Welcome

Recently, the Queensland Government released a discussion paper *A multicultural future...for all of us* which invites all Queenslanders to share their views and ideas about the future direction for multiculturalism in the state.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all government and non-government stakeholders with an interest in multicultural health to read the discussion paper and attend the associated forums and workshops.

It is only through sharing our understanding of the health needs of multicultural communities that we can ensure Queensland Health is able to meet its aim of achieving good health and well-being for all Queenslanders.

The discussion paper and how to respond are detailed on page three, I hope you will all be able to contribute.

I would also like to note that as we move into the final part of the year, and another long, hot summer, we are now officially at the halfway point of the Strategic Plan for Multicultural Health 2007-2012.

Much has changed in the two-and-a-half years since the plan was introduced and Queensland Health is now leading the way among government departments in developing organisational cultural competency.

In this issue you will find details about new and existing projects which are further enhancing our organisational cultural competence and helping Queensland Health better meet the needs of all Queenslanders.

Ellen Hawes
Manager, Multicultural Services
Interpreter Service Coordinators’ Forum 2009

Thirteen Health Service District Interpreter Service Coordinators from around the state came together in Brisbane recently to discuss and share information about the Queensland Health Interpreter Service.

The twice-yearly Interpreter Service Coordinators’ Forum was held from 22-23 October and provided an opportunity for coordinators to discuss issues including the review of the interpreter service standing offer arrangement and processes for the new video remote interpreting service.

Multicultural Services Principal Interpreter Service Quality Officer (Southern Districts) Ita Szymanska said the forum featured information, training and networking opportunities and allowed the coordinators to keep up-to-date with improvements to the Interpreter Service Information System (ISIS).

“The coordinators came from locations in southern, central and northern Queensland and the forum gave many of us an opportunity to meet face-to-face for the first time,” Ita said.

Ita, and her fellow Principal Interpreter Service Quality Officers, Libby Sterling and Angie Norris, along with ISIS Administrator Angel Bogicevic, provided training and updates on new business processes and projects developed by the Interpreter Services team in 2009.

“The forum was a good opportunity to bring the Interpreter Service Coordinators together as a group to discuss a number of important topics,” Ita said.

“We covered topics such as the new ISIS business rules, the new video remote interpreting project and the implementation of new reporting arrangements.

“The coordinators were also able to contribute their opinions and ideas about a number of enhancements which are proposed for the service in 2010.”

Multicultural Services Manager Ellen Hawes and Principal Project Officer (Cross-cultural Learning and Development team) Gail Hyslop also updated attendees on plans to include information on how to work with interpreters in the district orientation training programs.

The next forum will be held in May 2010.

Interpreter service wins again

The success of the Queensland Health Interpreter Service has again been recognised, this time at a national level at the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) Excellence Awards.

The service was recognised for its Outstanding Contribution to the Translating and Interpreting Industry at an awards ceremony in Adelaide on 6 November 2009.

Principal Interpreter Services Quality Officer Ita Szymanska accepted the award on behalf of Queensland Health Multicultural Services.

“To receive this award is especially satisfying as it is an award that is judged by people involved in the interpreting and translating industry,” Ita said.

“To receive this kind of recognition shows that the service we have developed is world class.”

The AUSIT Excellence Awards recognise initiatives and activities by individuals, teams, and organisations operating in all sectors of the translating and interpreting industry.

They are held every two years and encourage best practice, professionalism, dedication to quality, innovation and outstanding contributions to the industry.

Go to www.ausit.org for a full list of winners.

Ita Szymanska (left) receives the award for Outstanding Contribution to the Translating and Interpreting Industry
Queensland Government multicultural policy review

Queenslanders have been invited to submit their views and ideas about how to strengthen and support multiculturalism as part of the State Government’s review of multicultural policy.

A discussion paper, *A multicultural future…for all of us*, has been published by Multicultural Affairs Queensland and all interested parties are encouraged to contribute written submissions.

Community consultation will also occur throughout Queensland from November 2009 to March 2010, including eForums and face-to-face community workshops.

The paper seeks feedback about how the State Government can deliver services, engage with diverse groups and work with communities to achieve more equitable outcomes for all Queenslanders.

Queensland Health Multicultural Services Manager Ellen Hawes said it was important for all stakeholders to contribute to the discussion as the current review would dictate the future directions of multicultural policy in Queensland.

“The discussion paper is seeking information on how to improve outcomes for CALD communities in a variety of areas, including health care,” Ellen said.

“Queensland Health is already implementing a number of strategies to achieve this, but we need to consider how we can build on these achievements.

“This is especially important when considering the Australian Government’s current health reform agenda,” Ellen said.

