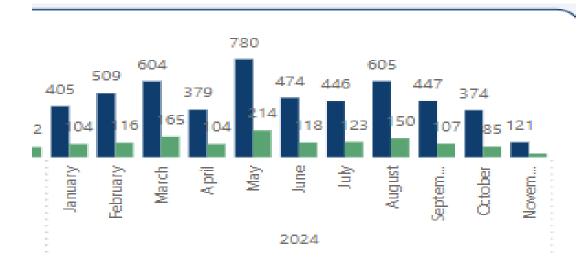


Temporary Humanitarian Stay pathway for Palestinian and Israeli nationals in Australia

- Register interest via a Webform on Home Affairs website
- Following the grant of a 449 visa, an Immigration Medical Exam (IME) occurs (through BUPA)
- HSP Providers can assist with booking and if unable to afford cost of the IME HSP can pay for the appointment
- Eligible for all HSP Services



THANK YOU



- Supported Health Appointments: 18,374 (Vic)
- Purchased Services (Pre NDIS support)
- 110 Melbourne
- 7 Regional Vic



Victorian Settlement Data

Victorian Refugee Health Network

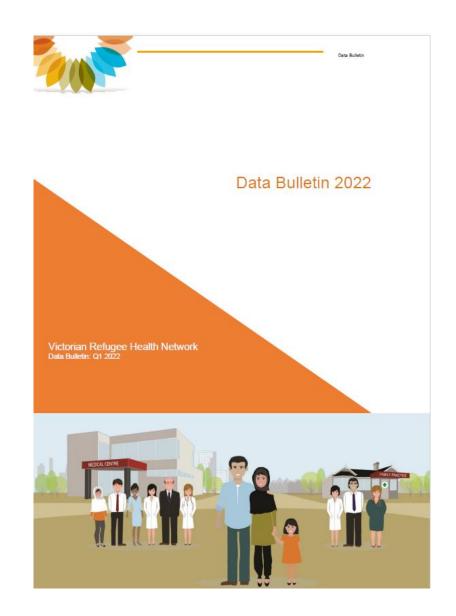


VRHN Data Bulletin

The Victorian Refugee Health Network publishes a Data Bulletin every quarter that outlines settlement data for Victoria:



https://refugeehealthnetwork.org.au/resourcesreferrals-2/? sft tool for clinician=settlementdata



Settlement Data in Victoria

Visa Subclass		Details	
200	Refugee Visa		
201	In Country Special Humanitarian	✓ Permanent Stay✓ With these visas you can move to Australia if you are subject to	
203	Emergency Rescue	persecution in your home county. These visas allow you and your family to live, work and study indefinitely in Australia	
204	Women at Risk	to live, work and study indefinitely in redstraind	
202	Global Special Humanitarian visa	 ✓ Permanent Stay ✓ With this visa you can move to Australia if you face substantial discrimination or human rights abuses and have a proposer and stay in Australia with your immediate family. 	
866	Protection Visa	 ✓ Permanent Stay ✓ This visa is for people who arrived in Australia on a valid visa and want to seek asylum. It lets you stay in Australia permanently, if you engage Australia's protection obligations and meet all other requirements for the grant of the visa. 	

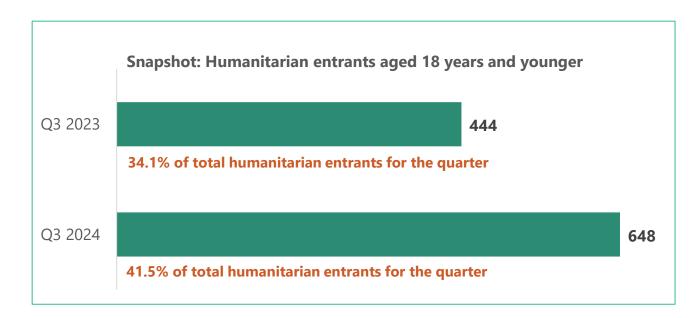
^{*} This data does not include those on Bridging visas or temporary protection visas (TPV, SHEV, 449, 786)

