History of ethnic aged care at the ECCV - Part Two

Portuguese seniors club in Truganina Grupo de Seniores APV
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From the Chairperson

Welcome to our first online edition of *Golden Years*.

ECCV is very pleased to transition to an online version of *Golden Years*. We expect that this will extend our readership. I hope that you will enjoy the *new face of Golden Years*, being presented to you as a flipbook.

In August this year, we celebrated ECCV’s 40th anniversary with a gala dinner at the St Kilda Town Hall. Guests included the Premier of Victoria, Denis Napthine, and Deputy Opposition Leader James Merlino.

In my address to guests, I highlighted that ECCV has followed the transformation of Australia over the past four decades from a closed, largely mono-cultural society to an open, vibrant and harmonious multicultural society. The Premier Denis Napthine congratulated the ECCV for 40 years of service and advocacy and said it was important to continue to build a multicultural Victoria. He also stated that multiculturalism in Victoria was a strength and added value to the state.

This edition of *Golden Years* gives you a snapshot of the history of ethnic ageing at the ECCV which is a continuation of our 116 edition. This special edition would not have been possible without the insights and documents that Ton Westerveld, former Chairperson of the Committee on the Ethnic Aged, preserved and provided to ECCV. We thank Ton for his long-standing commitment to the improve service access for seniors from non-English speaking backgrounds.

ECCV will be releasing its *Multicultural Aged Care Strategy* in October. I thank the Convenor of the ECCV Aged Care Policy Sub-committee, Marion Lau OAM JP, and the Committee members for their support and advice for the Strategy. This Strategy will be important in lobbying Government on a number of multicultural ageing and aged care issues.

I hope you enjoy reading the first online version of *Golden Years*.

**Eddie Micallef**
ECCV Chairperson
From the Editor

Dear Reader

I welcome you to edition 118 of *Golden Years* which is the first online edition of ECCV’s multicultural aged magazine. Over the last months, ECCV has been working on transitioning from a hard copy version to a flipbook. I encourage those who have not subscribed to the online distribution list of *Golden Years* yet, to send through your contact details, including your email address.

ECCV has been working together with the Victorian Department of Health (DH) and the Commonwealth Department of Social Services (DSS) on the Home and Community Care (HACC) transition. We have been advocating for a strong focus on cultural diversity in the design of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme. Earlier this year, ECCV made a submission to the Commonwealth on the *Key Directions for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme Discussion Paper* (CHSP). In August, a DH representative addressed ECCV’s Aged Care Policy Sub-committee on issues regarding the HACC transition.

As you are probably aware, the Commonwealth will directly manage the Victorian HACC program for people aged 65 and over from July 2015. DH has communicated that HACC funded organisations will be offered a DSS service agreement this year to ensure the continuation of services to older people under the CHSP. DH has also announced that, ‘organisation’s base funding for older people under the CHSP will remain stable for at least a three year period until 30 June 2018 (notwithstanding any decisions on growth and indexation).’


This edition features the historic achievements of ECCV in lobbying for culturally responsive services in the 1980s and displays historic letters from government to the ECCV. Articles also include ECCV’s new project in the area of advance care planning. ECCV will be working with three multicultural communities and running community education sessions to raise awareness on advance care planning.

An article by Kalyna Care illustrates the remarkable life of Maja Hrudka who founded the Ukrainian Elderly People’s Home.

Additional topics of this edition showcase:

- Multicultural walking groups of the Heart Foundation
- HACC diversity forum in Dandenong
- Round 4 of Participation for CALD Seniors grants program
- Care Connect/Spectrum Home Share Program.

I warmly thank the authors for their contributions.

Nikolaus Rittinghausen
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History of ethnic aged care at the ECCV - Part Two

This is a continuation of Golden Years edition 116. The previous section illustrated the establishment of the Ethnic Communities’ Council (ECC) Committee on the Ethnic Aged. This section covers the ECC work in the field of HACC and Ruth Mushin as ECC’s first Government funded community development officer for aged care. Also historic government letters to the ECC are displayed.

I. 1985
In a January 1985 letter explaining the adopted policy of ‘mini-block grants’ which were supposed to ‘reform and expand the present inadequate and fragmented system of domiciliary services for the aged,’ Tom Roper, Victorian Minister for Health, described the Federal HACC Programme as ‘inadequate … in financial terms.’ Ruth, Ton and the rest of the Committee on the Ethnic Aged (CEA) had their work cut out for them.

What on Earth Can the HACC Package Be?
On the 28th of February 1985 the NSW Ethnic Communities’ Council organised a Sydney HACC Workshop, during which the legislation and funding of the HACC package were outlined. To avoid ‘more of the same’, consultation with ‘traditionally excluded’ migrant communities was outlined as a priority during the workshop. The session also brought up the policy of mainstreaming which involved each department of the Government formulating ‘multicultural blueprints’ which would ensure all members of the community had equal access to government services.

