

Golden Years



ethnic
communities'
council of
victoria



Healthy and Active Ageing

GOLDEN YEARS is a newsletter on ethnic aged care issues produced by the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria, jointly supported by the Victorian and Australian Governments.



The Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria Inc. (ECCV) is the peak body for ethnic and multicultural organisations in Victoria. It is a community based, member driven organisation committed to empowering people from diverse multicultural backgrounds. We are proud to have been the key advocate for culturally diverse communities in Victoria since 1974. For over 35 years we have been the link between multicultural communities, government and the wider community.

The organisation advocates and lobbies all levels of government on behalf of multicultural communities in areas like human rights, access and equity, improving services, racism and discrimination, community harmony, employment, education and training, health and community services, disability, child protection law and justice, and arts and culture.

We also help build the capacity of new and emerging communities and develop policy on a wide range of issues including undertaking original research in collaboration with major tertiary institutions.

Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria

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Message from the Chairperson

Since my appointment as Chairperson last year, I have had the privilege of being a part of many exciting developments at the ECCV regarding our work in the aged care and health care sectors.

In February this year for instance, the ECCV had the pleasure of hosting the Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon. David Davis at an aged care trend briefing, where Directors and CEOs from a range of organisations gathered to discuss issues relating to cultural diversity in the aged care and health care systems.

At this briefing I raised a number of issues surrounding seniors and their need for culturally appropriate care, including the recommendation for more interpreters and translators.

It's a busy time at the ECCV in the field of aged care, as we currently have our aged care policy officer and HACC policy officer working on several aged care projects and submissions. Our most recent aged care policy submission was to the National Inquiry into Dementia: *Early Diagnosis and Intervention*. This

submission outlines our recommendations regarding early diagnosis strategies and preventative measures for CALD seniors.

The theme of this edition of Golden Years, Healthy and Active Seniors promotes a vital message to the community that seniors still have a desire to be active in society, and have much to contribute to the community. I am personally still active within the Italian community and assist many seniors groups in my area, and strongly believe that being active in the local community not only benefits individuals, but the broader society also. I hope you enjoy this issue of Golden Years, and all that are to come.

Joe Caputo, OAM

Chairperson

Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria



Message from the editor - *Healthy and Active Seniors*

Dear Reader,

I would like to introduce myself to you. I am Nikolaus Rittinghausen and I have taken on the role as ECCV Policy Officer for Aged Care. I truly believe in multiculturalism and I have had the chance to see many versions of multiculturalism in a variety of countries. I was born in Carlton, raised in Germany, and studied in Australia. I have also lived in Ecuador, Brazil and Russia as well as visiting other European countries and the Middle East. I look forward to meeting you and your organisations in the next few weeks and months to better understand what issues are important to you.

The topic of this Golden Years edition is *Healthy and Active Seniors*. Let's get physical. Whether it be an energetic walk, a game of bowls or even getting out in the garden, the focus of this issue is all about the importance of seniors staying healthy and active.

The notion of *Healthy and Active Seniors* covers a range of issues which can affect the ability of seniors to participate in the community in a physical and intellectual capacity.

As you'll see from this issue, a number of organisations are implementing projects and programs designed to get culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) seniors back into the community in a socially and physically active way.

For example, the Australian Greek Welfare Society is running Planned Activity Groups (PAGs) which deal primarily with reducing social isolation amongst seniors.

Social isolation can be an unfortunate side-effect of conditions such as dementia, and it is of significant importance that seniors are encouraged to still remain active in the community.

Nikolaus Rittinghausen
Aged Care Policy Officer
Editor





Social participation for better health in CALD communities

ECCV congratulates the 44 successful applicants that will run new projects to help strengthen social participation for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) seniors groups. Supported through the *Participation of CALD Seniors* grants program, these projects all seek to include isolated older people from non-English speaking backgrounds in social activity. The program is funded by the Victorian Department of Health.

Being socially active in the community is important for general health and wellbeing. According to the World Health Organisation (2002), the lack of adequate social support can lead to higher levels of emotional distress, more illness and higher mortality rates. Evidence shows that people from CALD backgrounds are often at a higher risk of social isolation due to a range of factors. The level of isolation can be extreme as the impact of ageing combines with cultural and linguistic barriers as well as a higher prevalence of smaller family networks due to migration.