Humanitarian Entrants in Victoria: Q3 2024

1,561 humanitarian entrants arrived in Australia in the third quarter of 2024 and currently reside in Victoria (as of 4 Oct 2024)

Country of Birth		
Afghanistan		
Syrian Arab Republic		
Myanmar		
Iran		
Congo		

Languages spoken	
Dari	
Arabic	
Pashto	
Farsi (Afghan)	
Swahili	





^{*} This data does not include those on Bridging visas or temporary protection visas (TPV, SHEV, 449, 786).

Additional sources of data

Social Statistics for Victorian Communities Social stats.com.au

Spoken Languages			
Spoken Languages by Age	Download		
Spoken Languages by Age and English Fluency	Download		
Spoken Language by Age, Fluency and Year of Arrival	Download		
Spoken Language by Suburb	Download		
Languages Spoken by Birthplace	Download		
Spoken Language and Recency of Arrival	Download		
English Fluency by Age and Gender	Download		
English Fluency by Language and Age	Download		
English Fluency by Birthplace Age and Gender	Download		

^{*} This data does not include those on Bridging visas or temporary protection visas (TPV, SHEV, 449, 786).

Statistics for people seeking asylum

Department of Home Affairs

https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-andstatistics/statistics/visa-statistics/live/humanitarian-program

SNAPSHOT: 1 SEP 2024 - 30 SEP 24

Total number of protection visa lodgements made onshore during the period: **2,002**

Total number of individuals granted a Final Protection Visa during this period: **253**

Countries of origin for individuals who were granted a Protection Visa during this period:

Malaysia

Myanmar

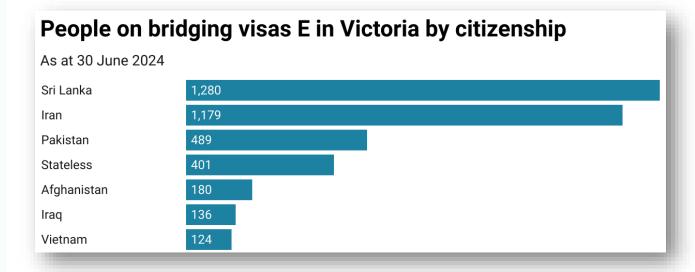
China

Iran

Pakistan

Refugee Council of Australia

https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/asylum-community



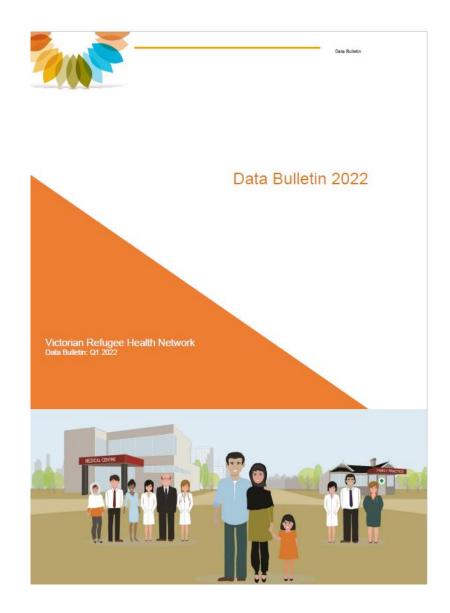
VRHN Data Bulletin

The Victorian Refugee Health Network publishes a Data Bulletin every quarter that outlines settlement data for Victoria:



https://refugeehealthnetwork.org.au/resourcesreferrals-2/? sft tool for clinician=settlementdata

