



Monday July 24, 2017

**MORE RESOURCES NEEDED TO COMBAT THE HEPATITIS EPIDEMIC WITHIN
VICTORIA'S DIVERSE COMMUNITIES**

The strategy to eliminate hepatitis by 2030 was declared at today's summit 'Diverse communities and the hepatitis challenge – towards elimination' presented in partnership by Hepatitis Victoria and Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV). The chair of ECCV, Mr. Eddie Micallef proposed that "as there is a disproportionately higher rate of infections of hepatitis within culturally diverse communities, we therefore should have disproportionately higher resources".

The need to raise awareness resonated through today's summit. ECCV believes community members can increase awareness by simply starting a conversation with your communities. We urge leaders to increase community awareness on issues relating to healthcare including growing awareness about how the Victorians healthcare system works. ECCV encourages Victorians to have a hepatitis check; it is free under the Medicare scheme.

"We need a healthcare system that supports health literacy. Specialised resources that are culturally responsive, target ethnic communities and focus on eliminating hepatitis infection rates within Victoria and Australia is essential in saving lives", says Eddie Micallef, ECCV Chair.

Victoria is the most ethnically diverse state within Australia, which is the most ethnically country within the world, ECCV believes the Victorian healthcare system should have adequate supports in place to deliver culturally responsive health care.

"The ability to access health services and information is vital for culturally diverse consumers to live a high quality of life. However, low English proficiency, and lower levels of health literacy within multicultural communities lead to poorer health outcomes, more hospitalisations and other inequalities." Mr. Micallef says in ECCV discussion paper, *Our Stories, Our Voices: Culturally diverse consumer perspectives on the role of accredited interpreters in Victoria's health services*.

For more information and/or media comment, please contact Leenie Fabri, ECCV Communications & Media Officer via lfabri@eccv.org.au / 0422 480 319

Reference:

ECCV discussion paper, [*Our Stories, Our Voices: Culturally diverse consumer perspectives on the role of accredited interpreters in Victoria's health services*](#)