



40 YEARS STRONG FORGING AHEAD

Annual Report 2018–19



MULTICULTURAL
CENTRE FOR
WOMEN'S HEALTH

OVER 40,000 YEARS STRONG

The women of MCWH work and live on Wurundjeri land. MCWH acknowledges the traditional owners and their continuing connection to land, sea and community.

We recognise that, as migrants to this country, we have shared many of the benefits of Australia's harmful colonisation and have a responsibility to respect the land and its first people.

We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their ancestors and elders, both past and present.



WHO WE ARE



Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH)

MCWH is a national, community-based organisation, led by and for women from migrant and refugee backgrounds. Our vision is to be the national voice for the wellbeing of migrant and refugee women in Australia, and we are committed to advancing their health and wellbeing through:

- research
- leadership
- education
- advocacy.

Migrant and refugee women are at the centre of our work, and MCWH is shaped by their lived experiences and perspectives. Our approach to health is intersectional, feminist and human rights-based. This approach acknowledges the complexity of women's lives and identities, in the context of social and systemic oppression and discrimination based on:

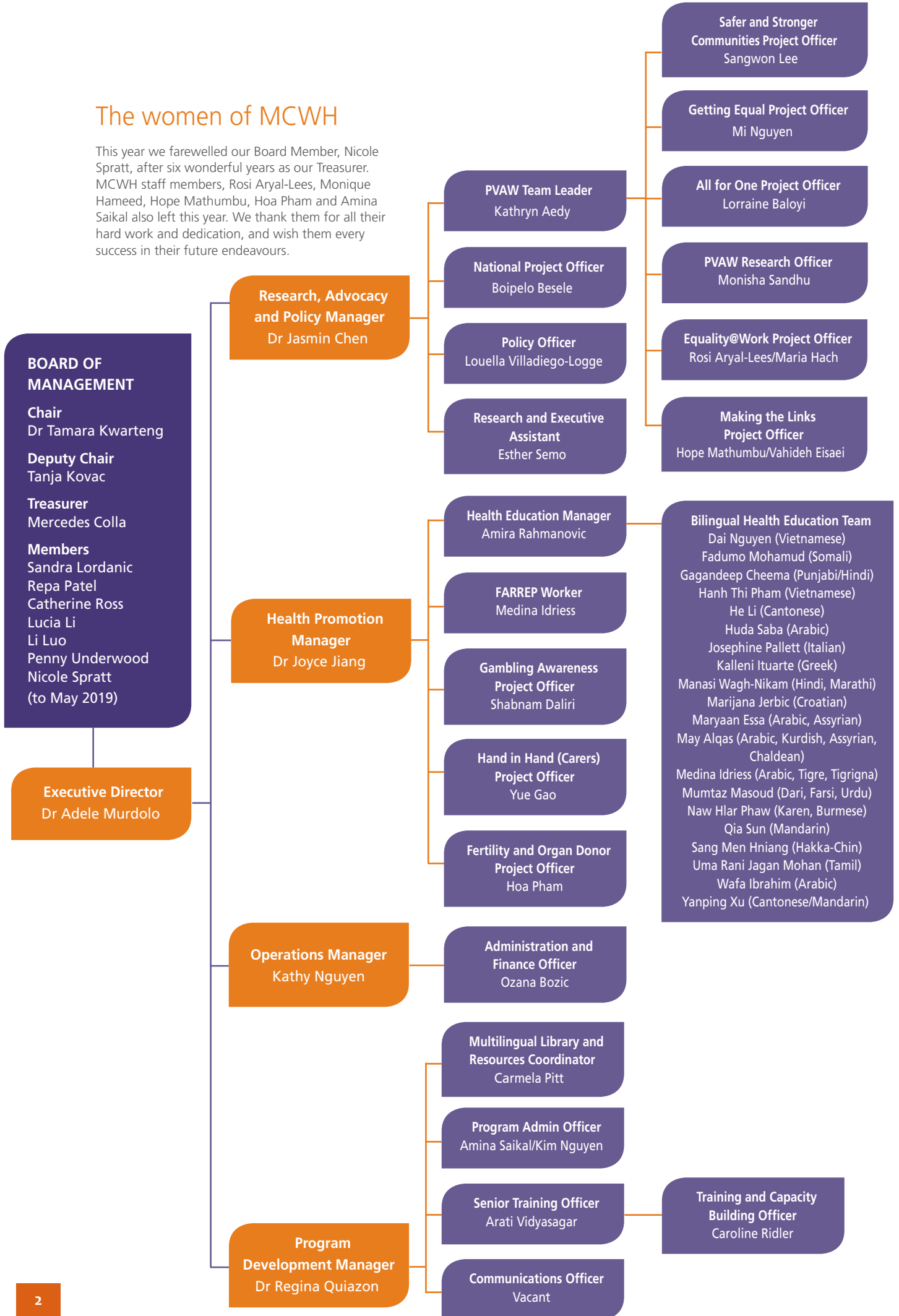
- gender
- racial, ethnic or religious identity
- ability
- socio-economic position
- sexuality
- age
- immigration status.

Our work with migrant and refugee women follows a feminist, peer education and participatory research model that respects and values women's knowledge and experience. As women who are committed to the wellbeing of our communities, we reach out to other migrant and refugee women, wherever they are, to share health information in the language most relevant for them, and to promote active participation in health education, research and leadership.



The women of MCWH

This year we farewelled our Board Member, Nicole Spratt, after six wonderful years as our Treasurer. MCWH staff members, Rosi Aryal-Lees, Monique Hameed, Hope Mathumbu, Hoa Pham and Amina Saikal also left this year. We thank them for all their hard work and dedication, and wish them every success in their future endeavours.



MIGRANT WOMEN'S HEALTH IN MIGRANT WOMEN'S HANDS SINCE 1978



A message from our Board Chair

This was a remarkable year for MCWH, with two key events highlighting our work with migrant and refugee women, and our ongoing commitment to their health and wellbeing.

The 'Building a Healthy Future for Migrant Women' forum in July 2018 brought together 58 stakeholders including government representatives, key health organisations and community leaders to talk about how we can look ahead to a healthy future for migrant and refugee women. And our spectacular 'Migrant Women Matter' gala event in October 2018 was a fitting finale to our 40th Anniversary celebrations.

I was honoured to host this beautiful evening and was pleased that our guest list included so many of our important stakeholders and partners, a group of founding members, many previous staff and Board members and, in particular, some of the migrant women factory staff we have worked with over the years.

Now that our 40th year is behind us, we are putting our energies into building our capacity for sustainability to ensure that MCWH is here for another 40 years, and beyond. As the population of migrant and refugee women grows and diversifies, MCWH is working on building its financial base, as well as adapting to changing needs.