refugeehealth@foundationhouse.org.au



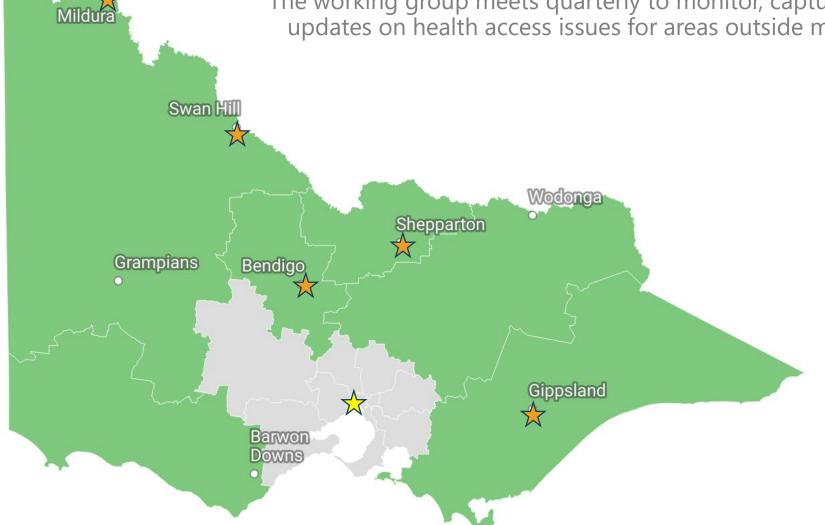


victorian refugee health network Rural/Regional Working Group

November 2024

Rural/Regional Working Group

The working group meets quarterly to monitor, capture and have regular updates on health access issues for areas outside metropolitan areas.



Representation from a range of areas including:

- Bendigo
- Shepparton
- Swan Hill
- Mildura
- Gippsland
- East Wimmera

Issues raised in rural and regional meetings:

Vaccinations

Housing

PALM Scheme



Access to GPs and specialists

Interpreter Use

Collaboration with settlement sector

Mental health access and literacy

CRISP

Cost of living

Racism

Dentistry / Oral Health

Transport

Case study

Single mother with two children, needing to go to specialist appointment. Unable to take her other child to the appointment and no one else to look after the other child. Wanted to drive to Melbourne and didn't have licence.

Location	Distance to Melbourne	Round-trip to/from Melbourne
Shepparton	200 km	4 - 6 hours
Mildura	550 km	12 – 14 hours
Gippsland	250 km	6 – 8 hours
Bendigo	160 km	4 – 6 hours



Two health clinicians often accompany clients to their appointments.



- 1. Mobile specialist clinics
- 2. Collaboration with settlement services to provide more education on public transport
- 3. Collaboration with hospitals to provide visual aids on navigation to clinics

Dental care

Case study

Six year old child in pain with all their teeth gone. There is no dental in East Wimmera.

Every three months, an oral surgeon comes to Nhill. However, there is a struggle with transport, and getting an appointment is a struggle due to backlog.

Workforce shortage:

"There are chairs but no people to man the chairs" 1. Scholarships for dentistry in rural/regional areas



- 2. Simplified, in-language resources regarding dental care
- 3. Explore connecting with peak bodies to advocate on this issue

Bendigo Community Health Services will be trialling an **onsite dental van** in the new year and will report back.

A **tool for Refugee Health Nurses** to identify and triage dental issues is also in the works.

Good News Story - Mildura



Case study



- 49 year old
- Burundian woman
- Diagnosed with possible cervical cancer
- Upset to hear that she would need to travel to Melbourne to undergo a hysterectomy
- Healthcare worker flagged her trauma background and social situation with the specialist, which he shared with the hospital team in Melbourne.
- The gynaecologist treated the woman with the **utmost respect** and arranged **interpreter services** to explain the procedure and address her fears about traveling to Melbourne. Fortunately, the surgery was performed at Mildura Base Hospital.

