

2010



Annual Report

Mission Statement

*Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre
is a community-based non-profit
organisation established to actively
and directly relieve the situation
of immigrants and refugees whose
social condition renders them
disadvantaged.*

Chairmans Report

On behalf of the Management Committee and the team at Liverpool MRC, I take pleasure in presenting my brief Annual Report for 2010.

Every year we write how busy and challenging our year has been, and again this is no exception. Our early expectations were that we were looking to a difficult financial year with some constriction of funding, but the reality has been quite different. The Therapeutic Arts Project from FAHCSIA continued to be funded and we received increased support from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship for Complex Case Services. We find ourselves in an enhanced financial position. Sound decisions and good work continue to be recognised and supported and we thank all our stakeholders for their recognition of this.

In the last year we have faced an increase in client needs and demands on our immediate client contact service. This has resulted in internal resources being shifted to caseworkers, together with the information and referral role that this provides, and a decrease in the community capacity and development services. This may have resulted in the LMRC being less visible in networks and projects, though the Centre continues in the vital work of providing settlement support to our clients.

We have seen a rise of more than 50% over the last year of casework services provided, with the biggest increase of issues being financial distress, impacts on family support matters, accommodation stability and the ability to study English and further education. Unfortunately, the ability to find referral agencies to cope with this demand has not caught up with this increase. In fact, the level of support the Liverpool area has for community services has not kept up with the growth in numbers or need for the area, for the whole community, let alone that faced by migrants and refugees.

The future for the LMRC in the immediate term appears secure by way of financial support, though the need continues to outstrip capacity; we are not alone in this plight. We will in the coming years reassert our community development visibility and involvement with networks.

Our strategic plan, which we redeveloped only recently, has identified our want to grow in family support program, youth services and aged support services. It recognised the unique role we have in supporting other services in the area and we hope the future can realise our potential.

I again would like to thank the team the Liverpool MRC for their hard work, and would like in particular to thank Pietty Greenwood and Alcina Desouza for their hard work, and would like to note the departure of a long term staff member, Dany Ya, who has gone to greener pastures at Liverpool Council.

Vincent Ogu
Chairperson

Liverpool at a glance

4108 clients serviced at the centre

258 students attended

- 4 English classes for beginners and intermediate level
- 4 Introduction to Computing classes - English
- 2 Introduction to Computing classes - Vietnamese
- 2 Introduction to Floristry classes
- 2 Introduction to Sewing classes

Tax Help Program (98 clients)

25 Volunteer Placements including Student Placement

28 Ethnic Groups are using our Meeting Room Facility

Outreach Services to

- Warrick Farm “Paint and Play” Playgroup
- Lurnea and Miller Intensive English Language Centres
- Miller Hub

Information Sessions on

- Youth Services
- Centrelink
- Democracy & Australian Parliament
- Immigration and Settlement
- Women’s Health Issues
- Legal Rights and Responsibilities
- Financial Management
- Housing
- Tenancy
- Volunteering
- Understanding NSW Health System
- Employment workshops

CVS continued for its 17th Consecutive Year

Now with 25 funded Places

5 Playgroups operating in Liverpool, Hinchinbrook

- 1 language-specific playgroup
- 4 Multicultural playgroups
- 102 families; 123 children enrolled

Supporting Community Events

- Nigerian Cultural Day
- Timorese Cultural Day
- Sudanese Cultural Day
- Congolese Cultural Day
- Kurdish Cultural day

In Partnership with other Community Organisations, undertake the following various social activities:

- Australian Mandaean Cultural Club
- Samoan Community
- Liverpool Australian Sudanese Community Inc
- Tongan Catholic Community
- The Federation of the Congolese Community of NSW
- Australian Ethiopian Community
- Good Family Welfare Association
- United Kurdish Association

Supported the following Networks:

- Liverpool Migrant & Refugee Interagency
- Community Sector Management Forum
- Settlement Council of Australia
- Warwick Farm Services Network
- Liverpool Youth Workers Network
- Liverpool Family & Children's Service Interagency
- 2168 Committee
- Liverpools Womens Health Centre

With thanks to our Funding Bodies

- Department of Immigration and Citizenship
- Department of Health and Ageing
- Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- Community Relations Commission
- Department of Housing
- Families NSW
- Liverpool City Council

