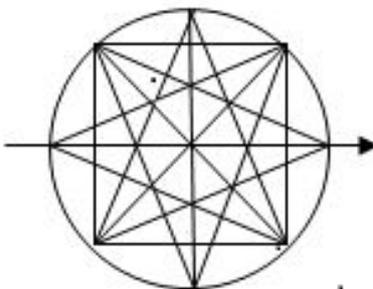


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MIGRANT SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE (Eastern Region)

Standing Committee of the Communities' Council on Ethnic Issues (Eastern Region) Inc.

Reg. No. A0017562S

Minutes

Friday, May 1st 2015

**Whitehorse Community Centre, Level 1 Conference Room,
79 Mahoneys Road, Forest Hill.**

1. Present

Sandy Ashton	Eastern Health, Diversity Coordinator
Linda Chen	Community Member, ESL Teacher
Gitta Clayton	AMES Outer East Volunteer Tutor Program, VTP Coordinator
Chris Cosgriff	Anchor Chair, CCOEI
Heather Cosgriff	CCOEI
Glenis Crocker	CCOEI
Leigh Gilmore	DOJ, Sheriff Office Ringwood, Senior Sheriff Officer and Indigenous and Multicultural Liaison Officer
Dianne Godfrey	Department of Human Services, Multicultural Services Officer
Michael Hardie	Dorish Maru College Box Hill, Rector
Margot Hennessy	AMES, AMES Youth Programs Manager
Abby Horsburgh	Inner East Integrated Family Services, Case Worker
Jack Intziadis	Department of Human Services, Multicultural Services Officer
Helen Jurcevic	Women's Friendship Group Inc., President
Steven Lim	MIC, Student on placement
Alex Matthews-Peata	Foundation House, Student on Placement
Jin Jin Minehane	Safe Futures Foundation, General Manager, Innovation and Foundation Development
Sam Navarria	CCOEI
Andree O'Donnell	AMES Settlement, Case Manager/Team Leader
Saturnino Onyala	MIC, Settlement Worker
Madeleine Parker	DET, North-Eastern Victoria Region, Senior Regional Project Officer EAL
Alaine Prime	Victoria Legal Aid, Community Educator
Kirsten Reedy	City of Manningham, Planning and Development Officer
Cynthia Shaw	CCOEI
Svetlana Sccherbakova	Louise Multicultural Centre
Robyn Tan	Migrant Information Centre, Settlement Worker
Bwe Thay	Swinburne University of Technology, Project Officer/AMEP Pathway Counsellor
Sui Ting Tse	CCOEI
Clary Verbunt	Dutch Community, CCOEI

Apologies

Leonie Burnham	ECLC, Manager Inner East Office
Jeska Chamberlain	Victoria Police, Multicultural Liaison Officer
Twanny Farrugia	DonateLife Community Champion, CCOEI
Belinda Haydon	Women's Health East, Health Communication Officer
Cindy Kung	Louise Multicultural Community Centre, Program Coordinator
Jasmina Mulugeta	Foundation House, Eastern Region Team Coordinator
Fiona Nicholls	Anchor, Acting CEO
Stuart Sorrell	VicPol, East Region Community Engagement
Fred Warren	Holmesglen TAFE, AMEP Coordinator

Guests

Marion Bailes, Specialist GP, RHN program, EACH.

Merilyn Spratling, Refugee Health Nurse Coordinator, Clinical Services, EACH.

2. **Minutes April 2015 meeting:** Minutes circulated electronically. Moved Clary Verbunt, Seconded: Sui Ting Tse. Accepted.
3. **Business Arising** – incorporated in the agenda.
4. **Issues and concerns template:** MSC members/organisations can highlight issues for the attention of the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) and appropriate Regional Advisory Council (RAC).
5. **Correspondence** – relevant correspondence (initiatives, services, programs circulated to MSC).
6. **Focus on refugee health - how are services responding to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers: the work of the Refugee Nurse Program**

Guest speakers: Merilyn Spratling (Refugee Health Nurse Program, Refugee Health Nurse Coordinator, Clinical Services), EACH; Dr Marion Bailes, Specialist GP, EACH.

