



Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW  
*Representing All Communities*

**ANNUAL REVIEW** 2021





**Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW**

*Representing All Communities*

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*Featuring a selection of photographs from the ECCNSW photo album that captures images of the various ethnic communities across New South Wales.*

## Messages of Support



I congratulate the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW on another successful year of advocating for multiculturalism in our State.

As the peak multicultural body in NSW, the Council provides a voice for more than 360 community organisations and has worked for 46 years to make our society more culturally inclusive.

I commend the Council for its comprehensive range of programs and projects that are strengthening our multicultural communities in areas such as aged care, education, living with disability, domestic violence and environmental sustainability.

I am particularly grateful for all your hard work guiding multicultural communities through the COVID-19 pandemic, making sure important health information is available in multiple languages and providing additional support where needed. Your efforts help to counter the spread of the virus and keep our community safe.

Thank you again and I wish you every success in the coming year.

**Gladys Berejiklian MP**  
Former Premier



It is my pleasure to congratulate the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW (ECCNSW) for a successful year.

As a long-standing state-wide peak body representing the voice of diverse communities, the ECCNSW has worked tirelessly over the past year to support vulnerable members of the community including the elderly and those with disabilities.

Through its many programs and initiatives the ECCNSW has ensured that culturally and linguistically diverse communities received timely and accurate health messaging on staying Covid safe.

You have done a great job for which I am deeply grateful.

The NSW Government is delighted to support the work of the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW, and commends the ECCNSW in working collaboratively with Multicultural NSW in promoting racial harmony and social inclusion.

Best wishes,

**The Hon. Natalie Ward MLC**  
Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans





On behalf of NSW Labor, I thank the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW for your tremendous advocacy and work over the past year.

For more than forty years the staff, members, volunteers and supporters of the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW have brought people together to promote harmony and cultural diversity, and to respond to issues impacting culturally diverse communities.

Ethnic community leaders have been one of our greatest strengths during this lockdown, advocating for their communities, providing information and resources and supporting the vaccination program. We all owe the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW and its leadership our gratitude and thanks for your response to this crisis.

The biggest burden of the COVID-19 lockdown has fallen on our most culturally diverse communities in Sydney's west and south west. As Sydney was divided into two cities, businesses failed, jobs were lost and families stretched to breaking point.

NSW Labor will stand with the communities in Sydney's west and south west as we start the process of rebuilding, rejuvenation and repairing the damage that has been done.

I wish the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW all the best for the year ahead.

**Chris Minns MP**  
NSW Labor Leader



Multicultural NSW has a long and proud history of partnering with the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW (ECCNSW). Our partnership demonstrates the impacts of strong and effective collaboration between government, community groups and multicultural peak bodies working towards the common goal of building and maintaining social cohesion and community harmony in NSW. When we work together, we achieve meaningful outcomes for communities across the state.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the ECCNSW has been actively informing government about the impacts of the pandemic on our communities and has consistently advocated for increased support for migrant groups, especially multicultural seniors. Multicultural NSW congratulates the ECCNSW on its critical work during the pandemic, and acknowledges its leadership role in the sector. We look forward to working closely together and strengthening our partnership into the future.

**Joseph La Posta**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Multicultural NSW

**Dr G.K. Harinath, OAM**  
Chairperson  
Multicultural NSW Advisory Board

L: Joseph La Posta, CEO, Multicultural NSW

R: Dr G.K. Harinath, OAM, Chairperson,  
Multicultural NSW Advisory Board

## Chair's Message



Peter Doukas OAM, Chair

This year has been a challenging year for us all. The further impacts of COVID-19 in New South Wales and around the country have been felt in every sector and in every community.

Unlike the difficulties we faced in 2020, this year saw COVID fatigue emerge as a factor as further

lockdowns, frustration and the long-term impacts of the Pandemic began to emerge. This was particularly felt in the community and multicultural space.

The localized lockdowns in Sydney that many of us felt to be directed against particular communities was most concerning. I participated in media interviews to address the obvious issues raised by those vulnerable communities in the 12 designated LGAs of concern.

ECCNSW worked with government and our member communities to ensure that an ongoing and streamlined level of support was established with those vulnerable communities, particularly in Western and Southwestern Sydney. Throughout this time, our Board of Management continued to meet to express concerns and identify strategies in its regular monthly Zoom conferences. I thank the dedication of the entire Board who attended our scheduled meetings and gave their insights and offered practical support.

Unfortunately, during this year our Board, and organization lost one of our most dedicated supporters. Our friend Tasha Vanos OAM passed away on 29 May 2021. He will be greatly missed. Tasha spent over 20 years assisting our organisation and in many other community groups. As Tasha was a sitting board member at the time of his passing, and due to his significant contributions to our organisation, the Board resolved to recommend posthumously awarding life achievement award in recognition of his works at our next Annual General Meeting.

Throughout this year, we have maintained our presence in the multicultural space through virtual and telephone meetings and appearances.

Our Deputy Chair Ms Fiona Mouhtaridis and myself attended a meeting with Minister Natalie Ward to welcome her in her new role as Minister for Multiculturalism and to discuss the challenges going forward from the Pandemic. We look forward to hosting her in our offices when it is safe to do so. In addition to our regular correspondence with government ECCNSW also acknowledges the work of the previous Premier Gladys Berejiklian for her work during the Pandemic but also her tireless advocacy of multiculturalism in New South Wales.

The challenges of the Pandemic will continue long after case numbers drop to a safe level. We are only now starting to see the impact that COVID-19 has had on our young, our working and our senior members of our communities. Importantly for the ECCNSW; we are also concerned about the impact the Pandemic had on our vital multicultural community organisations. How these communities get back on their feet in a post-Pandemic world will be a major priority for our Board in 2022 and years to come. COVID-19 has reinforced the importance of community to all of us, and these volunteer organisations are now facing ever more pressure to pivot away from traditional governance models. I believe they will be looking to us for leadership.

ECCNSW will be conducting workshops in 2022 to specifically target community groups to ensure their successful pivot towards a world in which COVID is a reality. We look forward to hearing from our members and their priorities so that as a state-wide peak body we can continue our task of rebuilding the community based foundations of our multicultural society.

This is not to say that we should ignore the challenges that emerged during the Pandemic. The notable increase in reported incidences of racism against our new and emerging communities is disturbing and unsettling. This on top of the existing flashpoints of ongoing anti-Asian sentiments, Islamophobia and Antisemitism that we were seeing in our society prior to the Pandemic. It would be naïve to not acknowledge that COVID-19 brought out the best and worst in us, and the ECCNSW is committed to fighting all forms of prejudice in our ongoing struggle for a more open and free multicultural society.

In this task I would like to thank the dedicated staff of ECCNSW led by our CEO, Ms Mary Karras. Our staff have adapted to the difficult working realities of COVID exceptionally and not only have undertaken their roles, but expanded the delivery of capacity building projects and programs resulting in the broadening of the collaborative base of the organisation. Their commitment to our multicultural organisation has been extraordinary.

I am optimistic for the next year. The Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW has the strength, resilience, and a team that will embrace the opportunities open to us to help reshape our NSW and wider Australian community. I thank all those who helped us through these difficult times and welcome you on our journey in again representing all communities in our great multicultural experiment.

Yours in Multiculturalism,

**Peter Doukas OAM**  
**Chair**



The ECCNSW Chair appearing at the NSW Parliamentary Committee's public hearing on coercive control

# Chief Executive Officer's Message



Mary Karras CEO

Since our last Annual Review in 2020 we have much to be grateful for, both as a community and as a nation.

Despite the turmoil, frustration and suffering during this pandemic and the impacts felt from the recent Delta strain, we have demonstrated resilience and strength,

and we look forward with optimism towards the post Covid future.

It has been an unpredictable and challenging year, and as an organisation the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW has learned so much over these past 18 months. We have had to discover new ways of working, connecting, and serving our members, and the broader multicultural communities.

By assisting NSW government through regular video conferences with the Minister for Multiculturalism, the Hon Natalie Ward MLC, key stakeholders including Multicultural NSW and community leaders the ECCNSW voiced the concerns of the community, particularly over these last few months of those most vulnerable in south western and western Sydney.

Issues of vaccine hesitancy, confusion over public health orders in the local government areas of concern, as well as vaccine choice and access were regular features of these discussions. Government messaging and responses were put to the test, and the ECCNSW was at the forefront emphasising the importance of appropriate government messaging to the multicultural communities in southwestern and western Sydney.

Operationally, the staff seamlessly transitioned to a working from home model during the lockdown. Their professionalism and collegiality were maintained throughout this period, and we are thankful that virtual platforms including webinars and zoom meetings were available.

These digital platforms ensured vigorous work in our projects in critical areas such as disability, domestic violence, aged care reforms was not compromised, and deliverables were adjusted to enable projects and programs to remain on track .

The ECCNSW is a member driven organisation, and the Board of Management expedited their due diligence in their governance responsibilities. In the absence of face-to-face meetings, the Members' Forums were conducted virtually. We listened to our members and heard the issues experienced in communities during the COVID lockdowns.



Virtual meeting with community leaders and Minister Ward MLC, Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans



To this end, the ECCNSW:

- ▶ Participated in virtual meetings with the Prime Minister, the NSW Minister for Multiculturalism, the CEO of Multicultural NSW and numerous community leaders to enable messaging surrounding vaccine hesitancy, lockdown restrictions and compliance remained as priorities of these discussions.
- ▶ Contributed a national voice on COVID-19 in the areas of women's safety and domestic & family violence; social isolation and mental health; the impact on small businesses and the economic recovery, and the concerning increase in racism and inequity.
- ▶ Reimagined the role of technology to fulfil strategic priorities and governance responsibilities.
- ▶ Participated in reviews, research and consultations including Multicultural NSW's Languages services; Deakin University's mapping social services provision for CALD communities, SBS Language Survey and the Department of Education's proposed parent survey on consent.
- ▶ Aided those vulnerable communities in crisis suffering from loss of employment and experiencing financial difficulties, by providing grocery vouchers, food hampers and support in how to navigate accessing the government's Covid safety net.

We have made significant progress in meeting our four focus areas and strategic priorities identified in our Strategic Plan 2019 -2022.

- 1 ENGAGE AND EMPOWER**
- 2 COLLABORATE AND PARTNER**
- 3 LEAD AND REPRESENT**
- 4 STRENGTHEN AND BUILD CAPACITY**



Virtual meeting with Minister Natalie Ward MLC, the ECCNSW Chair, Mr Peter Doukas OAM, Deputy Chair, Mrs Fiona Mouhtaridis and Life Member, Mr Jack Passaris OAM

This Annual Review book celebrates the past year's achievements of the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW. Although we are not a service provider offering client support and individual case management we are here as a peak body for our members, and the broader multicultural communities, to advocate across sectors in collaboration with key stakeholders and both government and non-government departments and agencies.

I wish to acknowledge and thank the Chair, Mr Peter Doukas OAM, the Deputy Chair, Mrs Fiona Mouhtaridis and the ECCNSW Board of Management for their unwavering support and commitment to the organisation.

I would also like to recognise and thank the staff for their strength, resilience, and commitment throughout the many challenges of the past 12 months.

The past year highlights their professionalism, diligence and dedication, and as a peak body across the state representing communities, we will continue to advocate on behalf of our members providing input into many state and national programs and policies through our various high-level representations and collaborations.

We look forward to a dynamic and restorative post Covid 2022!

**Mary Karras**  
CEO

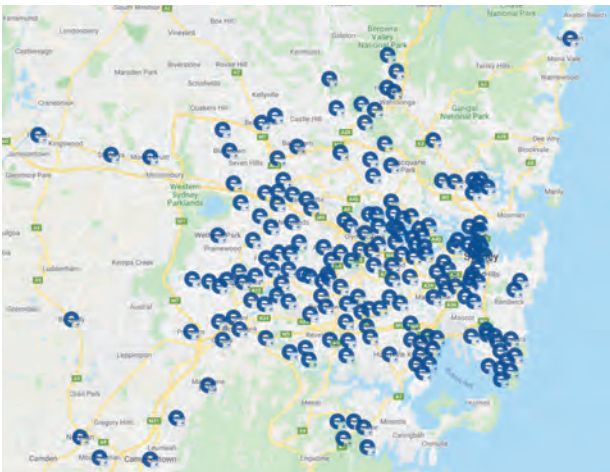
## Our Purpose

The Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW is the only state wide peak body representing multicultural communities across New South Wales.