Fifteen recommendations arose from the 1985 workshop. I had a chat with the current 2014 ECCV Aged Care Policy Officer, Nikolaus Rittinghausen (NR), to discuss whether some of the key recommendations have been adopted and how they have come to function over time. This article showcases four of the fifteen recommendations.

Recommendation 5
That mechanisms, again designed in consultation with the community and the voluntary sector, be set up to ensure that ethno-specific services receive funding in areas and fields where they are needed to complement mainstream services.

Letter from the Victorian Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Peter Spyker, in 1982, to the Chairperson of the ECC Committee on the Ethnic Aged, Ton Westerveld
NR’s Response

‘Ethno-specific and multicultural social support, including Planned Activity Groups and Friendly Visiting Programs, is funded by the Victorian Department of Health (DH). However, there is an increasing need for new and emerging ageing communities to receive similar ethno-specific support. ECCV also works closely together with DH in the implementation of Participation for CALD Seniors grants program.’

Recommendation 8
That all services be given the resources to collect the data related to service need/service type/ethnic groups/regions, and that this data is interpreted and made available to communities.

NR’s Response

‘In 2006, the Department of Human Services commissioned a report called Cultural Diversity, Ageing and HACC: trends in Victoria in the next 15 years. Also The Victorian Government provides a summary of HACC uptake by people born in non-English speaking countries. However, ECCV advocates for more nuanced data collection on cultural diversity for innovative improvements’

Recommendation 11
That there be proportional ethnic representation on the State Advisory Committee and that a person should be nominated from the Ethnic Affairs Commission, at least.

NR’s Response

Nikolaus believes this recommendation has been implemented as ECCV is represented at the HACC Departmental Advisory Committee and the HACC Diversity Working Group. Also there is an ongoing relationship between the ECCV Aged Care Policy Sub-committee and the Victorian HACC program.

Recommendation 14
That the interpreter system should be upgraded in line with increasing needs.

Letter from the Australian Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs in 1983 to Ton Westerveld, Chairperson of the ECC Committee on the Ethnic Aged
NR’s Response
‘The HACC Language Service Credit Line and the Government’s Health Translations are some of the services that have been performing this function but with the transition of HACC to the Commonwealth Home Support Programme, access of seniors from non-English speaking backgrounds to language services is a strong concern’.

II. Ms. Ruth Mushin’s Predictions of Demographics
In May 1985 Ms. Mushin presented a paper titled Development of Culturally Relevant Domiciliary Services for Ethnic Aged People at a seminar held in Adelaide by the South Australian Domiciliary Care Social Workers and Ethnic Health and Welfare Workers. She estimated that the 11 per cent of Australians over the age of 60, who were born in non-English speaking countries, will increase to 22 per cent. In 1985, 13 per cent of Australia’s total population was aged 60 and over, compared with 17 per cent of the overseas born population. But by 2001, Ms Mushin predicted the 13 per cent of the total population to remain constant, whilst the number of those 60 years and over and born in non-English speaking countries will almost double to 25 per cent. Her predictions were accurate.

III. Ms. Ruth Mushin, ECC Community Development Officer
Ms. Mushin came to the position of Community Development Officer through Walter Lippmann, who was a previous colleague of hers. She had an academic background in social sciences and previous experience with working in the public sector. Most importantly she had a ‘commitment to social justice.’ Herself having a non-English speaking background (NESB), Ruth wanted to raise awareness of the specific needs of Australians with NESB backgrounds, help improve service provision and link ethnic communities together. Mr. Lippmann and Mr. Westerveld thought she was perfect for the position.

Ms. Mushin feels very proud that her seminal work at the Committee improved service provision to ethnic communities. Not ignoring the limitations she encountered, Ms. Mushin believes this was her best job ever. She described it as a ‘stimulating environment … (full of) diversity, people, politics and ideals!’ Without any specific advice, she wished ECCV the best of luck going forward.

IV. Conclusion
Throughout 1985, the ECC held numerous meetings, released numerous research papers, submissions to government inquiries, representations to ministers and media campaigns. Frustratingly, their pioneering work in this domain and its significant expertise and links with ethnic aged groups were not taken up by the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (AIMA), the government’s peak consultative body on ethnic affairs, which failed to seek any active involvement or advice from the ECC when it was compiling its report on the ethnic aged. Despite the obvious challenges in political advocacy, the ECC and its Committee on the Ethnic Aged made a large and important contribution to the formulation and operation of the HACC program and multicultural policies.

