

5th March 2013

Health Minister Jillian Skinner recognises work of the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service engaging with multicultural communities in NSW

The Hon Jillian Skinner MP, Minister of Health and Minister of Medical Research visited the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service (MHCS) team at their office Gladesville Tuesday 5th March. The Minister was welcomed by MHCS Director Peter Todaro, SESLHD Chief Executive Terry Clout and Deputy Director, Ambulatory and Primary Health Care Deputy Director Tish Bruce together with the MHCS team, members of the MHCS Management Advisory Committee and ethnic media.

Minister Skinner met with the MHCS team to acknowledge their outstanding work in engaging with multicultural communities addressing their health communication needs through media and social marketing campaigns implementing plans as identified in the *Policy and Implementation Plan for Healthy Culturally Diverse Communities*.

MHCS was established by the NSW Ministry of Health to co-ordinate state-wide communication strategies with communities who speak a language other than English. A key objective of the Service is to develop and establish standards of best practice in communication with these communities.

The vision of MHCS is to ensure that “Individuals and communities in NSW from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds will have quality information/education that will allow them to make informed choices and changes for better health.” It works towards this vision through the implementation and evaluation of communication strategies and campaigns. For one of these campaigns, *What’s Gambling Really Costing You? DVD Strategy* recently won the Community Relations Commission 2012 National Multicultural Marketing Award.

MHCS also runs a multilingual website which receives over 5 million hits per year, and manages the yearly State Wide Multicultural Health Week in partnership with Local Health Districts and key state wide organisations.

Minister Skinner thanked the dynamic Multicultural Health Communication Service team which is composed of highly skilled individuals from various ethnic and professional backgrounds, including experts in marketing, media and promotion for their dedication to ensure a more inclusive, healthier and happier multicultural society.

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