Mabuhay (Welcome)

The theme for the recent Equity and Diversity Awareness Week was *multidisciplinary teams and multicultural teams provide better health care outcomes.*

At Queensland Health Multicultural Services, staff come from more than 10 different cultural backgrounds.

Our cultural diversity allows us to provide better health planning and services. In the same way that a multidisciplinary team can achieve better outcomes by considering many different professional perspectives, a multicultural team can consider the many different cultural perspectives and needs of clients when planning activities, strategies and resources.

The success of a multicultural approach is reflected in the nomination of Queensland Health Multicultural Services for three different awards, including a nomination in the upcoming Healthcare Improvement Symposium and Awards.

Equity and Diversity Awareness Week 2010 was held from 7-11 June. The week was a great chance for staff to hear about the positives that culturally diverse work teams bring to health care and team dynamics.

Ellen Hawes
A/Manager, Queensland Health Multicultural Services

*Mabuhay* (pronunciation: mah-BOO-high) is a Tagalog word used to exclaim “long live”. It is used to toast at gatherings and parties, for praising notable individuals, to welcome guests and show hospitality.

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Celebrating diversity!

Equity and Diversity Awareness Week 2010 was held from 7-11 June with the theme *multidisciplinary teams and multicultural teams provide better health care outcomes.*

The week aimed to acknowledge the diversity that exists within the workplace and recognise the achievements of teams who contribute to providing better health care outcomes for Queensland Health's culturally diverse clients.

A great example of the diversity that exists within Queensland Health is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Branch. Team members come from a variety of cultural backgrounds including Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, South Sea Islander, Greek, Cypriot, Portuguese, Pakistani, New Zealand, Polish, Portuguese, Irish and Afghani.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Branch Principal Policy Officer Peter Maher said a culturally diverse team can help to provide better health care by revealing different perspectives on the way things can be done.

“Our team has a lot of spice. Everyone’s different perspectives are great. When you get everyone together in the same room it’s the most flavoursome with different view points and cultures thrown into the mix,” Peter said.

Nevertheless, there can be challenges when interacting with colleagues and clients from diverse backgrounds, especially with regards to communication.

Acknowledging these challenges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Branch Senior Director Haylene Grogan encourages openness, transparency and acceptance of differences.

To support the many culturally diverse teams in Queensland Health, two training courses *Managing a Diverse Workforce* and *Working in Diverse Teams*, were launched recently to coincide with Equity and Diversity Awareness Week 2010.


International Unity in Diversity Conference

The third annual International Unity in Diversity Conference will be held from 19-20 August 2010 at the Rydges Southbank Townsville Hotel and Convention Centre.

The International Unity in Diversity Conference is a community forum which discusses diversity, culture and social cohesion.

The conference seeks to bring diverse interest groups together to discuss emerging challenges and approaches in a range of areas including:

- communication across cultural and ideological barriers
- migrant settlement services
- health and well-being in culturally diverse and Indigenous communities
- the relevance of multiculturalism to current debates and issues
- the aged care sector
- diversity and disabilities.

For more information, go to [www.unityindiversityconference.com](http://www.unityindiversityconference.com).

The 2010 conference will be held in association with the 16th annual Cultural Fest in Townsville.

Upcoming events

- The Multicultural Development Association is holding two events to celebrate World Refugee Day 2010 on 20 June and Refugee Week from 20-26 June.
- **Candlelight Walk and Lantern Parade**
  A candle and lantern parade will be held at Southbank Parklands at 5.00 pm on Friday, 18 June 2010.
- **World Refugee Day 2010**
  A community festival and football tournament will be held at Annerley Soccer Club on Sunday, 27 June 2010.

For more information contact Behice Bagdas on 3337 5476 or email behiceb@mdabne.org.au.
Community views on multicultural mental health

The Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre is currently conducting a statewide community consultation process to inform the development of a new Queensland Plan for Multicultural Mental Health.

The consultation sessions are an opportunity for people with an interest in multicultural mental health to have input into the new strategic statewide plan and service delivery framework.

By participating in the consultation sessions, interested parties can ensure mental health service provision remains culturally appropriate and responsive to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Sessions have so far been held in Cairns, Brisbane North, Bundaberg, Maryborough, Ipswich and Toowoomba, with further sessions to be held in Rockhampton, Mt Isa, Townsville, Mackay, Brisbane (South) and the Gold Coast from May-July.

For more information please call Rachel O’Connell on 3167 8333, 1800 188 189 (outside Brisbane), QTMHC@health.qld.gov.au or go to www.health.qld.gov.au/pahospital/qtmhc/default.asp.

Easier access to CALD aged and disability services

Culturally and linguistically diverse aged care and disability services clients can now easily access advocacy services thanks to a new resource launched by Queensland Aged and Disability Advocacy (QADA) recently.