Oleksiy Romanov
Oleksiy worked as an intern of the ECCV Policy Unit.
ECCV’s advance care planning community education project

Ethnic Communities’ Council of Victoria (ECCV) is undertaking an exciting new project to develop and deliver a community education program that will raise awareness about advance care planning amongst culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Victoria. The project has been funded by the Victorian Department of Health as part of the ‘Advance Care Planning: have the conversation – a strategy for Victorian health services 2014-2018.

Advance care planning (ACP) is a process of discussing and writing down future health preferences, with family and treating clinicians, to guide clinical decision-making when a person is unable to communicate their decisions to others. It is an important process that enables the individual to discuss their preference in their end-of-life care, also reduces the family’s own discomfort and burden of making difficult decisions on their own. There is emerging research to show that advance care planning can improve end-of-life care and patient and family satisfaction, and reduce stress, anxiety and depression in surviving relatives.

The use and uptake of ACP is still uncommon in many of the migrant communities. Many factors underlie the underutilisation of these services including culture specific factors as well as limited awareness of ACP in migrant communities. It is hoped that the current project will be able to address some of these factors.

The project is at an early stage of development. We have sent out an Expression of Interest form and are currently in the selection process of engaging with the communities that would like to collaborate with ECCV and take part in the project.

In this twelve month project ECCV will work with three ethnic communities to develop project resources and a community education program that will incorporate the cultural needs and values of each of the participating communities.

In the upcoming months we aim to establish community reference groups, for the three participating communities, to meet and identify cultural issues and factors around advance care planning, and where possible provide feedback on the existing resources available. This will inform the development of the community education program and resources for the targeted communities.

Once the community education program and project resources are developed we hope to train bilingual speaking educators to deliver community education about advance care planning to targeted communities.

If you would like to find more about the project please contact Anja Copelj, Project Officer, on 03 9349 4122 or email her at acopelj@eccv.org.au.
Maja Hrudka - 1925 to 2014

Maja Hrudka was the founder and Chairperson of the Board of Directors at Kalyna Care (Located in Delahey, Victoria) formally known as the Ukrainian Elderly People’s Home (UEPH), a position Maja held in the utmost regard.

Let us tell you a little about Maja. She was born on 18 January 1925 in Krasnohrad which is located in the Poltava region of Ukraine and had two brothers, Alex and Vlodymir.

Having nothing but a suitcase to her name, Maja sailed by ship to Melbourne in 1949. By the end of 1950 she had achieved her diploma in nursing at the Lakeside Psychiatric facility in Ballarat and mastered the English language. In 1954 she moved to Melbourne to work at the Royal Park Psychiatric Hospital in Parkville and following her completion of studies at Melbourne University, Maja was appointed Director of Nursing at the Larundel Psychiatric facility at Bundoora.

Maja eventually became Superintendent of Psychiatric Services in Victoria with her office being situated on Collins Street, Melbourne. Maja had high expectations of her staff and ran a tight ship. Maja was extremely active in the Ukrainian community and she held various executive committee positions not the least of which was as Secretary of the Ukrainian Women’s Association (UWA).

During this post, she represented the UWA at a national level and at conferences in Toronto, Beijing and Ukraine. In 1995, she attended the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women and in 1996 she contributed to international conferences in response to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. It is significant that Maja eventually became a resident to be cared for in a home she that she assisted to build for other Ukrainians. Some of the original staff who began work at UEPH in 1993 were her carers.

Maja passed away at Kalyna Care on 21st July 2014. May she now Rest in Peace.

Maja’s full story can be viewed on our website www.kalynaagedcare.com.au

Yours Sincerely

Darren Leech
General Manager

Kalyna Care
Personal and Compassionate Care
The Working with Diversity Forum held at Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre (SMRC) in the city of Greater Dandenong, brought together about 25 service providers from the HACC sector wishing to better equip themselves to work more effectively with culturally and linguistically diverse older people. The Forum concluded a project which focused on the Afghan community, in particular the Hazara community.

Each year SMRC engages in a project to strengthen relationships with a community seen to be small and emerging, in the aged care environment. The aim is to educate community leaders and members about HACC services and link them to service providers.

The project succeeded in providing information in a range of settings, including the local shopping plaza, to both men and women. Members of the Hazara community were generally not found in their own groups but as part of mixed groups of people from Afghanistan.

A greater understanding of people from Afghanistan and the needs of older people, was gained by SMRC staff involved in the project and a forum was planned to share this information with other providers.

In the forum, held 25th June 2014, Iman Allaf the project worker, described the aims of the project and how it was conducted. Then forum participants heard from guest speaker, Gula Bezhan – both an Afghan community leader and settlement worker at Catholic Care, who explained how older people were adapting to settling in Australia and how their culture often created barriers for them, in getting the help they needed.