MCWH remains an accessible and relevant organisation, maintaining the principles of equity and access that laid the foundations of the organisation 40 years ago. I'd like to thank all who have made MCWH the thriving organisation it is today, and warmly welcome those who will be joining us on the journey, as we forge ahead into the next 40 years.

Tamara Kwarteng
MCWH Chair

A message from our Executive Director

Women's stories are always compelling to me. A highlight of my work at MCWH is hearing the stories that women share with us about their lives and their health.

This year, I was heartened to hear that one woman who attended an MCWH health education session was encouraged to make an appointment for an overdue breast screening test. As a result, a developing problem was diagnosed in its early stages. She told us, "You saved my life!".

Another woman, who attended one of MCWH's leadership courses, told us it was her first activity out of the house since having a baby. It was great to hear that the program was effective for her, and that she learnt skills to prepare her for the workplace.

Many women have told us that the discussions on gender equality in our sessions have been life-changing, and given them strength and confidence.

The stories I have heard this year show me that MCWH programs and projects are definitely hitting the mark when it comes to meeting the needs of migrant and refugee women.

While our health education sessions follow a tried-and-true methodology, developed over the 40 years we've been working with migrant and refugee women, some of our other projects are forging new pathways, particularly in the area of preventing violence against women. These projects are based on emerging evidence, and contribute to that evidence base, about what works best to engage migrant and refugee communities in making the world safe and equitable for women and girls.








I am proud to be part of an organisation that can so effectively combine the old with the new, and this year has been a fabulous example of that. We also welcomed a group of new and highly-skilled staff members to build on the many years of expertise and experience that our current staff provide.

It has certainly been an eventful and important year of growth, and continuing contribution to the community of migrant and refugee women that we serve. May their stories continue to reflect MCWH's vision of excellent health and wellbeing for migrant and refugee women, their families and communities.

Adele Murdolo
MCWH Executive Director

IMPACT : REACHING COMMUNITIES

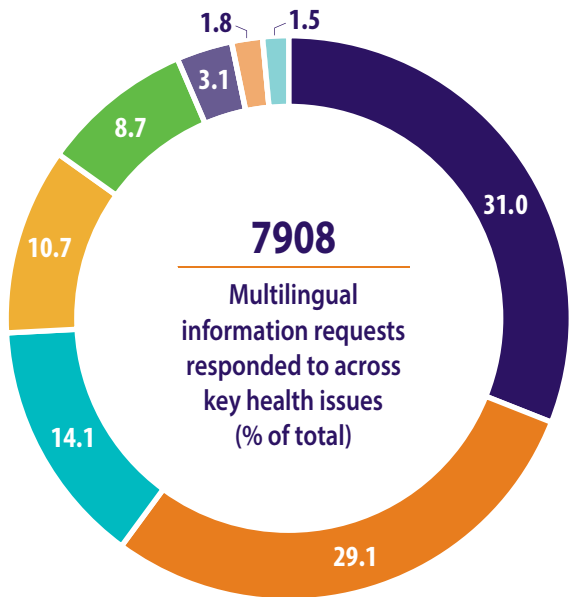
Snapshot 2018–19

	7908	Multilingual women's health resources available in 90 languages
	5000+	Contacts made with women
	293	Health education sessions
	64	Participant countries of birth or cultural backgrounds
	31	Expert consultations
	28	Presentations and training workshops reaching 2000+ attendees
	22	Steering and advisory committees
	17	Victorian Local Government Areas (LGAs)
	5	Radio interviews conducted on key health topics for SBS Radio

International Women's Day Event, City of Maribyrnong.



Key health issues

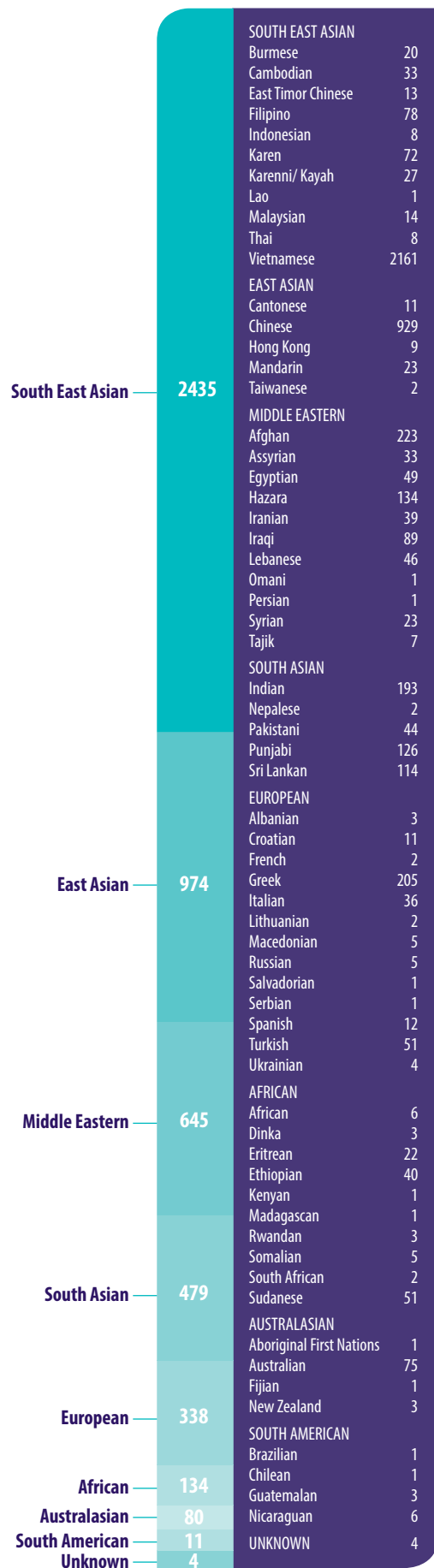


- Making healthy choices
- What is women's health?
- Mental health, and using medicines safely
- Women's safety and wellbeing
- Working well; OHS
- Reproductive health
- Sexual health
- International student health

... I was heartened to hear that one woman who attended an MCWH health education session was encouraged to make an appointment for an overdue breast screening test. ... a developing problem was diagnosed in its early stages. She told us, "You saved my life!"

Executive Director MCWH

Cultural backgrounds





'MIGRANT WOMEN MATTER' GALA: CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

MCWH's 40th Anniversary celebrations were capped-off with a gala dinner at the Langham in Melbourne, and migrant women were centre stage with Ruth DeSouza as MC, a keynote speech by Michelle Law, and performances by Mojo Juju and Thando.

In the presence of special guests from across government, migrant women also led the celebrations; delivering speeches and tributes to honour the friends and colleagues who contributed to 40 years of migrant women's health.

Heartfelt thanks to our sponsors of the Gala, who helped to make the evening such a memorable one.