- Healthcare worker advocating on client's behalf
- Sensitive, trauma-informed care addressing concerns and fears
- Interpreter services used
- Care provided close to home
- Support person allowed

"Client shared that she never felt afraid, alone, or confused during her hospital stay. Her English-speaking sister was allowed to stay with her, and interpreter services were available when needed."

Join a network

Looking to connect with others in the refugee and asylum seeker sector?

https://refugeehealthnetwork.org.au/join-a-network/

Bendigo Local Settlement Network

Meets three times a year

Network to work together to facilitate self-reliance and social cohesion amongst migrants with low English proficiency, international students, and refugees in Greater Bendigo so they are settled and empowered.

Location: Online via Teams

E: kayegraves@bchs.com.au

Contact: Kaye Graves, Senior Leader – Refugee and Cultural Diversity (Bendigo Community Health Services) Eastern Region Refugee Health Network

Meets every three months (quarterly)

Network to enhance the health outcomes of refugees and people seeking asylum within the Eastern Region catchment area through crossorganizational collaborative action.

Location: Ringwood East or Online via Teams

Contact: Merilyn Spratling, Refugee Health Nurse Coordinator (EACH) P: 03 9837 3900

E: mspratling@each.com.au

Rural and Regional Working Group

Meets every three months (quarterly)

A working group to discuss key issues impacting rural and regional settlement in Victoria and identify opportunities for advocacy.

Location: Online via Teams

Contact: Victorian Refugee Health

Network

E:

refugeehealth@foundationhouse.org.

au





victorian refugee health network

Interpreters, Language and Communication

Samina Hassan

Victorian Refugee Health Network

AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE



The Australian Charter of Health Care Rights

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care

Information



You have the right to

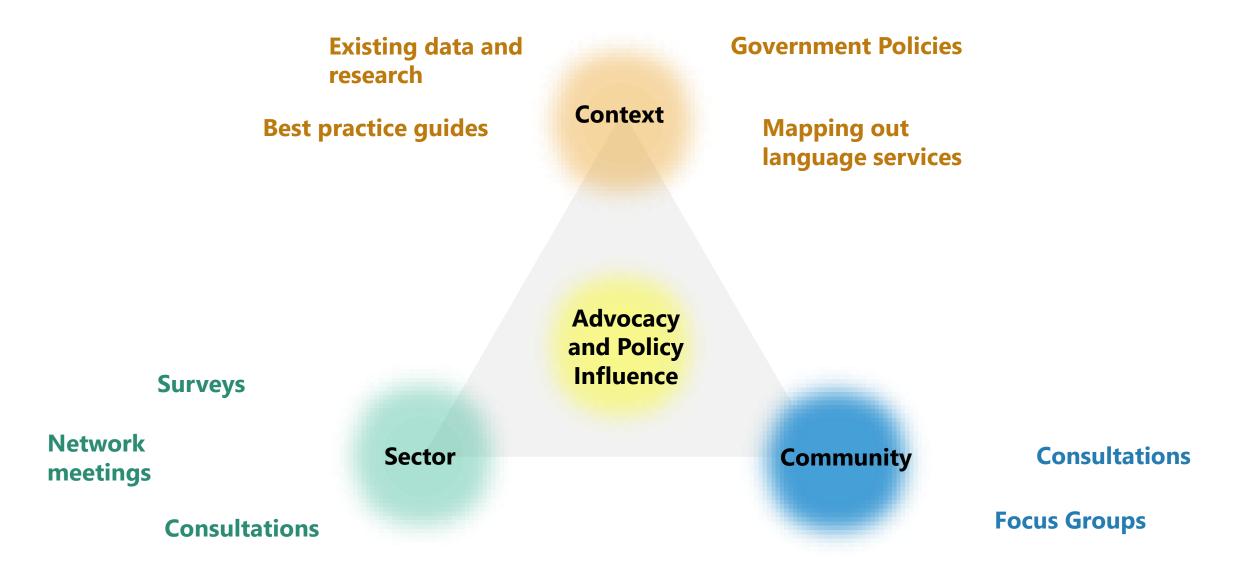
• get information about your health



see information about you

 get help to understand information about your health.

