

**WESTERN SYDNEY MRC**

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

POWERED BY COMMUNITY





Western Sydney MRC acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we operate. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. Always was, always will be Aboriginal Land.

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"ABSORBING ANOTHER'S  
EXPERIENCE ALLOWS US TO  
TRUELY HELP AND SUPPORT"

## LETTERS OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



**PAUL LYNCH MP**  
MEMBER FOR LIVERPOOL



**MESSAGE TO THE WESTERN SYDNEY MIGRANT RESOURCE  
CENTRE**

I am delighted to congratulate Western Sydney MRC on another successful year.

For many years the MRC has been working with migrants, refugees and the many diverse communities in our area. You have always developed a wide range of programs and services.

As with every other community organisation in our area the work of the MRC has been affected by the pandemic in recent times. However, I'm happy to join with you in hoping for another successful year to come.

Yours sincerely

Paul Lynch MP  
Shadow – Attorney General  
Member for Liverpool

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# ANNE STANLEY MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR WERRIWA



## MESSAGE TO THE WESTERN SYDNEY MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE

Congratulations to the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre on another successful twelve months assisting and representing the needs of newly arrived and settled migrants in Western Sydney.

Your support for the successful settlement of our multicultural community ensures that Liverpool and its suburbs are harmonious and affable.

This year has been particularly difficult one with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and I appreciate the support and translations you have provided to ensure our diverse community have been able to stay safe and reduce the spread of the virus.

I acknowledge the work of the CEO Kammalle Dabboussy and staff, and the Board members for all your hard work and wish you all the best for 2021.

Your sincerely



Anne Stanley MP  
Opposition Whip  
Member for Werriwa



## CHAIR'S ADDRESS **NATHAN HAGARTY**

It has quickly become a cliché, but this has been a year like no other. The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns have turned our world upside down. However, as it has done for four decades, Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) has stepped up to support the community during these extraordinary times. As we see during a crisis, it is our most vulnerable citizens that are disproportionately affected. Unemployment, mental health challenges, social dislocation in addition to the direct health effects have had a major impact on Western Sydney during the pandemic, including our many culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Despite the exceptional social and economic challenges, Western Sydney MRC has shown remarkable strength and resilience. We have gone above and beyond to ensure we continue to fulfil our mission and live our values. Now more than ever, it is vital that our diverse communities in Liverpool and beyond are "empowered, informed and connected."

While everyone at the MRC deserves special thanks and acknowledgement for the results of this past year, I want to especially acknowledge Anna-Marie, Rachel, Karameli and Sophia. During the extended absence of

the CEO, these four women have shown exceptional drive, commitment, and sacrifice. Their extraordinary efforts have not gone unnoticed.

Just as the entire world has had to quickly adapt to the 'new normal', so too has the MRC. Despite lockdowns and social distancing, programs and projects still need to be run, clients and community supported, informed and engaged. I am particularly pleased to report that Western Sydney MRC was well positioned for the move to online and remote working. The last few years have seen the organisation embark on series of IT infrastructure and software upgrades which meant many of our systems and processes were able to pivot quickly and effectively. This foresight has put us in good stead for the future and is already delivering results.

Since April, Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre has held a series of digital community forums

on a range of topics and in a variety of languages. These events have provided a vital forum for the MRC, community leaders and stakeholders to communicate and collaborate, ensuring critical support and resources get to where they are needed most.

Despite lockdowns and social distancing, programs and projects still need to be run, clients and community supported, informed and engaged.

Our growth into the digital space has also seen a move into the world of podcasting with the launch of 'Same Same Different'. Funded through Multicultural NSW, Same Same Different, sees Western Sydney MRC do what it does best, online: harnessing our community's cultural diversity, highlighting the many stories that make up Western Sydney and developing new skills and capacity in the process.



I would like to give a very big thank you to every single member of the MRC family, all the volunteers, staff, the CEO and my fellow board members. On a personal level, your support, advice, and friendship this past year has been invaluable.

Lastly, I would like to give a very big thank you to every single member of the MRC family, all the volunteers, staff, the CEO and my fellow board members. On a personal level, your support, advice, and friendship this past year has been invaluable.

Together we have demonstrated the critical importance and considerable value we bring to our community. Never has this been more evident than this past year. I've no doubt we will continue to deliver on that essential task into the future.

## CEO ADDRESS

Our grassroots connections to community proved to be an essential asset during COVID-19 pandemic - one to one relationships with caseworkers and staff, through to the leadership relationships the MRC has built up over 40 years. We were able to support clients to access not only digital services but diverse ways of connecting. We were able to bolster and strengthen the monstrous task of community leaders in supporting their communities digitally and led the MRC in providing information and co-ordination to leadership.

The MRC team dedicated many hours of training and retraining to the digital transition, particularly to those that were most vulnerable and isolated and in need. I thank my staff for providing assistance above and beyond the requirement, with patience and genuine care for clients. The team also helped source PPE equipment so that the most vulnerable still managed to get the services they needed - all this against the backdrop of ever-evolving information and advice.

A special note needs to go to community leaders who took the lead in supporting their communities with information that we were honoured to be a part.

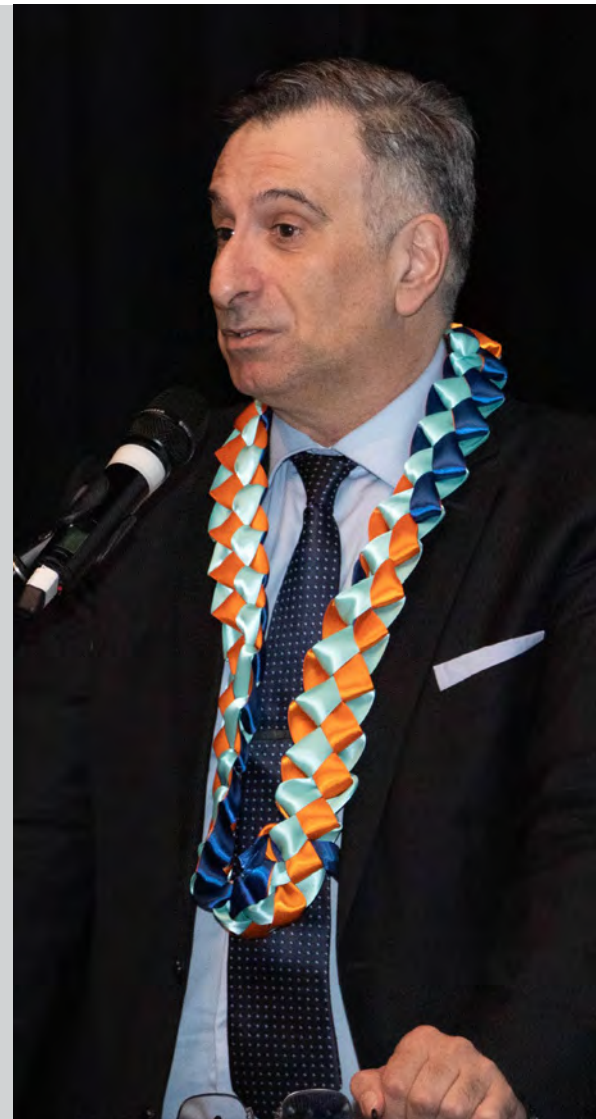
Many seminars and digital zoom based webinars were delivered and supported, including Health is Wealth with the Iraqi community, Africa Health Australia Health Diary seminars and videos alongside numerous examples. You showed your civic leadership that was valuable, timely and is an essential part of the fabric of Australia.

Looking forward, the changing landscape and various changes to policy setting of the Government has thrown into sharp focus the need to remain ever sharpened to our mission and values. Addressing systemic disadvantage, respecting diversity when working for inclusion and promoting the strengths of our communities and their leadership.

I must also take the opportunity to commend our supporters and founders, that quickly allowed us to pivot to the needs, granting us the ability to do what we do best, meet the needs of the community and clients with flexibility. The nature of work changed, but the volume increased, and all associated with Western Sydney MRC should be as proud of the year as I am.

In closing, I want to pay particular thanks and appreciation is to the staff of Western Sydney MRC and the dedicated team of volunteers, who have performed with distinction in the face of adversity. I am continually reassured and comforted with the passion, dedication and depth of talent that exists with my second family.

**Kamalle Dabboussy**





## ACTING CEO **ADDRESS**

2019-2020, and what a year it has been. Amongst the challenges this year has presented, Western Sydney MRC, staff and community together have learnt, become more resilient and connected.

At the end of 2019, we celebrated our 40 years working alongside multicultural communities through a recognition of the courageous journeys of refugees and migrant that arrive to make Australia home.

In 2020 we have once again been reminded of the strength and courage that surrounds us. Our community leaders have worked tirelessly alongside their paid employment and family lives to ensure that their communities are supported and kept up to date with COVID-19 information. Our dedicated team have been innovative in their service delivery and strived for excellence in remote support. New Australian's have shown strengthen and resilience in the face of more adversity.

This annual report will provide a snapshot of this year, however key to our success has been our deep connection to the local community. Through genuine community engagement and involvement, Western Sydney MRC has been able to be responsive to the communities needs and strengthens and adapt program delivery so all community members could still gain vital services.