A panel of community members, including Zakia Baig, President of Afghan Hazaras Women’s Friendship Group, Malika Atai, a family carer and Zakir Alami, a social work student, expanded on Gula’s presentation and shared their personal insights. A lively and informative discussion took place in which issues around cultural tendencies, settlement challenges and gender roles were explored. Some providers shared how their agency was exercising flexibility in order to cater for cultural difference.
Improving heart health in your community

We all know the benefits of exercise, social interaction and fresh air. Heart Foundation Walking Groups combine all of these things and are perfect for multicultural or senior groups where they have something in common such as a language, culture or lifestyle.

Why not consider joining or starting your own Heart Foundation Walking group with the support from the Heart Foundation? Heart Foundation Walking is Australia’s largest network of free, community-based walking groups.

Heart Foundation Victoria CEO Diana Heggie said the walking groups are a great way to improve heart health, especially for people who want to be more active and don’t want to exercise alone.

‘The simple act of walking for 30 minutes a day can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease by as much as half,’ Ms Heggie said.

‘It can be hard to get motivated and head outdoors, but knowing your group is waiting, is motivation enough for most people to pull on their comfy shoes and get walking’.

‘Walkers in our groups report that one of the biggest benefits they get from taking part is connecting with people in their local area or workplace.’

In Victoria, there 3,370 active participants in 279 walking groups including a Chinese senior citizens group, a Samoan and Pacific Islands group and a Turkish Community Group.

‘I find our walking group is very interesting because walking in groups is good and we socialise a lot afterwards,’ said Ayse Koksuz the organiser for the Turkish Community Walking Group in Meadow Heights.

‘It breaks down social isolation and is good for everything. I’m 60 years old and I’m not taking any medications, I feel good, I feel healthy. Exercise is the best medicine,’ said Ayse.

To discover what is happening in your local area, or to start your own walking group call the Heart Foundation’s Health Information Service on 1300 36 27 87 or visit heartfoundation.org.au/walking.

Heart Foundation Walking is funded nationally by the Medibank Community Fund and the ACT Government through ACT Health.

Turkish Community Walking Group (Meadow Heights, VIC)
Participation for CALD Seniors grants program

Round four now open for applications

Being socially active is important for the health and wellbeing of all people. Evidence shows that older people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds experience considerable barriers to participation in social activities.

To support older people from CALD backgrounds, the Victorian Coalition Government’s Participation for CALD seniors grants program funds projects to help isolated people from CALD backgrounds and connect them with existing or new support networks and activities.

If you are a seniors group or an organisation that needs funding to create or expand opportunities for CALD seniors, the fourth and final round of the Participation for CALD Seniors Grants Program is now open for applications.

There are two categories of grants available:

1. Ethnic or multicultural seniors groups can apply for up to $4,000 if they are based in metropolitan Melbourne or up to $5,000 if they are in regional areas.

2. Organisations can apply for up to $10,000 for larger or more complex projects.

The grants are open from 25 August 2014 until Friday 30 January 2015. The grant guidelines, application form and other information to help are available on Seniors Online (www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au). For more information or additional support with the application process please contact the Ethnic Communities’ Council of Victoria on (03) 9349 4122.
Home Share Program

In addressing some of the issues around getting older, or being isolated in the community, the Care Connect/Spectrum Home Share Program asks some of the difficult questions:

- Are you living alone and experiencing loneliness, missing the company you used to have?
- Are you struggling to keep up with all the little jobs around the house?
- Would you like a little assistance so that you can remain safely at home?
- You do find getting out and about difficult because of mobility issues - no longer driving?

There is an alternative that has many benefits:-
The Homeshare Program addresses issues of social isolation, your security in your home, health risks associated with living alone and pressure from family worried about your living alone. The basic value of Home Share is that older people and people with a disability have a right to remain in their own home should they wish to, for as long as is possible.

Homeshare involves the provision of accommodation in exchange for assistance and companionship, and supports the belief that older people can continue to contribute to their community, enhance their independence and dignity and develop new and interesting personal relationships.

The Homeshare program takes into consideration the needs and interests of both, you the home owner, and the younger person who will ultimately be sharing and living in your home. Some practical supports for you may include assistance with:-

- Shopping
- Medication prompts
- Household cleaning
- Companionship/socialization/sense of security
- Support to attend appointments
- Cooking
- Light gardening

This program DOES NOT replace existing HACC services into the home, but offers additional options for the house holder. The agreement is purely voluntary and home sharers are NOT considered to be employees or workers. The house sharer also benefits by having secure and affordable accommodation, contributing to the community’s social capital and developing intergenerational relationships.

The exchange of accommodation for assistance means that both participants gain from this experience. The house sharer does pay toward the household utilities so that the home owner is not disadvantaged in any agreement.

For further information contact Robyn Hillier, Client Facilitator (MHRP)/Home Share Co-ordinator, on phone 03 9362 8000 or email rhillier@careconnect.org.au.
Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre Multicultural Choir