How does the Network advocate for issues?



WHAT WE HEAR: INTERPRETER ACCESS

We can't secure a female interpreter

Interpreters are best practice to communicate health information



There are often no face-to-face interpreters available in rural and regional areas

There are no interpreters for the language we need

ADVOCACY AREA: WORKFORCE SUPPLY



2025 Interpreter Scholarship Program

1. Building evidence base through data

- Sector survey and data analysis
- Result: In-demand languages included in 2025 Interpreter Scholarship Program

2. Increasing accessibility of program

- Supporting sector organisations with advocacy
- Result: Co-location of Interpreter Scholarship Program in Bendigo

WHAT WE HAVE HEARD: WELL-BEING OF INTERPRETERS

Interpreters can experience vicarious trauma

As interpreters, the stories we hear impact us



Sometimes interpreters will disengage if they understand it's a counselling session

ADVOCACY AREA: TRAINING & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



Two-hour training:

Interpreter Mediated Work with Survivors of Trauma: Practice Considerations

Result: Over 180 attendees with positive feedback.

What do interpreters want health service providers to know?

- Briefing and debriefing about the session can make a big difference.
- Do not use **medical jargon**. Check and pause understanding of the client and interpreter.
- Understanding of roles and responsibilities

WHAT WE HAVE HEARD: WHAT IS WORKING WELL?

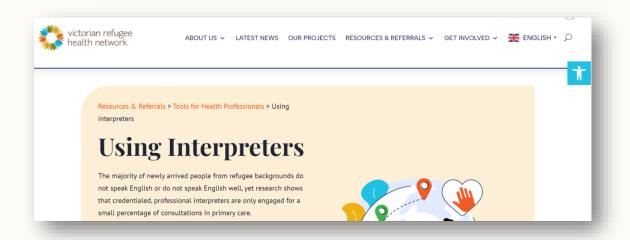
Building on the trust of community groups helps

In-language information is so valuable



It is great when someone takes the time to explain the information clearly Bicultural workers are incredible

ADVOCACY AREA: PROMOTION OF SERVICES AND RESOURCES





Contact us:

refugeehealth@foundationhouse.org.au



Reach out to us to share:

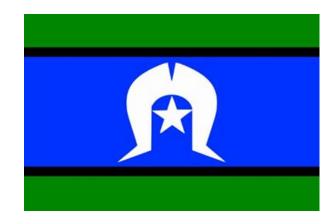
- Emerging issues for ongoing advocacy
- Case studies
- Best practice examples of what's working well

Bi-Cultural Health Navigator Project

Presented by Hiba Ayass

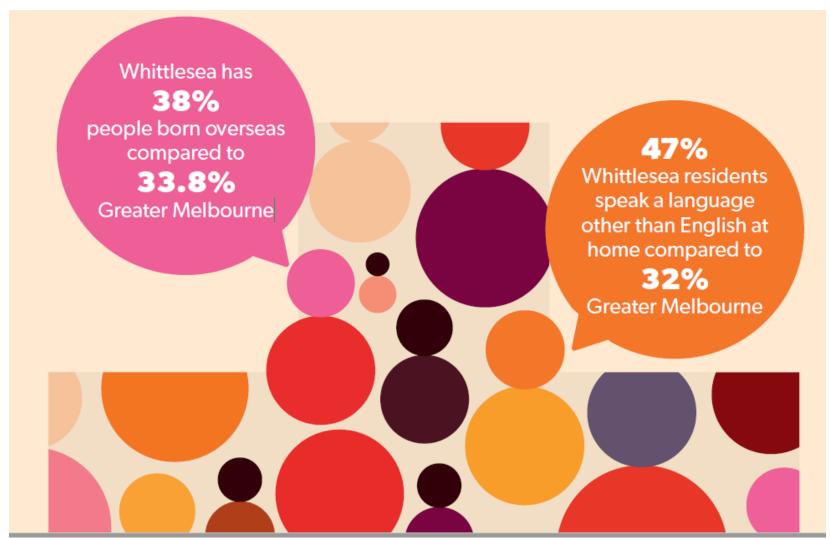
"We acknowledge the "Wurundjeri people" of the Kulin Nation, as the traditional custodians of the land I live, work and travel upon and I respect the elders both past and present"





Who are we?