A series of instructional cards in twelve languages has been developed to provide clients with a clear and straightforward four step process to contact a QADA advocate over the phone through an accredited interpreter at no cost.

The cards were developed with the assistance of the Federal Government’s Translating and Interpreting Service and use culturally appropriate images and words to easily take a client through what can be an intimidating process.

Instructional cards are available in Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Korean, Mandarin, Persian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish, and Vietnamese.

QADA provides advocacy support to recipients of Home and Community Care services, Community Aged Care and Extended Aged Care at Home packages, and residents of aged care facilities.

For further information about the instructional cards please call QADA on 1800 818 338 or go to www.qada.org.au.

News briefs

Visa and immigration information help
Queensland Health staff seeking information about visa and immigration options can access a new intranet page which details relevant and up-to-date visa and immigration options, legislation, policy and process. The site was developed by People and Culture Corporate and can be accessed at http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/peopleandculture/visa-and-immigration/html/v-i-home.htm (Qld Health staff only).

Physical Activity Project forums
A series of forums was held recently to discuss the funding of a project on the participation of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in physical activity.

State and local governments, service providers, multicultural communities and non-government organisations attended the forums to consider the project outcomes and to work towards improving the reach of physical activity programs to CALD communities.

Forums were held in Brisbane, Cairns, Gold Coast, Toowoomba, Townsville.

A facelift for ISIS!
Queensland Health’s Interpreter Service Information System (ISIS) was upgraded in May with a range of fixes and enhancements that help make the system more user-friendly.

New features include upgraded reports, streamlined booking processes and enhanced screen views for some functions.

Cultural inclusion award finalists
Queensland Health Multicultural Services reached the final of the 2010 Health and Community Services Workforce Innovation Awards recently in the Cultural Inclusion in the Workforce category. The team was nominated for the development of the five Queensland Health Cross Cultural Capabilities and the statewide Cross Cultural Learning and Development Strategy 2009-2012.

The awards, which are hosted by the Health and Community Services Workforce Council, seek to recognise good workforce practice across health and community services in Queensland.

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Healthy start for new arrivals

An innovative health and nutrition program which aims to introduce refugees and new migrants to Australian food and shopping practices was launched in Brisbane in April.

The Healthy Start for New Arrivals Workshops initiative was developed in partnership with Spiritus and ACCES Services Inc. and funded by the ‘Eat Well Be Active’ Partnerships Program from the Department of Communities.

Red Cross Nutritionist Nicole McGregor said the program will provide information to refugees and new migrants about food storage, cooking, nutrition, chronic disease prevention and exercise.

“The program includes simple tips on how to eat and cook healthy food in Australia, store food safely and buy food at a supermarket”, Nicole said.

“It is about developing a culturally appropriate, nutrition education program to assist migrant communities lead a healthy life in Australia.

“The information in the program has been developed with help from the Sudanese, Burundian, Congolese, Karen and Afghan communities, but it can be used by all culturally and linguistically diverse communities to lead a healthier life.

“Some newly arrived migrants find accessing good information on the prevention and management of chronic diseases a challenge, so special posters, board games, story cards and shopping guides have been developed to engage migrant groups in the program information.”

Culturally and linguistically diverse community workers seeking more information about the program or wishing to attend the launch should contact Nicole McGregor on 3367 4719.

For more information go to www.redcross.org.au.

Community navigation service

Multicultural communities in Logan-Beaudesert are now able to better navigate key health services thanks to a successful pilot program aimed at improving access to health care in the region.

The Logan Health and Wellbeing Natural Helper Project was launched in June 2009 in response to the significant barriers for people from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background in accessing health services.

These barriers include language and communication issues, a lack of knowledge and understanding of the health system, low levels of confidence and trust in health services, socio-economic factors, and a lack of cultural understanding within the health system.

The pilot project, which was recently renamed the Logan Health and Wellbeing Community Navigator Service, employs people from the Samoan, Maori, Afghan, Sudanese and Burmese communities who act as a navigator between their community and key health services.

Logan Health and Wellbeing Community Navigator Service Manager Lesley Kelly said the initiative had been successful at empowering communities to tackle the barriers that exist for CALD communities.

“The model works because the assistance is managed in a culturally appropriate way, which in itself is one of the barriers to accessing health services,” Lesley said.

“The community navigators also work alongside key health and social service agencies to improve their responsiveness to the target communities, and support community health and wellbeing actions.”

Lesley said the program was renamed the Logan Health and Wellbeing Community Navigator Service to better reflect the task of the workers as community navigators rather than helpers.

The Logan Health and Wellbeing Community Navigator Service is a partnership between Griffith University, Multilink Community Services, ACCES Services and Queensland Health’s Logan-Beaudesert Health Coalition.