Management committee members: 2009 - 2010

Dr. Vincent Ogu	–	Chairperson
Peter Harrison	–	Deputy Chairperson
Haidar Abdalla	–	Treasurer
Blanca Arely Espinoza	–	Secretary
Dr. Amad Mtashar	–	Member
David Bell	–	Member
Daly Tribulani	–	Member
Abdul Wahab Talabani	–	Member
Casimir Ugochukwu	–	Member
Martha Mansah	–	Member
Councillor Mazhar Hadid	–	Ex-Officio Liverpool City Council
Simon Fox	–	Ex-Officio Liverpool City Council

Sessional workers

Paola Sayegh	–	Melkite Welfare Association
Sai Rokomaqisa	–	Pacific Island Council
Huy Nguyen	–	Vietnamese Community in Australia
Bing Cai	–	Chinese Migrant Welfare Association
Michael Kwiatkowski	–	Spanish and Latin American Association for Social Assistance
Louay Moustapha	–	Lebanese Community Council of NSW
Behrooz Gouniai	–	Iranian Community Organisation
Allan Hornery	–	Hon. Dana Vale's Office - Member for Hughes
Fatima Kaurouche	–	Sydney Community College

Child Care workers

Azeena Khan, Musharrat	Xuan Thi Bui
Lynette Pressman	Mariam Dabboussy
Ximena Reyes	Yamane Fayed
Jennifer Joy Plat	Charanjit Kaur
Megumi Mamome	Salwa Mossad

Staff

Kamalle Dabboussy	–	Manager
Alcina Desouza	–	Administration Team Leader
Pietty Greenwood	–	Multicultural Families Resource Coordinator
Denise Gormley	–	Community Projects worker resigned 30/6/2010
Yuhana Nashmi	–	Caseworker Team Leader
Anke Kotte	–	Senior Complex Caseworker
Natalie Taha	–	Senior Complex Caseworker
Jimmy Mtashar	–	Iraqi Support worker
Shabnam Bhana	–	Youth worker
Ayman Al Haboub	–	Humanitarian Caseworker
Raeanne Ali	–	Afghan worker
Maria Pereira	–	Information Officer till 30/6/2010
Hana Tamer	–	Families Support worker
Sandra Romanelli	–	Family Support worker
Maria Karameli Manousso	–	Family Support Clerical worker
Linah Merdawi	–	Community Visitors Scheme Coordinator
Yahyeh Abouloukme	–	Therapeutic Arts Program Officer resigned 15/01/2010

Volunteers

Monilta	Fatima
Mona	Symion
Helen Sarojini	Athanasia
Nagamani	Julie
Mohamed	Memona
Therese	Maria My Tran
Manjula	Trinh Cathy
Irene	Emma Trish
Ansaf	Nimo
Kamal	
Getha	
Chau	

Administration Team Report

This project is funded by Department of Immigration and Citizenship to provide direct service to deliver service based on client needs through the front counter. And what a year it has been! We have seen an increase in service delivery and complexity in client issues —leading to a very busy and hectic year.

A total of 4,108 clients were serviced through the Desk alone, providing direct information, appointments with appropriate caseworkers, certifying documents, enrolling for courses within the LMRC and providing answers to general queries.

The front desk maintains a “Bilingual Information Hub”. Data on various services in Liverpool and Sydney is collected, displayed and updated at the reception area. All current information on community events, training and education is displayed for clients’ use.

The administration team was actively involved in organising classes by liaising with students, teachers and administrative support. A total of 258 students attended the following classes:

- 4 English Classes/Beginners and Intermediate Level
- 4 Introduction to Computing Classes — English
- 2 Introduction to Computing Classes — Vietnamese
- 2 Introduction to Floristry Classes
- 2 Introduction to Sewing Classes.

The Administration team supported the ATO Tax Help Program, as well as sessional outreach services. The team also supported the Skilled Migrant Mentoring Program, which provides outreach services at the LMRC, by organising appointments, and providing information in regards to the programs and other administrative duties.

As part of the provision of local work experience to volunteers, the Administration Team took on the supervision and training of 12 volunteers. This provided them with valuable training in developing a portfolio, resumé and cover letter, preparing for job interviews and marketing themselves effectively. Five of these volunteers were subsequently successful in gaining employment.

The Administration Team also mentored 21 leaders from ethnic backgrounds and provided hand-on experience in community service, organising events for their communities and looking for funding opportunities. Training was provided in leadership and in writing funding submissions.

The LMRC Meeting Room facilities have been accessed by 28 different Community Groups, who have been assisted with the organising, recording and allocation of the rooms for use during working hours and weekends.

The Administration team has also been involved in the promotion and orientation of the Centre to newly arrived migrants and refugees through Information Sessions, Speak Outs and Information Stalls at Community Events.

4108 clients have been recorded to have been serviced directly from the front counter



Casework Reports

Throughout 2010, the LMRC continued its efforts to directly relieve the situation of immigrants and refugees whose social condition renders them disadvantaged. The Cultural Connect Project Team had a very successful year and achieved great results for both families and children with 105 families and 123 children enrolled. By the end of this reporting period the Cultural Connect Project facilitated five Playgroups:

- Three Multicultural Playgroups — two held in the Liverpool CBD and one in Hinchinbrook.
- One Language specific Playgroup (Vietnamese) held in Heckenberg in partnership with Miller TAFE Outreach, with students studying towards a Statement of Attainment in Children's Services.
- One Multicultural Playgroup in the Liverpool CBD in partnership with Liverpool TAFE Outreach for students studying towards a Statement of Attainment in Children's Services.
- Current discussions are being held for a second Multicultural Playgroup in Hinchinbrook in partnership with Miller TAFE Early Childhood Studies, with students studying towards a Certificate III in Children's Services.

Through friendships and feelings of connectedness, families gradually move to use LMRC services and mainstream services.

Workshops, information sessions and excursions were tools used to help families learn more about their children's development and to connect them to local services:

- Parenting for Playgroups Course conducted in partnership with the Outreach section of Miller TAFE. This was a nine week course which aimed to assist parents to help their children with numeracy and literacy skills.
- Nutritional Program conducted in partnership with Miller Pathways Mission Australia. This program helped families to understand the importance of providing healthy food for their children at home, preschool and school. It also covered safety methods of packing lunches during the summer period, reading food labels and tackling obesity and diabetes during the early years.
- A nurse from the State-wide Eyesight Preschooler Screening Program (StEPS) conducted free vision screening tests for children going to school in 2010. As an outcome, one child required further follow up with an eye specialist.
- A Speech Pathologist from Liverpool Hospital talked to families about feeding and communication in the early years.
- An Occupational Therapist facilitated workshops for families in how to help their children improve their fine motor skills and helped to identify those children with poor muscle tone that needed additional support.





Hon. Chris Hayes with Sudanese participants

- Liverpool Hospital, Multicultural Health Educational Workers delivered sessions on communicable diseases and explained simple measures to prevent spread of diseases to families.
- Excursion to Westmead Hospital 'Kids Safe House' — to learn about home safety.

The children continued to be supported through an early childhood program based on play. The school readiness program is an integral component of the Multicultural Playgroups. Nineteen children graduated at the end of 2009 and in 2010 fourteen children were enrolled in the school readiness program.

Due to the increase demand to join the playgroups from families and referred families by service providers by the end of 2009, the waiting list increased significantly. We are therefore considering starting additional playgroups in partnership with TAFE. So far, the Partnership with TAFE has proven a very innovative model, as local TAFE institutes have been able to provide students with the opportunity

to learn skills on the job. In addition, TAFE students have gained first-hand experience through working with families and children from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. As part of the students' professional development, the Cultural Connect Project conducted two Vietnamese Cultural Awareness training sessions. A benefit to some families on the waiting list is that they are now attending one of the Partnership TAFE and LMRC Playgroups.

Clothes and toys donations were received from parents and workers from various community organisations in Liverpool. The Cultural Connect Team has greatly appreciated these donations as it has helped us to support families who were facing financial hardship.



Complementary one-off funding

Families NSW provided additional funding for the project 'Bilingual Community Educators'. This project was delivered through the Cultural Connect Project, and with the aid of Arabic and Vietnamese Bilingual Community Educators, educational information sessions were carried out as when a need was identified in the Playgroups. Some of the topics were:

- Road Safety Information Sessions held in Arabic and Vietnamese.
- Transition to School Information Sessions held in Arabic.
- Parenting for Playgroups Program delivered in conjunction with Miller Outreach TAFE.
- Love, Laugh and Learn, child development sessions in partnership with Miller Pathways, Mission Australia.

Liverpool City Council provided funding for the 'Reaching Out Project'. Educational and recreational activities helped families and children to connect to the mainstream community and to increase knowledge. Some of the activities we delivered were:

- Recreational/educational sessions on Australia fauna — 'Feature Creature', reptile show.
- Recreational/educational excursion to Casual Power House — to learn about programs and activities offered.
- Early Childhood Service Tour — to learn about children's services options for families in Liverpool.
- Environmental Awareness information sessions facilitated by Miller TAFE for the Vietnamese Playgroup to assist in the community gardening and planting at the Heckenberg Community Centre.

Achievements

Social Capital: The Cultural Connect Project continues to assist families to decrease their level of isolation as in the case of families who are going through a settlement process upon arrival in Australia. We have linked families to other families from their own culture, language or religion. Through friendships and feelings of connectedness, families gradually move to use other LMRC services and mainstream services.

Assisting children's development: Observing children's play and settling into playgroup routines assisted playgroup staff to identify those children who required additional support. Referrals to allied services and relevant children support services consequently increased during the reporting period. Some of these children have been linked to speech pathology intervention, screening clinic, Department of Education, preschools and early intervention programs.



Excursion to Casula Powerhouse Museum



Feature Creatures Mobile Display Presentation



“Playgroup has helped me to know my children better”, Parent from the Tuesday Multicultural Playgroup.

Student Placement: A Year Ten High School student spent a week, learning about the Cultural Connect Project. This resulted in the student gaining an awareness of community development and ways to support families with young children.

Learn With Me Project: While this was a one off funding project for the period 2008-2009, the early literacy kits we developed in the project are still used as a means to assist families to help their children to increase early literacy and numeracy skills in their home environment.

Parenting for Playgroups Course: assisted families to learn career paths in early childhood and other vocational courses through TAFE. The TAFE Teacher/Facilitator built trust over a period of time among families who began to feel very comfortable to talk about career options even though many of them had limited English and limited education. As a result, some families from the Tuesday Multicultural Playgroup enrolled in TAFE courses in 2010.

Information sessions were held from the LMRC, based on identified needs, to help participants understand more about their children’s safety and wellbeing. Topics included:

Child Development – Laugh, Learn & Love Sessions

- Conducted by a representative from Mission Australia. Issues treated: stages of child development, age appropriate toys for learning, how to play — techniques and role plays, learning at home.

Road Safety Information Session for Arabic Speaking Community

- Conducted by a representative from Liverpool Council 2 sessions held.

Transition to School Information sessions

- Conducted by a representative of the Department of Education.

Parenting for Playgroups

20 participants enrolled in a 9 week TAFE NSW Course, titled — Parenting for Playgroups — helping your child develop literacy and numeracy skills. This was a part-time course, 2 hours per week. A “Statement of Attainment in Access to Work and Training” was awarded to successful applicants.

Participants learned about support available to TAFE students during an excursion to Miller TAFE conducted the last week of the program (24/9/09). Participants were able to build networks while participating in the program.

Feedback from participants on value of activity

Participants expressed that they learned literacy and numeracy skills/activities that are easy to do at home with their children.

Partnerships with Miller TAFE Outreach resulted in 6 families enrolling in TAFE courses.

The Women Case Worker in conjunction with other LMRC staff helped to recruit Afghan women for the “Let’s Get Knitting Project”. As a result of this program the Afghan community increased access to support services at the Liverpool MRC.



Parents and Carers engaged in activities



After-School Soccer Program

To mark the football festivities and taking the world cup to South Africa in 2010, two students from the Lurnea after-school soccer program were chosen to attend the Football for Hope Festival in South Africa through the Football United program. This Festival showcased best practice in the field of development through football. The teams made up of boys and girls between 15-18 years.

Amplifying the Voices of Refugee Youth

A series of consultations were held with youth to voice their thoughts about issues or needs affecting youth in the Liverpool LGA. A report was compiled and is available for youth organisations, local councils and community organisations who want to find out more about the types of activities and issues facing some Liverpool youth. To access the report contact the LMRC.



**Parenting for Playgroups —
Partnership with Miller TAFE Outreach
August-September 2009**

The Community Visitors' Scheme (CVS) is an initiative of the Australian Government and is funded by the Department of Health and Ageing. Liverpool MRC has auspiced this program since 1993. The community Visitors Scheme at Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre operates within the South West Sydney Aged Care Planning Region.

The aim of this program is to enrich the quality of life of residents at Aged Care Facilities (Nursing Homes and Aged Hostels), who have been identified as being lonely or socially isolated due to being of a non-English-speaking background and might benefit from having a regular friendly visitor.

The CVS was funded to support 25 residents of the nursing homes; we are currently serving the Spanish and the Arabic-speaking community through Community Visitors who are committed and dedicated volunteers.

The CVS also helps to establish links between people living in Aged Care Homes and their community; this becomes even more relevant for residents identified as from a culturally and linguistic diversity background and having limited fluency of English and therefore being faced with a language barrier.

A Community Visitor commits to visiting a resident on a regular basis. Visits are spent doing something they both enjoy, reading, listening to music, chatting and reminiscing, watching a TV program together or taking a walk in the garden.



The community visitor's co-ordinator ensures the undertaking of a compulsory National Criminal History Record Check for each potential volunteer/community visitor. This check is required under the Aged Care Act as well as to provide the community visitors/volunteers with ongoing support, orientation and relevant training. The community visitor's co-ordinator also organises monthly support meetings for both Arabic and Spanish groups. All community visitors are also reimbursed for out of pocket expenses.

The Liverpool MRC would also like to acknowledge the wonderful contribution of each and every Volunteer that contributes to the Community Visitors' Scheme.

At the end of the year all community visitors were invited to lunch in appreciation of their support throughout the year.

The Community Visitors' Scheme is a very worthwhile program and the Liverpool MRC is proud to have it among its other services.

Youth casework operates on an outreach basis where students at Lurnea and Miller IEC get one-on-one support from the youth worker on youth-related issues. Information sessions are also organised throughout the year according to needs, as identified by teachers and students. Sessions covered topics such as: further education and careers, health and wellbeing, employment and youth services.



Homework Support

The Homework Support Program aims to provide youth with extra academic support, to help them understand their homework and develop their research and computer skills. The program aspires to develop a study skills program for youth which will assist them to develop the skills necessary to work independently and the ways in which they can study smart and effectively.

Young Women's Leadership Program

The Young Women's Leadership Program aimed at building self confidence, resilience and empowerment among young women in the Liverpool LGA. The program focused on key areas: leadership and mentoring, confidence and empowerment, self expression and public speaking, managing stress and relaxation, team-building and group work skills. The program achieved this through a therapeutic arts method of role-playing, practical activities, drama, dance and art. It started as a pilot program and due to its success will continue to provide future programs for young women. The program worked in partnership with the Liverpool Youth Council.

The Refugee Camp

The refugee youth camp was held on 8 and 9 of May 2010 at Sydney Olympic Park Lodge. The event was successful, with a range of youth-based activities delivered to participants to engage their abstract thinking, as well as introducing the participants to healthy lifestyle living. There were 12 participants who participated in activities such as team

building, mini Olympics, soccer, indoor sports, self-esteem building sessions and informational and heritage-based activities such as an ANZ stadium tour and Newington Armoury Heritage Walk.

Evaluations highlighted the success of the initiative, with all of the participants rating it as good or excellent!



Participants of the Young Women's Leadership Program



Youth Play

A refugee youth play was held with Lurnea Intensive English language Centre (IEC) with the focus on the journey and experience of young refugees on arrival to Australia. The play aims at promoting community awareness and knowledge around the refugee experience and what the community can do to support their settlement experiences. Participants come from different ethnic backgrounds, including: Congolese, Iraqi, Burmese, Vietnamese, and Sierra Leonean to name a few. The project worked in partnership with Lurnea IEC and the powerhouse youth theatre.

Sudanese Men's Art Project

Background

It has always been a challenge to engage the newly resettled Sudanese men living in Liverpool locality in community programs. This time we have used art to engage them so that they can share their experiences and stories about their past journeys and tackle the challenges of resettlement in their new home country, Australia.

We invited a re-known Sudanese artist to work with the Sudanese men through a series of sessions introducing the principles of painting and how to use it to express their feelings. One of the sessions also reflected on the importance and historical contribution of arts in health and healing. We also recruited a counsellor to support the group, where necessary.