Co-design the Bi-Cultural Health Navigator project



Partnership Model





Northern Health



Implementation

COVID-19 Awareness Forum 19 October via Zoom @ 6 pm













This forum will provide you with the opportunity to ask any questions regarding COVID-19 vaccinations, and directly address any concerns you may have. The forum was organised for urgent action as a joint effort between both community leaders and community organisations.

Topics to be covered include:

- The history of the vaccine
- Types & availability of vaccines
- Symptoms & side-effects of COVID-19/vaccines
- · Vaccine impact on fertility
- Vaccination for those under 12

Session time: October 19th, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86802353928? pwd=Qk5jblVmZCtKYm5TYXRONEZxMk5BUT09

Meeting ID: 868 0235 3928 Passcode: 892980



You will have the opportunity to hear from medical experts speaking in Arabic:





Dr Imad Berro Dr. Basim Francis Dr. Ghada Sleaby









For any enquiries please contact: Inaam: 0423 603 598, Hiyah: 0448 354 281, or Lina: 0413 575 588





Outcomes





What worked?

For Bi-Cultural Health Navigators





NAME: Jon (not client's real name)

AGE: 53 BORN: Syria

ARRIVED IN AUSTRALIA:

3 years ago on a refugee visa

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION:

Couple with 5 children, including 2 with a disability

PREVIOUS OCCUPATION:

Dentist

An experienced dentist in Syria, Jon worked full time for most of his adult life. Since coming to Australia Jon tried to get his qualifications recognized but did not have sufficient documentation and he could not retrieve them from Syria due to safety concerns. In Australia, he gained an interpreting qualification but could not find regular work due to an over-supply of Arabic speaking interpreters. He tried to safe a printing business but struggled to get started without sufficient resources. He and his family were forced to move rental properties several, which his children found particularly when his children asked him 'daddy, why don't you go towork?'

The Bi-Cultural Health Navigator role was Jon's first job in Australia. It provided an opportunity for him to learn about working in an Australian workplace, superannuation, tax, employment contracts etc. Jon has been engaged and happy in the role stating that, 'for me it's not only about money, it's about dignity'. Jon went on to secure a job at Northern Health as a Non-Clinical Ward Assistant and currently works at City of Whittlesea. Jon feels confident about finding further work in future now that he has local work experience.



NAME: Aisha (not client's real name)

AGE: 32 BORN: Egypt

ARRIVED IN AUSTRALIA: 4 years ago, on a skilled visa

4 years ago, orra skilled visa

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION: Couple with 1 child

couple with r child

PREVIOUS OCCUPATION:

Fine Arts Teacher

Aisha joined the Bi-Cultural Health Navigator course with an interest in gaining respectful work. Aisha had been unsuccessful in past interviews due to her limited English and lacked confidence applying for jobs.

Aisha's language skills have steadily improved through her involvement in the program. She is happy to have made connections with people from different backgrounds. Due to the flexible nature of the work she is able to take her daughter to and from school and work on weekends when her husband is home. She is feeling more confident about finding work in future.

What worked?