Merilyn and Marion presented information on refugee and asylum seeker health at the Eastern Access Community Health (EACH) Social and Community Health, under the Refugee Health Nurse program (RHN). The RHN covers many Melbourne Eastern Metropolitan Region local government areas.

To set the context and give an overview of the presentation, Merilyn and Marion provided a profile of refugees and asylum seekers that access the service; details of refugee health nursing, the specialist GPs that work in the program and the connection between the RHN program, allied health and other services. As well, they profiled some of the key health issues faced by refugees and asylum seekers.

The RHN has developed over the years. Along with refugee health nurses there are two specialist GPs who work on the health care of refugees and asylum seekers with other community services.

Merilyn referred to the definition of 'refugee' from the recently published Victorian Government Refugee & Asylum Seeker Health Action Plan 2014, a plan which maps the direction of health services for refugees and asylum seekers over the next 4 years. *"...Once granted refugee status under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) definition and accepted by Australia for settlement, a refugee receives an Australian visa under the Humanitarian Program which grants permanent residency and eligibility for the same services available to all Australian permanent residents."* The services include income support, Medicare and health care cards, education, social and health support. The difference between an asylum seeker and a refugee is that their status is yet to be determined.

The greatest numbers of refugees arriving in the eastern region were born in Myanmar (73%) and Iran (15%), although it is important to note that many born in Thailand, Malaysia or India are children of people from Myanmar. People from Myanmar are from different language and ethnic backgrounds. Understanding the refugee demographic helps RHN staff to better deliver health services.

Before arrival, refugees and asylum seekers have faced circumstances that negatively impact on their health (e.g. limited or no access to health care, adequate nutrition, clean water). Many may have suffered torture, trauma, loss of family, loss of dignity, and forced to make impossible decisions. After arrival, they need to negotiate new systems like health, difficulty in accessing services due to language, living in an unfamiliar culture, and bad news about family and friends at home or in transit countries.

Merilyn gave an overview of health services for refugees and asylum seekers in Victoria. She noted that asylum seekers who are Medicare ineligible have access to some pro bono services, such as some GPs, and services of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre and the Doveton Clinic.

Community health services available through the RHN include:

- counseling;
- oral health,
- physiotherapy;
- dieticians;
- health promotion;
- other allied health.

Torture and trauma counseling is available from Foundation House. Specialist Services are available from statewide and sub-regional clinical hubs in hospitals and community health services and cover infectious diseases, paediatrics, vitamin D, optometry, audiology, and mental health. The Refugee Health and Paediatric Fellows at Royal Melbourne and Royal Children's provide secondary consult and training. In relation to asylum seekers in community detention, the health services are provided by International Health and Medical Services (IHMS). Community Health may become IHMS providers.

Merilyn addressed the role of the RHN within the EACH refugee health program from the time of HSS referral for assessment to service delivery:

- Referrals of all newly arrived refugees in the east from AMES Settlement to RHN; seen by RHN within 6 weeks of arrival-with professional interpreter- for initial refugee health assessment;
- Assessment of asylum seekers (with/without Medicare) and people living in community detention;
- Linked to GP and health assessment report provided
- Referrals made by RHN as indicated by assessment (e.g. internally to EACH services such as dental, optometrist, physiotherapy, women's health clinic, etc and externally to MCH nurse, audiologist etc).

Specifically, the EACH RHN program delivers health assessment & management of health care of refugees post immediate settlement period (on referral from MIC, Foundation House, etc); Mantoux skin testing & immunisation clinics; support for EACH GP & RCH paediatric outreach clinics; health education sessions (e.g. "prevention of heart disease" for Chin men, "women's health issues" for Karen women, etc); establish and facilitate the Eastern Region Refugee Health network; participation in 'Asylum Seeker' triage clinics (in the city) for recently released people (from closed detention); membership of relevant policy & practice development activities (e.g. the Victorian Refugee Health Network).

Merilyn stated that EACH and the RHN have good relationships with organisations such as AMES Settlement and Foundation House to refer people in emergencies. Merilyn can be contacted on mspratling@each.com.au Tel: 9837 3999.

Dr Marion Bailes, MBBS, MHSC, focused the discussion on meeting the specific health needs of refugees and asylum seekers and helping them to navigate the Australian healthcare system.