Despite the resilience shown, the COVID-19 pandemic has shone on a light on the disparities in Australia's community. Looking to the future we must keep these in our sight to create a more equitable and inclusive society.

**Anna-Marie Kanaan**

I thank my staff for providing assistance above and beyond the requirement, with patience and genuine care for clients.



# PROGRAMS AND **SERVICES**

## Programs

**Connect Conversation English**

**Youth Activities**

**Strive Women's Group**

**RYPMP**

**The Parenting Place**

**Multicultural Playgroups**

## Services

### **SETS support**

- Information and Referral
- MooreStreet Hub
- Casework Services
- Youth Casework Services
- Educational Sessions
  - English Classes
  - Citizenship Forms
  - Citizenship sessions
  - Tax Assistance
- Community Capacity Building

### **Financial Support**

- Temporary Visa Management Support
- Emergency Relief
- Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA)
- Work and Development Order (WDO) Sessions

### **NDIS**

### **ParentsNext**

### **CHSP - Aged Care Respite**

## VISION & **MISSION**

We work with newly arrived migrants, refugees, and diverse communities. We provide a range of services and programs, from casework to community program facilitation. We ensure that our program, events and support are based on our clients' and community's needs and wants.

### Our Vision

Our vision is a socially inclusive Australia where diversity is celebrated.

### Our Mission

Western Sydney MRC champions our diverse community to be empowered, informed and connected

### Our Values

#### **Diversity**

We celebrate our diversity and respect the diversity of others

#### **Integrity**

We act ethically in all situations and decision making.

#### **Collaboration**

We work as one team to support our communities.

#### **Innovation**

We strive to develop innovative solutions to challenging social issues.

#### **Excellence**

We strive for quality outcomes in all that we do.



# DATA AND NUMBERS

**628** INFORMATION AND REFERRALS

## Major Countries of Origin



01 Iraq: 792



02 Syria: 185



03 Afghanistan: 23



04 Lebanon: 9



05 Iran: 13

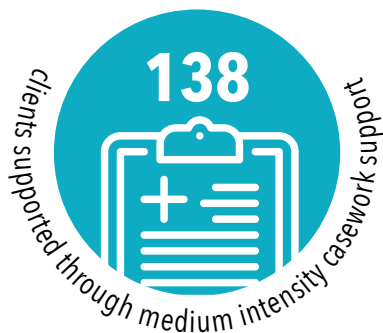


## Key issues addressed

- Community participation and networks
- Financial Capabilities
- Documents and transactions support
- Housing
- Legal / migration

- Physical health
- Employment, education and training
- Mental health
- Family support
- Personal and family safety

- Travel and Transport Access
- Utility Bills
- DV / Family Violence



92.7%

OF CLIENTS ASSESSED (301 CLIENTS) HAD OVERALL POSITIVE CHANGE IN THEIR CIRCUMSTANCE DUE TO ENGAGEMENTS WITH SETS SUPPORT

353

NEW CLIENTS INTAKE INTO THE SETS

## Engagement and Support



English learning pathways



Group Sessions



Instances of advocacy



Emergency Relief



Group-based sessions



Homework Support



Education skills and training



Medium Intensity Support



Clients support through intake



Employment pathways



Child and youth focused casework

## GAP ANALYSIS

As part of our planning for 2020-2021 we have identified needs in the following areas:

Family Support

Peer Support

Continued inclusivity

Sustainable Employment

Women's leadership

## COURAGEOUS JOURNEYS

For 40 years Western Sydney MRC has delivered services, programs, and projects to many clients and communities. The Western Sydney melting pot holds an assortment of culturally and linguistically diverse people, and those that have crossed our path have sought a variety of supports, connections, and assistance. Our staff, management, and board have ebbed and flowed alongside a multitude of partnerships. The lives of many individuals have intertwined, creating social connections, colleagues, and friendships... with a unified driver - a need to help others, to guide and nurture the passage of settlement that has existed for 4 decades.

We would like to thank everyone that was involved in making this happen, speakers, contributors, volunteers, communities, clients and attendees. Guest speakers Uncle Malcolm Maccoll, Mayor Wendy Waller, Diem Fuggersberger, Om Dhungel and Arwa Abousamra. We saw beautiful performances from Chinese Ethnic Folk Dance, The Peacemakers Ensemble and our MRC staff group Journey Pasefika Group. We had a range of activities and opportunities to purchase books and painting to assist in raising funds to continue our work and support. We would like to thank Nibras Al Zuhairi, an extremely talented 17 years old artist and calligraphy artist Shaia Kaia. Also more recognition goes to the entire Western Sydney MRC family for making this event as colourful and vibrant as is was. Special thanks goes to the event committee members for the dedication; Nadia Bouchti, Darren Chan, Rhianne Jeyakumar, Pio Macri, Sophia Strickland, Nada Miski and Rachel Haywood. Acknowledgement to Photographer Erielle for capturing the day so beautifully. Finally our thanks to MC Craig Donarski (Director), the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre team and Liverpool City Council for your support in making this event happen.









# HIGHLIGHTS 2019



## St. Peter Chanel recognition of City2Surf support

**JULY 2019**

Acting CEO Anna-Marie and Chair of the Board Nathan Hagarty visited St Peter Chanel Catholic Primary School to recognise the contribution and support made in donations for student Samuel Plakidis.



## LGBTIQ forum training

**OCTOBER 2019**

As part of the NSP, Advance Diversity Services organised training for three team members to attend LGBTIQ Awareness and Inclusion Training delivered through ACON. In this training we learnt about LGBTIQ people and communities. The difference between sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; Various LGBTIQ people's lived experiences. A number of health impacts caused by social stigma, assumptions, and bias. and how we can become a stronger ally for LGBTIQ people.

## UN National Day First People Gandangara LAC

**AUGUST 2019**

Aunty Pio along with a group of clients took along our guitars and musical instruments for some cultural sing along Haka and Siva Samoa Choo! They also took food dishes from the cultures of our families Samoa, Aotearoa, India, Fiji, Italy, Spain, Iran, Iraq and Turkey.



## Courageous Journeys

**NOVEMBER 2019**

We would like to thank everyone that was involved in making this happen, speakers, contributors, volunteers, communities and clients: Guest speakers Kamalle Dabboussy, Uncle Malcolm Maccoll, Mayor Wendy Waller, Diem Fuggersberger, Om Dhungel and Arwa Abousamra. We saw beautiful performances from Chinese Ethnic Folk Dance, The Peacemakers Ensemble and our MRC staff group Journey Pasefika Group. Thank to everyone that attended.

## 2 Way Street

**SEPTEMBER 2019**

Our Youth Worker Darren Chan delivered training to 70 young people (13-18 years) through a receive Rock and Water model to improve capacity to respond to and address racism and intolerance. Participants developed new skills and knowledge to help with focus, respect, conflict resolution, resilience, self-esteem and self-confidence via Rock and Water lessons.



## Giving Tuesday – local park clean up

**DECEMBER 2019**

#givingtuesday We were out and about giving cupcakes and cleaning up the local park. Thank you Councillor Nathan Hagarty for giving our time and resources to help us clean up. There was so much plastic in the park... 🗑️ we are thinking about doing this once a month... giving our time to community and teaching the importance of putting rubbish in the bin. Thank you to Liz our student for helping us give our teddy's to the local community too!

# 2020 HIGHLIGHTS



## Board Orientation

### JANUARY 2020

We were very happy to welcome our new board members through a strategy and organisation download. The staff put together a welcome video and the board members also had their photos taken, bios submitted and agendas set... heres to a busy 2020!



## WSW Women in Aviation Launch at Penrith Panthers

### FEBRUARY 2020

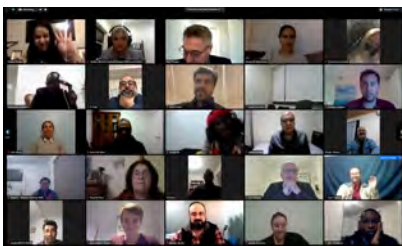
A massive thank you to Amanda Rose founder of Western Sydney Women for giving several applicants from our community an opportunity to undertake mentoring in their program Women in Aviation. Disrupted also by the pandemic, we hope this programs picks up again ASAP.



## The MRC picture before the pandemic hit

### MARCH 2019

We thought this was a beautiful image of connection. It was taken the day before we closed, and was once of the last moments of connection our team had physically for 3-4 months. It's an odd feeling to adjust to... being in a room next to someone - closer than 1.5m.... sharing food.



## Webinar, Zoom, online meetings

### APRIL 2019

Western Sydney MRC would like to acknowledge Nadia Bouchti, Community Development Officer for her commitment to community over the last 12 months. She has not only worked on supporting community but sees everyday as an opportunity to learn.



## Call, check-in, regroup

### MAY 2020

Western Sydney MRC implemented a wellness program that encouraged staff to take time out from the day to connect, and share hobbies, skills and more. We identified pretty quickly that the disconnect from our second family at the MRC was certainly having mental health impacts to us all. Our wellness sessions have continued each month, creating opportunities for us to laugh, exercise and reset for the weeks and months ahead. Self care is a priority, for we cannot care for others if we are ourselves depleted.