Major sponsor

- Costa Group

Key sponsors

- Heart Foundation
- Cititec

Event sponsor

- FECCA

In-kind sponsors

Humanitix, Kuwaii, Lakshal Perera Photography, Cinema Nova, Outland Denim, Obus, Peppermint, Lilac and the Cat, CERES, Readings, Jean Hailes, The Fabric Social, Emily's List, Saba's Ethiopian Restaurant, the Langham, Jamface.

Attending the gala made me realise how unique the organisation is and how many women have been a part of this work. It was an inspiring night.

Gala guest

The Health Education Program team at the MCWH Gala.





We paid tribute to some of the women who have shaped MCWH's history and future including:

- Jessie Azzopardi
- Alison Caddick
- Sara Charlesworth
- Wafa Ibrahim
- Carmela Ieracitano
- Medina Idriess
- Devva Kasnitz
- Tamara Kwarteng
- Connie La Marchesina
- Sandra Lordanic
- Jilane Matinga
- Elizabeth Mazeyko
- Adele Murdolo
- Anne Myers
- Charin Naksook
- Repa Patel
- Annette Sassano
- Rhonda Small
- Hien Tran
- Millsom Henry Waring
- Yanping Xu.



ENGAGEMENT: BUILDING CAPACITY TO CREATE CHANGE

Increasing women's knowledge through bilingual health education

Every year, our Health Education Program, including our Family and Reproductive Rights Education Program (FARREP), reaches thousands of women across Victoria in the workplace, education settings, prisons and community organisations.

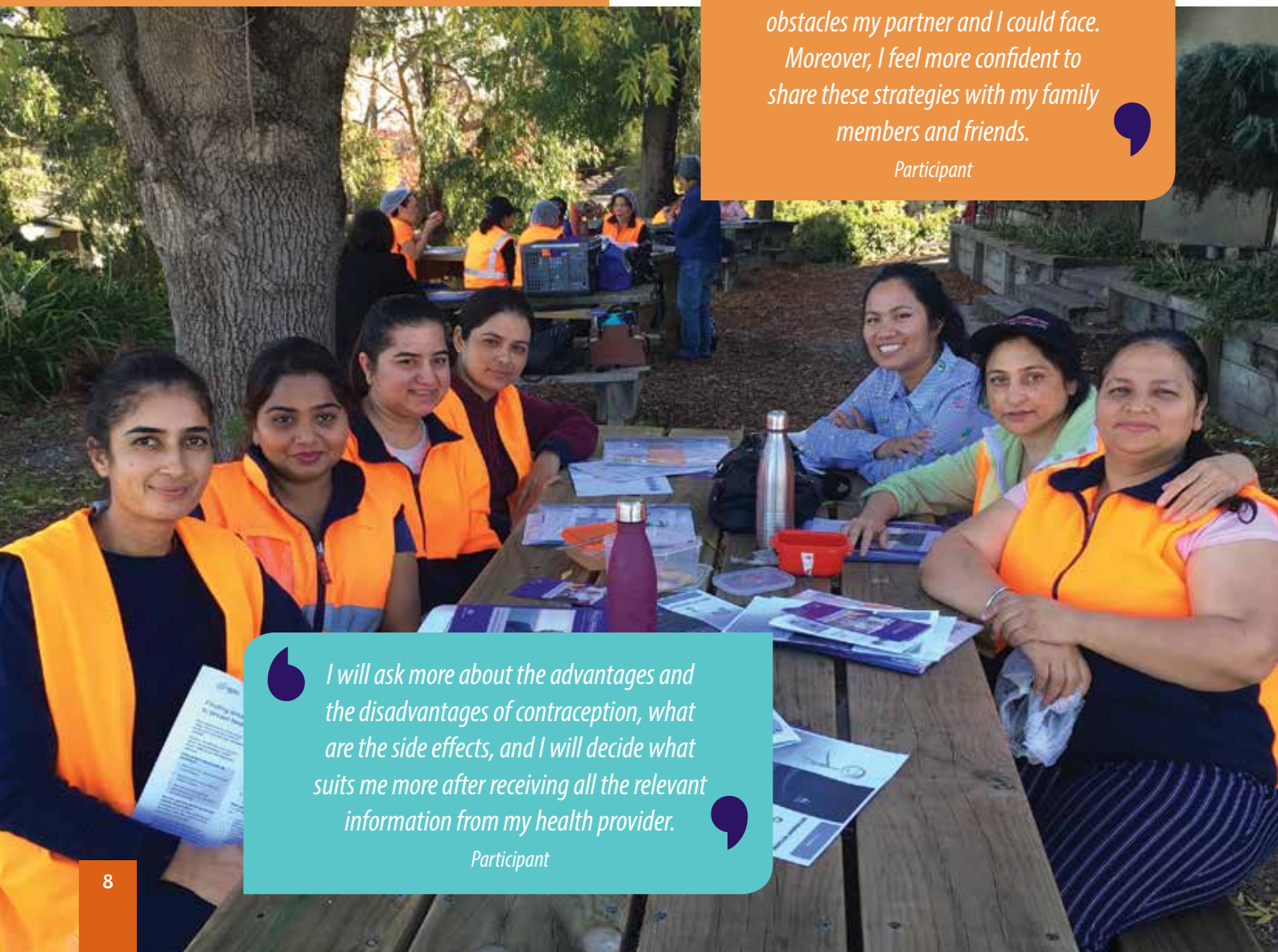
Our team of bilingual health educators continue to be a driving force in migrant and refugee women's

health and wellbeing, providing up-to-date information in over 20 languages on 250+ health topics including:

- sexual and reproductive health
- mental health
- occupational health and safety
- gender equality
- prevention of violence against women (PVAW).

This year we recruited and trained six new bilingual educators to help meet the growing demand for various languages including Farsi, Urdu, Karen, Burmese and Hakka-Chin.

Health education session with workers from Montague Orchards.