Marion listed main health issues of refugees and asylum seekers on arrival (Ref: Dept of Health 2014):

1. mental health (inc. torture & trauma)
2. infectious and vaccine-preventable disease
3. chronic disease
4. oral health
5. vision and hearing
6. social isolation
7. alcohol and drug use
8. somatic manifestations of pain
9. maternal and child health
10. sexual and reproductive health

11. diet and nutrition issues
12. vitamin D
13. disability and developmental concerns.

Most of these conditions are amenable to treatment, and quickly treated, once diagnosed. As previously stated, if health problems are identified and treated appropriately early in the settlement period, people are more likely to feel better and then be able to meet the demands of settlement better such as learning English, finding a house, finding a job, etc.

In addressing health issues of refugees and asylum seekers, she noted that communication is important, particularly in the preferred language of the client and for arranging an appropriate interpreter. Key languages of people from Myanmar residing in the east are Chin, Karen and Burmese.

To address the health issues of refugees and asylum seekers, it is important to find out which health issue is priority for the patient; take a full medical history; do a full check up for each member of the family; organize investigations (Pathology tests such as blood/urine/faeces; and Mantoux test, X-rays or Ultrasounds if required).

Addressing Women's health issues include those related to reproductive health (contraception; pap smears; antenatal care; postnatal care.), as well Vitamin D, breast screen, nutrition/healthy eating, mental health.

Addressing men's health issues include: nutrition/healthy eating, Vitamin D, mental health, smoking/alcohol, musculoskeletal problems (hard labour/injuries).

In order to prevent and for early detection of chronic diseases, Marion noted lifestyle issues such as tobacco/BMI/exercise, and chronic conditions like heart disease (BP; cholesterol/triglycerides), bowel cancer (FOB), Kidney disease (dipstick; BP; fasting sugar), Diabetes (BMI, dipstick, fasting sugar, HbA1C).

The background of refugees (e.g. limited access to health services, limited availability of healthy food, low health literacy), can increase the risk of chronic diseases.

She noted that the role of the GP within the EACH Refugee Health Program is to assess, investigate, treat, refer, liaise and support, then to transition the patient to a community GP practice.

Marion said that the Refugee Health Nurse (RHN) role is exciting, complex, challenging, and demanding. It utilises the full complement of nursing knowledge, ethics, brokering, advocacy, problem solving and cultural communication skills to ensure everyone can have the best health outcomes possible. A RHN role extends the scope of general practice to better meet the needs of people of refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds in the eastern region.

Marion can be contacted marion.bailes@gmail.com

Merilyn's and Marion's presentation is available on the CCOEI website www.ccoei.org.au

Q: When using interpreters there may be confidentiality concerns in small and emerging communities. What is done to ensure their privacy?

A: Use of accredited interpreters sourced from other states when required (in telephone interpreting).

Q: Regarding doctors and other allied health professionals do they understand the need to use interpreters?

A: The Refugee Health Nurse writes a comprehensive report which is provided to the doctor and other allied health professionals to ensure the needs of the patient such as interpreting will be met.

Q: Access for the whole family?

A: The whole family will be seen. There is a youth clinic for people up to 25 as well as a male GP if this is a preference to a female doctor.

Q: What are some of the cultural health issues being faced?

A: For example nutrition – fast food in Western society leading to weight and related problems; smoking or chewing (such as Chat) leading to heart problems; undiagnosed diabetes and others. There is an emphasis on prevention such as explaining the risks of smoking as this issue is not well known in many countries.

On behalf of the MSC, Sam thanked Marilyn and Marion for their excellent presentation and wished the service continued success.

7. **MSC 2015 Calendar:** the calendar is a guide of meeting focus, activities and events of the MSC. It may change to take into account developments during the year.