## Refugee Week

### JUNE 2019

This year, again because of the pandemic disruption we celebrated Refugee Week from a distance. Every time we watched this it makes us smile. This year's Refugee Week theme was Welcome. To honour this theme, we were able to weave together many beautiful messages of welcome. We held a community meeting where we came together to pay homage to the welcomes that exist. We also extend again a thank you to Jazz Money for her acknowledgement of country and beautiful poem, it was heartfelt and grounding.



# YOUTH **SUMMIT 2020**

During September and October 2019 the MRC began to see multiple posts from our youth community relating to the protests in Iraq. Young people were concerned for their loved ones, for family and friends and more broadly the impact of civil unrest.

Two consultation and brainstorm sessions were held on 11 October 2019 with a total of 12 young people. From the consultation, the local Iraqi young people showed a strong passion and were deeply invested in the protests in Iraq. However, they did not have a clear way for expressing themselves collectively. They wished to find ways to create positive support and to overcome feelings of uselessness.



The participants wanted to achieve a range of actions focusing on raising awareness and directly: recreating the issues (e.g. no electricity or internet similar to events like Earth Hour); social media campaigns including using influencers, creating local hashtags calling for action; walks and rallies; sending money and care packages to people in Iraq; and returning to Iraq to directly support the people. Critically, this last and similar suggestion warranted a response to the issue—providing safe and constructive avenues for young people to express their passions.

Participants also raised their concerns on being silent in the community—particular to the Iraqi events, there was limited engagement with young people in the community to be heard.

## EVENT DESIGN

The event shifted slightly to be more inclusive. Instead of being solely a platform for Iraqi young people, other communities could also discuss their issues. The intention was for local young people to discuss local and global issues (e.g. Syrian and Lebanese events, Aboriginal heritage).



With feedback and support from consulted young people, a youth summit was planned for young people of different backgrounds to create positive messages of support, to raise awareness and to advocate for global and local issues that affect them. The activities of the event focused on the youth-led creation of assets that can be used for social media campaigns and collective political action.

The ongoing Western Sydney MRC '2 Worlds 2 Words' campaign was incorporated into the event to supplement the creation of positive messages and for marketing purposes. Some

Western Sydney MRC and our youth group would like to thank Multicultural NSW for funding this event and giving our young people the opportunity to have a voice and be heard.



of the young people consulted were engaged in the marketing of the event.

The creation of assets was a success with participants being most interested in creating video messages, photos, and engaging with the facepaint and 2 Words activities. Participants required some support and encouragement in thinking on, and crafting such messages but were eager to be heard. In video messages, participants mainly spoke on their love and support for the Iraqi and Syrian people. Participants also demonstrated their love and support for other symbols e.g. painting the Australian and Aboriginal flags on themselves. These assets

have been collected and will be edited and shared with young people for their use on social media. The assets can also be used for future community action.

The event was delivered over a 2-hour period, with 4 staff in support. Thirty young people participated in the event, mostly from Iraqi or Syrian backgrounds with a mean age of 16, and 73% male and 27% female.

Overall, participants were excited to engage in the activities and felt positive being able to express themselves in support of their country.



# FAVOURITE CAPTURED MOMENTS









## MEET THE EXPERTS, **MEET THE TEAM**



**Aunty Pio Macri**  
Children and Families  
Coordinator & Wellbeing  
Ambassador

Since joining to MRC, Aunty Pio has given the MRC a revived sense of family. Empathetic, caring and nurturing, every conversation with Pio is an opportunity to see and feel loved. Across Parenting and Playgroup programs, Pio brings circles of love and security, and we are reminded every day why we are here and that we are powered by community.



**Meyer Nashed**  
Information and Referral  
Officer

If a settlement directory were to exist, Meyer would be it's ambassador. He is known by the community and clients alike as the first face of the MRC. He has a wonderful ability to guide, support all whilst smiling. His commitment is unwavering, and we expect you see his light shine from the end of Moore Street.

**Natalie Pauls**  
Caseworker

Natalie is calm and collected. Having worked several years on front desk her acknowledgement of the sector is second to none. She is caring and compassionate and goes above and beyond with each of her clients. Natalie takes the time, at the pace of the client, based on their needs and capacity. She is dedicated and wants to see the organisation move into wrap around families services and mental health supports.



**Nada Miski**  
NDIS and ParentsNext  
Coordinator

Nada has a natural ability to build rapport with everyone she meets. This allows her connection to clients to be in depth and authentic. She is a great team member and shows passion and willingness to be part of every staff event. She is dedicated to her own community, and with her lived experience of disability brings depth and understanding and insight to our disability services, clients and community.



**Dunia Aofi**  
ParentsNext Coordinator

Dunia is dedicated and outcome focused. Above all else, she wants to see her clients succeed. The understanding of the programs and tasks she undertakes is thorough and to the letter. She brings her lived experience of being a migrant mother to her role as ParentsNext Coordinator allowing her to relate and provide the highest quality of advocacy and service. She has consistently gone above and beyond.



**Rosaria Raco**  
CHSP / Respite Program  
Coordinator

Rosaria has such care for the people she works with. She treats clients as if they were her own family. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she reached out to every single person on a weekly basis to ensure they had a connection. She exudes warmth, which on a challenging day lifts the team. Her experience in aged care allows her to work efficiently and she is always striving to upskill and learn something new.



# LOVE YOURSELF - WESTERN SYDNEY WOMEN

On Wednesday, 12 February 2020 Western Sydney Women invited our clients to a day of self care and love. At Pablos Cantina y Cerveza, (Parramatta Leagues Club) the women were met with open arms and smiles as the kicked of the day with a series of workshop, pamper sessions and styling. Their sponsors made the event a wonderful day, with food and drinks to enjoy, alongside receiving goodies on the day! The women walked away from this day with a spring in their step. It was the first time they had spent time on themselves. Time out, away from the stresses and busy life. There lovely Sarah will be out photographer captured photos.

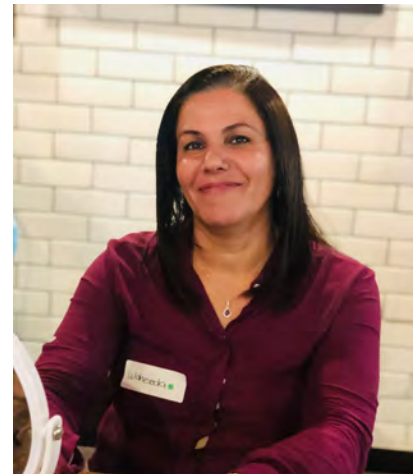
We want to thank all the sponsors of the day with special thanks to founder of Western Sydney Women, Amanda Rose for making this happen for our community, promoting self care and love.

## SPONSORS

- Amanda Rose - WSW Founder
- Parramatta Leagues Club - Venue
- Light her Latern - Photopgraphy
- Karin Murton Hair Design - Hairdressers
- Dusk Til Dawn - Make up
- The Polished Look by Angelique - Manicures
- Perfect Parties and Beauty - Manicures
- Eleni's Beauty Studio - Massage
- Spektra Therapy - Massage
- Pinstripe Solutions - Confidence / Job Readiness Workshop
- Hills Photo Booth - Photo booth
- Party Palace - Balloons
- All About Style - Personal Stylist
- Dress for Success - Clothing









# VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION





December 2019



### Thank you

Our volunteers this year have shown courage, resilience, perseverance and dedications. Thank you for being part of our family. Please see a list of our fabulous volunteers at the end of this report.



## CONNECT **CONVERSATIONAL ENGLISH**

Our amazing volunteer Sheenagh Dabbagh has been driving our conversation English program. Team member Rhianna took some time recently to explore with Sheenagh some of her insights.



### From your experience what has been the biggest need from participants of the program?

Being able to talk and interact with people in their neighbourhood, being able to respond and communicate coherently and appropriately when surrounded by everyday expressions, thereby increasing their participation in the community and potentially feeling less isolated.

The communication of their personality, their empathy, their humour and the avoidance of any appearance of disinterest or rudeness.

Being able to understand fast English speakers particularly when on the phone.

Having the right dialogue to get a refund , to call a taxi , to make a doctors appointment , to enquire about job vacancies, conversing with a doctor , talking to a teacher about his/her child, writing a concise text message etc.

The personal opportunity to tell their story, to be able to give some words and clarity to their experience of leaving their home country.

A knowledge and confidence that their intelligence and character is not buried underneath their learning to communicate in English.

### What activity/method has been the most beneficial in reaching this goal?

Firstly a regular and consistent one hour a week for clients to utilise for personal English support.

Providing a certain level of predictability that clients can plan for, this can slowly increase confidence and provide a sense of progress. What is the date today, what is the weather like, what did you do yesterday, what will you do tomorrow? This occurs during every session.

Practicing the recitation of basic dialogue , role playing the various scenarios that turn up repeatedly in their navigation of services within the community , the provision of these dialogues through text messaging and audio memos to enable study at home.

The unashamed usage of emojis after sessions, a very useful pictorial version of the “pat on the back” and positive feedback, but also it is word association that is likely to be memorised because it’s artistic, graphic and congratulatory.

