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A Newsletter for multicultural older people produced by the
Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria
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Our Golden Years



Editor's Note

What a busy year it's been with so many cultural activities in the ethnic community. I was pleased to represent Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria at the launch of the bilingual booklet *Australian Aged Care for Elderly Chinese*. Congratulations to all those involved in producing that important booklet! Summer holidays are great fun but can be lonely times for some people. You will find some good tips in this issue. Best wishes from ECCV for the Festive Season and a happy, healthy New Year to all.

Sincerely

Dr Irene Bouzo, Editor

Go Multicultural at Aberdeen

Italian concert, dragon dancers ... and an Aussie BBQ

At Aberdeen Aged Care in Reservoir diverse cultural activities keep people connected. Aberdeen is a multicultural facility and offers many activities. We recently took residents to the Aboriginal Heritage and Spiritual Healing Walk at Darebin Parklands and then a concert held by the Italian community with afternoon tea.

At Aberdeen we celebrate Australian Christmas, Australia Day and Chinese New Year, with all residents eagerly awaiting the Dragon Dancers, as well as other National Days such as Italian Day, Croatian Day and Greek Easter.

When going out for lunch the residents from different cultural backgrounds visit a range of restaurants to suit each person's preference. We go to McDonalds or Hungry Jacks, to the local hotel, the RSL club, and to the Italian club Casa D'Abruzzo. Sometimes the multicultural residents enjoy just going for a picnic in the park and taking sandwiches as well as having an Aussie BBQ. At Aberdeen we try to network with the wider community, to help our residents stay in touch with their cultures.



Dragon dance at Aberdeen Aged Care

Vicki Anderson

Lifestyle Department, Aberdeen Aged Care

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Silly Season Support for Carers

Sun, surf, sand, lazing about ... may not be what carers get at this time of the year. The summer months are often described as the silly season. Many people leave the cities and towns and head for the beach, caravans and holiday homes. It's a time for rest and recreation. There is a bleaker side to holidays. Workplaces and welfare services close down, so it's not easy to access a service if needed.

Family carers do great work to improve the lives of the elderly people they care for. After the festive season, welfare services sometimes have to pick up the pieces from domestic violence, family conflict or financial stresses. The 24/7 family carers need time out.

During the summer season carers have fewer family supports available to give them a break, as other family members go off to their holiday spots. Carers are often reluctant to use respite services. They feel guilty about leaving their family members in the care of others, or they are not confident about the quality of care. Carers need support in learning to use respite, and to plan ahead for a holiday break with the family. In some communities, a break for the carer means a break for the whole family. Carers deserve an enjoyable break from the demands of caring for a family member.

Family carers need support to:

- Recognise that looking after themselves is good for both the person they care for and themselves. It is not a selfish act.
- Accept that their own wellbeing is vital if they are to provide good quality care and still have some quality of life themselves.
- Think about and plan to use respite.
- Gain experience of using respite effectively, so both carer and person being cared for benefit from the break.
- Take breaks before and after the holiday season, for those relying on family for respite support, if it cannot be arranged during the summer season while most of the family is away.

Joyce Rebeiro

Carers Victoria

Telephone 03 9396 9509

Tips for Helping Someone with Depression

It can be hard to know what to say to someone with depression. Here are some tips:

- Talk to the person about how they're feeling.
- Listen and let them talk. Keep advice and suggestions for another time.
- Make eye contact and sit in a relaxed position.
- Ask open-ended questions such as 'So tell me about ...?' This is often a good way to start a conversation.
- If your conversation becomes difficult or the person gets angry, stay calm, be firm, fair and admit if you are wrong and don't lose control.
- Just spending time with the person lets them know you care.
- Encourage the person to get help from a family doctor or a mental health worker.
- Take care of yourself. Supporting someone with depression can be demanding so make sure you take some time out to look after yourself.

For more information visit www.beyondblue.org.au or call the beyondblue info line on 1300 22 4636 (local call). For urgent help call Lifeline on 13 11 14 (local call).