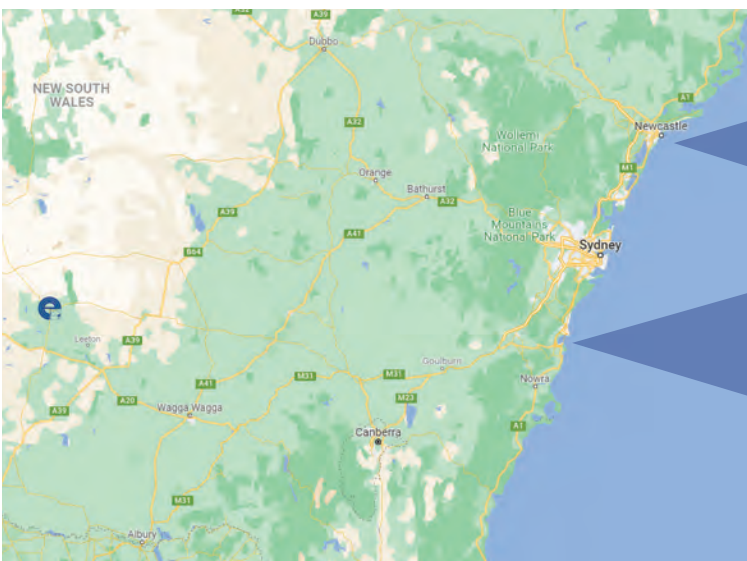
## Our Vision

An inclusive Australian society that actively upholds the principles of multiculturalism.

### ECCNSW Outreach across Sydney



### ECCNSW Outreach Rural and Regional 2020-21



## Our Results

Our key areas are:

### ▶ ENGAGE AND EMPOWER

Engage, involve, and empower CALD communities to contribute to, and participate in, all aspects of public life.

### ▶ COLLABORATE AND PARTNER

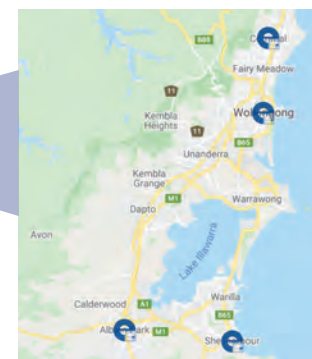
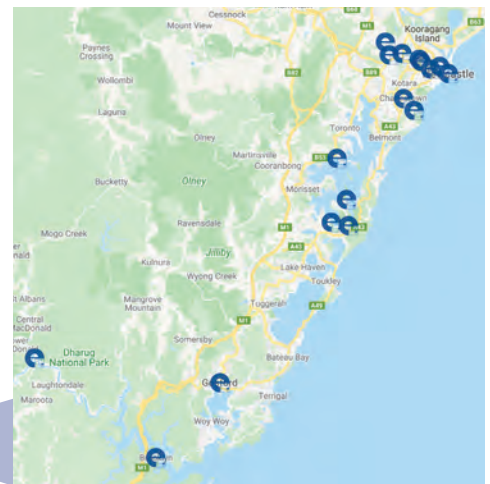
Collaborate and form partnerships to generate collective action on issues of importance to CALD communities.

### ▶ LEAD AND REPRESENT

Take a leadership role as an advocate for multiculturalism and represent issues of importance to CALD communities to governments and businesses.

### ▶ STRENGTHEN AND BUILD CAPACITY

Strengthen our processes and build organisational capacity to achieve strategic objectives.



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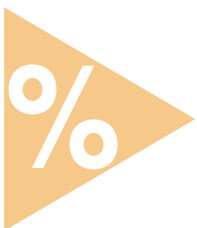
## Community Organisations



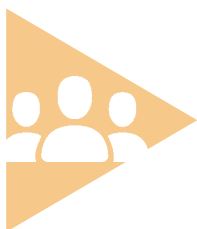
**45 years** since we were **founded by multicultural communities** at a Town Hall rally



**\$114,000** the **funding** we received for 2020-21 from the NSW Government through **Multicultural NSW**



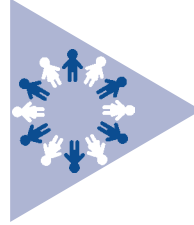
**85%** **ethnic community** organisations  
**18%** other **non-profit** organisations  
**9%** **multicultural** service providers



**12 staff** engaged in advocacy, policy and sector **development**  
**1** specialising in **energy reduction** and **climate change**  
**6** generalists working on **state-wide issues**  
**2** specialising in **community care**  
**5** specialising in capacity building in **ageing** and in **disability**  
**4** engaged in **media** and **communications**

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## Community Representatives



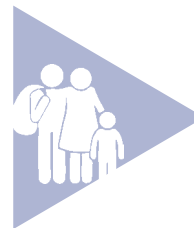
**31** ethnicities



**81%** born **overseas**



**24** **language groups** that speak all of the most **commonly spoken** languages in NSW



**10%** **refugees**



**10** **belief** systems







## Speak My Language (SML) Program – culturally diverse communities talking about living well with a disability

The Speak My Language (Disability) Program has harnessed the power of storytelling to share culturally diverse perspectives of living well with a disability. The Program promotes inclusive places, activities and opportunities to culturally diverse communities across Australia through personal stories, advice and resources.

### National Implementation Underway

SML is currently rolling out across all States and Territories. So far, we have recorded over 60 interviews in 12 languages, including more than 20 interviews with people who have a lived experience of disability and speak a language other than English. On completion of the project, we will have more than 25 languages included in the program. This year, we focused on both established and emerging migrant communities, including languages such as Burmese, Dari, Dinka, Kikuyu, Kannada, Nepali, Oromo, Sudanese, Swahili, Urdu and many others.

The program's 57 bilingual facilitators, known as Travellers, have undergone training developed by SML to understand the cultural sensitivities of disability within their community. One of the Travellers has explained the scope and importance of the project:

*"The program is meaningful and necessary in my community language because we need to hear the stories of people living with disabilities. Listening to other people's stories inspires us and broadens our minds with new perspectives. There hasn't been a program of this magnitude in the Arabic language, and it's time to empower people by owning their stories and raise awareness and understanding in the wider community."*

Ms Fida Al Haddad, Arabic Speaking Traveller



Our program is unique because we find and promote places, activities and services that are accessible to everyone, whether or not you have a disability and regardless of whether you have disability funding. Thus far, the interviews have touched on topics like the role of music, dance and movement in supporting wellbeing, recreational activities, counselling services, accessible housing and transport, tertiary education, awareness of legal rights, local government services. These podcasts have encouraged CALD people with disabilities to live with independence, dignity and social connection—while centering and sharing their perspectives.

*"Speak My Language provides us with tremendous opportunities to engage with and empower individuals with disabilities, their families, carers and communities."*

Ms Dolma Sherpa,  
Nepali Speaking Traveller



### Overcoming Pandemic Hurdles

The National Program Manager, Ms Jenny Bray, strengthened and adapted the Program's Risk Management Plan to ensure the COVID-19 pandemic caused minimal disruptions to Speak My Language. Through innovative technologies, the Program has been optimised for remote delivery. Training, interviews and podcast recordings have taken place online. This has minimised the need for face-to-face interaction during an uncertain time and, most importantly, ensured a COVID-Safe environment for people with disabilities and other talent participating in our Program.

Nevertheless, prolonged lockdowns across most states and territories over the course of 2021 has placed pressure on the Program's timeline. Some of the guest speakers secured for SML have had to



indefinitely delay their interviews due to recurring lockdowns; their bilingual role in law enforcement, health and local government has meant they are in high demand facilitating the Public Health Orders in multicultural communities. The Program has managed this risk by introducing a contingency plan to use an interpreter model should bilingual staff from these organisations become unavailable for interviews.

### Building Relationships

Several ECCNSW member organisations have been engaged throughout the Program's delivery. The Program benefits from their valuable knowledge of the disability sector, strengthens relationships and builds the capacity of other organisations. For instance, SML is collaborating closely with the Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW to share resources and networks to make Australia more inclusive for our culturally diverse communities.

The ECCNSW SML State Co ordinator held a focus group with CASS Care Disability Services to better



CASS Care Focus Group

understand the unique cultural needs of Chinese Australians living with disability. As one participant shared, "I have been here a long time. Attitudes to disability and to Chinese people have changed a lot. Much better now - but I can speak English." Based on this feedback, SML is bringing conversations about inclusive attitudes to the broader non-English speaking Australian community. This has informed the way our Mandarin and Cantonese speaking Traveller approaches podcast content creation for this community.

▶ *"The cultural stigma and expectation of saving face amongst the Chinese Community can mean some families with a disability are less willing to reveal their need for disability support, which means they are less likely to use formal or informal support services."*



*I believe the Speak My Language program can become an important and effective medium to tackle this issue and support families to gain the knowledge and capacity they need to live well."*

Mr Jian (James) Liao,  
Mandarin and Cantonese Speaking Traveller

The ECCNSW acknowledges the commitment and support of the SML Advisory Group Members, including FECCA, NEDA, Mental Health Australia, AMPARO (QLD), MDAA and individuals with disabilities, and in particular appreciates the insights of the Safeguarding and Cultural Issues Committee, comprising representatives from the University of Sydney, University of Western Sydney, and from our Partner Agency ECCWA.

SML is a national initiative funded by the Department of Social Services, and delivered through a partnership between all State and Territory Multicultural Councils, and Ethnic and Multicultural Communities' Councils around Australia. The Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW (ECCNSW) is the lead agency hosting the SML Program's National Team and overseeing its implementation.

## Men Against Violence Project (MAV)

Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW (ECCNSW) was successfully funded by the Department of Social Services (DSS) to deliver the Men Against Violence (MAV) Project in 2018.

This project engages Wellbeing Connectors (WB's) from CALD backgrounds to empower CALD men to become the pipeline for change and challenge current perception towards DV in their community.

The project targets men from diverse backgrounds including Arabic, Dinka, Sudanese, Punjabi and Tamil backgrounds in a range of localities including Auburn, Blacktown, Liverpool and Parramatta areas.

In order to deliver this project effectively the ECCNSW recruited eight Wellbeing Connectors (WB's) from Arabic, Dinka, Sudanese, Punjabi and Tamil backgrounds to engage men from their communities in conversations at informal settings. Training on how to facilitate meaningful conversations with other men in their own communities was undertaken.

The year 2020-2021 was a challenging year as the pandemic affected our lives. As a result of COVID-19 all MAV sessions were suspended during the lockdown (July – August 2020) and online follow up continued with Wellbeing Connectors and Advisory Committee members.

Once the lockdown lifted, we resumed our project using a face to face approach. The Wellbeing Connectors were kept safe and health measures including keeping social distancing, wearing masks at all times and the monitoring of slight symptoms were observed.

However, it was a notable slow process of going back to some form of normalcy. Our communities continued to be concerned about the spread of the virus and the health issues associated with being infected. Post COVID-19 lockdown, there were many who were affected by the loss of employment, the fear of travel, the closing of businesses, the social isolation and financial insecurity. These aftereffects of the COVID-19 lockdown intensified the mental health issues, and the domestic violence issues in the community.

It was a challenging time during lockdown as many courts were closed and cases were facilitated over the virtual platform. The Wellbeing Connectors were



Wellbeing Connectors from Arabic, Sudanese and Tamil backgrounds

unable to be involved in any face to face engagements during this period and the reliance on virtual was difficult to deliver during the lockdown.

Throughout most of the project we were able to offer support to the NSW Police and Department of Communities and Justice. We extended assistance when needed to the Local Courts through the provision of the Wellbeing Connectors to liaise with bilingual DV Support Officers and offer cultural expertise and assistance during charging or police interaction in court or with offenders in custody at police stations.

The MAV project enabled the Wellbeing Connectors to become recognised leaders in their community. The project built capacity in DV prevention for the CALD communities. Through this project model, the Wellbeing Connectors engaged with men in conversation at various informal settings. These conversations were facilitated in language and helped in identifying DV issues, to better understand the law and assisted community members to improve their attitude and behaviour towards women and children.