The majority of the grants have been awarded to ethnic seniors groups to extend their membership and reach community members that have found it difficult to attend

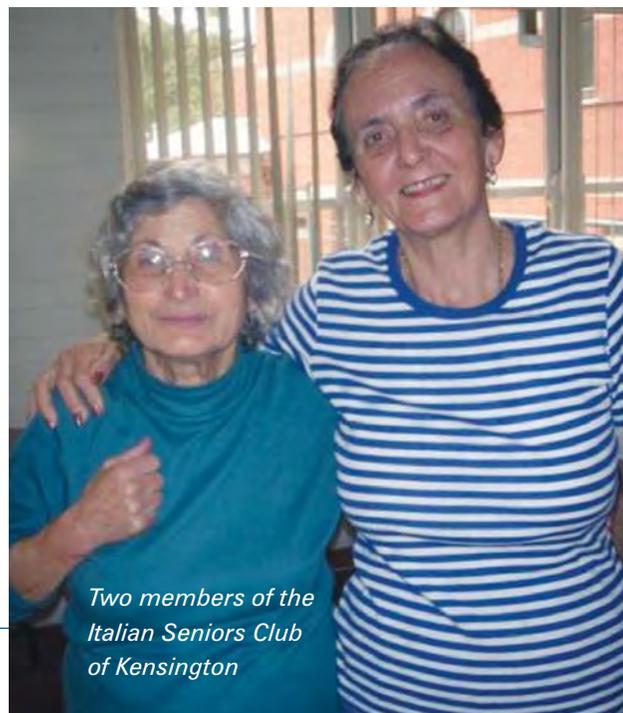
their activities. Ethnic seniors groups have a valuable and essential role in providing bilingual, bicultural social connections. This grants program provides welcome support for the important work that they are doing week in, week out.

Grants have also been awarded to service providers to support the development of new networks or social support groups for sections of the community currently under-served.

The grants are for 12 months of activity and the 2012 round is now closed. There will be another round in 2013, and again in 2014. ECCV is supporting the program with advice to applicants and funded projects. More details are available on the Seniors Online website. Alternatively, contact the ECCV Project Officer, Kate Ling, on 9349 4122 or kling@eccv.org.au to find out more.

Kate Ling

ECCV Project Officer



Two members of the Italian Seniors Club of Kensington

Strengthening the pathways for CALD clients to access HACC services

The ECCV's new and exciting project, *Improving Pathways between Ethnic and Multicultural Aged Care Services and HACC Assessment Services* is well underway. The overall aim of the project is to support ethnic and multicultural aged care services and HACC assessment services, as well as explore and trial strategies to work together to help CALD clients and their carers access HACC services.

ECCV has worked collaboratively with regional office Department of Health colleagues to implement region specific implementation plans for the three metropolitan regions (North West, East and South Metropolitan region). As an outcome, three region specific projects have been developed.

Each of the regions have taken a different approach to the delivery of the current project. The following is a very brief overview of the three projects:

Southern Metropolitan region: Six monthly meetings have been organised for the participating agencies to work together and identify issues relating to clients and carers pathways to HACC assessment and discuss strategies for improvement. So far the key priorities that the project aims to address include:

- importance of carer engagement,
- development of sustainable networks between the sector and the community, improving assessment and referral practice
- strengthening of existing good practises.

North West Metropolitan region: A regional cluster (comprising two HACC Assessment Services, six ethnic and multicultural agencies and a regional Royal District Nursing Service representative) has been developed and is now well on its way through the project meeting structure. The cluster has already had the opportunity to identify and discuss key issues facing clients accessing HACC Assessment Services.

East Metropolitan region: This region took a different approach from the other regions due to the multiplicity of existing networks. A focus group was convened to find out what good practice is already taking place between the sectors and what are the challenges regarding pathways to HACC Assessment. In addition, the opportunities for future collaboration were explored. The information from the focus group will be utilised through a forum hosted by the Migrant Information Centre.

The final stage of the project will result in the development of practical guidelines that will help highlight the effective strategies identified in the current project to strengthen CALD clients pathways into HACC services.

Anja Copelj

HACC Project Pathways Officer



Healthy - Everyday!

Australian Croatian Community Services (ACCS) is the peak Community services agency for people from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in Victoria. It is a community based, non-profit organisation, receiving funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

Staff at ACCS have recently been busy organising and conducting Community Forums through their Community Partners Program (CPP). The common theme of the forums is *Healthy - Everyday!* and the aim is to promote healthy and active living to the target communities through the provision of relevant information about the government services available to them.