Beer, Bratwurst and Song

On 22 October residents and their relatives were invited to the Oktoberfest by the German-speaking Tabulam and Templer Homes for the Aged in Bayswater. The new dining room in the recently opened Warrina Wing was nicely decorated. Long tables seated up to 90 people. A large part of the courtyard was filled with residents' four-wheeled walking frames.

German folk music played by a woman on the accordion was popular. Guests had beer, wine and juice and the choice of traditional south German, Swiss and Austrian Leberkäse (similar to meat loaf), Weißwurst or Bratwurst. Because of the age and frailty of the guests, half of them had left by 1.30pm, but everyone enjoyed themselves.

Kurt Beilharz

Husband of a resident at Tabulam and Templer Homes for the Aged



Australian Aged Care for Chinese Elderly

Bilingual booklet

On Friday 7 November, the South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre (SERMRC) in Dandenong launched a very useful booklet called Australian Aged Care for Chinese Elderly. Many representatives from other Chinese Seniors Clubs in the area attended.

The booklet aims to provide aged care information to Chinese elderly in their own language. It was funded through the Australian Government's Department of Health and Ageing under the Community Partners Program.

The 60 page booklet was written in English and Chinese and explains all the aged care services, social support services and senior group activities for Chinese elderly living in the South East Region of Melbourne.

At the launch ceremony, Aolei Xue Yuan, President of the Chinese Friendship Centre welcomed the special guests including Jenny Semple, CEO of the SER Migrant Resource Centre. Peter van Vliet, Director of Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) officially launched the booklet. He said, "This booklet will help to address the language barriers facing the Chinese community and assist elderly people make informed decisions about aged care services." All booklets will be freely available to Chinese families living in the areas of Kingston, Greater Dandenong and Casey.

Wai Yee Leong

Community Partners Project Worker
South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre



From the left: Min Qiang Liu (Vice President, SERMRC), Peter van Vliet (Director, FECCA), Jenny Semple (CEO, SERMRC), Anne Jones (Access and Equity Team Leader, SERMRC), Aolei Xue Yuan (President, SERMRC), Galina Kozoolin (Aged and Disability Manager, SERMRC) and Wai Yee Leong (Community Partners Program Worker, SERMRC).



Get Connected

At Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre, Preston

Spectrum helps elderly migrants to stay connected with others from their cultural background. The centre runs Planned Activity Groups (PAGs) for elderly people from Polish, Italian, Macedonian, Chinese, Vietnamese, African and Middle Eastern backgrounds. For many seniors that's the only way to connect to their cultural community. Many multicultural seniors live alone and have lost contact with people from their cultural background.



Yearly olive crushing at Italian PAG, Spectrum

At our PAGs, they enjoy reconnecting with others who they can talk comfortably with in their language and remember the past.

The groups are run by bilingual workers and provide culturally specific meals. The wonderful food gives many older culturally diverse people the chance to have a hearty home style meal that they no longer have the opportunity to enjoy.

Coming to these groups is especially significant at times like Christmas to celebrate with others and remember people's traditional practices that they may otherwise miss. The staff sees its role as an extension of family and they provide a vital service to the lives of the elderly living in the community. The groups run weekly and are a happy and healthy family-like environment that people look forward to attending.

Claire O'Connor

Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre

Telephone 03 9496 0200



Enjoying exercising through dance at Italian PAG, Spectrum




**Polish
Planned Activity Group (PAG)**
Witamy w Polskiej grupie
Minimal cost per day
Transportation provided

Thursday from 10.00am to 3.00pm
A day of activity with bi-lingual staff
for elderly Polish people

Regent Centre, 4 Robinsons Rd Reservoir

Socialization Games Bingo	Discussion groups Traditional cooked lunch Morning tea	Exercise Crafts Activities
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Wspanialy Czas! Smaczne Jedzenie! Przyjedz i Zobacz!

For more information please contact:
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