For community & partnership





Health Navigator Journey





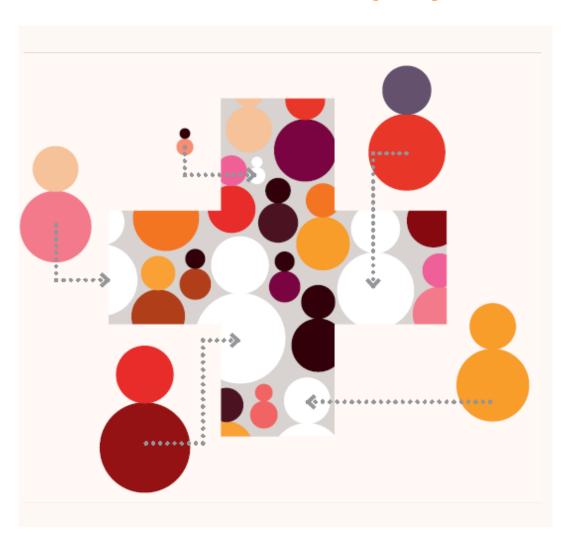
Bi-Cultural Health Navigator
Project was acknowledged
and recognised around
Victoria





Future Opportunities:

Health Sector Multicultural Employment Strategy



Increasing Multicultural Health Sector Workforce

Pre-employment Training

- Cross-cultural communication skills
- Working with clients with complex needs
- Understanding the Australian health care system and the different employment pathways within it



Placement Pathways

- Pathway for overseas qualified health professionals
- NILS program to support financial cost of overseas qualification recognition
- Pathway for jobseekers from multicultural backgrounds interested in working in health



Support, Mentoring & Further Training

- On the job supervisor (health service) and Bi-Cultural mentor (support organisation)
- Communication and support mechanisms to address work place issues if and when they
 occur
- Support to continue to English language proficiency
- Further training to support up-skilling and or transition to clinical roles



Bi-Cultural Health Navigators

Hiyah Rahman & Hiba Ayass - Whittlesea Community Connections

Overview

The project trains people with migrant and refugee backgrounds interested in working in the health sector to better understand and navigate the health system in Australia. Trained Bi-Cultural Health Navigators gained employment opportunities delivering COVID19 information and support to multicultural communities in Whittlesea. This included in language information about when and where to get tested, current health advice and reliable and accurate information about Australia's vaccination program



Background

Whittlesea is one of the fastest growing and most multicultural LGAs in Victoria. According to the 2021 ABS Census Data:



Partnership Model

onnection and engagement with Whittlesser's diverse communitie. As the project evolved the City of Whittlesse was a key partner, as the Bi-Caltural Health Navigation was integrated into Council's Emergency Management response. This provided for additional local employment Management op portunities. WCC has engaged with Drummond and engagement op portunities. WCC has engaged with Drummond Street and Canour Council to acterid thework of the Bi-Cultural Health

Implementation

WICE provided on-going mentoring support to help nevigators address unspoken barriers working in an Australian work place. unsponen centres working in an invasionam work place. Newligation in present the comment for inch where by and use their language and cut is as lixnovledge to support community to access trusted information and support to the in a COVID10 seleway. Newligations delivered community information issuitions, developed nasources and alternated pop up or successful on their nasources and alternated pop up or successful on their successions.



Outcome

- A total of 24 people with migrant and refegee backgrounds have been employed through this project.
- Health Navigators have developed a range of skills and competencies through on-going training (eg reental h and mentoring which has built their confidence to co
- confidence gained has enabled them to secure further work

- Higher veccination rates particularly among CALD communities

- sector clossy, sligned-with maplityer needs and especialism. See Abilinghy throughout of register alone in select converse ship in a way and a select selection of the selection

For Bi-Cultural Health Navigators What worked?



Respectable' and well-matched to their skills and interest. Some 81-Cultural Health Navigators needed to compromise with their career aspirations but chose to do so. Some were not able to

One to one and group support:

For community & partnership Timing:

and its significant insect on multicaltural commanities, providir sufficients rounces to pilot the project and other part-time Healt Navigator positions and help with the surla reballity of the pilot. Connecting multicultural communities:

Involving local employers, organisations and other NGOs increased the level of connection to new migrants, refuges and people seeking asylum with training, support and jobs

The program was responsive to the changing needs of the community as the COVID situation developed.