The provision of important phrases that relay interest, empathy and agreement , teaching the trick of repeating what the other person said to convey interest.

The activity where I become the student and they are the teacher , this is worthwhile because it places clients in the situation of asking me the questions , and there is a shift of roles and an easy passage to showing interest and curiosity. It also aids language around empathy and interest. Providing a toolbox of phrases in writing and presented when the moment arises.

### What has engagement been like with participants and how do we increase this?

Engagement has been good but it will always depend on the relevancy of what is provided to the client. It's essential to get to know the individual and their unique navigation of their community, it's discovering clients specific needs and ensuring you turn up on a regular basis with a tailored and concise set of objectives that know the person at that point in their life. And it should also take into account the previous weeks progress and focus so there is a natural building of the clients competency. Clients need to be offered something that they want to plan for, understand the benefit of its continuance and have the knowledge that it is created especially for them, this programme has that capacity.

Sessions needs to be entertaining, varied, and have the ability to switch to a different focus when the client has an unpredictable question or a concern to address. It also needs a touch of mystery, a tiny element of unexpected information.

## What resources are required for this program?

Access to technology, my iPad has become invaluable as a teaching tool and as an aid for translation, as well as the swift provision of a pictorial representation to aid clients understanding of definition

Cultural and relevant linguistic support to clients when introduced to video platforms, ensuring they are comfortable with the technology during those early stages. If there is discomfort or a sense of intimidation then the English support is potentially finished before it has begun.

A little financial support to volunteers to reimburse for teaching materials, phone charges and petrol. This acknowledges that the programme is aware of how much is accessible in terms of support resources and how the access of many of these marvellous teaching aids can create an anonymous cost such as apps, subscriptions and online courses in the pursuit of reaching a bigger scope of culturally appropriate teaching resources.

A case worker who is fluent in the clients native tongue making direct contact every week to discover the clients feedback and recommendations on how the session can be more customised to meet his / her specific community English requirement.

This enhances the value of the programme because clients can state their needs and this importantly requires language competency. Online resources that can provide quick access to those frequently used expressions that relate to family, shopping, local geography and community services

## Have there been any unintended outcomes of the program that have been noted and seen as beneficial for the participants?

The whole situation has showcased all the available online resources and the teaching power of short texts and gaining a response, this is English conversation learning that is underestimated, it has much teaching power and greater flexibility.

Also the language around a pandemic has lent itself to bigger discussions around health care and vigilant community awareness as well as vocabulary around restrictions and alterations in the way we greet each other and interact.

The usage of clients phones as an extensive language learning resource through apps, YouTube videos, audio memo's and Google. Use of text messages to send me virtual thank you flowers.

The immediate need to understand time and instigate planning for ongoing sessions.

Seeing their children being told via a sign "do not disturb mum, doing English"

There are many others. I am thoroughly delighted to provide this information as I believe this prospective programme can alter the way Clients learn community English, the benefits are manifold to the instructor and the client and I believe that my assistance to clients is only the tip of the iceberg in terms of support, understanding and most importantly client empowerment



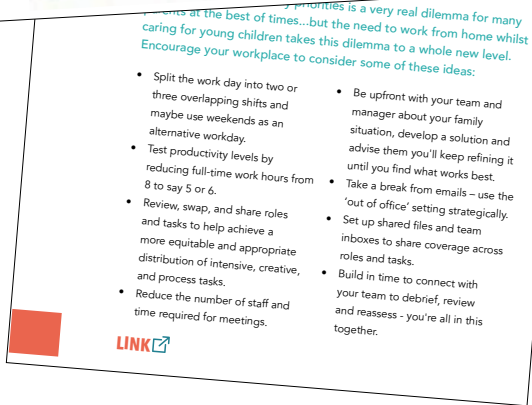
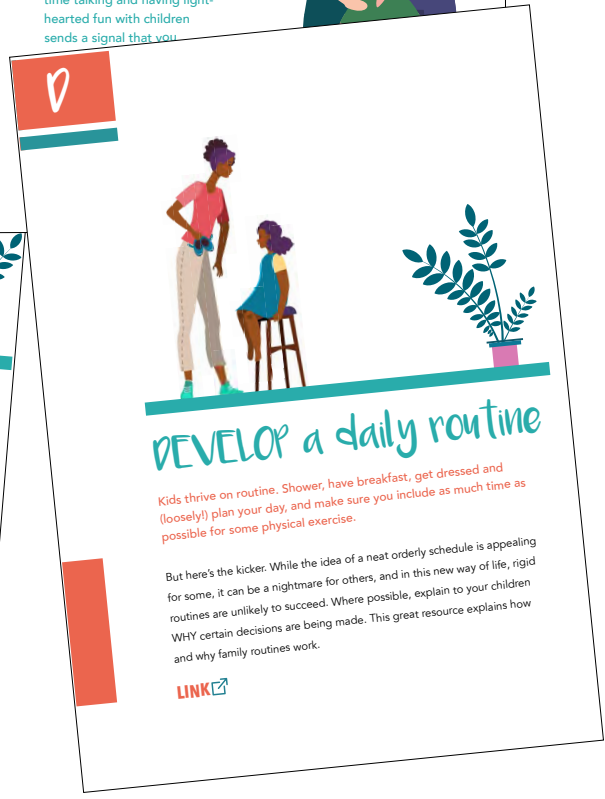
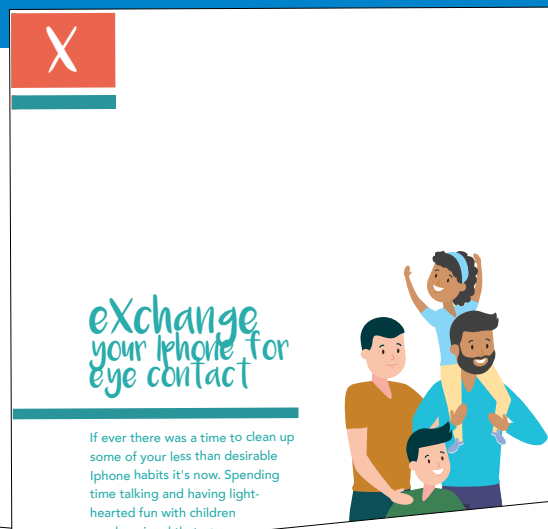




# COVID-19 A-Z GUIDE TO PARENTING

We had the pleasure of collaborating on this A-Z guide for parenting during the initial months of the COVID-19 Pandemic. This A-Z guide has been developed as a free resource by Tanya Dannock, a qualified trainer, parenting advocate, birth assistant, and managing director of AdaptAbility@Work, a consultancy dedicated to helping parents juggle work and family and everything else!

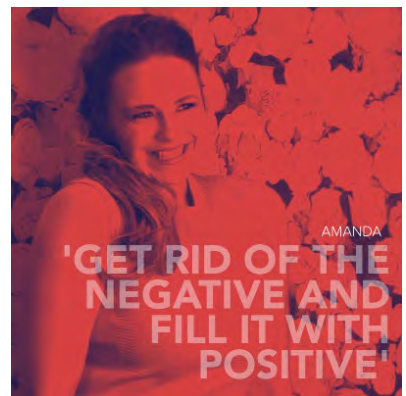
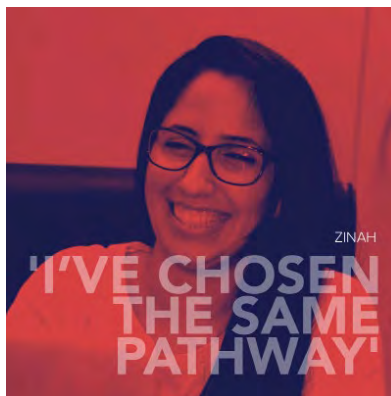
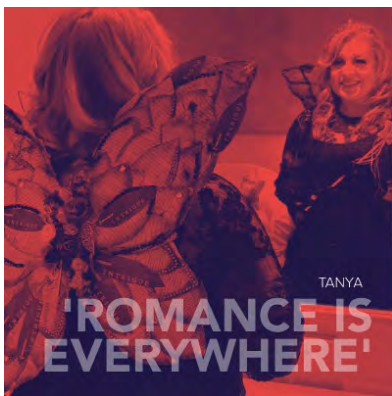
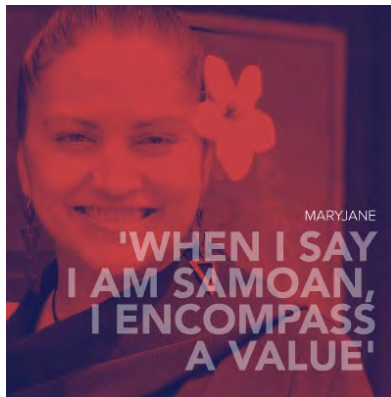
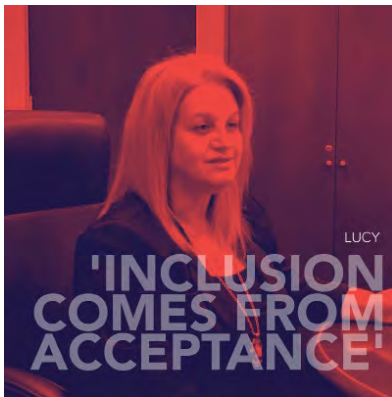
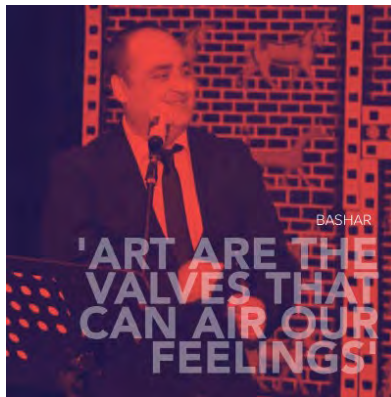
Our connection with Tanya was instantaneous and we are still aiming to produce a second version of this wonderful guide in a variety of languages.