MSC 2015 CALENDAR

MSC meeting dates	Meeting focus	Forums/functions/events dates and working groups	International Multicultural events Calendar
January 2	No meeting		
06 Feb	Part A: Settlement Services in Victoria: Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) and the Settlement Services Grants (SSG) – panel of speakers from HSS and SSG providers (Teresa Lee and Tori Densley AMES; Judy McDougall MIC), the Department of Social Services (Josh Presser, DSS), and the Department of Human Services (Jack Intsiadis and Maria deMonte DHS).	Forum: Community Safety and Crime prevention: Financial risks, elderly guarantors from Chinese background 10/02, Manningham. Forum: Domestic Violence 19/02. (Leonie, Jeska, Glenis, EACH, Foundation House).	February 1-7 United Nations Interfaith Harmony Week
06 March	Part B: Refugee and asylum seekers: the policy landscape and its challenges for advocacy organizations – Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre (RILC). Speaker: David Manne, Executive Director, Principal Solicitor and Migration Agent, RILC, and a RILC lawyer.	Harmony Day events. Forum: Community Safety and crime prevention project: Elderly guarantors from Indian background and financial risks, late March.	March 21: <u>Harmony Day</u>
03 April	Good Friday – no meeting.	Forum: Community Safety and crime prevention: Elderly guarantors from Greek background and financial risks, late April (Effie, Athena/Adonis)	April 7 – World Health Organisation <u>World Health Day</u>
01 May	Part A: Refugee Women’s Health: how are services responding to the needs of refugee women, particularly young women? Part B: Refugee Men’s Health: what are the main areas of concern and are men accessing available health services? Speakers: Marilyn Spratling (Refugee Health Nurse Program, Refugee Health Nurse Coordinator, Clinical Services) and Dr Marion Bailes, Specialist GP.		May 21 - <u>World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development.</u>
05 June	Initiatives and innovations that make a difference: brief presentations across sectors.	Refugee Week: celebration of settlement in EMR. MSC/CCOEI, City of Manningham (Kirsten, Cynthia, Sam, Belinda H., Bwe, Saturnino, Gitta, Elizabeth, Jasmina)	June 20 – UN <u>World Refugee Day</u> , June 26 – UN <u>Day - Support of Victims of Torture</u>
July 3	No meeting		

07 Aug	ROCA Refugee Intake annual submission to the Australian Federal Government, Asher Hirsch.	CALD and mental health (to be reviewed): (Leonie, Maria, Teena, Railey). Further discussion required.	
04 Sept	Assisting older migrants and refugees in general through the every day life maze (i.e. open a bank account, enrol kids in school, public transport, etc); OR Employment and training programs for CALD: do they respond effectively to needs. Speakers from JN, TAFE, ACE, employers, settlement/education.	Education and Training expo to be reviewed: Gateway LLEN, Providers of the AMEP and VET (TAFE, AMES, Centrelink. (Centrelink, Bronwyn Henry, Outer Eastern LLEN)	
02 Oct	Understanding the paths for refugees through the visa system (Zoe Holbeche and Magdallene Hektoras, DIBP, Current visa types (i.e. T.P.V., Bridging, etc.) and the implications for refugees to be confirmed).	Refugee health forum: services for refugee and humanitarian entrants (EACH; Eastern Health; Glenis, Belinda, Refugee Nurse. MIC?)	October 17- <u>International Day for the Eradication of Poverty</u>, UN calendar
06 Nov	Refugee Council of Australia – the Refugee Communities Network – to be confirmed; Review MSC 2015 program and plan 2016 calendar of speakers, forums and events.	Refugee youth (to be reviewed): (Margot, CMY, BELS, Gateway LLENS, Swinburne Uni): policy, programs, services, sharing good practice & opportunities. (Disability forum: how are CALD with a disability faring under the NDIS? – postponed to first half of 2016)	November 16 - <u>International Day for Tolerance</u> November 25 - <u>International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women</u>,
04 Dec	Finalize meeting and events calendar 2016. Meeting focus to be advised.		Dec 3 rd : <u>International Day for People with a disability.</u> http://www.idpwd.com.au/

Other areas of interest:

- (a) Human Rights Law Centre – a focus on CALD;
- (b) Amnesty International – its work locally and globally
- (c) How culturally responsive are LGAs in the Eastern Metropolitan Region

8. Forum and Agency Reports

Forum Reports

Refugee Week Celebration 2015 (Kirsten Reedy)

Refugee Welcome celebration, a partnership of CCOEI, City of Manningham and the MSC, on the 26th June from 10 – 12:30 am. Manningham City Council. Thomas Albrecht, the UNHCR Representative for Australia and the Pacific Region, will be the keynote speaker. As reported in previous MSC minutes, the celebration includes refugee stories, artwork, and human library activity and welcome tree messages. Meetings of the working group regularly held after the MSC meetings.