The training provided to the Wellbeing Connectors was extremely helpful and empowering.

The following comments made by the Wellbeing Connectors (WB's) demonstrate the benefits of their participation in the project:

▶ WB1: "I really enjoyed working with ECCNSW on this MAV project. I learned a lot about DV which I am going to use in our community to help them."

▶ WB2: "I learned so much about the types of supports available for the vulnerable people in DV situations."

▶ WB3: "The most important thing I learned was about AVO's. They explained that it is not considered a criminal offence against the guilty person. I also learned how to approach CALD communities, specifically the Arabic communities, with new thoughts and topics."

The key to the success of this project is enacting change by building the capacity and resilience from within the community.

From October 2020 to March 2021 MAV Wellbeing Connectors were able to deliver and speak with men from Arabic, Dinka, Sudanese, Punjabi and Tamil backgrounds in the targeted areas as shown in the following table:

Area	Community	# Conversational sessions	#Participants	# Pledge
Auburn	Arabic	16	74	24
Auburn	Dinka	5	40	22
Auburn	Tamil	5	23	20
Auburn	Sudanese	2	13	1
Blacktown	Arabic	12	59	29
Blacktown	Dinka	6	38	21
Blacktown	Tamil	6	26	22
Blacktown	Sudanese	3	18	6
Blacktown	Punjabi	4	17	9
Liverpool	Arabic	17	84	34
Liverpool	Dinka	3	24	12
Liverpool	Tamil	8	41	41
Liverpool	Sudanese	3	19	4
Liverpool	Punjabi	1	4	0
Parramatta	Arabic	16	75	20
Parramatta	Dinka	6	39	19
Parramatta	Tamil	7	32	26
Parramatta	Sudanese	4	20	8
Parramatta	Punjabi	1	3	2

The Wellbeing Connectors delivered on 125 conversational sessions in a variety of informal settings such as local coffee shops, places of worship, local parks. They engaged 649 men and of those 320 men pledged to speak to another 5 men from within their communities.

Given the significance of this project, the ECCNSW was granted extension funding by the Department of

Social Services to expand the MAV project until June 2022 to enable further engagement with men from Assyrian, Dinka, Sudanese, and Tamil communities.

Changing the attitude and perception of domestic violence against women and children in our society is a challenge. The MAV Project is helping to prevent this widespread and hidden problem in our society.





## 'Our Journeys' - creating pathways to build a safer, stronger, resilient and connected community for CALD people with disabilities

'Our Journeys' is an exciting program, funded through the Strong and Resilient Communities-Community Resilience grant. The program was in its final year but has been granted a further 12-month extension to complete the final stages of the social media marketing campaign. The campaign has been developed and ready for roll out at the end of 2021. It is designed to facilitate interactive activities online aimed at empowering the community to embrace CALD people with a disability and support them to feel connected, informed and empowered to make informed decisions. The program has successfully engaged ten CALD community groups who will use the power of on-air ethnic radio conversations, social media campaigns, podcasts and marketing events aimed at driving messages of inclusion and resilience across CALD groups, to not only CALD people with a disability and their families, but also, to the broader community.

The past 12 months have been challenging for the program due to COVID-19 restrictions. Face to face activities, filming, events, group activities, interactive booths and harmony sessions could not be conducted due to social distancing and lockdowns across the country.

In most cases, this would certainly be affecting the program outcomes and deliverables, However in this case, the global pandemic has only served as a catalyst to seek out alternative solutions and options, finding innovative ways to capture and deliver a 'living well with a disability' message.

The ECCNSW aimed to continue to facilitate CALD community member conversations to improve CALD communities' knowledge and awareness of national disability reforms and develop strategies to overcome barriers which affect their full participation in community life.

With the support of a collaborating film and media partner, *Why Documentaries*, the ECCNSW was able to continue to build strong, resilient, cohesive, and harmonious partnerships throughout the challenges of a pandemic and used the power of digital technology and social media to prepare key messages, even during the isolation of lockdowns.

During the last 12 months of the program, human trust and relationships proved to be the key to its success. The participants involved in the program openly participated in podcast recordings, video recordings and activities which captured their journeys and lives as both members of the community and as individuals living with a disability.



Lived experience was the focus of Our Journeys Program

## Participants and members who shared their stories

The Program involved the filming of ten families as part of the 'Our Journeys' production.

The films capture the stories and conversations of people from several language groups including:

- ▶ Tongan
- ▶ Korean
- ▶ Hindi
- ▶ English
- ▶ Spanish
- ▶ Serbian
- ▶ Indonesian
- ▶ Farsi
- ▶ CALD young person
- ▶ Arabic

The ten, five-minute videos have been edited and ready for the social media and marketing campaign, which is scheduled to begin at the end of 2021, to coincide with International Disability Day, Friday 3rd December 2021.

In addition to the 12 videos, there have been 30 podcasts in language, short stories, scripts, Facebook and social media messaging developed, that have captured the positive messages from our ten families.

These stories and group consultations have resulted in a number of strategies being identified to assist in developing strong and powerful messages about living well, and building resilient communities.



Many of the participants kept commenting, "Just Be Kind". This became the inspiration for the marketing campaign which will accompany and lead the launch of the "Our Journeys" stories and website.

Catherine Vanisis, from the Tongan community, who talks about her connection to culture and her identity as a strong independent Tongan woman with a disability.



## About Cyrus:

*"Hi. My name is Cyrus and I like surfing, scuba diving and basketball. These are my favourite sports. One of my good memories from Tehran is walking in "Daarabad" and "Abo Atash" park in which I saw the water fountains. Two beautiful parks. and again, the reason I came here was pollution and the government was not very kind to us, and I did not feel so safe in there. Yes, I miss my family and the people there so much. ADD is like When I read a story or something, I cannot think about it and focus on it, and I get distracted. With ADD I could not focus on geography, like south and east and stuff on a compass and this resulted in other people bullying me for it.*

*Looking back now, I would tell that 9-year-old boy that in order to control ADD you can watch comedy movies and laugh also doing yoga, singing, seeing a therapist and games that help you with increasing focus can be good.*

*I am positive because I get reminded of my favourite places I have been to, for example Blue Mountains and Kangaroo Valley were beautiful places.*

*Yes, I was bullied before, and it wasn't nice, and I just say something, why cant people just be patience and jut be kind."*

## 2020 - Pre-production

With the support of translators and bilingual facilitators, and the expertise of the *Why Documentaries* production crew, the program spent the last 18 months conducting phone consultations, zoom consultations, online group consultations online, and, where social distancing rules permitted, completed face-to-face videos and filming with the ten families.

Key messaging and conversations about living with a disability were key components of the program. Seeking assistance, service support system, the role of family and community, building independence, having purpose, and engaging with the broader community were all key messages and themes across the 10 stories.

The kindness of community and society was one of the most powerful messages which featured across all the films and stories.



*"The pandemic really showed (society) how dangerous, difficult and challenging isolation is. The pandemic placed so many people under incredible stress. Once they found themselves stuck at home, isolated, alone and not able to easily engage with their community or outside world, they found themselves feeling powerless and not in control. What I found interesting is that there are some people, like us, who have a disability, who live that life every day. It wasn't until we were all told to isolate did society begin to experience and understand the lives of people like myself, who have a disability, who need to battle for a place, space or role in society. I would say, Just Be Kind. Kindness goes a long way, and we all have the right to be here, share this space, and share community life."*



Ilinka B

### Production and postproduction

Over 150 hours of videography was recorded, with 15 hours of podcast recordings, 60 hours scripting and planning with each family and participants, in order to develop the materials and resources in preparation of the launch "Our Journeys" scheduled for December 2021/early 2022.

This program was an invaluable and engaging inter-personal interaction. It captured a person's deep and heartfelt insights and experiences and in turn enabled the participants to appreciate how their words and reflections became such powerful messages.

### 'Just Be Kind' and 'Our Journeys' website

The website will be launched during the roll out of the social media campaign in December 2021 / early January 2022. The interactive site will feature all the stories, videos, podcasts, social media messaging, as well as information on disability services and supports available to guide individuals and families seeking assistance.

The showcase will be the marketing campaign 'Just Be Kind' which is scheduled to run consecutively over a six month period between December 2021 and June 2022.



*"Working with ECCNSW on the 'Our Journeys' program has instilled a sense of inspiration for the crew. We were touched by the people we met who shared with us their personal journeys and their unique paths about living with disability. Their stories are empowering, positive, and insightful. We know that for a few of the people we interviewed shared they were grateful for their disability, and we had never considered disability in that light before. They were grateful because their disability caused them to care about what truly matters, it gave them resolve and an increased sense of empathy. I think we [the crew] have grown as people being involved in this project."*

Sandra Pries, Director and Cofounder of Why Documentaries



Two Korean women, Grace Kye and her mother Su Park, as they share their stories with the Why Documentaries crew.



## EPA Litter Campaign 5

The Community Litter Grant program began in 2012 and ran over four rounds through the Keep Australia Beautiful NSW under a Deed Agreement with the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

The message was clear - Litter is rubbish in the wrong place!

Litter in the environment has incredibly harmful impacts on animals and plants and affects people's enjoyment of the environment. The NSW EPA is working to reduce litter through the 'Waste Less Recycle More' initiative, which funds diverse projects including community litter prevent projects.

Sydney Olympic Park Authority is the proud custodian of the 2000 Olympic Games legacy. The park has multiple, significant values including 430 hectares of public open space for recreation and nature conservation. Close to 10 million people visit the park each year and littering by a small fraction of people can add up to a lot of rubbish. Rubbish from outside the park via waterways. This is bad news for the park's wildlife as they may die from eating litter or becoming entangled in it.

To address this issue, the Authority obtained a NSW EPA funded Community Litter Grant in partnership with the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW to raise awareness and to promote action on reducing litter in the park.

The popular and common litter seen in the park include packaging such as lolly wrappers or chip packets, or single-use items such as coffee cups, water bottles, straws or takeaway food containers and cutlery. Some people litter tissues and paper serviettes, thinking these will breakdown. While others leave bags of mixed rubbish next to bins that are already full thinking they have done the right thing! Wildlife, like birds, often open these bags and scatter the content everywhere.

Sydney Olympic Park Authority and the ECCNSW worked together to see everyone take litter seriously and do the right thing with our waste.

The ECCNSW project team reached out to the community both in the Park and online. Within the popular picnic areas/playgrounds of Blaxland Riverside Park and Bicentennial Park, there are now display boards providing regular updates on the litter situation in the park.



Community engagement Hindi



Sydney Olympic Park attracts visitors from all over Sydney. The three largest local communities are Arabic, Chinese and Korean speakers. ECCNSW's bi-lingual educators' role in this project was to engage with visitors from these three communities. ECCNSW's educators visited the Sydney Olympic Park on weekends to survey park visitors and find out how much they knew about litter, what they thought could be done to reduce litter, and provided information on how to get involved. These survey results helped inform the way the Park is managed.

Ultimately, the ECCNSW supports the messaging that environments need to be entirely free of rubbish.

So, we want everyone to become aware of the impact of litter and know what they can do to improve the situation. The Authority will be conducting regular litter checks to track progress. It is hoped to beat the government's goal of reducing litter by 40%.

As for information online – the Park Authority has created a Park Pledge webpage, filled with great tips on how to reduce waste and litter, both at the park and at home. It all starts at home, and simple steps will make a big difference! Check it out at [Sydneyolympicpark.com.au](http://Sydneyolympicpark.com.au)



Community engagement Korean

ECCNSW invites everyone to connect online by searching Park Pledge on the Sydney Olympic Park website. There you will find information on how to start the change at home. Simple steps to reduce waste, like choosing reusable items over single-use items, which will mean less rubbish and less chance of rubbish becoming litter.

Littering is an issue that needs to be taken seriously if we are to keep the environment safe for wildlife and enjoyable for everyone in the community.





**NO**  
**PLASTIC B...**

EPA

NO PLASTIC BOTTLES, CANS, OR OTHER PLASTIC CONTAINERS

**Recycling**

RECYCLING



## Inner West Sector Support Development and Training (IWSSD&T) Program

The ECCNSW Inner West Sector Support Development and Training Officer has continued to work closely with the Inner West Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) service providers and the broader aged care system in order to collectively support strengthen the service system.

The IWSSD&T Program is funded to work alongside the aged care sector and in partnership with Regional Assessment Services, Sydney Local Health District and CHSP providers, has focused on strengthening regional referral and assessment pathways, improving service specific capacity to take on clients, creating innovative solutions and streamlining communication channels.

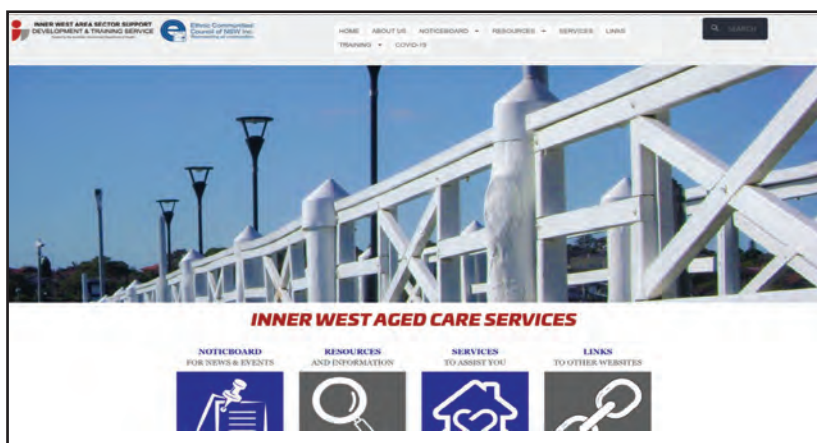
The ECCNSW undertook a continuity plan during the months of lockdown and whilst there have been some challenging times due to COVID-19, the IWSSD&T Officer has been instrumental in the sector by driving new initiatives, providing guidance, arranging training, participating in Roundtable discussions, developing resources, and engaging in the broader aged care collaborations.

Peak bodies such as Dementia Australia, Local Councils, Sydney Local Health District and several

CHSP providers reached out to communities to identify service gaps, to identify issues regarding accessing services particularly during the lockdowns and to develop strategies to influence service provision practices. Through the IWSSD&T Program, the ECCNSW was able to collaborate with these peak bodies to investigate gaps experienced by the CALD communities.

The IWSSD&T Officer has worked with other Sector Support Development Officers to facilitate 2021 CHSP Service Providers Best Practice Forums on how to implement independence through Wellness and Reablement Approach. As a result of this professional dialogue and collaboration, several online resources, webinars and specialized training sessions were developed to further assist the sector with implementation of this reform.

The ECCNSW is pleased to confirm that KPMG was engaged by the Department of Health in 2019-2020 to undertake a review of the Sector Support



Inner West Aged Care Services Website  
<https://innerwestagedcareservices.org.au/>



Inner West & South West Sydney CHSP  
 Wellness and Reablement Best Practice  
 Webinar

and Development programs funded through the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), and that the final report was released in early 2021 whereby the IWSSD Officer now auspiced by the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW was mentioned as implementing a best practice model.

### Inner West Aged Care Website

Alongside the ECCNSW website there is a link to the Inner West Aged Care Services Website. This information centric website was developed to provide Inner West Aged Care services and community members with a one-stop shop easy to access information.

The website is funded by the Department of Health and conveys information regarding sector updates, local and new initiatives, information about service providers, aged care specific resources, training updates, best practice ideas, monthly newsletters and much more.

This year the website serviced 147 Inner West CHSP providers and reached out to numerous community members who access information regarding the local CHSP services.

### Inner West Area Training Service (IWATS)

Another component of ECCNSW's Inner West Sector Support Development Program is the Inner West Area Training Service (IWATS). This component of the Program aims to build the skill set and capacity of the sector.

In partnership with consultants, trainers, and other sector experts the IWSSD&T Officer facilitated the delivery of online capacity building training using a variety of tools such zoom, webinars, videos. The training sessions focused on Government reforms such as Wellness and Reablement, Diversity Framework, continuity of service delivery during COVID-19 and much more. The sessions aimed to upskill CHSP management, staff and volunteers with a focus on the Aged Care Royal Commission Report recommendations and future possible models of service provision for the future.

The ECCNSW acknowledges the benefits of this Training Service and values the close collaboration the IWSSD&T Officer has harnessed with CHSP service providers and trainers to develop capacity building resources such as checklists and online training and instructional videos that explore future changes in CHSP service provision to assist the sector with moving forward.



Zoom training session on the Interface between CHSP and Home Care Packages



## NSW State-Wide Multicultural Access Program (MAP)

It has been an interesting and invigorating year for the NSW State-Wide Multicultural Access Program (MAP) auspiced by the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW. It delivered various activities across the state, with a focus on culturally responsive care and aged care reforms including:

- ▶ training and educational workshops to over 120 aged care personnel across the state
- ▶ monthly updates and Information to over 300 services and personnel regarding the reforms and changes affecting the aged care sector
- ▶ facilitating and hosting various workshops and information share sessions to over 350 participants from different regional networks and forums across the state
- ▶ developing over 70 resources, in language and in English with powerful, culturally responsive messaging. The resources addressed various priority areas including health and wellbeing, decision making during palliative care, podcasts with sector influencers in relation to culturally appropriate multicultural care in dementia, developing a culturally responsive bilingual workforce, and operational strategies to prepare services to meet national reforms
- ▶ maintaining the Multicultural Exchange Hub website, and one draft online interactive platform for e learning. The aim of these digital tools is to provide easy online access to assist organisations to understand how to implement the Commonwealth's Diversity Action Plan and Diversity Framework. The interactive online platform is near completion and is scheduled to be launched January 2022

- ▶ in addition to group activities, the program delivered over 45 episodes of one-on-one coaching with individualised support to service providers, executive teams, and leadership teams. The sessions focused on assisting the providers to develop local solutions to local problems, linking them into other culturally responsive stakeholders and partners, identifying new ways of doing business while meeting aged the care system changes and cultural requirements
- ▶ training and capacity building workshops delivered to over 20 bilingual facilitators on the recent aged care reforms, changes to the aged care standards and compliance expectations. The workshops contributed towards building a confident, and responsive, bilingual aged care workforce.

While these are only a snapshot of the interactive activities delivered over the past year, they reflect the diverse and changing aged care landscape. The significant changes also explains the sector's ongoing requests for more support and assistance to better understand the Commonwealth's frameworks and policy changes, particularly in response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

### **KPMG review of the CHSP, Sector Support and Development programs**

KPMG was engaged by the Department of Health in 2019-2020 to undertake a review of the Sector Support and Development programs funded through the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP).

The final report was released in early 2021 and the NSW MAP Network convened by the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW was recognised for its innovation and practices. The NSW MAP Network streamlined and provided a uniform approach to the way in which the SSD MAP programs operate and support each other.





## The Multicultural Exchange Hub

The ECCNSW Multicultural Access Program (MAP) and its collaborative partners from the NSW MAP Network are pleased to report that the KPMG Review identified several services demonstrating innovative practices. The ECCNSW MAP Multicultural Exchange Hub website was one of the positive models, highlighting the Hub's unique online strategies as an initiative which provides resources and information for CHSP providers across the State. The various resources and materials available and the centralised location where the MAP Network collaborative can share and engage with the sector and each other were a few of the stand out features that were mentioned.

## The State-wide NSW MAP Network

The partnership approach across the MAP Officers who deliver on the eleven MAP Programs, and the leadership provided by the ECCNSW State-wide MAP Officer has resulted in several collaborative projects, shared resources, skills, training and development and a spirit of collaboration and unity across the NSW MAP Network.

This year the MAP Officers have also completed a series of planning days which have provided the foundation for further sharing and learning. As a result, the NSW MAP Network, under the guidance of the ECCNSW State wide MAP Officer, is now preparing to test and trial a new online platform which will assist to centralise and improve data collection, capture timely data often lost or not gathered, capture client and service provider testimonials and provide on the spot feedback. This application will enable the opportunity to identify regional issues, tap into local intelligence, identify possible solutions and improve the way we communicate these to the Commonwealth in a timely manner. The initial set up and testing of the platform has been completed and the Beta trial of the new software will be conducted over the next 12 months.

## National Alliance of CALD Sector Support and Development Programs

The ECCNSW State-wide MAP Officer continues to convene the National Alliance of CALD SSD Officers. Ongoing contact with the Queensland, Victorian and now the South Australian SSD programs provides a national platform to host dialogue that enhances CALD SSD practices and activities on a national scale. The Alliance is providing leadership towards a more uniform approach to the way in which data is collated, analysed, and reviewed.

The National Alliance has been incredibly beneficial in supporting CALD SSD Officers to develop a better understanding, knowledge, strategic approaches, and improved practices on how the CALD SSDs disseminate information regarding the Commonwealth's aged care reforms. The Alliance has contributed to the Multicultural Exchange Hub website and the State-wide NSW MAP Network to distribute monthly information across the country. The key is to deliver information about the reforms that are uniform, consistent, and easy to understand.

## Education, Training and Development

While the ECCNSW's state wide MAP Program has enabled the delivery of various training and capacity building workshops across the state, the challenge has been to encourage organisations to embrace, prioritise and implement the Commonwealth's Diversity Action Plan.

The Aged Care Standards, reforms and frameworks have been a priority, as there are service providers who are still grappling with implementing the Diversity Framework and Action Plan released by the Commonwealth in 2019. As a result, the NSW MAP Officer auspiced by the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW, is currently developing an online digital version of the Diversity Action Plan, allowing the user to engage and create pathways and options as they adjust to delivering on the Plan. With built in case studies, prompting questions and online digital support, it is envisaged this will increase the number of aged care providers who will take the first step to begin implementing the framework. The software will be ready for the first trial to begin in January 2022.



Helping providers to support seniors wanting access to aged care services

This is an exciting journey for the ECCNSW as it moves to embrace the aged care reforms. By creating change through interactive digitally inclusive practices it enables a seamless transition to the new order. A prototype for consumers will also be considered and piloted early next year.

In addition to the training on the Diversity Framework, the State wide ECCNSW MAP Officer delivered training to over fifty refugee, migrant and bilingual workers. This training raised awareness of the Commonwealth's aged care reforms, changes to the Aged Care Standards and improved understandings of the centralised assessment process required by all seniors in order to access aged care supports in Australia. New and emerging issues regarding ageing for refugee and recently arrived immigrants (past 10-15 years) are now increasing. The ECCNSW MAP Officer has worked closely with the sector to educate and inform the settlement service workforce and front-line counter staff, on how to identify a senior who requires assistance, and how to support them to engage with My Aged Care.

## Research and Development

The ECCNSW State-wide MAP Officer has participated in several presentations, research programs and initiatives this year, offered through Macquarie University.

One of ECCNSW's exciting collaborations was the NSW MAP Officer's involvement in the development of the new 'Forward with Dementia' website.

'Forward with Dementia' is a partnership programme between the University of New South Wales, the

University of Sydney, the University of Wollongong (Australia), McGill University, University of New Brunswick, University of Waterloo (Canada), Maastricht University (Netherlands), Wroclaw Medical University (Poland), University College London, Newcastle University (United Kingdom), Alzheimer's Disease International and Dementia Alliance International. Registered in Australia, Canada, Netherlands, Poland and United Kingdom.

ECCNSW nominated CALD carers and representatives from the CALD sector who were involved in codesign workshops aimed at developing a single international online resource for people living with dementia. The site has now been launched. ECCNSW thanks the carers, bilingual facilitators and CALD representatives that provided such valuable feedback during the codesign sessions with Macquarie University and for assisting the developers to shape and design the new online resource.

## The 'CALD Voice'

One of the direct services to consumer programs delivered by the ECCNSW MAP is the recently established 'Consumer Voice' initiative. Unlike a reference group, the consumers aid the research by scoping their community to gather case studies and stories from other consumers on their positive or not so positive experience when accessing and receiving care through the Commonwealth Home Support Program, (CHSP).

By allowing consumers to drive the storytelling and story gathering process, they are able to break through cultural or language barriers to understand and capture the gaps and issues, and assist the sector to identify possible solutions as to how to minimise gaps in the future.

Still in its infancy, the peer-to-peer initiative is due to be reviewed in February 2022. This is only a trial period however from the valuable feedback and data collected to date, the ECCNSW envisages that the initiative will continue. The Program currently has six champion Beta Testing seniors. They speak seven languages, represent six different cultural backgrounds, and range from 65 to 89 years of age. They are currently codesigning and testing the model and assisting the ECCNSW MAP Officer to conduct a preliminary review in preparation for the next phase of this initiative.



Our elderly have greater choice and are overcoming the barriers to access support

## Aged Care reforms

THE ECCNSW sees the aged care reforms as a necessary and positive step forward.

Hence the state wide MAP Officer auspiced by ECCNSW, continues to support the Commonwealth in the roll out of the aged care reforms, by participating in several leadership roles which drive innovation, progress, and change. The ECCNSW sees a need to focus on supporting the small to medium size aged care providers who are delivering exceptional work but are finding the changes in meeting the various national reform requirements quite challenging. The ECCNSW has supported the ECCNSW MAP Officer to partake in the following over the past year:

- ▶ Convenor of the NSW MAP Network
- ▶ Convenor of the National Multicultural SSD Alliance
- ▶ One of four Key Contacts for the NSW SSD Network who meet with Commonwealth representatives to assist in developing strategies to improve the way in which SSDs work collaboratively with government to support the roll out of the reforms.
- ▶ Member of the planning group for the NSW SSDN Network to support strategic planning and development following the KPMG Review Report
- ▶ (to begin in 2022), a member of the National Brains Trust, working closely with CALD representatives, and CALD industry influencers and leaders across the country, to facilitate and record conversations about the reforms.

## Individual Service provider support and coaching

The most significant growth in the ECCNSW State-Wide MAP program has been the 30% increase for the one-on-one or pairing of providers for intensive individualised support. The service providers feel more at ease working in small intimate groups as they seek assistance to find local solutions for individualised and unique barriers or issues.

THE ECCNSW thanks the many service providers, consumers, and partners for placing their trust and confidence in the organisation and its MAP Program. It is imperative that confidentiality is maintained, support is extended, resources are provided, and assistance is accessible to these small operating services. National reforms are required to address the many gaps in the service system, however it is often the small CALD operations, which provide individualised, boutique, person centred services that tend to struggle with the service system changes.

As a peak body, the ECCNSW is committed to continuing support to the smaller aged care service providers as they implement the national reforms, to ensure that CALD communities continue to have choices and options when it comes to receiving culturally and linguistically responsive care.



# Household Chemical Problem Waste CALD Engagement Program

## Background

In 2020-2021 the ECCNSW was funded by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to facilitate the Household Chemical Problem Waste Program for the Arabic, Assyrian, Mandaean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, Turkish, Italian, Greek, Spanish, Nepalese, Hindi, Tamil, and Urdu communities, reaching 4020 CALD participants in total.

The Household Chemical Program was first funded in 2015 and has since continued to be a significant capacity building program even after the initial funding ceased. With additional funding the Program continues to be successfully delivered to the CALD communities across Sydney, the Illawarra and Newcastle.

We are incredibly proud to report on 2020-2021 outcomes of the Household Problem Waste CALD Engagement Program delivered by the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW.

The ECCNSW applauds and congratulates the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) in engaging ECCNSW to deliver Household Chemical problem waste for our diverse communities.

Quite often, there is a misconception that community education to CALD communities is simply about providing translated materials or language-specific images and signs to these groups and that this will suffice in creating long term behavioural changes when it comes to sustainability and environmental impacts. This could not be further from the truth.

The ECCNSW has worked closely with CALD communities for over four decades and understands that change in human behaviour requires a grassroots and multifaceted approach, particularly when responding to the complexities which arise for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

ECCNSW has utilised materials and resources in language together with the ECCNSW skilled community language expertise via trained bilingual educators. It harnesses the trust and rapport developed through years of working with community networks and community groups, and builds on the



Korean language participants

links with skilled bilingual professionals across networks and industries, including media and communications.

The organisation's commitment to environmental responsibility and sustainability has continued to grow and develop further. Each funding round improves the CALD engagement strategies and delivers workshops in language that are powerful, engaging, thought-provoking, educational while at the same time providing the CALD participants with a greater sense of confidence and knowledge in how they can play a part in sustainable practices.

Comments from participants:

- ▶ *The information was very useful and in an easy-to-understand language.*  
Korean group
- ▶ *"We had little to no knowledge before the workshop on how to dispose of household chemicals in our homes in a responsible manner."*  
Vietnamese group
- ▶ *"When I came to hear the session, I had very little knowledge, and by the end of the workshop, I had learnt so much from the presentations."*  
Greek group

▶ *"We found information on how to dispose of old mobile phones and old cartridges through local Australia Post/Office works information very useful; checking the website for EPA for information on Drop off centres is handy."*  
Hindi group

The Household Chemical Program aims to convey messages and information to CALD communities regarding the safe disposal of Households Chemical. Delivering concise and clear information on environmental impacts of those chemicals ending up in the landfill. In addition, it informs fewer waste behaviours by promoting the use of cleanout services and community recycling centres.

Messaging was conveyed through face to face and online workshops facilitated in languages via social groups across Sydney metropolitan area, Central Coast, and the Illawarra. This enabled 729 participants to access this information. Furthermore, the project fostered collaborations with TAFE /English Courses and broadened the reach to include the newly arrived migrants and refugees that resulted in an additional 55 participants.

Comments from the bilingual team:

▶ *"The Household Chemical program was an eye-opener to waste minimisation for the Arabic Communities, especially the newly arrived migrants and refugees."*  
Arabic Bilingual Educator



Household Chemicals Cantonese online

▶ *"The Chinese communities were so grateful to receive this vital information in their own language."*  
Chinese Bilingual Educator

▶ *"This program did offer not only information, but also confidence and knowledge which are essential to creating behavioural changes."*  
Mandaeen Bilingual educator

Other events where over 470 people were reached and given information in their own language, involved pre COVID-19 lockdowns such as ECCNSW stalls, Chinese New Year celebrations, Harmony Events, Street Celebration Events and Multicultural Festivals.

In response to the COVID-19 situation, the 2020-2021 funding round also explored the value and impact of ethnic social media in the dissemination of information to broader CALD communities. The use of media proved to be a helpful medium, in reaching out to the CALD communities. Using both SBS and community ethnic radio, community ethnic newspapers as well as community social media platforms and the ECCNSW website this project was able to reach out to over 2766 people.

Left: Household Chemicals article published in Nepalese news online



## Tech Savvy Program for CALD Seniors

This past year proved to be another successful round of Tech Savvy CALD Seniors program. This is the 7th round that ECCNSW is delivering this program in partnership with the State Library of NSW, the NSW Department of Communities & Justice and Telstra.

The program is delivered in Arabic, Assyrian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Hindi, Korean, Italian, Spanish, Greek, and English and takes place in local libraries.

ECCNSW acknowledges the close collaboration with the participating libraries which include, Burwood, Riverwood, Bankstown, Campsie, Marrickville, Leichhardt, Haberfield, Canada Bay, Five Dock, Concord, Rhodes, Chatswood, Ashfield, Ryde, The Learning Place, Strathfield, Randwick, Fairfield, Whitlam, Granville, Bonnyrigg, Parramatta, Wentworthville, Casula, Cabramatta, and Liverpool libraries.

The Sydney metropolitan area is most fortunate to have these libraries participating in the program. With the onset of COVID-19 lockdowns the Tech Savvy program moved to a hybrid model, and in 2020-2021 delivered 68 online learning sessions and 313 face to face sessions resulting in over 2000 seniors participating in the learning sessions. Face-to-face sessions were run in compliance with COVID-19 rules. Social distancing rules applied, face masks and sanitisers were provided.

The COVID-19 crisis highlighted the huge need for digital knowledge for our seniors. During the snap lockdowns, CALD seniors experienced isolation and uncertainty and this program helped alleviate the social disconnectedness. It is what makes this program one of the best programs that ECCNSW has ever delivered to CALD seniors.

The Tech Savvy Program attributes its success to the ECCNSW bilingual team who facilitated 68 online Tech Savvy sessions that reached over 500 CALD seniors. The online sessions were run in Arabic, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, Italian, and Turkish.

These sessions were the lifeline for many seniors who found themselves socially isolated. The program focused on assisting seniors to remain updated, informed and in touch with loved ones.



Cantonese TSS Riverwood Library

An expansion of the Tech Savvy program enabled the ECCNSW bilingual educators to collaborate with State Library to create online resources and YouTube videos on a range of topics in the following languages, Arabic, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean and Spanish.

The topics these resources covered included:

- ▶ introduction to smartphones
- ▶ how to download apps
- ▶ introduction to Zoom.

The YouTube videos are an amazing resource and were promoted during Tech Savvy classes. They can be found on the State library Website and ECCNSW website. [www.ecnsw.org.au](http://www.ecnsw.org.au)

In addition to the standard modules delivered in this program, the ECCNSW bilingual educators responded to the feedback provided by the seniors which identified further modules that needed to be delivered in the program.

These module topics included:

- ▶ how to connect with family and friends
- ▶ how to maximise the use of an iPhone / iPad



- ▶ how to download useful apps
- ▶ how to navigate the online government services such as the Seniors Card
- ▶ how to do online shopping
- ▶ how to download the Service NSW app and sign in and out of the QR Code
- ▶ creating awareness of cybersecurity.

These Tech Savvy modules were formulated to respond to current circumstances and are relevant to the unfolding situation of COVID-19.

Based on the feedback we received from the participants, these sessions proved to be immensely successful. Many expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to acquire digital skills while in the safety of their homes. They believe this newfound knowledge has empowered them to connect and keep in touch with loved ones and has given them the confidence and independence to access online information.

ECCNSW is proud to be delivering the Tech Savvy Program as it is a true lifeline to those CALD seniors during these difficult and dark days of the pandemic.

THE ECCNSW bilingual educators also experienced their "Wow!" moment in this program. Their feedback indicated that their teaching moments were both valuable and rewarding.



Arabic TSS Liverpool Library

For everyday technology users, it is easy to forget just how amazing technology really is. By creating the opportunities such as showing them their childhood home on Google Earth, or Face Timing with a close friend who they have not seen in years, we can gauge the huge impact the program has for so many seniors.

These are the incredible things technology enables them to do, and the more they engage with it, the easier it makes mastering it a breeze.

As a peak body representing culturally and linguistically diverse communities we fully support programs that assist those most vulnerable. In this case it is our elderly in our communities. This program is a success as it delivers in one's own language in a culturally appropriate and safe environment.

The design of the Tech Savvy for Seniors program is slow paced, and this is its strength as it appeals to older audiences. Repeating clear and concise instructions allows seniors to overcome the fear of the digital world. A one off lesson is not effective. Seniors attending the lessons have commented on how the need to repeat clear and concise learning materials on a regular basis is paramount, and that one-off sessions are very limited in their impact.

This year, in March, the ECNSW was involved with an independent consultant engaged to evaluate the Tech Savvy program. The following are excerpts of the feedback received from the participants involved in the Evaluation Report:

Comments from participants:

- ▶ *"I like the program very much and was very thankful that I was able to be in it. The fact that I could learn something that I always wanted to learn and, most of all in Korean, was amazing. I want to keep learning."* Korean
- ▶ *"Apart from learning new digital skills, I made friends that I met in the class. We became good friends, and that is one of the things that I am grateful for. We are a minority and seniors. It is not easy to meet people in a similar situation as me."* Greek
- ▶ *"I gained confidence throughout the sessions. The trainer encouraged us to try things which I was afraid of before attending the classes."* Spanish



- ▶ *"I appreciated the online classes that ECCNSW ran at that time. It was great to feel connected."* Mandarin
- ▶ *"Yes, the courses are an eye-opener to the digital world."* Hindi
- ▶ *"The Tech Savvy program has improved my technology skills. Attending this program opened my eyes. Now I can use my tablet and smartphone in many more ways, such as editing photos, translating between languages, checking train timetables and keeping updated on information."* Italian
- ▶ *"I can lookup Google maps and put together a plan for a weekend trip around Sydney."* Cantonese
- ▶ *"I am more comfortable and confident and want to practice what I have learnt; I am using apps that I downloaded and contacting friends with more options (i.e. texting, emailing, kakaotalk etc.)"* Korean
- ▶ *"The COVID-19 crisis made us rely much more on digital technology, especially to connect with family and friends via Zoom and to be kept updated about the restrictions and any information related to COVID."* Mandarin
- ▶ *"It is one of the best programs, handy. It enabled me to survive during the lockdown. I was able to log into a government website and online services."* Arabic



Spanish TSS Bonnyrigg Library



English TSS Bonnyrigg

- ▶ *"I thought I was too old to learn about computers, but attending this program made me realise that it is never too late to learn a new skill."* Vietnamese

The ECCNSW has many success stories with this program. And the following is a snapshot of what this program can do to change the lives of so many.

### Case studies

The trainer assisted a senior participant in changing the template in his email settings. When he returned to the class the week after, he said to the trainer that his daughter asked him how to change the template as she did not know how to do it. He was so happy and felt so proud he could assist his daughter.

Another senior participant receiving NDIS was so determined and came to the class in Bankstown every week. She was very hardworking and asked so many questions. At the end of the class, she was able to buy, click and collect and was very happy with finding local shops/ retailers online. Attending the program had boosted her confidence.

## Bin Trim Program 4

### Working with CALD businesses in NSW to reduce waste and increase recycling

Did you know that roughly 70% of the items placed in a business's general waste bin can be reused or recycled? From cardboard, paper and plastic through to food waste – so much of this ends up in the general waste bin, when it could be avoided, reused or recycled.

The NSW Environment Protection Authority's Bin Trim Program has been helping the NSW businesses to maximise their recycling, minimise their waste and potentially save money since 2015.

ECCNSW has been a grantee of all four rounds of the Bin Trim Program and has successfully completed three rounds and is currently completing the last round with significant results in waste diversion for 'hard to reach' ethnic small businesses in Sydney Metropolitan area and the Greater Sydney with densely populated multicultural communities.

ECCNSW primarily targeted food related businesses such as restaurants, cafes, bakeries, butcheries, and groceries and has broadened its reach to temples and churches, childcare centres, and pre-schools with large numbers of children and parents from CALD backgrounds. ECCNSW's bilingual Bin Trim assessors used existing networks to engage over 830 multicultural businesses diverting approximately 3,400 tonnes of waste from landfill per annum throughout all rounds of Bin Trim Program.



Nadiri Supermarket



Papaya Thai Eatery

Many of the ethnic businesses we found had no prior experience or knowledge of waste minimisation.

These businesses generate a large amount of food waste, as well as a large number of mixed recyclables and cardboard and paper.

Over the course of 2-3 months, ECCNSW's Bin Trim Program staff worked with each business in their own language, conducting waste assessments and providing action plans for implementation.

ECCNSW's bilingual Bin Trim assessors helped these businesses to recycle and implement a better waste management system, resulting in a cleaner environment and greater financial savings.

Raising further awareness about the program, ECCNSW has partnered with SBS Radio to develop a range of interviews about the program in Arabic, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Tamil and Thai languages. Articles have also been published to promote the program in one of the leading Korean community newspapers and an Indian community newspaper.

The bilingual Bin Trim team at the ECCNSW has played a critical role in delivering and educating the ethnic businesses on the importance of waste separation and recycling. With this input, the level of awareness has been raised significantly and people's behaviour is continuing to change in ethnic communities.



## 'Vote Talk' Live! Program

The ECCNSW is pleased to report that the *Vote Talk* program was refunded to deliver a second series of workshops and podcasts in 2021.

The program received an additional round of funding support from the Australian Electoral Commission, who found the first series of the program incredibly valuable and a wonderful opportunity to engage with our CALD seniors.

An additional nine bilingual facilitators representing eight languages have been engaged to facilitate conversations in the community about voting and elections.

The facilitators have completed the intensive two-day *Vote Talk* training and assessment program to prepare them to facilitate conversations with the community in 2021/2022.

The training was facilitated by the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW and accompanied by Jaime Garrido, Assistant Director, Community, and International Engagement for the Australian Electoral Commission.

A *Vote Talk* Support Officer has joined the *Vote Talk* team and has been guiding the new bilingual facilitators through the program's various stages of development.

The bilingual facilitators recruited for this round have completed the following:

- ▶ Recorded conversations with Chinese speaking families
- ▶ Focused on working with Chinese speaking health and aged care professionals
- ▶ Worked with the Urdu speaking community
- ▶ Conducted interviews with the Tamil speaking community including community leaders and radio hosts
- ▶ Hosted conversations with the Nepalese speaking community
- ▶ Engaged in conversations with the Arabic speaking community



Training of the *Vote Talk* bilingual facilitators

- ▶ Hosted conversations with the Aboriginal speaking members of the community across regional NSW
- ▶ Interviewed members from the Vietnamese community
- ▶ Facilitated English conversations with CALD leaders and members from diverse communities.

The ECCNSW has engaged a sound editor for the podcasts and over 12 bilingual facilitators who are responsible for content checking and ensuring the podcasts meet the program's quality assessment standards.

The program is preparing to finalise all podcasts and materials in time for the next federal elections.

### COVID-19 challenges

The program was affected by the global pandemic and the lockdowns issued across NSW in 2021. Social distancing requirements meant that face to face conversations and recordings could not be conducted. The bilingual facilitators were able to identify other recording strategies such as utilizing Zoom software and mobile phone recording devices. Although these were used, the program is aiming to finalise its final series of live conversations in time for the federal election schedule.



## Website and social media improvements

As part of the 2021 improvements, the original *Vote Talk* program website was upgraded and now features new graphics, bilingual materials, and resources.

Completed podcasts and radio recording will also be uploaded in time for an election announcement.

A social marketing and media campaign is also scheduled to be rolled out during the live on-air radio recordings. A final session of training for the bilingual facilitators is scheduled at the end of 2021 to prepare them for their respective radio programs.

The *Vote Talk* program will also deliver a marketing media communications strategy to encourage people from CALD backgrounds to apply for work at the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) during the election period. Feedback received by the ECCNSW clearly indicated that an increase in personnel at polling booths who speak different languages improves the participation rate of CALD communities.

## Program focus and key messages

The program continues to focus on delivering simple easy to understand messages about your rights to vote, how to vote, and making your vote count.

Radio scripts are designed to remind people of CALD backgrounds of their right to vote as citizens and to have a say as to how their country, state and committees are governed. It also encourages communities to have their own conversations with their friends, families, neighbours, and colleagues about how voting works in Australia.

Over forty podcasts in seven languages are currently in the editing and production phase and will be ready to be presented to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for approval before they are disseminated across the *Vote Talk* website and media outlets.

While there are several translated materials available through the AEC website, the *Vote Talk* program is delivering key messages about voting, using the art of storytelling and community conversations.

Through interactive dialogue with community leaders, friends and neighbours, bilingual facilitators can improve their listener's knowledge and understanding of how the election process works.

The ECCNSW would like to emphasise that the *Vote Talk* program is not about who to vote for, or which party to follow. The program is about raising awareness and educating diverse communities about how to make informed decisions during election times. This includes understanding how to fill out the ballot papers correctly, so they are informed and confident to participate in Australian electoral processes.



## Palliative Care collaboration with NSW Health and Carers NSW

The ECCNSW would like to acknowledge and thank NSW Health and Carers NSW for the opportunity to be part of 'In Our Own Voices', podcasts about palliative care delivered in Arabic, Chinese, Hindi and English.

This project aimed to develop in-language resources in Arabic, Chinese, Hindi and English, to assist the community to break down the stigma and unpack the negative perceptions diverse communities have about palliative care by assisting them to find ways to reach out and seek help from their palliative care team. With a focus on breaking down cultural barriers, this exciting program utilised the voices and experiences of carers. Through podcasts and audio recordings, the program recorded heartfelt conversations featuring carers from culturally diverse backgrounds sharing their personal experiences of palliative care whilst supporting a friend or family member living with a life-limiting illness.

The name of this resource was inspired by the original ECCNSW digital CALD storybook titled 'In My Own Words', developed by the members of the NSW Multicultural Access Network and ECCNSW. The Carers NSW resource will become part of the 'In My Own Words' library. This library focuses on the carer delivering key messages derived from their lived experiences, thus building carer's confidence knowing they were supported with high levels of cultural expertise.



Sharing a lived experience



ECCNSW bilingual facilitator supporting a podcast recording of a heartfelt conversation

### Authentic community engagement

ECCNSW applies principles of authentic engagement through its skilled and talented ECCNSW bilingual facilitators who are experienced in community engagement and leading community conversations via face-to-face conversations, telephone and on line Zoom. The COVID-19 restrictions meant that alternatives to face-to-face were, at times, required. The new environment meant the sound quality of the recordings were varied, however, the rich content and stories captured are incredibly valuable, inspirational, and heartfelt.

### Webpage design and multilingual blog

ECCNSW was also engaged on behalf of Carers NSW to design a webpage for the CALD palliative care podcasts to showcase the resources developed by this initiative. This includes various fact sheets and the eLearning platform developed by Carers NSW.

In addition to the podcasts, an in-language blog space posts in-language articles fortnightly to the blog page, aiming at a total of sixty articles in Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin) and Hindi. This will assist the ongoing promotion, marketing and engagement of these communities over the next 12 months.

The podcasts and website page will be launched by Carers NSW at the end of 2021.



Photos above: Team leader Mariette Mikhael, and Bilingual facilitators Rageed Tater, Wenying Han and Anju Mathur delivered outstanding cross-cultural facilitation and research, contributing to the development of over 24 in language podcasts, featuring the stories and voices of carers and family members and their messages about palliative care.

This initiative was funded by NSW Health, auspiced and co-ordinated by Carers NSW with the support and partnership of the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW.

### About ECCNSW's Bilingual facilitators

The ECCNSW Arabic speaking, Chinese speaking, Hindi speaking and English speaking facilitators selected for the program are highly skilled, receptive and are recognised for their cultural nuances that can play a significant role in how carers from CALD communities communicate their views about palliative care. These skilled facilitators have an innate ability for language-rich expression, which assisted them to convey concepts into culturally appropriate messages.

The Arabic, Chinese, and Hindi carers who spoke English an additional language, collaborated well with the bilingual facilitators who offered support when conveying information or giving assistance in communicating their ideas and concepts about palliative care. It was important to carefully select facilitators who had language, cultural and research expertise and who were able to work closely with the Arabic, Chinese or Hindi carers to capture their heartfelt stories about palliative care.

The interview process allowed carers to share the stories that matter the most to them, giving a voice to previously silenced narratives around palliative care. In each case, bilingual facilitators helped bridge these cultural gaps for a more inclusive and culturally sensitive experience.

In this way, carers received high quality support from people with a deep understanding of their culture and language.

The ECCNSW worked closely with the Carers NSW Co ordinator of the project. An Advisory group was established to provide input into the design and implementation of the project aimed at improving service delivery for CALD carers. The Advisory group consisted of representatives from peak bodies and organisations who were experienced in working with the CALD community and palliative care health professionals.



## 2021 Census for CALD Communities

Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW partnered with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to reach out to 5 CALD community groups to assist them to participate in the Census 2021.

With the COVID-19 crisis, more specifically the lockdown measures in NSW, all the face-to-face assistance through the "fill in the form" sessions and pop-up hubs were cancelled.

Hence the ABS reached out to community organisations and services connected with communities, to support them to ensure the Census was completed so that data would be representative of CALD communities.

The ECCNSW engaged with ABS and focused on addressing barriers faced by each of these specific communities. Although these differ between cohorts, the identified common barriers include:

- ▶ Limited English language proficiency
- ▶ Lack of awareness of the Census and the obligation to participate
- ▶ Concerns about confidentiality and privacy
- ▶ Misunderstanding of the Census questions
- ▶ Low digital literacy concerns and literacy barriers within the language
- ▶ Fear or mistrust in government
- ▶ Concerns about repercussions

The ECCNSW bilingual educators from the following 5 languages groups, Arabic, Assyrian, Vietnamese, Korean

and Vietnamese, were engaged by ABS to become "prompters" of the Census.

Prior to engaging in the role as "prompters" they attended a train the trainer Zoom workshop which enabled them to better understand the purpose and significance of Census data.