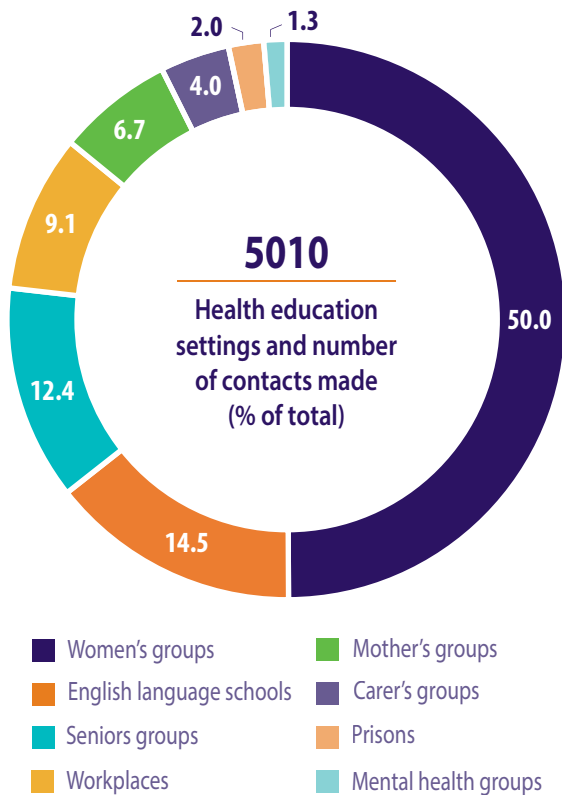


The information I received in this session has enhanced my confidence about how to deal with and react to obstacles my partner and I could face. Moreover, I feel more confident to share these strategies with my family members and friends.

Participant

I will ask more about the advantages and the disadvantages of contraception, what are the side effects, and I will decide what suits me more after receiving all the relevant information from my health provider.

Participant



Funding

Department of Health and Human Services Victoria

Reach

5010 contacts with women via 293 education sessions in 15 languages including Arabic, Cantonese, Chinese, Dari, English (for mixed groups), Mandarin, Tagalog and Vietnamese, across 17 Victorian LGAs

Thanks

To the women and organisations who participated in the Industry Visits Program this year from Costa/Mushroom Exchange, Montague Orchards, Nestle, Max Solutions, Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services, Dame Phyllis Frost Centre

Health education session with workers from Costa/Mushroom Exchange.

Before the session, I used to think that I am too young to have cervical cancer and I have never done the pap-test before. After attending this session, my view on this has completely changed, as anyone could have cervical cancer, and it could be prevented and discovered even before the cancer developed.

Participant

Increasing women's social and economic participation

Getting Equal: Promoting inclusive CALD communities through gender equality

Getting Equal is a three-year project, delivered across 18 metropolitan and regional areas in Victoria. It aims to increase the social and economic participation of migrant and refugee women in these communities.

Project participants have access to bilingual education sessions on a variety of topics including:

- gender equality
- family violence
- respectful relationships
- navigating the health system
- women's health and wellbeing.

The project will continue until June 2021. It will develop and strengthen online networks between migrant and refugee women, multicultural women's organisations, regional women's health services and other relevant service providers, and increase access to information and services.

Migrant and refugee women are also engaged through MCWH's Participate, Advocate, Communicate, Engage (PACE) program, which is aimed at building their capacity to be leaders in their communities.

I am out of the house for the first time in eight months since my son was born so I want to make friends and to learn new skills to prepare for work. I am so happy to be here because everyone has been so welcoming.

Participant

The leadership course has helped me take initiatives towards community wellbeing.

Participant

Funding

Australian Government Department of Social Services

Reach

203 women through 12 education sessions and four PACE leadership training sessions

Thanks

Women's Health in the North, Maribyrnong City Council, Diversitat, Women's Health Barwon Southwest, Latrobe City Council, Gippsland Multicultural Services, Women's Health West and Arabic Welfare, Hume City Council, Australian Vietnamese Women's Association, Maribyrnong City Council, Nestle, Merri Health, Greek Welfare, St Albans Heights Primary School, IPC Health

It has been an amazing journey. I met new friends, discovered a lot about myself, and about Australian politics and health.

Participant

This course was well thought-out. You made it easier for women to come by providing free lunch and childcare. It's also empowering that we can choose what we want to get out of the course. This course was made for us.

Participant



WHAT WILL PROMOTE EQUALITY & RESPECT FOR AGED CARE WORKERS?

Overall, this session has been very informative. It makes me feel stronger, in an organisational sense, to act.
Participant

Postcard series developed with Mercy Health aged care workers.

Creating leadership roles for aged-care workers

Equality@Work

Through our partnership with Mercy Health, we continue to provide opportunities for migrant women to take a leadership role in championing gender equality and violence prevention.

Building on the success of the 2018 pilot project, this year, we scaled up the Equality@Work project to two new Mercy Health locations. The project improves workers' capacity to contribute to workplace prevention and gender equality programs, and will also add to the evidence base about workplace prevention programming in multicultural workforces.

Funding
Department of Health and Human Services Victoria

Partner
Mercy Health

Reach
17 team leaders, nurses, care assistants, pastoral carers, coordinators and other staff trained as Gender Equality Advocates in the workplace, and over 100 workers engaged through staff forums and surveys

It has increased my ability to support individuals either in the workplace or in the community.
Participant

I now understand the links between gender inequality and violence, which I never really understood prior to this.
Participant

Linking women with local services in regional Victoria

Making the links

Our Making the Links: Building Safer Pathways to Support for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women is providing access to family violence-related support for migrant and refugee women living in regional areas.

The project has also forged links between family violence and sexual assault services, other relevant support services not traditionally associated with family violence or sexual assault issues, and local multicultural services. Across five Victorian LGAs – Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat, Mildura and Swan Hill – women, and the service providers who work with them, received cross-cultural training, in-language education training and access to specifically-tailored resources.

The project has been extended until June 2020 and will include delivery of tailored bilingual education sessions and training sessions, as well as consultation with service providers.

Funding

Australian Government Department of Social Services

Partner

Ballarat Community Health

Reach

279 project participants including women from South-Sudanese, Karen, Kenyan, Iranian, Serbian, Vietnamese and Filipino backgrounds, and mainstream service workers, engaged in information and training sessions

Advisory group

Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc., Mallee Domestic Violence Services, Ballarat Community Health, Mallee Family Care, Swan Hill Health District, InTouch – Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence, Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Centre, Principle Strategic Advisor, Barwon), The Orange Door, Barwon, Sunrasiya Mallee Ethnic Communities Council, Women's Health Loddon Mallee, Bendigo Community Health Services, Ballarat Multicultural Centre

Thanks

Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety

Building safer and stronger communities

Safer communities pilot

The Building Safer and Stronger Communities pilot is a two-year PVAW project. It delivers tailored, primary prevention activities in several migrant and refugee communities across Victoria, and undertakes organisational prevention work at five worksites.

Five settlement service providers across Victoria are working with local community members from selected migrant and refugee communities to design and deliver prevention activities. In addition, the settlement service providers are implementing Our Watch's Workplace Equality and Respect Standards within their organisations. MCWH and Our Watch are working together to build the prevention capacity of the project leaders, community advisory members and local professionals involved in the pilot.