Crime Prevention Community Safety CCOEI project A *Matter of Trust*: (Glenis Crocker and members of the Steering Committee). CCOEI project focuses on financial abuse of elderly CALD, and is an initiative funded by the Victorian Government. The steering committee includes key players (CCOEI, Sheriff's Office, Victoria Police, and Eastern Community Legal Centre). The last forum in the series will be held in late May with a focus on the Indian community. Important to note that the financial abuse of elderly CALD is not limited to any one specific CALD group. Presenter and a participant resource kits are being developed as part of the project. The kits aim to facilitate and support forums and educational activity.

Other forums in 2015: Disability forum with a focus on CALD and the NDIS rescheduled for the first half of 2016. Refugee Youth forum still scheduled for the end of 2015.

Agency and individual reports

Sheriff's Office Ringwood (Leigh Gilmore): involved in the delivery of forums to various communities *A Matter of Trust* on the subject of guarantors in CALD communities. Noted the opportunity for CALD to work with Cricket Australia on cricket projects – for cricket contacts and to discuss contact Leigh.

MIC (Saturnino Onyala): Activities include: Training young people in life saving swimming program; Eastern Multicultural Community Garden – call MIC Jessica or Barbara on 9285 4888 for information.

Swinburne University of Technology (Bwe Thay): TAFE trade taster day at Swinburne 9th May 2015.

Dorish Maru College (Michael Hardie): intercultural workshop - living in a multicultural society.

DHS – Centrelink (Jack Intziadis): Whitehorse and Manningham information to community groups, agencies etc. about DHS services. May 12 Budget Day – significant; Employment Services contract outcome.

Department of Education and Training (Madeleine Parker): Wodonga: UNHCR Green Conference.

CCOEI (Sui Ting Tse, Clary Verbunt and Cynthia Shaw)

- Refugee celebration Eastern Region with City of Manningham progressing
- *Matter of Trust* forum for Indian communities being prepared;
- Sorry Day 26th May 2015.

AMES Youth Program (Margot Hennessy)

- Two Ucan2 classes (social support, work experience in retail industry, and education) partnership with Foundation House, CMY and AMES, running at Box Hill as well as 2 general youth classes;
- attending trade activity;
- Refugee week involvement City of Manningham.

AMES Settlement (Andree O'Donnell): April arrival cases doubled – rejoining families. Extra case manager from next month to bridge south and east. 60 referrals expected in May and June.

City of Manningham (Kirsten Reedy) - Refugee Welcome celebration 26 June 10-12.30 includes Manningham's declaration Refugee Welcome zone. Various activities, many organisations involved. Welcome tree activity will tour Manningham and other cities in East, then return to Manningham after one year. All welcome.

Next MSC Meeting: Friday 5th June 2015, 9.30 – 12.00

Focus: Initiatives and innovations that make a difference. Programs and speakers:

Settled and Safe: Alaine Prime, Community Liaison Educator, Victoria Legal Aid, Ringwood and Dandenong

Women's Friendship Group: Helen Jurcevic, President, Women's Friendship Group Inc.

AMES Youth Program: Margot Hennessy, Manager Youth Programs, AMES

MIC Access and Support Program: Wanling Zhang, Access and Support Program, MIC

Safe Futures Foundation, Jin Jin Minehane, General Manager Innovation and Foundation Development

The Volunteer Tutor Program (VTP): Gitta Clayton, Volunteer Tutor Program Coordinator, AMES

TAFE Taster and Transition to Higher Education, Bwe Thay, Project Officer/AMEP Pathways Counselor, Swinburne University of Technology.

Venue: Conference Room, Level 1, Whitehorse Community Centre, 79 Mahoneys Road, Forest Hill.

NOTES: (1) For past and current CCOEI and MSC documents, including meeting papers and guest presentations, visit www.CCOEI.org.au ; **(2)** To contact Cynthia Shaw or Sam Navarria on matters relating to the MSC please use chair.msc@gmail.com