



**ethnic
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Additional ECCV Submission to the HACC Social Support and Respite Review, Department of Health

21 September 2010

Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) advocates and lobbies all levels of government on behalf of multicultural communities in a range of areas especially aged care.

ECCV represents the views of the Aged Care Policy Committee whose members consist of HACC managers and aged care providers in the ethnic and multicultural aged care sector.

ECCV and its stakeholders welcomed the opportunity to take part in the recent focus groups and consultations on the Review of HACC Social Support and Respite Services at the Department of Health.

At the Aged Care Committee meeting on 16 September 2010 many members agreed that there was insufficient time and direction, during those consultations, to discuss all the pertinent issues.

Committee members therefore expressed the need to provide the Department of Health with additional input to its Social Support and Respite Review in order to highlight pertinent issues not yet addressed. Such information would provide a comprehensive overview of how the HACC Program effectively responds to the ethnic aged care sector as well as highlight opportunities for strengthening the Program and building on initiatives that currently work well.

The additional input provided by ECCV stakeholders is as follows:

1. The Social Support and Respite Program is of crucial importance in the overall HACC Program as it is the main program, possibly the only one, that provides a range of effective, culturally responsive and direct support to a significant proportion of seniors from CALD backgrounds.
2. HACC providers that participated in recent Focus Groups discussed PAGES (Planned Activity Groups) but had insufficient opportunity to discuss other effective culturally responsive aspects of the Social Support and Respite Program which are pertinent to meeting the needs of ethnic seniors.
3. The full range of HACC Social Support and Respite Programs that are delivered by ethnic and multicultural agencies and that are specifically tailored to respond to cultural, linguistic and personal preferences of seniors are:
 - Bilingual Telelink Programs
 - A range of flexible ethno-specific respite programs

Statewide Resources Centre
150 Palmerston Street
Carlton Victoria 3053

t 03 9349 4122
f 03 9349 4967
eccv@eccv.org.au
www.eccv.org.au

ABN 65071572705



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- The provision of Volunteer Coordination for same-language visiting programs to isolated ethnic seniors
- Ethno-specific Planned Activity Groups (PAGs)

To some extent the very nature of these linguistically appropriate and ethno-specific HACC services show that they already adhering to key ASM (Active Service Model) principles.

4. Strategies and support for coordinators of the programs above to further implement the ASM in an appropriate and culturally responsive manner need highlighting. For example consideration needs to be given to additional time required to address the shift in dependency thinking and attitudes of institutionalised intergenerational family support, to one of independence, customised choice and decision making amongst ethnic seniors.
5. There is a need for additional culturally responsive training for HACC assessors, and other providers in the HACC Program, to ensure the effective implementation of responsiveness to client preferences according to ASM principles. This is important given the high proportion of seniors from culturally diverse backgrounds and to ensure effective referrals made from ethno-specific PAGs and similar programs to other HACC services.
6. More effective networking and partnerships within the Social Support and Respite Program and the ethnic community sector need to be developed to strengthen and support the range of programs. This would also ensure that culturally diverse HACC clients that enter programs via local councils or health related services have equitable access to the ethno-specific Social Support and Respite Services.
7. Given the high proportion of seniors from culturally diverse backgrounds in the community and the range of ethno-specific and same-language HACC services that effectively and creatively meet client preferences in line with ASM principles, ECCV recommends that consideration be given to expanding and further supporting these programs.

For further information contact Dr Irene Bouzo, Policy Officer Aged Care
ph 9349 4122 and email ibouzo@eccv.org.au

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