Funding

Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division (DPC Vic MASC)

Partners

DPC Vic MASC, Our Watch, InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence, University of Melbourne, Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Micare, South East Community Links, Diversitat

Reach

103 people engaged, including community members and community service workers, through four PVAW sessions across five regions

Thanks

DPC Vic MASC, Office for Women, Our Watch, InTouch, University of Melbourne, Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Micare, South East Community Links, Diversitat

Funding

Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division (DPC Vic MASC)

Partners

DPC Vic MASC, University of Melbourne, Our Watch, Victorian Tamil Association Inc., Australian Bosnian Women's Association (Zena Zeni), Druse Community Charity of Victoria, Women of Wyndham, United Muslim Sisters of Latrobe Valley, Sankat Mochan Samiti Inc., Centre for Holistic Health, Saint Elizabeth Centre for Social Assistance Inc., The 'Silent Witness' Network, Victorian Afghan Associations Network, Macedonian Community Welfare Association, Fawkner Community House, Australasian Centre for Human Rights and Health, Gateway Health, Chinese Community Social Services Centre Inc.

Reach

15 multicultural organisations undertaking PVAW activities across Victoria

Facilitating collaboration

One for all

In 2019, MCWH began its two-year One for All, All for One project to support and build the capacity of 15 multicultural organisations undertaking PVAW activities.

MCWH will provide expert advice and information for the project, and will act as the central resource for facilitating deeper collaboration and coordination across multicultural and ethno-specific communities in Victoria. This will enable us to create a platform to support best practice in the PVAW Community, fostering a shared level of expertise in PVAW and gender inequality for culturally-diverse communities, and contribute to the evidence base on prevention strategies and planning.

MCWH Prevention of Violence Against Women (PVAW) Project Officers at the PreventX Conference, Melbourne.



Supporting reproductive decision-making

Fertility pilot project

The two-year Your Fertility pilot project, conducted in partnership with the Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority (VARTA) as part of the Your Fertility program, was completed this year. As part of the project, we trained a group of MCWH's bilingual health educators to deliver multilingual community education on fertility to women in six languages. The sessions raised awareness about being healthy before becoming pregnant, and making informed and timely decisions about reproductive health. Multilingual resources were also developed and all resources, including in-language factsheets and an animated video with seven-language voiceover, can be accessed via the dedicated project webpage: <http://www.mcwh.com.au/project/your-fertility/>

At the beginning of the session, women were shy to talk about sexual and reproductive health but by the end of the session, everyone was talking comfortably about the fertility process.

Participant

Funding

Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority

Reach

252 women from Arabic, Assyrian, Chinese, Dari, Punjabi and Sri Lankan backgrounds through 18 in-language education sessions

Thanks

Women participants, MCWH's educators, CAP ANA Media, Language Australis

Today's session has given us knowledge to support our daughters and daughters-in-law, and any other women who would like to become pregnant.

Participant

Delivering knowledge about organ tissue donation

Raising community awareness

Organ tissue donation is a transformative and life-saving medical process. However, it can be a difficult topic to raise. Our organ tissue donation project helped to raise community awareness, and build understanding of the benefits of donation through tailored multilingual education sessions conducted by our bilingual health educators. The project also redeveloped culturally-appropriate multilingual resources in various formats. All resources can be accessed via the dedicated project webpage: <http://www.mcwh.com.au/project/organ-tissue-donation>

Funding

Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority

Reach

171 women from Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese communities through nine in-language education sessions

Thanks

Education session participants, MCWH's bilingual educators, CAP ANA Media, and Language Australis

This session has changed my attitude regarding organ donation. Giving life to people who need an organ transplant is a very humanitarian action and a noble thing to do.

Participant

Funding

Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation

Partners

Arabic Welfare Incorporated, Australian Vietnamese Women's Association, Federation of Chinese Association- Social Welfare Centre, Springvale Indo-Chinese Mutual Assistance Association Incorporated, Victorian Arabic Social Services

Reach

600 community members across rural and regional Victoria through 30 education sessions, and more than 1000 people through community radio

Thanks

Ms Yirgalem Frezghi, Church of all Nations and Ms Rosa Vasseghi, Women's Tapestry Group

Raising awareness about gambling-related harm

GAP

MCWH's Gambling Awareness Project (GAP) aims to empower migrant and refugee women with knowledge to reduce gambling-related harm to themselves and their families. GAP education sessions provide participants with information about how to access culturally-appropriate services for gambling-related harm and family violence that are specific and best-suited to their needs.

This year, we conducted two activities about gambling-related harm. The Dialogue Between Two Generations was delivered to women from Chinese and African backgrounds, and a new factsheet, Gambling and Family Relationships, was translated into Arabic, Dari and Greek.

I liked to go to gambling venues and casinos because these places are bustling and warm. You had fun there. But I will try what I have learned from this session in my spare time. Now, I know how to amuse myself and stop myself from being bored.

Participant

Thank you for the great information that we had today. I did like the session because you gave us important information about gambling that I had wrong thoughts about before, and because we shared stories we learnt a lot today.

Participant

Supporting the needs of carers from migrant backgrounds

Hand-in-Hand

Building on the success of the Unique Carer's Project, we've recently commenced work on the Hand-in-Hand project to provide tailored and in-language support to migrant and refugee carers who care for family members with a life-limiting illness. Over the next three years, MCWH will provide carers and care recipients with tailored support in the form of a support companion, and facilitate access to relevant services and resources. The project will also provide tailored assistance to the carers after their caring journey finishes by providing pathways to re-enter the workforce and connect with people who have had similar experiences.

Funding

Department of Health and Human Services Victoria

Advisory group

Carers Victoria, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Palliative Care Victoria, Greenvale Aged and Disability Services, Australian Vietnamese Women's Association



Delegates at the Building a Healthy Future for Migrant Women in Victoria forum came from government and 58 different health organisations.



Manasi Wagh-Nikam (MCWH educator, on left) and Jane Middleton (Mercy Health social worker) addressing the forum.

Advocating for the health needs of migrant women

Building a healthy future

Making links between research, practice and policy is an important step towards change, and that was the focus of our Building a Healthy Future for Migrant Women in Victoria forum. Facilitated by journalist and filmmaker, Santilla Chingaibe, the forum brought together key members of government, and 58 health organisations and community leaders to discuss how we can create a healthy future for migrant and refugee women.

Our first panel discussed the state of migrant women's health and featured Family Planning

Victoria CEO Claire Vissenga, Mercy Health social worker, Jane Middleton, and MCWH health educator, Manasi Wagh-Nikam.

The second panel's focus was government policy, and how future policies could be implemented to include migrant and refugee women's needs in Victoria. The panel featured then Greens' Member of the Victorian Legislative Council, Huong Truong, then Labor candidate, Jennifer Kanis, and Shadow Minister for Health Mary Wooldridge.

From left to right: Huong Truong (Greens), Claire Vissenga (Family Planning Victoria), Mary Wooldridge (Shadow Minister for Health), and Dr Adele Murdolo (Executive Director, MCWH) at the forum.