The forums held to date have been a huge success. So far the forums have been held in the South East Metropolitan region, Ballarat and Gippsland/Latrobe Valley. Service providers

and their presentations, along with hands on activities and advice, were extremely well received by the elderly community members.

Special thanks goes to ECCV, Carers Victoria, Arthritis Australia (Vic), Kronstadt Gardens Aged Care, Southern Health, Mt Eliza Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS) Country Club Lodge Aged Care, Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre, Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council, Grampians ACAS, Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS), Career Respite and Support Services Ballarat, Linkages Ballarat, Hearing Australia, Regional Development Victoria - Ballarat, Ballarat Hospice Care, Gippsland Multicultural Council, Latrobe Community Health Centre, Pakenham Family House, New Hope Foundation, Peninsula Support Services, Baptcare, Mornington Peninsula Shire - Rye Ward and Alzheimer's Australia (Vic), who were all more than happy to explain to their audience what they were all about and how they can assist our elderly.



We would like to extend our appreciation to our special guest in Ballarat, the Hon Catherine King MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing. We thank her for her support and attendance at the *Healthy - Everyday!* forum.

In order to have a bit of educational fun, staff at ACCS organised a health quiz, with multiple choice answers. Tables were very competitive and the winners received a well deserved prize, along with more knowledge on how to live healthily.

“It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience to work with you again, meet other service providers, and to chat with some of the carers. A very special thanks for the kind hospitality extended on the day... the catering was sensational!”

– Sonia Savannah, Carers Victoria.

The Forums are continuing throughout Victoria. The next one is organised for Mornington Peninsula region in co-operation with Croatian Social Club, Rye. This will be followed by a forum in the North West region organised at *Croatian House* in Footscray at the beginning of June.

We would like to thank the following: Dandenong City Soccer Club, *Croatian House* in Footscray, Australian Croatian Association *Stjepan Radic* Ballarat and Gippsland Croatian Association Traralgon for allowing us to use their premises and helping us achieve our goal to inform, educate and support the Croatian community in Victoria.





Active Ageing Network

The Active Ageing Network (AAN) began in 2009 and is managed by the YMCA Victoria on behalf of the Department of Health and in partnership with Council on the Ageing (COTA).

The AAN aims to increase the number and range of sustainable physical activity programs for older people from disadvantaged groups (including CALD communities).

The network has achieved various milestones including:

- Managing the AAN Grants Scheme 2010 & 2012, thereby helping to ensure there is a sustainable strength training program for older adults in every local government area.

To date, 17 organisations/agencies have received funding through the AAN's grant funding program, totalling \$163,374.

The local government areas in which grants were distributed include: Buloke, Cardinia, Central Goldfields (2 grants), Corangamite, Gannawarra, Indigo, Moira, Mount Alexander, Moyne (2 grants), Strathbogie (2 grants), Warrnambool (2 grants), Wellington and Yarriambiack.

- Facilitated 4 community forums on strength training in AAN and conducted 4 successful practitioner and community forums.
- Developed and continuing to maintain a high-quality, comprehensive website

for health and fitness professionals and the general public. The website is very user friendly, includes a practitioner discussion forum to encourage communication between individuals working in the sector; an older adults fitness instructor register for those seeking employment and for those seeking employees; and a *Finder Program*, a database of 227 programs, which assists older adults to find a physical activity program in their local area.

- Formed an Advisory Committee consisting of 17 members from relevant sector organisations.

The AAN has recently received another three years of funding.

For more information visit:

www.activeageingnetwork.org.au

Or contact:

Louise Haddad,

Active Ageing Network Program Manager

louise.haddad@ymca.org.au



Reducing Social Isolation

Australian Greek Welfare Society's (AGWS) Planned Activity Groups (PAG's) play a vital role in reducing social isolation.

A new PAG day was set up by AGWS in the Northern region in late 2011 in addition to the regular Planned Activity Groups that AGWS has been running for many years in the North, East, West and Southern regions for HACC eligible clients.

This was in response to a growing demand for centre based socialization for clients with higher and more complex care needs such as those on EACH and EACH D packages.

The new PAG day operates every Friday from AGWS premises in Brunswick and is of particular relevance to clients on EACH and EACH D packages. Prior to clients joining the PAG group there is extensive consultation with the respective case managers, clients and their families in order to discuss individual needs.