For more information contact Lesley Kelly on 3382 1077 or email: l.kelly@griffith.edu.au.
PROuDly bringing better health to refugees

The hard work of staff at the Zillmere Refugee Health Assessment Centre to create better access to healthcare services for newly arrived migrants and their children was recognised recently with a Children’s Health Service District People Recognised for Outstanding Drive (PROuD) award.

Queensland Health Children’s Health Services Acting Chief Operating Officer Linda Hardy presented the team with a certificate of recognition and a $1500 professional development grant at the Children’s Health Service District Staff Forum on Monday, 12 April 2010.

The centre is part of the Queensland Health-funded statewide service, Refugee Health Queensland, which provides refugees and special humanitarian entrants with:

- standard initial nursing & medical assessments, including public health screening & catch-up vaccination
- coordination of short term health management with additional support for complex cases
- supported referral to existing services for continuing care, in particular, general practitioners.

Refugee Health Queensland Statewide Coordinator Sarah Grealy congratulated the centre on its award and said she was very happy for the team’s hard work to be recognised in this way.

“The Zillmere Refugee Health Assessment Centre has consistently provided refugee families in the region with high quality nursing and medical assessments,” Sarah said.

“The Clinic has worked particularly hard in partnering with the local Division of General Practice, GP Partners, to develop the capacity of local primary care services to provide high-quality care to refugees and to improve access to general practice. They have also partnered with Queensland Health Oral Health Services to improve access to oral health care services.

“The clinic also received Queensland Health Connecting Healthcare in Communities funding to employ a project officer to visit general practices to provide education around working with refugees.

“The staff of the Zillmere Refugee Health Assessment Centre are very motivated and committed to improving the health care and care pathways for refugees living in their district.”

Refugee Health Queensland was established in 2008 to develop and implement a coordinated statewide health service for refugees, special humanitarian entrants and asylum seekers.

Refugee health clinics are located at Zillmere, Logan, Toowoomba, Cairns and Townsville with the Mater-based service in South Brisbane working as both a health clinic and a statewide coordination point.

For more information about Refugee Health Queensland please contact Sarah Grealy, Statewide Coordinator at sarah.grealy@mater.org.au or Dr Megan Evans, Senior Medical Officer on megan.evans@mater.org.au.

The PROuD awards are a formal staff reward and recognition scheme for individuals and teams that have gone above and beyond their normal duties to improve the healthcare of children and young people.

Multicultural team gets physical

Staff from Queensland Health Multicultural Services traded in their familiar office surroundings for the open water recently when they competed in the Queensland Corporate Games Outrigger Canoeing competition.

Team captain Amy Orlandi said that despite not winning the competition, the team showed plenty of competitive and cooperative spirit.

“It was great to get out of our comfort zone and participate in something that we would not normally get a chance to do. Everybody had a great time and we all learned a great deal about working together as a team.”

Back - Paul Newman, Ellen Hawes, Theo Georgia
Front - Shelley Kulperger, Amy Orlandi
Not pictured - Marina Chand, Ranil Appuhamy
Staff profile: Jay (Jayakrishnan) Nair
Patient Food Services Coordinator – Food and Retail Services.
Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital

What is your cultural background?
I am from India and am a Hindu.

When did you arrive in Australia?
I arrived on 1 May 2006.

What would you say is the biggest difference between Australian and Indian culture?
The biggest difference in the culture has been the food habits (traditionally vegetarian) and the joint family system. In India we often still have sons and daughters living with their parents, even after they are married!

How long have you worked for Queensland Health?
I have been working for Queensland Health since 24 July 2006.

What are your responsibilities as patient Food Services Coordinator?
I coordinate and oversee the provision of up to 950,000 meals per year across 900 hospital beds. I also manage approximately 150 staff from a huge range of cultural backgrounds.

What are the challenges of working in a culturally diverse workplace?
The main challenge is to source and provide a suitable variety of foods for culturally diverse patients. The choices can sometimes be limited.

A statement on cultural diversity in Australia

The Australian Multicultural Advisory Council presented its statement on cultural diversity and recommendations to the federal government on 30 April 2010.

The statement, titled The People of Australia, comments on topics including our history, our rights and responsibilities, and our future as a multicultural country.

It also features recommendations on ways to preserve and enhance the multicultural character of Australia, ways to make government programs more responsive to multicultural needs, and ways to empower local communities to ensure social participation for all Australians.

The Australian Multicultural Advisory Council is made up of 16 members and is chaired by AFL Chief Executive Officer Andrew Demetriou.

The council provides the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship and the Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services with advice on:
- social cohesion issues relating to Australia’s cultural and religious diversity
- overcoming intolerance and racism in Australia
- communicating the social and economic benefits of Australia’s cultural diversity to the broad community
- issues relating to the social and civic participation of migrants in Australian society.

For more information or to download a copy of The People of Australia go to www.immi.gov.au/about/stakeholder-engagement/national/advisory/amac.