Amplifying the health needs of migrant women nationally

MWHA National Program

Our Multicultural Women's Health Australia (MWHA) National Program provides evidence-based and up-to-date health information to migrant women and health professionals to support informed decisions about family planning and reproductive health. Consultations are also prepared for other key stakeholders including the federal government.

The MWHA National Program continues to provide free women's health information and resources in over 80 languages, by request, through our online women's health catalogue or our toll-free number on 1800 656 421.

We also connect organisations across Australia, through our MWHA Network partners in each state and territory, to enable sharing of information and resources that support and promote migrant and refugee women's sexual and reproductive health. This year, our MWHA Network collaborated on a submission to the Australian Government Department of Health on the Draft National Women's Health Strategy 2020–30.

Funding

Australian Government Department of Health

Advisory group

Women's Centre for Health Matters (ACT), Ishar Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (WA), Red Cross Tasmania Bicultural Health Program (TAS), Migrant Health Service (SA), Immigrant Women's Support Service (QLD), Melaleuca Refugee Centre (NT)

NETFA Program

Building on several years of evidence-based prevention work, our National Education Toolkit for Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Awareness (NETFA) project remains Australia's leading resource for improving support for women and girls who have experienced the practice, and raising awareness of its harmful consequences. With a network of over 50 service providers and advocates across Australia, NETFA continues to provide support through a multimedia, multilingual campaign.

Visit www.netfa.com.au for resources and information.

Funding

Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

Partners (national)

Family Planning Welfare Association (NT), Women's Health Service (ACT), Women and Newborn Health Service, Edward Memorial Hospital (WA), TRUE Relationships and Reproductive Health (QLD), Education Program on FGM (NSW), NSW Health, Red Cross Tasmania Bicultural Community Education Program (TAS), Refugee Women's Health and Safety Program, Women's Health Statewide (SA)

NETFA network meeting, Melbourne.





EXPERTISE: ENABLING IMPACT

Identifying strategies to support women experiencing violence

MuSes

The MuSes Research Project, now in its second and final year, investigates the ways in which multicultural and settlement services (MuSeS) can support women experiencing violence. Data from the research will be used to inform strategies for better supporting women and children experiencing violence. It will also identify how to improve support for service providers in their efforts to deliver services to migrant and refugee women.

Funding

Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety

Partners (national)

University of Melbourne, University of Tasmania, Flinders University

Gathering evidence about working with faith communities to prevent violence

Supporting healthy family relationships

How can faith communities be supported to respond to, and prevent, family violence and violence against women? This is a key question of the Faith Communities Supporting Healthy Family Relationships project, a participatory action research project being conducted with a multifaith advisory group.

The research will generate evidence about best-practice guidelines for building the capacity of faith leaders to effectively respond to, and prevent, violence against women and family violence.

Funding

Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division

Partner

University of Melbourne

Working group (including multifaith advisory members)

Victorian Council of Churches, Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria, Islamic Council of Victoria, Buddhist Council of Victoria, Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, Coalition to Advance Multiculturalism, The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne, Baha'i Community of Victoria, Sisters for Sisters, Victorian Multicultural Commission, InTouch, Our Watch

Improving access to reproductive health services

CASPA

Women living in smaller communities, such as regional or rural areas, experience challenges in accessing healthcare specific to their needs. These challenges include obtaining advice, information, and access to GPs who are willing to discuss, support or refer women seeking abortion services.

The Contraception, Abortion, Stillbirth, Perinatal mental health and Antenatal care (CASPA) Reproductive Health project is a research and education project that investigates migrant and refugee women's access to sexual and reproductive health services. The research examines the barriers to accessing these services for migrant and refugee women living in regional and rural Victoria. It is conducted in partnership with Women's Health Loddon Mallee, with a focus on the Loddon Mallee region.

Data is collected through consultation with migrant and refugee women living in the region, via a multilingual community education and information campaign, to document the stories of their challenges, supports and recommendations for better reproductive health services in the area.

Funding

Department of Health and Human Services Victoria

Partner

Women's Health Loddon Mallee

Thanks

Women's Health Loddon Mallee, Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services



Training Mercy Health aged-care workers, Colac.

Cross-cultural training

Common threads

The MCWH training program continues to challenge and transform professional practice and thinking across the health sector. Our two-day, Common Threads training course and our tailored modules on intersectional approaches provide a unique Australian perspective on cultural difference and inequalities in health, and in society as a whole.

This year, we delivered 23 training activities and sessions to support effective and respectful work with migrant and refugee women, and their communities.

I was not aware of the term 'intersectionality' – what a 'wow' moment. Thank you. Gender bias and prevention really stood out for me to consider in my work, in a more daily practice when supporting services.

Participant

Reach

700+ participants across multiple services including Ballarat Community Health, Diversitat, Save the Children, Mercy Health, Women's Health in the North, Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South East, Women's Legal Service Victoria

I have a clearer understanding of how my behaviour and language use could be detrimental to working with immigrant and refugee communities. [I also have a] better understanding of some of the barriers experienced.

Participant

Providing expert advice

Gender equity

MCWH is a proud member of Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC), the peak body for gender equity, women's health, and preventing violence against women. Previously called Women's Health Association of Victoria, GEN VIC connects regional and statewide women's health and gender equity services to collaborate and advocate for equality for all women.

MCWH auspices the growing GEN VIC team at our offices, and provides advice and support to Victoria's nine regional women's health services, particularly in developing and implementing regional action plans for PVAW.



Key consultations



Australian Human Rights Commission: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment

Australian Institute of Family Studies: Evaluation of the Third Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children

Cancer Council Victoria: Optimal Care Pathway Consumer Engagement Summit

Office of Prevention and Women's Equality (with Ernst & Young): Primary Prevention in CALD Communities Workshop

RMIT University: Development of a Graduate Certificate in Family Violence

University of NSW: National Workforce Agenda for the domestic and family violence, and sexual assault workforces

Department of Health and Human Services Victoria: Review of Sexual Health and Service Needs

Department of Health and Human Services Victoria, Family Safety Victoria:

- Development of the Diversity and Intersectionality Training Framework
- Gender Equality Bill.

Department of Health and Human Services Victoria, Family Safety Victoria (Inclusion and Engagement Branch and Centre for Workforce Excellence): Intersectionality and Capacity Building Project

Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation: Mental Health Royal Commission

Other organisations that sought our advice

- Australian Institute of Family Studies
- Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights
- Birth for Humankind
- Centre for Multicultural Youth
- CORE Community Services
- Deakin University
- Diabetes Victoria
- Eastern Community Legal Centre
- Latrobe University
- Link Community Transport
- Marie Stopes
- Moonee Valley City Council
- Murdoch Children's Institute
- Neighbourhood Justice Centre
- North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network
- Our Watch
- Peter McCallum Cancer Centre
- St Vincent's Hospital
- Vicseg
- Women's Health East

Conference presentations



R. Aryal-Lees and M. Hameed. Multicultural Centre for Women's Health pushing towards radical change. Australian Women's History Symposium: The past is a position: History, activism and privilege. Australian Women's History Network, Canberra.