“The National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission report *A Healthier Future For All Australians* identifies access and equity issues that affect health outcomes as one of its three major reform goals.

“With ABS statistics showing that 74% of CALD Australians are health illiterate, a major barrier that impacts on an individual’s capacity to manage their own health and access services, it is important that we make sure health access and equity issues for CALD communities are also high priorities for consideration in Queensland multicultural policy.”

Go to [www.multicultural.qld.gov.au](http://www.multicultural.qld.gov.au) for more information.

How to have your say

1. Read the discussion paper and complete the survey
   You can download a copy of the discussion and response papers or request to have the papers mailed out to you by calling 13 13 04.

2. Make a submission
   Email: info@multicultural.qld.gov.au
   Post: Multicultural Affairs Queensland
   GPO Box 806
   BRISBANE QLD 4001
   Online: By completing the online survey at [www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au](http://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au)
   Phone: 13 13 04
   Submissions must be received by 26 March 2010.

3. Attend a community workshop
   Community workshops will be held in Brisbane, Caboolture, Cairns, the Gold Coast, Hervey Bay, Inala, Logan, Mackay, Toowoomba and Townsville.

4. Participate in an online forum

Organisations and individuals are encouraged to lodge submissions early to ensure health issues are included from the first day of analysis.

New People and Culture Plan

A new plan which aims to reshape the culture and employment experience in Queensland Health was launched by Director-General Michael Reid on 11 November 2009.

The *People and Culture Plan 2009-12* describes eight key principles and behaviours that will guide and inform people and culture strategies and initiatives at the organisational, district and divisional levels.

Most importantly for multicultural health, diversity is identified as one of the key elements in the plan.

The plan outlines how Queensland Health will value diversity at work that is representative and understanding of the community it serves.

Under the plan Queensland Health will seek to understand how cultural differences can impact how things are done, and seek to employ people with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Multicultural Services has received funding through the *People and Culture Plan 2009-12* to implement programs which further these principles and behaviours.

Multicultural swine flu vaccination project

A new project is underway which aims to encourage people from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background to get vaccinated against human swine flu.

Multicultural Services Principal Project Officer Ann Garred is working closely with the Communicable Diseases Branch to bring the message of human swine flu vaccination to CALD communities.

Ann said the project would start in November and would be handled in two stages.

“The first stage will consist of a general awareness campaign using the multicultural media and multicultural agencies to educate CALD communities about the availability of the vaccine,” she said.

“The second part is a more focussed campaign which is aimed at Pacific Islander communities. Bilingual/bicultural workers will engage directly with the various communities and help to educate and encourage people to get vaccinated.”

Ann said Pacific Islander communities would be specifically targeted because hospitals and general practitioners had reported a higher rate of infection and more severe symptoms among those communities than the general population.

It has been shown that people who suffer from higher levels of chronic disease, such as diabetes and obesity, are more vulnerable to human swine flu and should get vaccinated in case a second wave hits with the onset of the northern hemisphere winter.

Ann said Queensland Health would hold a series of training and information sessions for bilingual/bicultural workers who are interested in learning about human swine flu and the current vaccination program.

“These sessions will be held in late November and early December and all bilingual/bicultural workers are invited to attend,” she said.

The vaccine for Pandemic H1N1 (Human Swine Influenza) is available free of charge for all Australians from most general practitioners. (Some GPs may charge for the consultation)

It is recommended for everyone over the age of 10, and is strongly recommended for anyone who is pregnant, obese, suffering from a chronic disease, caring for the sick or who has young children.

A children’s vaccine for those under 10 is expected to be available soon.

To register your interest for the information sessions for bilingual/bicultural workers contact Ann Garred on 3328 9872.


Multicultural Summit 2009

The ECCQ Multicultural Summit 2009 was held in Brisbane from 26-27 October at the State Library of Queensland.

The central theme of the summit was from reflection to rejuvenation – reflection of good practice, unmet needs, policy gaps, program sustainability, and achievements; and rejuvenation of spirit, policy, multiculturalism, practice and programs, emotion and passion, and identity.

Attendees were addressed by two keynote speakers, Michael Hourigan, a criminal lawyer with a passion for human rights, and Phillip Adams, an author, social commentator and radio host.

There was also a panel discussion debating the controversial topic Multiculturalism is dead – Long Live Social Inclusion, four plenary sessions and 10 concurrent breakout sessions. Entertainment was provided by the Burundi Drummers (pictured).

Delegates also developed a summit declaration which can be seen at www.eccq.com.au.

For more information contact Erik Lamichhane Bhandari at ECCQ on 3844 9166 or email summit@eccq.com.au.

Keynote speaker Michael Hourigan

The Burundi Drummers entertained the summit attendees.

Photos courtesy of Richard McLaren of Zouchai.com - email zouchai@bigpond.net.au
Interpreter training reaches milestone

Queensland Health Multicultural Services has now helped more than 100 professional interpreters improve their skills in interpreting in a health care environment since May 2009.

Five sessions of the *Interpreting within a health context* introductory and advanced workshops have so far been delivered to interpreters working in the health care industry, with more planned for the future.

The training sessions were delivered by Ita Szymanska and Angel Bogicevic from Multicultural Services, who both have extensive experience in interpreting in a health care environment.

Angel said the course participants not only had a diverse range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, but also a similarly diverse level of education and health-related interpreting experience.

“As a result, the training modules need to cater for a wide variety of interpreting practitioners, ranging from professionals with many years of experience, to those people just entering this demanding occupation,” Angel said.

“The main goal of the training program is to reinforce the skills, knowledge and best practice in interpreting.”

Angel said that goal was achieved by delivering presentations and group exercises aimed at enhancing the participants’ understanding of the role of a health care interpreter, as well as developing awareness of issues regarding professional ethics.

“Participants in the introductory module are also given role-playing exercises to test their capabilities in real-life scenarios,” he said.

The training program used to conduct the workshops was developed in 2007 by Patricia Avilla and a working group comprising of QLD Health employees and stakeholders with expertise in interpreting in a health context.

CALD Physical Activity Mapping Project

Queensland Health Multicultural Services recently commenced a new project which aims to improve the physical activity levels of people from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background.

The CALD Physical Activity Mapping Project will run until the end of June 2010 and seeks to identify opportunities for CALD communities to participate in physical activity, and any overlaps or gaps in the delivery of services.

The project will also develop recommendations for how sustainable and successful physical activity programs can be delivered to CALD communities throughout Queensland.

CALD Physical Activity Mapping Project Senior Project Officer Amy Orlandi said there were a number of barriers that affected the ability of Queensland CALD communities to participate in physical activity programs.

“Barriers include high costs, and concerns about cultural appropriateness and safety,” Amy said.

“There is also a lack of understanding among CALD communities about the types of physical activity programs that are available, and a lack of understanding from mainstream service providers about how to effectively engage with these communities.”

Amy said stakeholders from Commonwealth, State and Local Government, and non-government organisations will be consulted to identify suitable physical activity programs.

“CALD communities will also be consulted to assess their beliefs and attitudes about physical activity, barriers to participation and their knowledge of local physical activity opportunities.”

Forums will be conducted at the completion of the project to share the findings and provide recommendations to implementing sustainable strategies and partnerships.

The project is being funded by the Health Promotion Unit from Queensland Health and conducted in partnership with the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland.

An Advisory Group involving key stakeholders from related organisations has been established to provide advice throughout the project.

For more details about the project, please contact Amy Orlandi on 3328 9875 or email multicultural@health.qld.gov.au.
Staff profile: Masoud Ali-Akbari – Project Manager
Rheumatic Heart Disease State-Wide Register and Control System
Tropical Population Health Unit

What is your cultural background?
I am from Iran.

When did you arrive in Australia?
I came to Australia in September 1982.

What would you say is the biggest difference between Australian and Iranian culture?
Individual freedom of expression/thought/religion/speech/political affiliation is much greater in Australia. Although sometimes individual freedoms are carried to excess to the detriment of the family unit.

How long have you worked for Queensland Health?
A total of six years in various roles.

What are the main multicultural communities in your region?
Nepalese, German, Persian, Philippines, etc. Cairns is a very multicultural city.

What is the biggest health issue facing these communities?
Health issues are similar to the mainstream population. They are mostly related to chronic disease and lifestyle choices.

ECCQ launches new healthy lifestyle program

A new healthy lifestyle program which seeks to help people from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background to prevent and manage chronic disease will be officially launched next month.

Living Well: A healthy lifestyle program for culturally and linguistically diverse populations will be conducted by the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland (ECCQ) and contains four components: healthy eating; physical activity; health education; and mental health.

The program will be launched during a full day workshop on 10 December 2009 at The Greek Club and Convention Centre in Brisbane.

The project was developed by ECCQ in partnership with the Central Area and South Area Nutrition programs.

For more information or to RSVP contact ECCQ: Genevieve Hargrave on 3844 9166 or email genevieveh@ecqc.com.au or Queensland Health: Amanda Guandalini on 4120 6004 or email amanda_guandalini@health.qld.gov.au by 26 November 2009.