# SAME SAME **DIFFERENT**

This podcast series leverages the beauty and richness of cultural diversity and highlights the many stories that make up Western Sydney.

## Meet Guest Speakers





SameSameDifferent is a podcast series that reflects and give voice to the diverse community that makes up Western Sydney.

Our podcast series will leverage the beauty, richness and uniqueness of cultural diversity, and highlight the triumph and strength of participants who represent cultural diversity, as an asset to improving social cohesion and community harmony. Embracing a shared and active commitment to cultural diversity by sustaining wide-reaching, accessible and robust relationships: We seek to highlight the triumphs and shared humanity across cultural groups through the podcast series, to break the stereotype of the quintessential Australian, and strengthen and improve attitudes towards cultural diversity.



### Series One

And what a series it was. A BIG thank you to our guest speakers Uncle Malcolm Maccoll, Amanda Rose, Najla Turk, John Tran, Basha Hanna, Zinah AlHaidari, MaryJane Schwenke, Tanya Nellestein and Lucy Reggio.

### Our Team

Our three hosts have undertaken something new and exciting to challenge them, and we want to thank them for their dedication. A huge thank you to Harshi Chamakuri, Sara Rahem and Mahmood as well as student intern Kylie Amurao and our internal MRC team Sophia Strickland and Jennifer McLean, Meyer Nashed and Dalya Al Haidari and Darren Chan for being our submission review panel.

## Listen to our episodes

Our podcast is available across all Podcast platforms, or listen directly from our website.

The podcast is available on all your favourite platforms including Apple and Spotify.




Funding for this podcast has been Provided by NSW Government. Thank you to audio-technica for your sponsorship.






# REFUGEE WEEK 2020






Refugee Week  
**Welcome**  
FROM THE 

Refugee Week 2020 theme is Welcome. To honour this theme, we want to highlight the work undertaken by many of the volunteer communities across Australia. Whether you are an individual volunteer or are connected to community groups, we want to recognise the amazing welcome that you offer and your contribution to those that come here as refugees.  
Stand together as one, as we Welcome from the Heart.

- 1



**Join our Welcome from the Heart project**  
Email [rachel@wsmerc.org.au](mailto:rachel@wsmerc.org.au) with a logo or a name to let us know you would like to confirm your involvement. You will be added to our website and the facebook event and be able to share and contribute to our community.
- 2



**Send us your video**  
Capture the reasons why you do what you do, and how important a welcome to our refugee community is in a short video and send to us on FB, messenger, Instagram or Whatsapp. We will create a welcome reel to be shared during Refugee Week and at our event. Do you know someone who deserves to be recognised for their work?
- 3



**Register for our online community zoom connection**  
Register for our community welcome from the heart virtual meeting.  
[tinyurl.com/welcomefromheart](https://tinyurl.com/welcomefromheart)
- 4



**Refugee Week Event Thursday 18th June 2020**  
Join us in our Welcome from the Heart zoom on Thursday 18th June 2020. Update your profile pic on FB using our Welcome from the Heart frame.

JOIN US

♥ Find out more, visit [wsmerc.org.au/welcome](https://wsmerc.org.au/welcome) ♥  
#refugeeweek #welcomefromtheheart2020 #wsmerc



POWERED BY COMMUNITY



### Join Us

Email us with a logo or a name to let us know you would like to join our event. You will be added to our website and the facebook event and be able to share and contribute to our community.

Email



### Send your video

In a short video capture the reasons why you do what you do, and how important a welcome to our refugee community is and send to us on FB, messenger, Instagram or Whatsapp - 0422401470



### Register Online

Register for our community welcome from the heart virtual meeting.

Register now



### Refugee Week Zoom

Join us in our Welcome from the Heart zoom to share our reel and recognise the communities involved. Update your profile pic on FB using our Welcome from the Heart frame.

Support was also shown through a Facebook profile tile, and over 40 videos were received. Thank you to our partners for this project and everyone who joined on the day. a thank you to Jazz Money opening Acknowledgement to Country and writing this beautiful poem.

Enjoy watching the reels on our YouTube Channel.

[www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIWAbxoxRb3BVPw-PVaLegN7UW2QKIGNG](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIWAbxoxRb3BVPw-PVaLegN7UW2QKIGNG)

[jazz.money/welcome-from-the-heart](https://jazz.money/welcome-from-the-heart)



## OUR PROGRAMS **THE PARENTING PLACE**



With support from the NSP Settlement Innovation Fund (SIF) Western Sydney MRC has continued to evolve our parenting program 'The Parenting Place' to create a nurturing and safe space that supports and empowers parents to develop and build effective and resilient families, honouring and promoting their strengths and unique cultural identity alongside creating and strengthening bonds between parents and children. So what does Parenting Place look like, or more importantly, how does it feel to be there?

With a series of parenting workshops, our families and children coordinator, child experts and supporting staff cover a range of topics, based on the participants' discussion, conversations, need and interest. Casual conversation in a safe space have facilitated learning, alongside the establishment of new friendships and support networks, building social cohesion. The integration of indigenous culture has been one of the key goals of the program aiming to further promote social cohesion, and a connection to community.

Initially the program was designed without a childcare option, however parents advised that this was a barrier to them being able to attend.

We explored having a childcare model facilitated in an adjacent room. Initially the children were unsettled, and the first few weeks saw the children and parents gaining their confidence and sense of safety. This was challenging for many parents; many never having left their children in another's care, however overtime proved to be extremely successful with parents and children both enjoying the sessions. Positive role modelling and discussion of parenting styles and approaches has been key to addressing some of the women's parenting challenges.

Ongoing education around Aboriginal heritage and culture, through Uncle Malcolm's welcome to country, alongside his story telling and generosity in sharing time and resources for the children, participants have become very interested in aboriginal culture seeking opportunities to be involved including attending a BBQ at the Gandagara Aboriginal Land Council.

The parenting place was designed to empower and support participants, and guest speaker Amy Dawes from the Australasian Birth Trauma Association (ABTA) joined the women in February to talk about birth trauma. The engagement from



participants and staff was overwhelming, many not having disclosed or ever discussed their experiences. The women have created a safe space, and through the sharing of journeys further build confidence in having a voice and feeling heard.

It has been demonstrated through the course of the program that Parenting Place has assisted in creating stronger bonds between parents and children. A change in behaviour has also been demonstrated, for example how parents respond to a tantrum and the flow on impact this has on the child. With such tangible success, Western Sydney MRC will continue the project as part of the SETS work plan for 19-20. Additional funding is being sought externally for continuation of childcare supports.



The model for The Parenting Place (TPP) considers a new approach to recognise and promote the Strengths and Skills of Parents as the most powerful and influential teachers of their children. With this in mind TPP aims to work in partnership to co-produce and codesign the program and engagement to reflect Dignity and Respect for Parents, rather than focusing on deficit and needy base mentality. The other very important aspect identified for TPP was the need to ensure the “space” for TPP reflects a warm and family friendly environment. Our aim is to create a nurturing and safe space that supports and empowers Parents to develop and build effective and resilient families, honouring and promoting their strengths and unique cultural identity. To provide a space filled with warmth, laughter, acceptance where parents learn and help each other, to share their journey as parents the up and downs and know they are not alone. To provide a space that inspires and encourages parents to be the best they can be by providing the current best parenting practises training and relevant government and health department assistance programs for families.

### Western Sydney MRC Facilitator Pio Macri

Pio has extensive experience in the early childhood sector, having led a range of local government childcare centres, director of The University of Western Sydney Early Learning Centre and has been

an educator and leader in many projects for children and families over the past 30 years. Pio is passionate about the importance of strengthening families and promoting the image of children as powerful, rich and strong individuals.

# LGBTIQ+ CELEBRATING INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY



**WESTERN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA**

WELCOME TO  
**IDAHOBIT 2020**  
**SUPPORTING DIVERSE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**

**THIS WEBINAR BEGIN AT 10AM**

**Meeting housekeeping**  
Questions can be posted directly to the panelists (privately).  
Any questions posted using the Q&A feature can be seen by all participants.  
You may also choose to post a question anonymously using the 'send anon' checkbox.  
Reminder that this session will be recorded.