A. Murdolo. Visas, Vulvas and Voice: an evidence review of migrant and refugee women's health. South Australia Women's Conference. Fertility South Australia, Adelaide.

A. Murdolo. Dynamics and complexity of abuse and resilience: migrant and refugee women and communities. International Domestic Violence and Health Conference: Sustainable Change in the Health Sector. Safer Families Centre of Research Excellence, University of Melbourne, Melbourne.

A. Murdolo. Migrant women's feminist activism and advocacy in Australia: a gender-based violence case study. 10th European Feminist Research Conference, Gottingen, Germany.

R. Aryal-Lees. Moved to care: valuing the love-labour of migrant care workers. Australian Association of Gerontology Conference, Melbourne.

A. Murdolo. Applying a feminist and intersectional framework to prevention and early intervention in migrant and refugee communities. Sharing and Strengthening our Practice Conference. Territory Families, Northern Territory Government, Darwin.

Training presentations and facilitation



Workshop facilitation. R. Quiazon, A. Vidyasagar, C. Ridler. Robin Di Angelo White Fragility Workshops. Centre for Multicultural Youth, Southbank.

Engaging migrant and refugee communities in prevention of violence against women. C. Ridler and A. Vidyasagar. Intersectionality Forum. Women's Health in the North, Darebin.

Taking an intersectional approach to preventing violence against women among migrant and refugee communities. A. Vidyasagar. Regional PVAW Community of Practice. Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South East, Geelong.

Intersectionality and prevention of violence against women. A. Vidyasagar. Women's Legal Service, Melbourne.

Family Violence and Cultural Diversity. A. Vidyasagar and C. Ridler. Information Session. Mercy Health, Heidelberg.

Applying Intersectionality to prevention of violence against women, and engaging migrant and refugee communities in prevention of violence against women. C. Ridler. Women's Health in the North, Darebin.

Family violence cultural diversity. A. Vidyasagar and C. Ridler. Mercy Health, Heidelberg.

Intersectionality. A. Vidyasagar. Victorian Women's Health Services Orientation Day, Melbourne.

Engaging migrant and refugee communities in prevention of violence against women. C. Ridler and A. Vidyasagar. PreventX. Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria, RMIT University, Melbourne.

Under the radar: contemporary challenges for practitioners of preventing violence against women. J. Chen. Decolonisation and Immigration Panel. Gender Equity Victoria, Melbourne

Committees



Practitioner Engagement Group: Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety
International Students' Sexual Health Network: Centre for Culture Ethnicity and Health
Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership Group: City of Whittlesea
Settlement Services Network: City of Yarra
Supporting Minds Project Advisory Group: Cohealth
Go Life Project Steering Group: Diabetes Victoria
Hume Crew Steering Committee: DPV Health (formerly Dianella Health and Plenty Family Community Health)
Policy Advisory Group on Health and Wellbeing: ECCV
Family Violence Reference Group: Indian Care
Brimbank Melton/Inner West Settlement Advisory Committee: Migrant Resource Centre North West
Multifaith Advisory Group and Working Group on Family Violence: Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion
Masculinities Evidence Review Expert Advisory Panel: Our Watch
The Refugee and Immigrant Family Violence Projects: Ballarat Steering Group
Queer and Trans Indigenous and/or People of Colour: Switchboard
Culturally Responsive Health Advisory Group: True Relationships and Reproductive Health Queensland
Diverse Communities and Intersectionality Working Group: Department of Health and Human Services Victoria, Family Safety Victoria
Gender Advisory Group, Raise It: Conversations about Sexual Harassment and Workplace Equality Project: Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
Eastern Metro Region Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategic Reference Group: Women's Health East
Sexual and Reproductive Health Literacy Working Group: Women's Health East
Eastern Metropolitan Region Sexual Health Literacy Working Group: Women's Health East
Female International Students Sexual and Reproductive Health Project: Women's Health in the North
Side by Side Critical Friends Project: Women's Health in the North

Submissions



Response to the Department of Health and Human Services Assisted Reproductive Treatment Review

Submission to the Commonwealth Department of Health National Women's Health Strategy 2020–30

Testimony at the Senate Select Committee on Stillbirth Research and Education

J. Chen. Public Hearing, Melbourne

Publications



The MuSeS project: a mixed-methods study to increase understanding of the role of settlement and multicultural services in supporting migrant and refugee women experiencing violence in Australia

Vaughan C., Jarallah Y., Murdolo A., Murray L., Quiazon R., Block K., Zannettino L. (2019). *BMC International Health and Human Rights*.

Between 'here' and 'there': family violence against immigrant and refugee women in urban and rural Southern Australia

Murray L., Warr D., Chen J., Block K., Murdolo A., Quiazon R., Davis E., Vaughan, C. (2019) *Gender, Place & Culture A Journal of Feminist Geography*

Key media



The women paying the ultimate price for divorce: Fariha Elahi's life tragically ended by the man who promised to love and protect her

Nicola Berkovic (includes an interview with Adele Murdolo). *The Australian*, 13 July 2019.

Inadequate support for women after miscarriage

Peggy Giakoumelos (includes an interview with Adele Murdolo). SBS World News Radio, 9 July 2019.

Arab women in Australia linked to more aggressive breast cancers

Amelia Dunn (interview with Adele Murdolo). SBS News, 9 May 2019.

Action plan on stillbirths

Santilla Chingaipe (includes an interview with Adele Murdolo). *The Saturday Paper*, 9 March 2019.

Women alone can't be blamed for infertility

Manpreet K Singh (includes an interview with Gagandeep Cheema). SBS Punjabi Radio Online, 2 August 2019.