The program witnessed an overwhelming level of demand and increasing enrolment of participants.

Project aims

The project had several aims:

- Increase the participation and integration of newly arrived Sudanese men living in Liverpool local area.
- Break the barriers that prevent them from accessing social and health care services.
- Identify newly arrived Sudanese men's culturally specific needs.

Project significance

The program had various impacts:

- This program helped identify the needs of the newly resettled Sudanese men residing in the Liverpool locality.
- It helped engage Sudanese men, who are often isolated and lonely.
- The program helped Sudanese men to remove the barriers to accessing essential services such as health care and social services, among others.

The overarching achievement of this project, as expressed by participants, was the opportunity for a group of men to meet and through the use of diversionary tactics, engage in open dialogue regarding past experiences. Success was measured through participation levels (numbers increased from 4 to 14), feedback from the facilitators and participants.

Participants completed 3 paintings each, with the progression of healing evident in the latter pictures painted (for example, in the different use of colour, symbols depicted and in the naming of pictures). CD, photos, video and audio tapes captured the work done by the men during the workshops.



Get Knitting Project

This project focussed on the relaxing and social aspect of knitting; a women's group for Afghanistan Women was formed, in partnership with Liverpool Women's Health Centre.

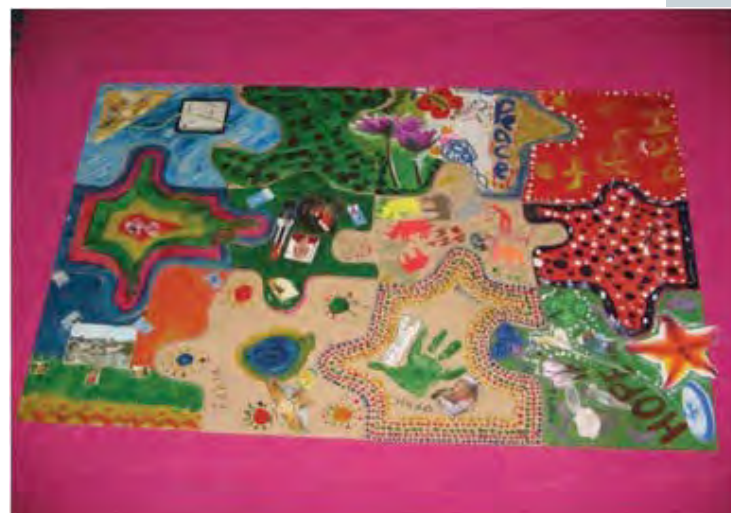
The majority of participants reported they had learned something new from the project. These included:

- By the end of the project the participants gained basic knitting and crochet skills. They created items such as blankets, cardigans, scarves and iPod bags. A cardigan was made for a mum in the group who had a baby in January 2010. A doll's cardigan and blanket were donated to the Liverpool MRC Cultural Connect Project Playgroups.
- Various relaxation techniques and exploring of effective ways of managing stress.
- Knowledge of the services provided by Liverpool Women's Health Centre and other services provided in the Liverpool area.
- Better English language proficiency.
- The benefits of speaking with other women and making lots of friends through gathering together in a group setting.
- The development of a large 12-piece puzzle. Each participant designed their own individual puzzle piece, using various materials such as paint, magazine clippings, wool etc. The puzzle was then assembled into one piece of art.

The success of the project was primarily measured through participant evaluations. But the overall success of the project was evident from participant requests to avail of a room in the LMRC to continue meeting independently. The group was linked to the Liverpool Women's Health Centre through the mental health counsellor who facilitated the wellbeing sessions. Four appointments were made by participants in the group after an excursion to the Liverpool Women's Health Centre. An unexpected outcome of the project was that some participants were referred to the LMRC Complex Case Support Program.



Therapeutic Arts Project —
e xamples of items knitted by the participants



Complex case support (CSS)

The Complex Case Support (CCS) Program funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship enables delivery of specialised and intensive case management services to refugee and humanitarian entrants. The program is designed to work in partnership with existing settlement programs such as the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy and the Settlement Grants Program.

It is designed to target the needs of individuals and families who may experience specific short-term difficulties that place themselves and their families at risk, and individuals and families who cannot access appropriate support via mainstream services and who require time intensive case management.