*Trigger warning : this webinar may contain potentially distressing content or topics. Please take care of yourself. If you need to take a break or leave the webinar we understand.*

Logos at the bottom of the slide include: CENTREPOINT BUNDESTEAM, CITY OF PARRAMATTA, acon, WESTERN SYDNEY MRC, WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY, LGBTIQ, and BCRG.



We have identified that historically the organisation has focused on the diversity of community individuals and groups that site cultural, religious and linguistic differences. We are aiming to continue to improve the quality of services and supports, recognition and identification of clients and community experiences from within the LGBTIQ+ community. We want to ensure that our organisation is prepared to provide support, appropriate management and inclusivity practise. We have identified that we must prepare a strategy and theory of change for us to fully understand the community, its views, beliefs and barriers to full inclusive acceptance.

Our vision is a socially inclusive Australia where diversity and inclusiveness are celebrated. We have undertaken a staff focus group, discussing (at a high level) what acceptance means. We have also sought out training and the use of focus groups and networking opportunities in order to connect with individuals and organizations on similar trajectory and path to not only having our Welcome Here Sticker displayed but ensuring we feel confident in the supports provided, management of individuals based on their needs and situations and in ultimately providing a safe and respectful environment for everyone.

We have explored many of the complexities of understanding the intersectionality relating to an individual's sense of self and self-identification (religion, disability, culture and sexuality/ gender identification).

We have explored and discovered that many of our communities do not currently disclose any diversity around gender or sexuality at the MRC.

We understand that often the countries of origin beliefs/acceptance relating to LGBTIQ+ individuals and communities often transfers to the communities here in Australia, the perceptions and belief of gender and sexual diverse practices often clash with religious belief and the lack of experience of CALD communities addressing sexuality and gender diversity openly.

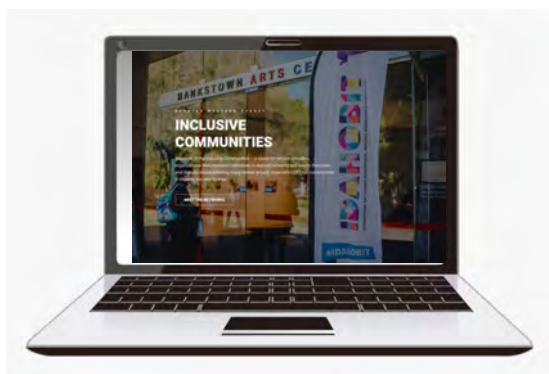
We are proud at Western Sydney MRC to have become a 'ACON Welcome Here' member and working towards meeting the needs of our community and the associated requirements.

We have a clear strategic plan - with two main strategic priorities:

**Inclusion of diversity**

**Leadership through connection**

We have identified and established a connection with ACON alongside joining one of the established LGBTQ+ networks, Inclusive Communities Network (ICN), Canterbury-Bankstown. Listening and learning has been our primary objective here, however through connection and advocacy, Western Sydney MRC was proud to support the Wear it Purple event, which was moved online due to COVID-19, alongside partnering with ACON in developing a website to support all the inclusive community networks through the development of an online



hub.

Many of the NSW Settlement Partners are committed to the betterment of supports available to the LGBTIQ+ community, and are leading the way in bridging the gaps in knowledge, education, understanding and action.

We have ensured that learning and continued discussion are top of mind in staff meetings and believe that this ingrained approach is fundamental to addressing the internal barriers.

We have been able to achieve the following:

- 'Acceptance is...?' internal staff session

- Training with ACON (marketing and 2 x caseworkers attended)

- 1 staff member attended ACON Western Sydney LGBTIQ Wellbeing and Inclusion Research Project focus group



Support of IDAHOBIT event (moved online). Involvement in this lead us to interview one of the program participants on a podcast series 2!

An active member of the Inclusive Communities Network, Canterbury / Bankstown Group

Anecdotal Youth consultation - 30-person youth group discussed sexuality and their views and visibility / acceptance within the community.

From Western Sydney MRC, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the following individuals and organisations who have played a crucial role in our journey as an organisation:

*Michael Atkinson - ACON Program Manager, LGBTQ Safety and Inclusion;*

*Jacob Steuart - Canterbury-Bankstown Council Access and Inclusion Officer & ICN Chair,*

*Anna Certoma - Bankstown Community Resource Group Community Development Officer and*

*Gavin Prendergast - ACON Manager Regional Outreach.*





## DIGITAL WEBINARS

Over four months ago COVID-19 has changed the way we connect, support, communicate and engage with our clients, community and staff. The health and wellbeing of our community have been our priority, organisation-wide, identifying the needs of individuals and community, focussing on the building capacity and literacy across multiple areas and asking ourselves such questions as are the community safe? Is the messaging getting through? What is our role in this current landscape? What are we not seeing? And how are the mental and physical impacts of COVID-19 affecting us all?

Alongside the peaks and troughs of COVID-19 confirmed cases and health across the world, many communities have been watching their loved ones from afar be impacted with little to no way of providing support. Initial impacts included the loss of jobs and income and financial stability, our connections to family, community and work severed. Social gatherings are suspended, impacting us all, from family gathering and places of worship. Has new words have entered our vocabulary with a different meaning - social distancing, isolation, and we have used technology to bridge the expanse of disconnection. For a while home-schooling challenged everyone. Whilst every parent is an everyday teacher, home-schooling challenged those with limited English language and education to be able to support their children's learning. Access to online learning, computers, devices, unlimited data and digital know-how have been significant barriers for many of our community.

The use of masks, the 1.5 metre rule alongside, conspiracy theories, home remedies and cures have filled our social media feeds. Media and health messaging have is saturated. More in language translations have appeared being replicated and disseminated by community leaders and influencers amounts migrant communities, ensuring that everyone is in touch with relevant and reliable information.

The words "you are on mute" has quite likely been the most uttered sentence since we started on this

journey. Ironically this has such depth in meaning. Many of the vulnerable communities have been just that... on mute. Many unseen and slipping through the cracks. With an increase in international student and temporary visa support requests, alongside the need for emergency relief. With the second wave, many individuals and families can simply not afford to test positive or socially isolate, increasing the risk of community transmission. We are learning a new culture, the culture of COVID-19, its intricacies, its rules and how it fits with each of our lives.

With this as our present narrative, we need to plan for the future, what is our future, how will we be impacted emotionally, by PTSD, mental and physical health long term impacts.

We do know one thing, that this journey has impacted each and every one of us. The spectrum is a long winding line, and we all sit somewhere. At Western Sydney MRC we have ensured that we have walked this line, providing support, training, service, assistance to as many of the community as we can reach.

We have only managed to do this with the support of community and the long-term investment in the wellbeing and relationships with our community. The need has been clearly defined.

We have stood by our values or principles, and ensured whatever the platform, whatever the challenge, we remain focussed, driven and committed.

From March-June 2020 we have delivered 7 community webinars as multiple languages regarding employment, health, education and more.

MIGRANT  
EMPLOYMENT  
LEGAL SERVICE  
FREE CONFIDENTIAL LEGAL HELP

 core  
Community Services

 Africa  
Health  
Australia

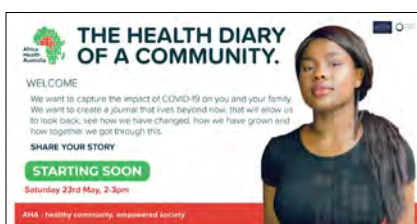


## Estimated reach of 13,978, Unique views 5855



### Health is Wealth

We want to highlight one community organisation that has shown absolute commitment during the last 4 months, delivering digital webinars and an abundance of community support. It has always been the intention of many Iraqi Australian Christians, with Arabic speaking backgrounds, living in the Australian community, to establish an organization to: Maintain their culture, Maintain their Christian values, Strengthen the bonds amongst the members through social, cultural, sport and humanitarian activities, Maintain communication in Arabic for the coming generations, and Provide assistance, where possible, to all Iraqi Christians whether they have just arrived in Australia or are living outside Iraq as refugees. We would like to acknowledge Dr Ramzi Banouti, Dr Yousif Lallo, Dr Ziad Basyouni, Dr Jamal Rifi, Dr Raid Simhairi and Mrs Hawra Al Zargani, Dr Mitchell Smith, Director NSW Refugee Health, Katrina Ironside (MELS), Dr Vincent Ogu from AHA to name but some of the many that were involved in making these events possible.



Western Sydney MRC would like to acknowledge Nadia Bouchti, Community Development Officer for her commitment to community over the last 12 months. She has not only worked on supporting community but sees everyday as an opportunity to learn.

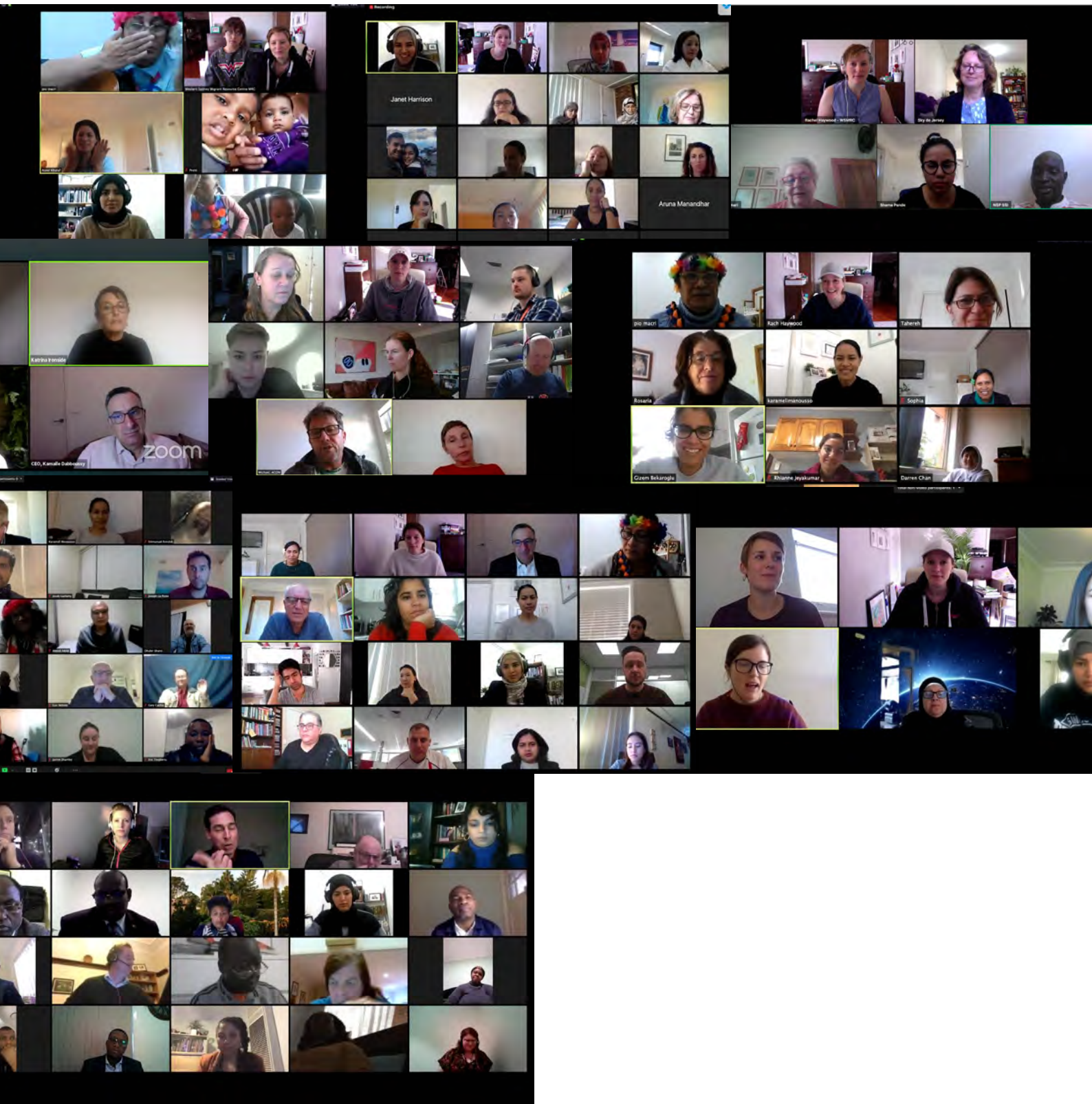




# IT'S ALL ABOUT CONNECTION AND ZOOM







# FUNDRAISING, SUPPORTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

We would like to acknowledge our funding and corporate partners, and those who have participated in and actively promoted our services for the past 12 months. We would like to make special mention to 12 year old Samuel Plakidis who ran the City2Surf and raised over \$2,500 for our MRC services.

## Fundraising Campaigns

Total fund raised \$10,060

Courageous Journeys

City2Surf

Online donations

Giving Tuesday donations

## Associate Memberships

Welcome to our new Associate Members.

- Peacemakers Ensemble
- Sumer Association
- Centre Minds Counselling
- Christina Muchenagumbo (Individual)
- The Nasoraean Mandaeen Association Inc.
- Hymiana Social Group
- Africa Health Australia

## ProBono Support

### KING & WOOD MALLESONS

Expert legal advice in relation to lease agreements and MOU's.

### EMPLOYSURE

Expert employer and human resource advice.







## C-19

It's not often we share an internal communication; however, this piece was after our second month of working remotely. It speaks to the staff, community and client's resilience. Written by Services Manager, Anna-Marie Kanaan, it speaks to the role of knowing what every single staff member was facing and achieving. Our COVID-19 response was structured and streamlined due to the infrastructures and organisations' service capacity.

*As we are wrapping up our 2nd month of working remotely, I have been reflecting how far we have come as a team in the past few months.*

*There has been much mention (and rightly so) of teachers and nurses as our unsung heroes. I believe our wonderful front-line workers are too everyday heroes. Due to the humble nature of many of our team members and the limited opportunities for hallway small talk, I have realised that I'm one of the few people who have witnessed the incredible achievements at the front-line in the last few weeks. I want to just share a few with you all:*

*Our SETS caseworkers provided more casework sessions in the first 2 weeks of remote working than in any 2-week period in the 6 months prior. They have provided over \$4,000 in food vouchers, continued to support clients with energy bill assistance (EAPA), Working development orders' in adjacency to information and referrals. This has included teaching our community the basics of using mobile phones and technology, taking photos and sending texts. Your patience and compassion astounds me.*

*Tahereh has taken on the additional task of training up Aseel, the ParentsNext team and Meyer in Emergency Relief EAPA and our internal database (all remotely) so we can support more clients.*

*Eptesam, our social worker extraordinaire, has accepted 24 complex clients through SIS Tier 3 since March, continuing to provide in person support to our most vulnerable individuals. She has supported in areas of domestic violence, housing issues and disability. She has learned (and mastered) a whole new program and way of reporting whilst working remotely. For this, on behalf of our clients, we thank you.*

*Natalie has done the incredible juggle of supporting clients remotely while entertaining a toddler at home full time. The level of support you continue to commit to is inspiring. Meyer has taken on the new challenge of undertaking assessments for EAPA and Emergency Relief and somehow provided front desk support without a front desk!*

*The ParentsNext team contacted around 100 clients last week to update expired plans. They worked around the clock to support the MRC reach its KPIs and at the same*

*time ensuring clients are supported. Nada and Dunia, we are incredibly lucky to have staff as dedicated as you both.*

*With age Care home-based respite, in person support has not stopped during this time. The Support Workers have continued to provide personal and domestic assistance. Rosaria has ensured that our Support Workers and clients are kept safe through frequent screening. She has also completed assessments for a huge number of newly referred clients since lockdown. She has also reached out to clients who would otherwise be isolated to ensure they have an ear, someone to listen to them - a person to connect with.*

*Despite her stating that digital platforms are not being her greatest talent; Aunty Pio has taken on the challenge of digital playgroups with gusto. Both Pio and Aseel bring such enthusiasm and love to those meetings with the littlest members of our community.*

*Rhianne took on the challenge of leading our first wellness session- something I truly take my hat off to, I am yet to chair a Zoom meeting and if I'm honest slightly terrified of it! Talking of chairing Zoom meetings, Nadia chaired the first Liverpool Migrant and Refugee Interagency on Zoom and with what seemed like at least 30 people on it went so smoothly. Don't even get my started on the success of the community digital forums which have led the way for other community organisations in this area. With youth being so hugely impacted by COVID-19, Darren has continued to support young people with complex needs included clients with court appearances and legal challenges. He has been a point of support and consistency for the rapidly changing environment our young people find themselves in.*

*Lastly and by no means least, Dalya has strived to provide social connection and support for our elderly community in aged care facilities. I feel truly honoured that I get to work alongside such dedicated, competent and compassionate staff. Thank you for being there for our community through these times. Being here for one another helps us be here for community.*

AMK

Ok, so that was just the tip of pandemic iceberg. An early instigated COVID-19 contingency plan, communications tracker and management check-in were some of senior management initiatives implemented during this pandemic. We continue to improve, find new ways to supports the needs of clients and staff, alongside finding the energy to keep going, responding to the next challenge. Being disconnected from people has significant long-term impacts and we are working towards protecting our ability to deliver service. That means taking care of our own.



Western Sydney MRC Staff EOY Function. December 2019



# FUNDING HIGHLIGHT

Western Sydney MRC endeavours to seek out new opportunities to support community groups and initiatives.

## Celebrating Success, celebrating community - complete

Alongside 62 other local organisations, communities and government bodies, Western Sydney MRC attended Liverpool City Council 'Celebrating Community Success 2019' to receive a certificate of appreciation for 2 projects.

Youth school holiday activity Liverpool Amazing Race and our Liverpool Youth vs Liverpool Police Soccer Tournament. Our Community Development Team including Youth Worker Darren Chan and RYPMP and Volunteer Coordinator Jennifer McLean worked with internal teams to bring together two fantastic events.

Liverpool City Council works to support and recognise the needs of communities, providing much needed funding, mentoring and advocacy. We were among some dedicated organisations and community groups that we also have the pleasure of working with including: Sumer Association, Sabian Mandaean Association, African Cultural & Dinner Nite (IGBO Community), the Zest Awards by Western Sydney Community Forum.

We would like to extend our congrats to all the organisations for continuing to delivering initiatives that support social cohesion, connection, diversity and inclusion.

Thank you again Liverpool City Council for celebrating community in the way that you do - through your continued support... here's to 2020. We think it's going to be a big year!

Original post: [wsmrc.org.au/celebrating-community/](http://wsmrc.org.au/celebrating-community/)



# RE-IMAGINING SETTLEMENT

The NSP with SSI is undertaking a significant body of work to explore views, successes and challenges of those settling in Australia. Staying informed to the needs of the community, alongside their experiences allows us to continue to strengthen relationships & collaboration with clients, community partners and frontline workers across the NSP. Through a series of interviews we will gain collective insight into a client centered view of settlement that clarifies priorities for advocacy, highlights adaptive responses to change and innovation and identifies opportunities for service improvement and increased collaboration. We look forward to publishing the results of the study with the NSP, and are once again proud to be part of such passionate individual and organisations. The NSW System Change re-imagining settlement event is looking to bring the voices of our community to the table and current picture of our clients views on their settlement journey. Settlement isn't just settlement services. It's a life, a dream, safe place to build a future. This will act as a broader evaluation to the work we undertake everyday but more importantly the impact that is felt by our community over a lifetime.





# LIVERPOOL REFUGEE AND MIGRANT INTERAGENCY (LRMI)

## LRMI Organisers

Western Sydney MRC and Liverpool City Council

The Liverpool Refugee and Migrant Interagency is a network of service providers from the Liverpool Local Government Area who address issues affecting migrants and refugees. The interagency is made up of members from a diverse range of service providers including government departments, private sector organisations, schools, childcare centres, residents and any interested parties. The interagency raises awareness of issues, advocates and lobbies in relation to migrant and refugee communities.

Based on the survey completed by the LRMI members the group focus was on Employment, unfortunately, due to COVID-19 pandemic, the Education and Employment subcommittee couldn't continue working on this project - but we do recognise that this remains a key issue for community, especially post the pandemic.

*Liverpool City Council and Western Sydney MRC are planning a renewed structure for the LRMI in 2021.*

In 2019-2020 we held 5 Face to face meetings between June 2019 - February 2020, and moved to an online model holding 3 online meetings between April - June 2020. During each meeting we focus on a key learning area and an opportunity for info share. Presentations during this time included:

Liverpool Settlement Data, Updates/Statistics Tier 3 Support by SSI  
 Ingham Institute | Donor Relationship and CRM Manager by Ryan Luhan,  
 Cultural & Linguistic Diversity (CALD) Coordinator TAFE - Feedback on Community Stakeholder Consultation by Eva Atkins  
 Multicultural Communities Sector Support - My Aged Care System by Zana Brasnovic,  
 Refugee Employment Support Program by Katarzyna Ross  
 Exploring Employment Strategies, Western Sydney MRC by Rachel Haywood  
 MTC Australia, Remote Delivery of SEE Program by Noah Dean  
 Supporting people with a cognitive impairment, Justice Advocacy Services, by Matt French

- Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese
- City of Liverpool Meals on Wheels
- Headspace
- Health Promotion Service
- Hume Community Housing Association
- IWAA
- Lebanese Muslim Association
- Legal Aid NSW
- Lifeline Macarthur
- Liverpool City Council
- Liverpool City Library
- Migrant & Refugee Progressive Pathways
- Migrant Employment Legal Service
- Mission Australia
- Navitas
- NSWPF
- One Door
- Services Australia
- Settlement Services International
- South West Sydney Legal Centre
- South Western Sydney LHD
- STARTTS
- Sunnyfield Disability Services
- TAFE NSW
- The Ingham Institute
- Wesley Mission
- Western Sydney Local Health District
- Western Sydney MRC

# THE NSP, AND **MOORE STREET HUB**

## NSP

The extent of support, opportunities and service provision offered at Western Sydney MRC would not have been made possible without the involvement of our many dedicated partners. As part of the NSW Settlement Partnership together with 22 agencies across NSW and led by SSI, we continued to deliver support to newly arrived refugees and migrants as a community of practice under the Department of Social Services funded Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) Program. Western Sydney MRC has continued to participate in multiple Community of Practice (CoP) meetings and planning across the NSP including family and domestic violence CoP and the Community Capacity Building CoP. Through such CoP's staff can build knowledge and skills through shared learning. Overall, as a partnership we can Strengthened the settlement sector and advocacy outcomes for clients. The NSP have meet quarterly with numerous update meetings, community capacity building development and exploration. We would like to acknowledge our NSP sister members, we value and enjoy the opportunities to connect, share and learn from each and everyone of you.



## Partnerships

Multicultural playgroups were delivered together with Liverpool City Council and Fairfield City Council under DCJ funding. We have continued to build our relationship with CORE Community Services, alongside many other organisations providing supports and services to community through internal and external referral pathways. We want to highlight the work undertaken with the Assyrian Resource Centre, supporting our community with Citizenship sessions. A huge thank you to Father Fadi.

## Our MooreStreet Hub

A Centre of Excellence (CoE) is a team, a shared facility or an entity that provides leadership, best practices, research, support and/or training for a focus area.

We worked together with an even wider range of partners, to enhance social impact and supports. Key partners included the services who form the hub of co-located services operating from our Centre, through to project partners such as PCYC in the co-delivery of 'Drop Zone' our youth activities.





## OUR 2019 - 2020 TEAM

Our team are the core of who we are as an organisation. We pay respect and gratitude to their efforts in achieving our many goals. Without you this year would not have been possible.

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### STAFF

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Abeer El-Adib  
Anna-Marie Kanaan  
Aseel Khalaf  
Caroline Dimond  
Dalia Attalla  
Dalya Al Haidari  
Darren Chan  
Dunia Aofi  
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Nadia Bouchti  
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Nina Sakr  
Rachel Haywood  
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Rosaria Raco  
Sophia Strickland  
Suhad Khalaf  
Tahereh Kargar  
Wan Wen Li  
Xuan Thi Bui

### SUPPORTING AGENCIES

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Department of Social Services  
Department of Community and Justice  
Department of Health and Ageing  
Department of Home Affairs  
Department of Human Services  
Multicultural NSW  
National Disability Insurance Agency  
Western Sydney University  
UTS  
Focus Connect, formerly MDSI  
South Western Local District  
Settlement Services International (SSI)

The contributions that the volunteers make to the Western Sydney MRC clients and community is invaluable. On behalf of our clients and community we would like to thank the following individuals.

## VOLUNTEERS

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Admon Yokhana  
Ahiegwu Odeh  
Alaa Ahmed  
Ali Al Mahdawi  
Amal Shijar  
Amanda Orellana  
Aneer Altaieb  
Aneesa Takyen  
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Asmar Al-Najjar  
Azza Alguma  
Bryony Cumberpatch  
Clara Bucarey  
David Chenu  
Eliza Carter  
Emmy Roufail  
Faiza Khan  
Fareed Muradhanna  
Fatimah Albraihi  
Fouzi Jamhour  
Griffyn Williams-Brooks

Guadalupe Alvarez  
Henry Xu  
Ilisapesi Coskun  
Ivy Dao  
Jamal Al Mindwy  
Jehan Al Galmash  
Joanna Judge  
Jonathon Pearson  
Julie Adamson  
Juliet Warda  
Khalid Fenjan  
Kirilly Noble  
Llewellyn Williams-Brooks  
Lucy Ray  
Manar Hussein  
Maral Ibrahim  
Maria Valdes  
Mark Adamson  
Marwa George  
Mary Gardner  
Mary Majbel  
Mim Saraya  
Miriam Kleinig  
Mona Dawoud

Nabira Mirza  
Naomi Coote  
Naqib Noori  
Navtej Singh Deyal  
Noor Abdalwahad  
Penny Cummins  
Rachelle Pike  
Rahim Sahan  
Rashi Raj Gupta  
Rayan Osman  
Razan Ozon  
Rumaysah Jawad  
Salasaini De Tommaso  
Salwan Hassam Amara  
Samira Haque  
Sandra Carina Virga  
Sara Peters  
Sara Rahem  
Sarah Shabo  
Sarin Kakhejian  
Semat Hraiz  
Shameema Duncan  
Shams Adam  
Sheenagh Dabbagh

Shomal Prasad  
Suha Abood  
Sumaia Ismail  
Susan Alzuhairi  
Sylvia Giannone  
Tanton Nguyen  
Thekra Binoka  
Thomas Ho  
Thomas Schuetz  
Thurawah (Sue) Alameddine  
Tina Huynh  
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Vivienne Harb  
Wan Wen Li  
Wesnaa Karim  
Yamamah Abbood  
Zaid Shadid  
Zaman Hantoosh  
Zunilda Navarro

## 2020 BOARD MEMBERS

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ClIr Nathan Hagarty (Chair)  
Ms Feng Guo (Finance & Audit Subcommittee Chair)  
Ms Helen Wortham (Compliance & Risk Subcommittee Chair)  
Dr Amad Mtashar  
Ms Myee Gregory  
Ms Rola Hijwel  
Mr Vijhai Utheyan  
Mr Gaurav Singh

















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### How to get Here

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm