

Presented by Dr Harriet Radermacher  
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## If I touch you, is that a partnership?

Exploring the experiences of partnerships  
in the ethnic and multicultural community aged care sector



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## Project partners



ethnic  
communities'  
council of  
victoria



This project has been generously supported by the Victorian Department of Health

### What am I going to speak about?

- What is the PPP project and how did it come about?
- Why is the PPP project important?
- Stage 1 - The research
  - What we did and what we found
- Where to next?

### What is the PPP project?

- **Practising Positive Partnerships** in the ethnic and multicultural community aged care sector (EMCAC)
- The aim of the PPP project is *to assist organisations within the EMCAC sector to establish positive collaborations, and in doing so, strengthen service delivery and access to services for older people from CALD backgrounds.*

### How did the PPP project come about?

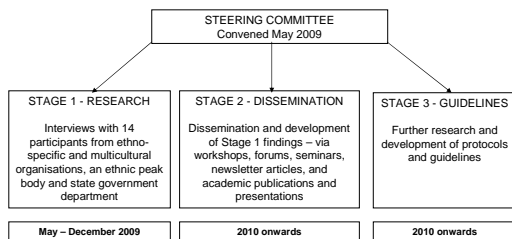
#### ECCV - Review of the literature

- Radermacher, H., Feldman, S. & Browning, C. (2008) Review of literature concerning the delivery of community aged care services to ethnic groups. Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria and Monash University, Melbourne, Australia.
- Radermacher, H., Feldman, S. & Browning, C. (2009) Mainstream versus ethno-specific community aged care services: It's not an 'either or'. *Australasian Journal on Ageing*, 28, 58-63.

### Why is the PPP project important?

- Increasing numbers of older people from CALD backgrounds – with additional needs
- Health disparities in CALD population and inequitable access/barriers to services
- Anecdotal evidence within EMCAC sector to suggest that this area needs to be investigated
- Limited empirical evidence
- Widespread promotion (esp by government) of partnership as a strategy within health service delivery

## What exactly is the PPP project?



## STAGE 1 - Research

Aim of the research:

*To explore the role and experiences of partnerships within the EMCAC sector in addressing the needs of older people from CALD communities.*

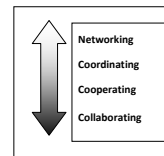
## Literature Review

**Factors impacting on partnership:** personal relationships, trust, previous experience of partnerships, organisational size.

**Benefits:** mutual learning, maximise available resources, better outcomes for service users, increased profits and training opportunities, empowerment.

**Limitations:** time consuming, decreases in funding to individual agencies, unequal power relationships impact quality and process, can be exclusive, conflicting interests.

## The partnership continuum



Vichealth (2009); Himmelman (2001)

## Definition of partnership

*"a relationship where two or more organisations with compatible goals, have a formal or informal agreement to work together in order to strengthen service delivery for older CALD community members"*

- 'Working together' includes networking, coordinating, cooperating and/or collaborating with other organisation/s.
- This working definition of partnership was based on the literature review and discussions with the steering committee.

## What did we do?

- **Sampling and recruitment**
  - Participants were primarily recruited via SCDN
  - Sought key informants from a range of organisations within the EMCAC sector
- **Surveys**
- **Semi-structured interviews**
- **Descriptive statistics/Thematic analysis**

## Who took part?

- **14 Participants (10 women, 4 men) representing 9 organisations**
  - Ethno-specific, ESOs (4 participants, 4 organisations)
  - Multi-cultural, MCOs (8 participants, 4 organisations)
  - State government (2 participants, 1 organisation)

## Characteristics of participants

- Participants had worked an average of **10 years in EMCAC sector (range: 18 months – 30 years)**
- **Current roles included: HACC workers, program coordinators, team leaders, policy workers**

## Characteristics of organisations

- **Average organisational existence = 26 years (Range: 16-35 years)**
- **Majority government funded (n=7)**
- **All involved in advocacy, service delivery (n=7), policy work (n=3)**

	Average no. of employees (range)	Average no. of volunteers (range)
MCOs	95 (12-200)	104 (0-285)
ESOs	22 (6-34)	31 (15-50)

## Findings

1. Definition and benefits of partnerships
2. Influences on partnerships
3. Future of partnerships

### 1a. Definition of partnerships

#### • Defining partnership

– What is a partnership?

*"It's a broad, almost meaningless [definition], because collaborating, coordinating, exchanging information, you really couldn't even run a service if you didn't do that. It really comes down to business as usual." (MCO)*

– Networks and partnerships

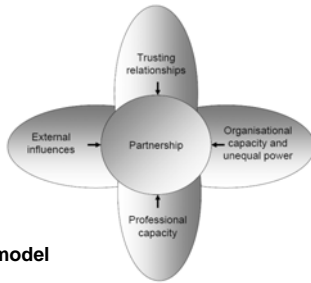
*"...we cooperate together. We've got the same goal, to help the client, but I don't think you could call it a partnership." (ESO)*

### 1b. Benefits of partnering

- **Need for organisations within the EMCAC sector to work together**
- **Promotes organisational development**
- **Facilitates access to resources/community**
- **Avoid tokenism**

*"Working alone in this vast area, either it's the geography or the limited funds or a lot of work to do. You can't do it by yourself. So you have to do it with others" (MCO)*

## 2. Influences on partnerships



The PPP model

## 2. Influences on partnerships

- Professional capacity
- Trusting Relationships
- Organisational capacity and unequal power
  - Limited resources to build partnerships
  - How to find the right partners
  - Organisational support and structure for partnership work
  - Smaller organisations are disadvantaged
- External influences
  - Top-down forces and restrictions
  - The mosaic of ethnic ageing communities



## 3. The future of partnerships

- Strategies for more successful partnerships
- Towards equality

*"See with the partnership you've got the power which is divided between the partners. You've got totally different power than working with even half professionals, with the social workers. They have bigger power very often than I have... I think that the power should be equal, if you want to talk about mutual friendly partnership that will be growing strong and effective. So you need that power to be equal and financial responsibility to be equal too". (ESO)*

## Conclusion

- There is a need (and associated benefits) for organisations to work in partnership in the EMCAC sector.
- There is evidence to indicate that organisations in the sector may need assistance to increase their capacity to do partnership work.
- A number of factors have been identified in this study that may assist organisations within the sector to maximise the benefits of existing or future partnerships.
- Small and ethno-specific organisations face some serious concerns and challenges in their attempts to form and maintain partnerships – these need to be addressed to provide more effective service delivery for the ageing multicultural population.

## Key actions for the future

- ECCV to use this evidence-based research:
  1. To lobby government for additional resource allocation to increase the capacity for ethnic organisations to enter into partnerships
  2. As a platform to address the inequality in partnerships
- Training of individuals and organisations within sector to develop skills and leadership to do partnership work
- Development of strategies to educate ethnic and generic mainstream aged care providers on value, nature and need for partnerships

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My contact details: [harriet.rademacher@med.monash.edu.au](mailto:harriet.rademacher@med.monash.edu.au)

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