The CCS program delivers case co-ordination, advocacy, referral and the overseeing of issues experienced by the client and their family, and aims to work in collaboration with other existing service providers to maintain relationships and to holistically address the needs of all family members.

Liverpool MRC has helped a number of clients in a range of situations since the program's start in 2008. The common issues presented by CCS clients include domestic/family violence, housing, mental health, physical health and social isolation.

While families settling in Australia can experience a multitude of issues, time can be considered the most valuable resource in assisting such families. The Complex Case Support program has given Liverpool MRC the opportunity to extend its services via a

range of innovative approaches. The major strength seen in this program is that staff are given time to build close and sustainable relationships with their clients and families. In addition, case co-ordination has been an effective means for Complex Case Support clients in minimising the anxieties of managing numerous services and the steering of complex and unknown service systems.



Achievements of the program

Liverpool MRC has successfully worked with 24 clients and their families from June 2009-June 2010, by linking them with appropriate mainstream services and programs, providing support to access and attend them successfully, and providing support to resolve existing issues. These clients proved they have gained skills, built on existing skills to integrate and function confidently in the community and developed their capacity to engage further with services and managing difficulties in life.

We look forward to assisting more individuals through this program in the year ahead. We also thank the Complex Case Support Team at DIAC for their support and timely responses.

The Humanitarian Case Worker serviced clients from a range of ethnic backgrounds — including Sudanese, Iranian, and Jordanian, with the overwhelming majority being Sudanese. A wide range of issues were addressed through provision of casework, including financial assistance, accommodation, citizenship, document help, household management and many more.

Information Sessions

Information sessions were held to better orientate clients to settlement and mainstream services. Information sessions held a high level of interest and participation, which replicates the overwhelming demand for casework provision. Sessions were held on prominent issues relating to financial assistance, schooling, citizenship, and mental health, Centrelink, housing, health and wellbeing and employment.



Emergency Department tour

Increased access to health care services is one of the major problems that refugees and new arrivals face during their resettlement process in Australia.

We successfully ran the Emergency Department(ED) tour that effectively increased the knowledge and also changed attitudes towards the ED services in Liverpool Hospital — especially for those who had never been to the ED before. Seven groups of different ethnic backgrounds have visited the ED and the program is still running.

The Iraqi worker has been involved in delivering a high level of service through casework provision to a range of ethnic backgrounds from Iraq, including Mandaean, Assyrian and Kurdish. Through the year the Iraqi worker has provided service to 313 clients addressing a range of settlement issues. One of the main issues addressed through casework has been document help — signifying clients still require a high level of assistance with various forms and interpretive assistance. Household management and referrals to utilities have increased as prices have risen, with many clients requiring financial assistance with electricity and gas bills, especially around the winter months as the use of heaters and hot water becomes more prevalent. Accommodation assistance also remains a prominent issue for Iraqi communities as housing availability locally becomes harder to access due to long applicant lists. This has had a flow-on effect to housing affordability, as rent prices continue to rise periodically.

One of the positive stories of this project was the Health Information sessions which gave clients a different look at health services and healthy living. The sessions encouraged client to take on board healthy lifestyles to promote healthy living. Six other orientation and life skills sessions were held through the year, engaging topics such as Centrelink, child protection and tenancy.





On the bus to Kidsafe House



Parent's receiving information about Child Safety



The Civil Participation sessions was conducted with success, giving clients a detailed look at Australian civics and history with the aim of increasing civil participation and understanding among participants. The course consisted of 8 workshops that addressed local, State and Federal Government roles and responsibilities, with a focus on historically significant personalities and key events in Australian civics history. A recorded broadcast of Parliament House was conducted, during a session which took a multimedia look at how Parliament operates.

Throughout the year, the Iraqi worker has taken part in interagency meetings and attended forums and conferences to help promote the project and advocate for client settlement needs. The Iraqi worker also gave a presentation of Mandaean settlement needs at the event 'Introduction to the Mandaeans', which was attended by over 100 participants — including service providers, community leaders and members and local media.

Research has also been conducted focussing on settlement needs in the local area for the target group and these findings have been presented to a range of services as cultural awareness training. Research conducted has helped community organisations and the Liverpool MRC advocate for the target group and their needs to mainstream services.





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