The main aim is ensuring that clients enjoy maximum choice and participation in activities that meet their own needs and are in line with the Active Service Model.

It is not uncommon for people with more complex needs such as dementia to become socially isolated, and in many cases quite housebound. The loss of social connections can often result in a significant deterioration in their physical and mental health. To reduce the risk of this, AGWS provides these clients with regular opportunities to come to a centre-based PAG on a weekly basis. Clients are

transported to and from the centre by taxi and the cost of attending the Friday PAG including meal provision can usually be covered by the client's package. While at the PAG clients enjoy a diverse range of stimulating and culturally and linguistically appropriate activities in a highly supportive and caring environment. This is not only good for the clients but also provides carers with much needed respite.

The staff at PAG are all bilingual and have an extensive knowledge of the Greek culture and the individual needs of the clients. In addition to the recreational activities that clients enjoy there are also periodic information sessions on issues of particular interest and relevance to them. The care provided is very much client-focused and every effort is made to ensure that individual needs are met as much as possible, and that clients have an enjoyable, stimulating and engaging experience when they come to PAG.

For more information in respect to this or any other services offered by AGWS contact Nina Xarhakos on 9388 9998.

Nina Xarhakos

Australian Greek Welfare Society.





'The Great Displaced' Poem by Omar Musa

The boy lights a candle
and faces a perilous horizon.

He pulls on his socks, his boots
and picks seeds from between his teeth.

He will leave before dawn.
His sisters are asleep
and he will not wake them
because he believes that dreams are fragile
and shouldn't be disturbed.

The boy is not alone.

He is one of millions
across the broad black beyond,
enacting the ritual of leaving,
the ritual of
sighs.

So to the cities they come,
over roads and highways of waves,
where coral reaches up like a migrant
connecting the stars
into maps of deliverance.
Suitcases blackened
by the sweat and smoke of transit cities,
of roasting meat over hot rocks,
the diesel perfume of foreign docks,
they pass memories like bottles of wine.

The great displaced,
starboard side
harboured
in waters that know nothing of them,
tasting strange languages and lands
harvesting hope with ashy hands-
the children
of fractured communities.
The moon

a sullen orphan
who guides them to reefs of light
where progress is the catchcry,
and we are swept towards
modernity
at all costs.

Just because there was no gun to your temple
does not mean you were not forced to leave.

Villages and family ties disappear
then re-appear freshborn and shining in our
myths,
daubed on the doorways to ourselves.

The countrysides
become plots for our nostalgia,
sown from afar,
flourishing with orchards of memory.
Each tree laden with fruit,
each fruit a repository of dreams
where real orchards no longer exist.
They are unmapped places
dedicated to everything we miss.

Do we speak too highly of the past?
Were the times not difficult then?

How do we fill the missing spaces?

The boy lights a candle.

He pulls on his boots
and faces a horizon
as heavy
and perilous
as chance.



Omar Musa reading
'The Great Displaced'

The Dream Window

Heartlands Refugee Fine Arts Prize 2012 Exhibition

Oil Paint on Canvas

Afghanistan



For the artist the painting is about finding yourself, where you are and what you want to do. Looking out of the Dream Window a world of opportunity is waiting for you with a bright future. 'Everywhere you will find helpful people towards your destination'

Sayed Murtaza



Notes to Remember

1 October International Day of Older Persons

'A demographic revolution is underway throughout the world. Today, world-wide, there are around 600 million persons aged 60 years and over; this total will double by 2025 and will reach virtually two billion by 2050 - the vast majority of them in the developing world' (World Health Organisation 2012)

For more information please visit:

http://www.who.int/ageing/events/idop_rationale/en/index.html

Victorian Seniors Festival 2012

The Victorian Seniors Festival will take place from 7 - 14 October 2012. The topic of this year's Seniors Festival will be 'Celebrating life and good eating state-wide'.

For more information please visit:

<http://www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/Home/Festival-and-Awards/Victorian-Seniors-Festival.aspx>

ECCV Aged Care Policy Subcommittee Meeting Dates

The ECCV Aged Care Policy subcommittee meets at the ECCV on the third Thursday of the every month from 9.30 am to 11.30 am at the Statewide Resources Centre, level 2, 150 Palmerston Street, Carlton. Next quarter's dates are:

Thursday 19 July

Thursday 16 August

Thursday 20 September

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