



Multicultural initiatives

The focus of Queensland Health's activities to cater for the needs of multicultural clients is derived from the *Multicultural Queensland Policy*, *Queensland Government's Action Plan for the Australian South Sea Islander Community*, the *Queensland Health Multicultural Policy Statement* and the *Language Services Policy Statement*.

Initiatives undertaken during 2003-04 included:

- a post-implementation review of the *Queensland Health Multicultural Policy Statement* and the *Language Services Policy Statement* to identify barriers and sustainable implementation strategies. The results will be disseminated to Queensland Health staff for consideration in further planning, implementation and evaluation of services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- funding was extended for a further 12 months to the Yangulla Centre, Central Zone Rural Health Training Unit to deliver the Australian South Sea Islander Cultural Awareness Training Program. This program aims to raise cultural awareness and contribute to better health outcomes for the Australian South Sea Islander community;
- funding for a further three years went to the Queensland Integrated Refugee Community Health Centre to extend the coordinator's position from part-time to full-time. The centre at the Mater Hospital offers primary health care services to humanitarian entrants and asylum seekers with complex health needs;
- continued development of the Princess Alexandra Health Service District's highly innovative centralised Interpreter Services Unit, the first of its kind for a Queensland hospital. Eleven language interpreters speaking Vietnamese, Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian, Spanish and Mandarin (six of the hospital's frequently spoken languages other than English) were employed this year to extend the service;
- focus groups by the Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre (QTMHC) with 13 language groups to ensure the cultural appropriateness

of a mental health inventory tool before its use in mental health services. The QTMHC also developed a partnership with three district mental health services - Cairns, Gold Coast, Logan-Beaudesert - to build the districts' capacities to deliver culturally appropriate services and to build links with local ethnic communities;

- updating, publishing and distribution the *Directory of Resources for Health Services Working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse People in Queensland* took place. It went to more than 200 health and multicultural services statewide;
- a multicultural and interpreter review project was conducted by the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital, resulting in clearer language service guidelines, decreased costs associated with interpreter service provision and increased staff awareness on cultural and language issues. A system of augmentative communication was also introduced to wards, providing a multilingual word/picture communication tool to assist with day-to-day communication; and
- a multicultural consumer and carer participation strategy plan implementation project conducted by the Royal Brisbane and Women's Health Service District. It has resulted in a range of improvements across the district, including the *Think Diversity Multicultural and Multilingual Resources Guide*, interpreter services guidelines, establishment of an oversight committee and evaluation of the multicultural strategies.

implementation and evaluation of services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds