

Monday 2 September 2019

MULTICULTURAL HEALTH WEEK 2019: A FOCUS ON NEW AND EMERGING COMMUNITIES

Addressing the health needs of new and emerging communities is the key focus of Multicultural Health Week to ensure equitable access to health care and health information for these communities.

In today's launch event, NSW Health's Chief Health Officer, Dr Kerry Chant stressed the importance of the 2019 Multicultural Week theme: Health Literacy of new and emerging communities.

"Health literacy is recognised as a critical issue for health services. Health literacy refers to how people understand information about health and health care; how they apply that information to their lives; how they use it to make decisions and act on that information", Dr Chant said.

New and emerging communities are defined as communities which are:

- Recently settled compared with more established culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities;
- Smaller in number of residents but with significant increase in the past 5 to 10 years;
- Lacking sufficient infrastructure and resources compared with more established CALD communities;
- Experiencing significant barriers in accessing health care and/or poorer health outcomes; and
- Isolated in their geographical area.

Examples of new and emerging language groups across the state include communities who speak Bangla, Kurdish Kurmanji, Mongolian, Nepali, Tamil, Tibetan and Urdu.

Lisa Woodland, Director, NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service (MHCS), urged all health organisations to routinely include consumers, families and carers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds when developing, implementing and evaluating programs, projects and resources.

"This Multicultural Health Week, we ask health professionals working with new and emerging communities to read our new factsheets, tailored for each Local Health District. We also ask communities to access the new video, entitled "Accessing healthcare in Australia", in over 20 languages with accompanying translated health information".

These resources are available to download for free on www.multiculturalhealthweek.com.

Winners of the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service (MHCS) Awards to recognise excellence in multilingual health communication have also been announced.

"Congratulations to all the award winners and finalists. We celebrate your valuable contribution to promoting the health and wellbeing of multicultural communities in NSW", Dr Kerry Chant said.

Resources produced by winners and finalists will be available on the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service website - www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au

Editor's note: List of Multicultural Health Communication Award 2019 winners attached.

MEDIA: Jesusa Helaratne, MHCS Media Manager M. 0409 864 881