SUSTAINABILITY: FINANCIAL SUMMARY*

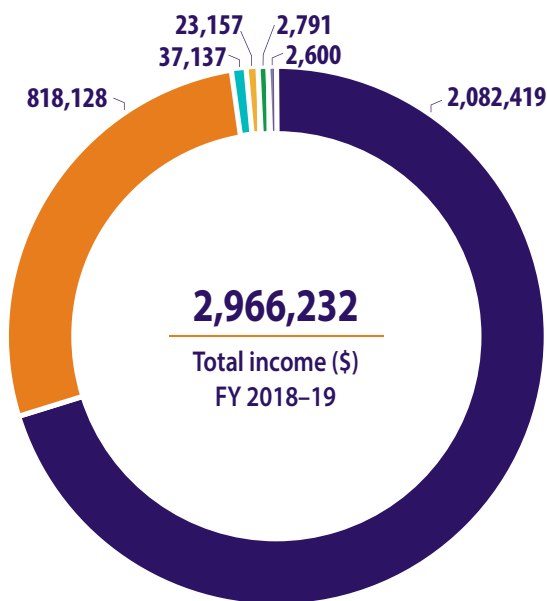
Risk appetite statement

MCWH operates within an overall low-risk range with the lowest risk appetite relating to safety and compliance objectives. This means tolerance for activities and programs that impact in a negative way on employee and client health and wellbeing is set at zero. MCWH also has a zero-tolerance risk appetite with regard to compliance and legal issues because it would impact our good reputation and standing within the community. Programs that potentially put clients and staff at risk will not be pursued. Programs that have potential reputational risk will not be pursued.

MCWH operates with a marginally-higher risk appetite towards its strategic and operational objectives, where activities and programs with some risk attached will be pursued. Programs with a financial risk attached will only be pursued where the potential loss attributable is less than 1 per cent of total revenue in any one financial year.

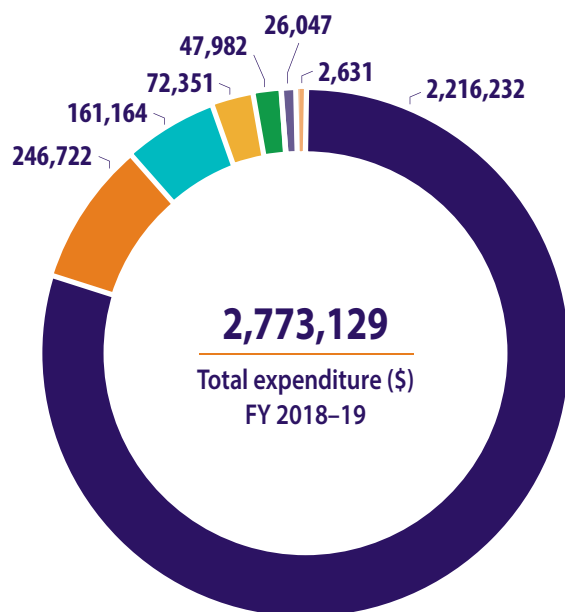


Income



- Project grants
- DHHS (Vic) grant
- Interest
- Miscellaneous
- Rental
- Training

Expenditure



- Employment
- Programs
- Property
- Office equipment
- Administration
- Motor vehicle
- Governance

* A full financial report for the year ended 30 June 2019 (including the Auditor's report and the directors' statement) is available on our website at mcwh.com.au (Resources & Publications).

Statement of financial performance for the year ended 30 June 2019

	2019 \$	2018 \$
REVENUE		
Grant funding income	2,900,547	2,012,389
Other income	28,548	42,724
Interest received	37,137	4,236
TOTAL REVENUE	2,966,232	2,059,349
EXPENDITURE		
Administration expenses	47,982	23,993
Employment expenses	2,216,232	1,459,486
Governance expenses	2,631	897
Motor vehicle expenses	26,047	29,247
Office equipment expenses	72,351	61,913
Program expenses	246,722	301,698
Property expenses	161,164	167,407
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,773,129	2,044,641
Net surplus/(deficit) before income tax	193,103	14,708
Income tax expense	–	–
Net surplus/(deficit) attributable to the Association	193,103	14,708

Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	2,759,339	3,229,516
Trade and other receivables	3	62,107	90,843
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		2,821,446	3,320,359
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	4	63,734	78,440
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		63,734	78,440
TOTAL ASSETS		2,885,180	3,398,799
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	5	267,305	359,633
Income received in advance	6	1,803,766	2,468,587
Provisions	7	292,088	245,752
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		2,363,159	3,073,972
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provisions	7	23,501	19,410
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		23,501	19,410
TOTAL LIABILITIES		2,386,660	3,093,382
NET ASSETS		498,520	305,417
EQUITY			
Accumulated funds		498,520	305,417
TOTAL EQUITY		498,520	305,417

Independent Auditor's Report

TOWARDS A VISION SHARED



ABN 15 893 818 045

127 Paisley Street
Footscray VIC 3011
Australia

Phone (03) 9680 1000
Fax (03) 9689 6605

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**MULTICULTURAL CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH INC.
REG. NO: A0023550R
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS**

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial report of Multicultural Centre for Women's Health Inc. (the Association), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2019, and the income statement, statement of changes in equity and cash flow statement for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes and the statement by the members of the Board.

In my opinion, the financial report of the Association is in accordance with *the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* and *the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*, including:

- i. giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2019 and of its performance for the year ended; and
- ii. complying with Australian Accounting Standards as per Note 1, *the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* and *the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. I am independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the applicable legislation and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

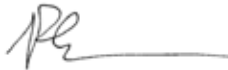
My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the registered entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the responsible entities.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the responsible entities use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal controls that I identify during my audit.

Auditor: Frederik Ryk Ludolf Eksteen **ASIC Registration Number:** 421448
Address: Collins & Co, 127 Paisley Street, FOOTSCRAY VIC 3011



Signature:

Date: 17 March 2020

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Statement by members of the Committee


Multicultural Centre for Women's Health Inc
Reg. No. A0023550R

In the opinion of the Committee the information as set out in the financial summary and full financial report:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Multicultural Centre for Women's Health Inc as at 30 June 2019 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Multicultural Centre for Women's Health Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

Chairperson



Dr Tamara Kwarteng

Treasurer



Mercedes Colla

Dated this 12th day of March 2020.



THANK YOU

Key funders

Department of Health and Human Services Victoria
Australian Government Department of Health

Project funders

Australian Government Department of Social Services
Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
Department of Premier and Cabinet, Victoria
Eastern Metropolitan Primary Health Network
North Western Metropolitan Primary Health Network
Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation

Partners

Family Planning Victoria
Mercy Health (formerly Southern Cross Care Vic)
Women's Health Loddon Mallee

Research funders

Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety
University of Melbourne

Training and presentation clients

Ballarat Community Health
Diversitat
Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria
Mercy Health
Multicultural Women's Health Australia Network
Save the Children
Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West
Women's Health in the North
Women's Legal Service Victoria

The women of MCWH.



CONTACT US

Multicultural Centre for Women's Health
Suite 207, Level 2 Carringbush Building
134 Cambridge Street Collingwood VIC 3066
P +61 3 9418 0999 or toll-free 1800 656 421
E reception@mcwh.com.au
W www.mcwh.com.au
F [MulticulturalCentreforWomensHealth](https://www.facebook.com/MulticulturalCentreforWomensHealth)
T [@mcwh1978](https://www.instagram.com/mcwh1978)
ABN: 48 188 616 970

