



ECCV Submission to the Victorian Aged Care Planning Advisory Committee

Aged Care Approval Rounds 2013

- March 2014 -

The Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria welcomes the opportunity to present a submission to the Victorian Aged Care Planning Advisory Committee on the occasion of the opening of the Aged Care Approval Rounds (ACARs) in 2014.

Background to ECCV

The Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria Inc. (ECCV) is the Voice of Multicultural Victoria. As the peak body for ethnic and multicultural organisations in Victoria, we are proud to have been the key advocate for culturally diverse communities in Victoria since 1974.

For 40 years we have been the link between multicultural communities, government and the wider community. We aim for a culturally diverse and harmonious society that is just, fair and inclusive where all people have the opportunity to participate in and contribute to, community life. We advocate for freedom, respect, equality and dignity for multicultural communities and strive with others, to build a strong, vibrant Victorian community.

Recommendation 1:

ECCV recommends a significant increase in allocation of ACAR places to ethno-specific and multicultural agencies to reflect the growing proportion of an older multicultural population.

Recommendation 2:

ECCV recommends allocating additional ACAR places to more newly arrived communities in order to meet the needs and preferences of those communities.

Recommendation 3:

ECCV recommends allocating additional ACAR places to ethno-specific and multicultural services providers in regional and rural Victoria.

Diversity of Victoria's senior's population

ECCV highlights that almost a third of the Victorian population aged 65 and over are from a non-English speaking background. According to the 2011 ABS census, more than 77,000 of the Victorian population aged 75-84 are from a non-English speaking background. ECCV is aware the seniors from a non-English speaking background are diverse in culture, language, spiritual beliefs and migration experiences. To ensure access and equity of older multicultural populations the allocation ACAR places should reflect the diversity of Victoria's aged population.

Preference for ethno-specific services

ECCV community feedback indicates that seniors from a non-English speaking background often have a strong preference for ethno-specific and multicultural aged care services. ECCV also highlights that the demand of ethno-specific aged care services by far exceeds its supply. ECCV notes that ethno-specific providers having long waiting lists and there are examples where people are for three years on a waiting list. ECCV also recognises the cultural expertise of ethno-specific and multicultural agencies in providing culturally appropriate care.

Culturally appropriate care

ECCV highlights that culturally appropriate care consist of the following elements:

- Same language services
- Cultural and spiritual care
- Partnerships with ethno-specific and faith-based organisations
- Employment of bilingual staff
- Culturally specific dementia and palliative care
- Culturally sensitive aged care assessment
- Culturally appropriate food.

ECCV is concerned that currently there is no monitoring system in place that examines if CALD packages are delivered to seniors from a non-English speaking background. ECCV also emphasises that in the 2012/2013 ACAR, less than 10% of Home Care places and 8% of residential places were allocated to ethno-specific or multicultural agencies.

Increase in multicultural aged population

ECCV highlights that most multicultural communities which include more established and new and emerging communities have seen a significant increase in the aged populations while some communities are already reaching a peak in their aged populations. Therefore it is vital to cater now and the near future for the preferences and needs of seniors from a non-English speaking background. ECCV believes that ethno-specific and multicultural agencies are well placed to respond to the needs of this growing proportion of the Victorian community.

New and Emerging Communities

ECCV emphasises that there is growing proportion of more recently arrived communities with a significant populations of seniors. It is important to build and strengthen new and emerging communities to be in a position to deliver aged care services as seniors from new and emerging communities have a right to access ethno-specific and multicultural aged care services.

Regional and rural Victoria

ECCV is aware that in regional and rural Victoria there are limited options for seniors from a non-English speaking background to access highly needed ethno-specific or multicultural aged care services. Given the great demand for culturally appropriate services in regional and rural Victoria, it is suggested to allocate a significant number of ACAR places to ethno-specific and multicultural providers in regional and rural Victoria.

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