From that point on until the night of the 10th of August 2021, the ECCNSW bilingual educators, as ABS "prompters", became the voice of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Their role was to utilise communication channels such as the phone, emails, social media, and other applications such as WeChat to reach out to networks and community members and remind and encourage them to participate in the Census.

By doing this, the ABS gathered the necessary data and information to help governments to better prepare for the future and provide valuable insights for informed decisions regarding improving services in the community.

The ECCNSW is proud to have been a part of the Census process to ensure everyone is counted and that cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity is captured and is reflective of Australia's rich tapestry.



Christine Ahn, Korean educator





## Representations, consultations and collaborations

As a statewide peak body, the ECCNSW continues to advocate and provide a consultative role in addressing issues and concerns in communities.

The following list demonstrates just some of the various government and non government advisory groups, meetings, networks and Roundtables the ECCNSW Board, staff and CEO actively participated in over the past year:

### Representations

FECCA Executive Committee

Aged Care Liaison Group – Department of Health

Ausgrid – Customer Consultative Committee

Australian Hate Crime Network – Western Sydney University

CALD Reference group – NSW Electoral Commission

Catholic Immigration Advisory Group – Sydney Archdiocese

Community Advisory Committee – Sydney Institute of Community Languages Education (SICLE) – University of Sydney

Community Engagement Advisory Committee – Australasian College of Dermatologists

Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault Ministerial Council – NSW Government

Expert Reference Group – NSW Ageing and Disability Commission

Education & Training Temporary Residents Program – Exemption Review Panel – NSW Department of Education

Energy & Water Ombudsman (EWON) NSW

Energy Consumer Australia’s Consumer Reference Group

Energy Council of Australia

Jemena Consumer Council

Multicultural NSW’s Leaders in Cultural Diversity (LinCD) Program

Multicultural NSW Regional Advisory Councils (RACS)

Multicultural Advisory Group – NSW Department of Communities and Justice

Multicultural Education Advisory Group- NSW Department of Education

Multicultural Youth Network (MYAN)

National Round Table on Energy

Sydney Water Consultative Group (Community Engagement)

NSW Dept of Planning & Industry and Environment – Energy & Climate Change Reference Group

### Collaborations

Multicultural Disability Advocacy Services

Ethnic Communities Council Victoria

Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia

Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland

Ethnic Communities Council of Northern Territory

Ethnic Communities Council of Tasmania

Ethnic Communities Council of South Australia

NSW Cancer Institute

Western Sydney University

Settlement Services International

National Ethnic Disability Association

NAVITAS

SBS Radio

Macquarie University

Inner West Council, Canterbury/Bankstown Council, Blacktown Council, Willoughby Council, Cumberland Council, Ryde Council

Office of Responsible Gambling

Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre

Sydney Institute of Women, Children, and their Families

NEMBC

Sydney Local Area Health Services

Dementia Australia

Muslim Women’s Association

Disability Royal Commission

Safe Work NSW

Department of Home Affairs

Carers NSW

Small Business Association

ACON

NSW Environment Protection Authority

South Metropolitan Cemeteries

Local Government NSW

Service NSW

Deakin University

Amnesty International

Harmony Alliance

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre

NSW State Library

Sydney Olympic Park Authority



## Energy Advocacy

This year has seen a changed focus for ECCNSW in its Energy Advocacy role across the National Energy Market (the NEM). The uncertainties and challenges of COVID 19 has necessitated the regulators of the NEM to focus carefully on ensuring that the most vulnerable energy consumers are adequately supported and protected as we negotiate the difficulties of lockdowns, loss of employment, appropriate financial support and the pandemic more generally. These regulators are the Essential Services Commission (ESCV) in Victoria and the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) in the other eastern states and they have instituted binding statements of expectations for energy businesses to guide their interactions with their customers. There have been several iterations of these Statements of Expectations (SOE) over the course of the pandemic and they have included pauses on disconnections for non-payment as well as a range of other measures to support consumers. The ECCNSW Energy Advocate has been a member of the Consultative Committee which assisted and helped guide the Statement of Expectations.

Our bilingual facilitators assisted the AER in their provision of appropriate information in language about the expectations placed on energy businesses and the provision of support for consumers outlined in the Statement of Expectations. They have also been engaged by the AER to organise and conduct focus groups in several languages around energy bill understanding and the design of more consumer accessible bills.

Over the last year there has been a renewed focus on energy efficiency standards for new and existing housing stock. ECCNSW is a member of the Healthy Affordable Housing Coalition (HAH) and there have been a range of initiatives for minimum energy efficiency standards for new housing as well as some movement towards similar minimum standards for existing housing, including rental housing stock.

Every five years the regulated energy businesses (the distribution and transmission businesses – the ‘poles and wires’ businesses) in each state have to get approval for the next five year’s revenue expectations from the AER. These are complex financial and



technical documents and are assessed by the AER which determines how much each business can recover from consumers over the five-year period. This process is called a ‘revenue reset’ and has just finished in Victoria and is about to start in NSW. The ECCNSW Energy Advocate was involved in the Victorian consultations and has started the consultation process with the NSW businesses, Ausgrid, Endeavour, Essential and Transgrid as they plan their revenue requirements for the 2024-2029 period.

Extensive consultation has been initiated by all the NSW businesses as a co-design process with stakeholders, including the ECCNSW Energy Advocate. These businesses are all planning to institute in-language engagement with CALD consumers, both domestic and small business and we anticipate that ECCNSW bi-lingual facilitators will be an integral part of that consultation and research. We anticipate a very busy year of engagement with CALD energy consumers in 2021-2022.

Our Energy Advocate is a member of a range of energy business customer consultative councils and groups (Ausgrid, AGL, Endeavour, Jemena Gas Network, SA Power Networks and Transgrid). The Advocate is also a member of the AER Customer Consultative Group (AER CCG) and its Working Group looking at the implications of Covid19 across the NEM. The Energy Advocate is also a member of the Healthy and Affordable Homes Coalition (HAH) as well as joining the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) and the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) Consumer Forums and the Energy and Water Ombudsman Consultative Council on a regular basis.

# Media and Communications

Since the beginning of the pandemic, in March 2020, ECCNSW media team created a dedicated COVID-19 webpage with important information about restrictions guidelines, health care information and support, testing, vaccination roadmap, financial and mental health support, as well as all the updates provided by NSW Health with links to information in near 60 languages.

The COVID page has been updated on a daily basis with relevant information, which was also shared on our Social Media channels.

During the latest lockdown we placed special emphasis on sharing information regarding domestic violence support resources, vaccines and roadmap for easing restrictions in NSW.

Our newsletter, website as well as Facebook and Twitter accounts were the platforms used to share these important messages in the community.

We also published and shared media releases around the beginning of the lockdown, calling the NSW government for immediate, effective engagement with diverse communities on COVID-19. ECCNSW's



Chair, Peter Doukas OAM, was interviewed on ABC radio about this matter given that the centre of the outbreak shifted from the eastern suburbs to Sydney's south western suburbs and calling on the state government to strike the right balance in its messaging and measures to contain the outbreak.

A very important media release was issued calling on the Federal Government to reassess the language preconditions for partner visas delineating English proficiency required by both applicants and their sponsors. ECCNSW's Chair called for "government to support ways for migrants to strengthen their English and contribute to life in Australia rather than making it an onerous and unnecessary precondition which will have the effect of undermining rather than bolstering local families".

One of our main social media campaigns was launched to promote the Census. ECCNSW partnered with the ABS office to recruit Local Engagement Officers (LEOs) from CALD backgrounds. Unfortunately these LEAs were not able to be engaged due to the snap lockdown.

Our newsletter is growing in subscriptions, as well as our social media platforms are gaining followers in a consistent trend. If you haven't engaged...give it a go!

# Abridged Accounts

The abridged income statement and balance sheet for the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW Inc (ABN: 66 291 586 945) for the year ended 30 June 2021 have been prepared from the audited financial statement approved by the Management Committee, who are responsible for these financial statements as well as the information they contain. The unabridged accounts and audit report by Meagher Howard & Wright may be obtained from the Council.



Mr. Emanuel Valageorgiou, Treasurer

## Income Statement for the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	FY 2021 \$	FY 2020 \$
<b>INCOME</b>		
Grants	2,425,763	2,087,381
Interest Received	9,838	27,575
Membership Fees	6,378	8,368
Rent Income	103,026	109,809
Unexpended Funds Rollover	(128,692)	(798,444)
Sundry Income & Service Fees	138,992	101,524
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2,555,304</b>	<b>1,536,212</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Administration	170,197	97,383
Audit Fees	3,700	3,700
Bank Charges	765	596
Building Expense	60,101	79,640
Computer, Support & Software	62,731	67,633
Insurance	10,090	15,067
Media & Web Design	41,227	70,331
Employees & Contractors Expenses	2,135,598	1,151,565
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>2,484,408</b>	<b>1,485,915</b>
Surplus (Deficit) before income tax	70,896	50,298
Surplus (Deficit) after income tax	70,896	50,298
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	1,298,054	1,247,755
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	1,368,950	1,298,054



## Balance Sheet 30 June 2021

	FY 2021 \$	FY 2020 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,394,817	2,244,774
Trade and Other Receivables	102,246	54,887
Prepayments	15,083	11,266
Total CURRENT ASSETS	2,512,146	2,310,927
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, Plants and equipment	2,300,000	2,300,001
Total NON-CURRENT ASSETS	2,300,000	2,300,001
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>4,812,146</b>	<b>4,610,928</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and Other Payables	110,763	174,891
Provision for Employees Other	174,257	108,498
Unexpended Funds Rollover next year	1,318,177	1,189,485
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,603,197	1,472,874
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Building Improvement Reserve	50,000	50,000
Total NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	50,000	50,000
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1,653,197</b>	<b>1,522,874</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>3,158,950</b>	<b>3,088,054</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Retained Earnings	1,368,950	1,298,054
Reserves	1,790,000	1,790,000
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>3,158,950</b>	<b>3,088,054</b>

# Board of Management

The ECCNSW Board of Management is a subset of the Members' Forum and includes all office bearers. The Board of Management's responsibility is to oversee the governance of the association in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 and the ECCNSW Constitution on behalf of its members. Some of the key activities of the Board include:

- ▶ Ensuring a strategic plan is developed to secure a sustainable future that enacts the objects of the ECCNSW Constitution
- ▶ Monitoring progress against the strategic plan
- ▶ Managing finances and resourcing the strategic plan
- ▶ Meeting all legal requirements
- ▶ Ensuring the organisation has policies and procedures in place
- ▶ Managing risk

## **Peter Doukas OAM** **Chair**

Elected Chair in 2013 and re-elected in 2015 and 2019, Peter Doukas was the youngest ever Chair of the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW. He also served as Secretary between 2009 and 2013 and presided over significant changes to the internal governance structure of the organisation. Mr Doukas is managing Director of law firm Denison Toyer, based in the Sydney CBD and operating mainly in commercial, administrative and estates law. He has worked in corporate governance since 2006 and has provided extensive advice to associations, and NGOs around compliance and governance. He is currently the Senior Deputy Chair of FECCA and serves on various other non-profit boards.



## **Fiona Mouhtaris** **Deputy Chair**

Ms Mouhtaris elected as Deputy Chair in 2019 has been a member of the ECCNSW since 2004 and was first elected on the Board in 2007. She is an experienced not-for-profit

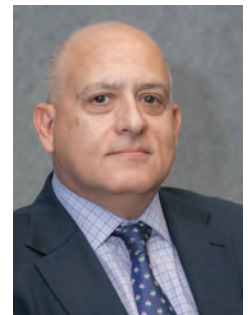


board member having held a variety of positions in ECCNSW including Executive Member, Assistant Treasurer and Secretary.

Ms Mouhtaris is a member of the Greek Orthodox Church Sts Constantine and Helen Ladies Auxiliary. Ms Mouhtaris has completed a Commerce degree majoring in marketing and is a practising solicitor. She practices in a variety of areas of law including property, criminal, family, wills & estates and litigation. She is a passionate advocate of multiculturalism, women's rights, and social cohesion.

## **Emanuel Valageorgiou** **Treasurer**

Elected as Treasurer in 2017 and member of the Board since 2005, he has served as Secretary and was Chair from 2011-2013. Mr Valageorgiou is an experienced NFP board director and formerly a senior executive with TransGrid, who provides HR and change management consulting services to NFPs. He is Chair of Multicultural Care and the President of Samian Brotherhood of Sydney & NSW Ltd and Director of Glory Football Club with extensive experience in organisations dealing with multicultural issues, aged and disability care, youth and sport.



## **Glen Falkenstein** **Secretary**

Elected in 2019 as Secretary, Glen served as the ECCNSW Youth Chair through 2015-2019. He is a Solicitor practising in Not-for-profit law and journalist; having worked as a policy analyst and legal advocate for asylum seekers in Australia and overseas. Glen is a co-founder of the Australian Youth Parliament of the World's Religions and former Executive Member of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies.



### **Joshua Moses Youth Chair**

Elected in 2019 as Youth Chair. Joshua is a government policy consultant, Director of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, Vice President of the NSW Council of Christians and Jews, and Youth PoWR board member.



### **Anthony Alexandrou Assistant Treasurer**

Elected as a Board member in 2019. Started an accountancy firm approximately 50 years ago.

Holder of a FCPA Certificate and a CPA member for almost the same time as he has been practicing. He is also a Registered Auditor and Registered Tax Agent.



### **Christine Lynch OAM Assistant Secretary**

Elected 2015 as board member and Members' Forum member since 2012. Member of AHEPA Australia Ltd 50 years, served as national president 2013-2015. A member of the Greek Young Matrons Association since 1984 (raising funds for children's hospital and Greek Archdiocese), committee member of St Basil's Ladies Auxiliary for over 20 years, member of the Hellenic Women of Sydney committee raising funds to provide food, clothing, pharmaceuticals for orphanages in Greece. Chairperson of the AHEPA National Educational Fund Inc, member of the AHEPA Australia National Council, Secretary of the AHEPA Medical Foundation Inc. Ahepan of the year 2007. Member of the St Sophia Restoration Fundraising Committee under the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW, and a member of the Hellenic Lyceum. Attended Sydney TAFE Ultimo with Diploma in Floristry and Advanced Floristry. Retired business person.



### **The Late Tasha Vanos OAM JP, Assistant Secretary**

The late Tasha Vanos OAM was an ECCNSW member with various governance positions for over thirty years. He held many positions during his esteemed life including National President of AHEPA Australia, Secretary of AHEPA NSW, Chairman of the AHEPA Medical Foundation Inc., Chairman Hellenic Tribute Inc. Sydney Olympics (Discobolus) and past President of the Castellorizian Club. He is also committee member for the Restoration of St. Sophia Church Darlinghurst and donor. A life of service. May he Rest in peace.



### **Jack Passaris OAM Foundation & Life Member**

Jack Passaris OAM has been an ECCNSW office bearer for 46 years. He is an ECCNSW foundation and life member and was present at the mass rally of all ethnic communities at Sydney Town Hall in 1975 where ECCNSW was established before the Hon. Gough Whitlam and the Hon. Malcolm Fraser. Mr Passaris has dedicated his time and efforts to the ECCNSW and to multiculturalism in general for over four decades. His passion for multiculturalism and social cohesion is evident in his involvement on various boards and organisations. He has extensive experience on not-for-profit boards and community organisations. Mr Passaris was the Chair of Multicultural Care from 2003-2020 and is currently a Director. He is the President of the Newtown Greek Orthodox Parish, Treasurer and Trustee of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia Consolidated Trust, former Marrickville Council Deputy Mayor having served in local council for 19 years, Trustee of the Foundation for Hellenic Studies (UNSW) and various other positions. Mr Passaris was awarded the Order of Australia medal for his services to the community particularly through ECCNSW and local Government. In 2014 Mr Passaris was also awarded the NSW Premier's Lifetime Multicultural Community Service Medal. He has demonstrated his ongoing and strong commitment to multiculturalism in Australia and community life.





### Ada Cheng

Ada Cheng elected as Board member in 2019 is a qualified Social Worker and holds a Master degree in Community Management. Ada has over 25 years of experience in Aged Care Management and has a proven track record in service planning and development. Ada serves as the CEO of Australian Nursing Home Foundation. Ada was on the Steering Committee of the National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy for People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Backgrounds which supports the implementation of the Living Longer Living Better Aged Care Reforms. She also served on the CALD Aged Care Strategy Working Group (2015-17) to support and guide on-going implementation of the Strategy.



### Albert Vella OAM

Elected in 2019, Albert is former President of the NSW Federation of Community Language Schools, where he served for 15 years to ensure that communities across the Inner West of Sydney were able to maintain their cultural traditions whilst also participating in modern Australian life. He is a founding member of the Polish School of Sydney and member of the Multicultural NSW Advisory Board.



### Amir Salem OAM

Elected as Board member in 2019, Amir has more than 30 years' experience in the multicultural services, including teaching and program management of TAFE Multicultural Education program and community engagement. He was also the lead tutor on a project which developed a training program for Australian business people conducting business in Asia and the Middle East. Amir provided training to Australian Business teams deployed in Egypt, and worked as a bilingual tutor to a range of courses in TAFE NSW and has been tutoring



a 'Cultural awareness program' for the Australian Peacekeeping troops, Department of Defence. He is also a Facilitator at STARTTS (Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors) for its programs Families in Cultural Transition.

Amir is the president of the Australian Egyptian Council Forum and a board member of various community organisations and advisory committees.

### Indrajit Khuman

Elected to the Board in 2019. Served in various Board governance positions for over thirty years. Active in Sikh community. Established first Sikh Gurdwara in north shore Sydney. Passionate about multiculturalism. Performed over the years in Sydney Shell Folkloric festival. Former member of ministerial consultative committee. Counter chair of Care Worldwide, a community welfare organisation.



### Maria Georgiou

Elected 2013. Mrs Georgiou is a primary school teacher at an inner-city independent school. With experience in a variety of voluntary positions, she has a strong interest in multiculturalism and is passionate about playing a role in educating today's youth about the diverse world we live in.



### Sam Pashalis

Elected to the Members' Forum in 2012 and as a Board Member in 2017. Mr. Pashalis is the Secretary of the Greek Orthodox Parish and Community of Belmore 'All Saints', and a Committee Member of various heritage and philanthropic associations. With a keen interest in understanding the multicultural foundations of our society, he is an advocate for the use of technology as a unifying resource towards that goal. Mr. Pashalis holds an Engineering degree and is employed in the ICT industry as a Senior Consultant.



## Members' Forum 2020-2021

Abbas Alvi  
 Ada Cheng  
 Albert Vella OAM  
 Amir Salem OAM  
 Andrew Georgiou  
 Anthony Alexandrou  
 Arbin Lal  
 Carol Pavlou  
 Chris Georgiou  
 Christine Lynch OAM  
 Con Pavlou  
 Dean Albanakis  
 Emanuel Valageorgiou  
 Ernest Kulauzovic  
 Fiona Mouhtaridis  
 Fotini Loukis  
 George Bouteris  
 Georgia Anastasopoulos  
 Glen Falkenstein  
 Helen Albanakis

Indarjit Khuman  
 Irene Passaris  
 Jack Passaris OAM  
 Jon Soemarjono  
 Joshua Moses  
 Leila Papapetros  
 Lia Albanakis  
 Mahrukh Batliwalla  
 Maria Georgiou  
 Maria Lills  
 Maria Markos  
 Marta Terracciano  
 Mary Karras  
 Nick Anastasopoulos  
 Patrice Laskas  
 Paul Tsanis  
 Peter Doukas OAM  
 Peter Onisforou  
 Phil Chau  
 Sajana Nand

Sam Pashalis  
 Sarosh Batliwalla  
 Steve Mouhtaridis  
 Siddique Panwala  
 The late Tasha Vanos OAM  
 Tolly Saivanidis  
 Vasiliki Laskas

## Life Membership Bestowed

George Wojak AO, MBE  
 Eddie Raiss  
 Ross Tzannes AM  
 Angela Chan  
 Jack Passaris OAM  
 Ian Lacey AM  
 Josie Lacey OAM  
 George Varughese  
 Anthony Pun OAM

## Staff and Volunteers

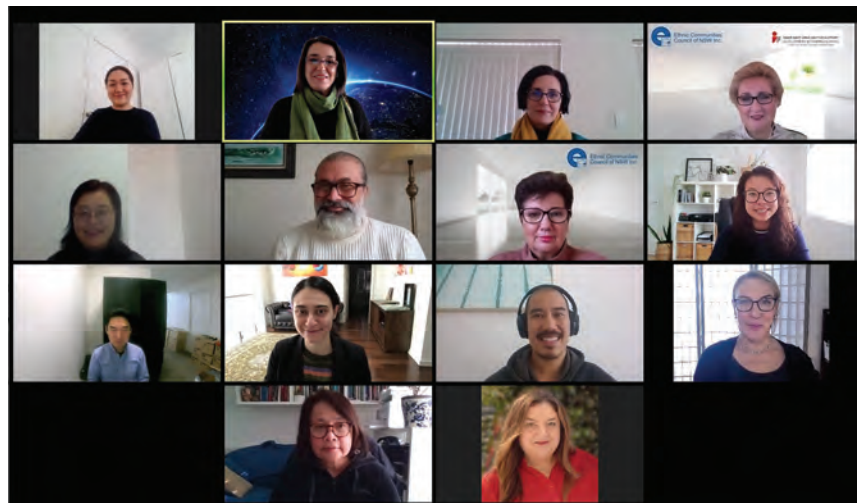
### Staff

Mary Karras  
*Chief Executive Officer*

Terrie Leoleos  
*NSW State Wide Multicultural Access Officer; Manager of Our Journeys Disability Project & Vote Talk Program*

Marina Antonas  
*Inner West Sector Support Development and Training Co ordinator*

Jenny Bray  
*National Program Manager Speak My Language (Disability)*



Esther Lozano  
*Digital Communications*

Natalie Phan  
*Inner West Sector Support  
Development and Training  
SSD Support Officer*

Louise Easson  
*Media and Communications Officer*

Mariette Mikhael  
*Project Co ordinator*

Christine Ahn  
*Project Co ordinator*

Fadi Nemme  
*Project Co ordinator*

Iain Maitland  
*Energy Advocate*

Patricia Vaz  
*Vote Talk Support Officer*

Patrick Wang  
*Financial Officer*

Karen Li  
*Administration Officer*

Jude Borromeo  
*Training Development and  
Communications Officer  
Speak My Language (Disability)*

Vanessa Papastavros  
*Communications and Engagement  
Officer  
Speak My Language (Disability)*

Teresa de Leon  
*NSW/ACT Project Co ordinator  
Speak My Language (Disability)*

## Bilingual Educators

### *Arabic*

Anwar Yousif  
Rageed Tater  
Munzer Emad  
George Georgees  
Yasmin Ibrahim Mohamed

### *Cantonese/ Mandarin*

Haiyan Li  
Natalie Chau

### *Dinka*

Emmanuel Kondok  
Mayuen Arop

### *Greek*

Antonios Ampatzis

### *Gujarati*

Daksha Prasad

### *Hindi*

Patricia Vaz

### *Italian*

Francesca Cutrupi

### *Korean*

John Kim  
Insang Yu  
Elizabeth Park

### *Mandarin*

Ye Lu  
Jing Grace Lu  
Wenyang Han

### *Nepalese*

Rishi Acharya

### *Punjabi*

Arvind P Issar  
Ashok Kumar

### *Spanish*

Jimena Escobar

### *Sudanese*

Elnayal Abdelrahim  
Mayuen Arop

### *Tamil*

Mani Ramasamy  
Alex Balasanthiran  
Kumar (Dharmarajah  
Dharmakumar)

### *Thai*

Kanyarat Tresise

### *Turkish*

Adnan Alca

### *Urdu*

Marium Khan

### *Vietnamese*

Phung Ngo  
Le-Tam Tu  
Thi Huong Phan

## ECCNSW work placements

Due to the COVID restrictions there were no intern or work placements for this period.

**We thank the many  
volunteers who give  
of their time so  
graciously for the  
Ethnic Communities'  
Council of NSW**