Health Navigator Journey



Opportunities:

- The program could be enhanced with the engagement of volunteer industry
- Develop a sustainable model or parkway ineo Northern Health and other local health services.









Other Partners and Funders Department of Families, Falmess and Housing Department of Health City of Whittleses Council

DPV Heelth



If you like to hear more about the Bi-Cultural **Health Navigator project** you can visit our Website

Q&A





Hiba Ayass

Multicultural Team Leader

Phone: 9401 6697

Address: Shop 111, PACIFIC Epping, Epping, 3076

HAYASS@WHITTLESEACC.ORG.AU www.whittleseacC.org.au

Language barrier? Tips and resources for health sector workers

Presentation for
Victorian Refugee Health Network
Statewide meeting

Spase Veljanovski

14 November 2024



Overview

Tips and resources to assist you with communication when there is a language barrier between you and your client.

- 1. Plain language
- 2. Spoken communication techniques
- 3. Translated resources
- 4. Interpreting 5 step framework



1. Plain language

What?

• <u>Plain language</u> is communication that is clear and easy to understand for your *target audience*

Why?

- Almost 60% of Australians have a low level of individual health literacy
- When you use simple, accurate language you make it easier for more clients to understand you and make informed decisions

How?

Swap jargon for plain language



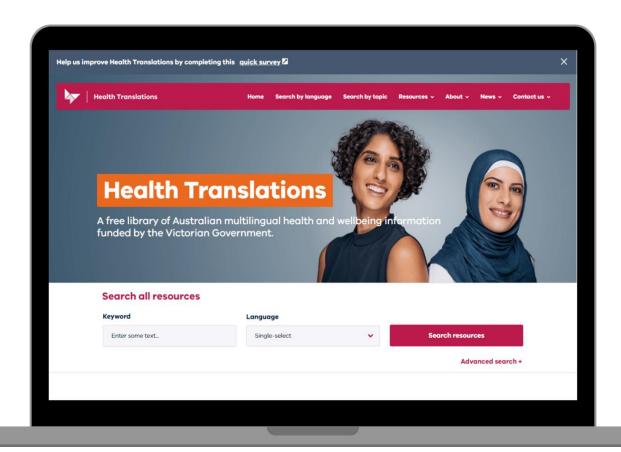
2. Spoken communication techniques

- Use plain language
- Find out client's view and knowledge
- Say less
 - Need-to-know vs nice-to-know
 - Limit to 3-5 key messages
- How will they remember?
 - Ask if they want to take notes on paper or in their phone
 - Record the key points in the recorder on their phone
- Check for understanding. <u>Teach back</u>... and <u>via an interpreter</u>



3. Translated resources

Free and reliable online Australian health information





- Victorian Government initiative
- Designed for practitioners
- Over 30,000 resources in many formats
- Translations in 130+ languages
- 100+ topics

4. Interpreting – 5 step framework

- 1. Assessing the need for an interpreter
- 2. Booking getting the right interpreter
- 3. Briefing your return on investment
- 4. Communicating effectively
- 5. De-briefing comments, compliments & complaints





4. Interpreting – 5 step framework

Resources

- Assessing the need for interpreter developed by the Judicial Council
 on Cultural Diversity
- Interpreting video scenarios
- CEH interpreting tip sheets
- CEH self-paced learning
- Training, eLearning & presentations https://www.ceh.org.au/training/



We would love to hear from you

Complete our feedback form



https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9YVY62X

Let us know about:

- Feedback on today's meeting
- Topics you would like covered in future meetings
- Speaker opportunities



Thank you

Receive our monthly e-bulletin



Join the Victorian Refugee Health Network to be involved in the Network's pieces of advocacy and networking opportunities.