

ECCV position paper on ethnic senior citizens' clubs

June 2017

Significance of ethnic senior citizens' clubs

1. [Ethnic and multicultural senior citizens' clubs and groups](#) play a major role in the community in overcoming social isolation and in helping people to access healthy ageing programs and government services.
2. Members of ethnic seniors clubs support each other through peer-to-peer assistance.
3. Club members take part and facilitate a variety of social, cultural and healthy ageing activities and help people access services.
4. Culturally diverse seniors find joy in sharing and expressing their common language and culture.
5. ECCV emphasises that being able to speak and socialise in one's native language is considered to be a [basic human right](#) of all people.

Vulnerability of ethnic senior citizens clubs and their members

6. The ECCV has identified older migrants often have low digital literacy skills and therefore are likely to miss out on government services (See [ECCV Ageing Portfolio Sheet 2016, sheet 3, digital literacy](#)).
7. ECCV states that ethnic seniors groups encounter difficulties to apply for electronically processed grants.
8. ECCV is concerned that volunteers of ethnic seniors clubs struggle with administrative tasks which are required by governmental institutions for reporting purposes.

9. ECCV advocates for translations of the [‘Incorporated association rules’](#) by Consumer Affairs Victoria into bilingual formats and languages other than English (See [ECCV Health Literacy paper](#), page 16)
10. ECCV emphasises that best practice in translations assist in ensuring high quality and easy to understand translations (See [RDNS Talking Books](#) examples).
11. ECCV advocates for translations of government subsidised services and information to be translated into the most common community languages spoken by seniors (See [ECCV Multicultural Aged Care Strategy 2014](#), appendix 1, and Commonwealth Department of Health [website](#)) and in simple English.
12. Ethnic senior citizens’ clubs and groups encounter enormous challenges in organising their club activities as members are increasingly frail and the difficulty to recruit new members.
13. ECCV highlights that more support is needed as club members and volunteers are of an ‘advanced’ age and as no younger people are following.
14. ECCV is concerned about the uncertainty of future government allocations that fund social, cultural, and healthy ageing activities of ethnic seniors groups.
15. ECCV states that issues related to gambling significantly impact on the health and wellbeing of culturally diverse older people and their families.
16. ECCV emphasises the need for prevention work with ethnic seniors clubs to protect their members from being exposed to gambling harm at gaming venues.

Ethnic senior groups in the wider community

17. Ethnic seniors group and their members participate in and facilitate activities that take place in the local and wider community.
18. ECCV has confirmed about 500 ethnic senior citizens’ clubs in Victoria representing approximately 40,000 persons (See the [ECCV ageing portfolio 2016, sheet 2: Multicultural seniors associations](#), page 7, for details).
19. Public visibility and awareness of issues pertinent to culturally diverse seniors’ associations remains low.
20. ECCV invites community groups, healthcare providers and government representative to actively engage with culturally diverse seniors groups to foster their participation in the wider community.

21. Committee members of the clubs should be encouraged to participate in training on governance and succession planning to better manage and sustain club activities.
22. ECCV advocates for community initiative that provide opportunities for inter-generational learning.

Governmental programs

23. ECCV has noticed the significant benefits and positive outcomes of the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services' ([DHHS](#)) [Participation for CALD Seniors Grants Program](#) which has been implemented in close partnership with the ECCV.
24. ECCV appreciates that the Victorian Multicultural Commission ([VMC](#)) has previously allocated funding to ethnic senior citizens' clubs across Victoria through the [Senior citizens Organisational Support Grants](#).
25. ECCV highlights that funding provided through the VMC's *Senior Citizens Organisational Support Grants* has been essential in covering some of the running costs for ethnic senior citizens' clubs and in providing information sessions to members.
26. ECCV asks that the Victorian Government considers continuing the *Participation for CALD Seniors Grants Program*.
27. ECCV advocates that the Victorian Government continues specific VMC funding directed at ethnic senior citizens' clubs.
28. ECCV advocates for face-to-face engagement and targeted in-language communication when promoting government programs and services to seniors groups.
29. ECCV asks the Victorian Government to continue providing public liability insurance for ethnic senior citizens clubs.
30. ECCV advocates for mentoring programs between established ethnic seniors groups and older people from new and emerging community groups.