

# **MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE NORTH WEST REGION INC.**



## **ANNUAL REPORT**



**MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE NORTH WEST REGION INC.**



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**Email: [mrcnw@mrcnorthwest.org.au](mailto:mrcnw@mrcnorthwest.org.au)**

We would like to acknowledge Indigenous peoples as the first Australians and Traditional Custodians of this land. We would like to pay respect to the Elders both past, present and emerging.







## **CONTENTS OF ANNUAL REPORT**

**About Us**

**Our Committee**

**Our President**

**Our Executive Officer**

**Our Treasurer**

**Financial Statement**

**Our Staff**

**Our Volunteers**

**Our Year**

**Our Services**

**Our Partners & Supporters**



# ABOUT US

## Who we are

Migrant Resource Centre North West (MRCNW) is a non profit community based organisation that supports and empowers migrants and refugees to settle and live fulfilling lives in north west metro Melbourne.

## OUR VISION

The MRCNW, supports an environment where people from diverse cultural backgrounds are able to participate to their full potential in the life of the Australian Community while they are free to maintain their individual culture and heritage.

## OUR MISSION

The MRCNW, within its scope and capacity will pursue equality of opportunity for all people in our community and challenge discrimination through direct services, systemic advocacy, information provision and community development projects which further the capacity for migrants and refugees to achieve and maintain a safe and healthy life in Australia.

## What we Do

Our main focus is on meeting the needs of our communities through effective, targeted, and meaningful services.

We strive on promoting the needs of our multicultural communities through advocacy and by working with like-minded mainstream services to support the delivery of responsive and culturally Inclusive services.

MRCNW's extensive range of services and projects include but not limited too:

- Individual and group case management
- Capacity building
- Community development
- Support for frail, elderly and people with a disability and their families
- Disability Services & Disability Advocacy
- Specialised settlement services
- Education & Training services
- Youth settlement work
- Home Care packages
- NDIS Case Coordination
- Health, wellbeing and life skills programs, activities and services.





# OUR COMMITTEE



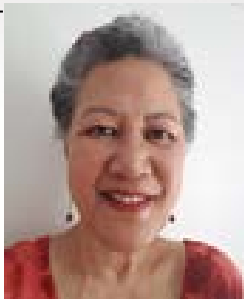
Hakki Suleyman  
**President**



Troy Atanasovski  
**Vice President**



Daniel B Wallace  
**Treasurer**



Alicia Matene  
**Secretary**



Joe Caf  
**COM Member**



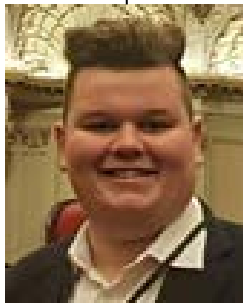
Minh H Lam  
**COM Member**



George Aquilina  
**COM Member**



Sydney Vas  
**COM Member**



Nicholas Tribe  
**COM Member**

# OUR PRESIDENT

## HAKKI SULEYMAN

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Dear Members and associates, welcome to another Annual Report marking MRC North West Region Inc.'s 32nd year.

Despite the very trying circumstances created by the continuation of the pandemic, I am pleased and most proud to report that we at the MRC North West Region Inc., continued to show great resilience and adaptability in dealing with the changes necessary to maintain our essential services and provide relief to those in our community most severely impacted during these challenging times.

Navigating and responding to the pandemic over the past 20 months has arguably been one of the most demanding periods in the organisation's recent history. I would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank the contributions and efforts made by our team of staff led by our Executive Officer, Mrs Gulden Metin, and especially those at the frontline of our operations as they continued to make sure patrons to the MRC had access to their essential needs.

The highlights of our work in 2020-21 have been in the areas of Age Care, Disability services, SETS Client Services, RTO and LLO training and employment support, NDIS services, Home Care Packages and engaging with our communities, all of which are featured in this annual report. The successes that we have achieved are a result of decades of experience and strong connections, coupled with strategic direction, a highly skilled workforce and a dedicated volunteer base.

As always, the health, safety and wellbeing of our own people has and will always be our highest priority and it's for these reasons we've been able to provide a high level of service to the community throughout the pandemic. COVID-safe plans and guidance were regularly reviewed and updated, ensuring MRCNW staff had the latest information on maintaining a safe work environment, whether working from home, in the office or in the field.

Supporting us every step of the way were our many partners, stakeholders, the valuable networks, our Committee of Management and volunteers. Thank you all. What we have accomplished over the past year in response to COVID-19 is yet another reminder of the importance of our work in the community and our enduring commitment to serving and improving positive outcomes.

In concluding I extend my sincere gratitude to my colleagues on the Committee, all our staff for their ongoing dedication and tremendous work, all our volunteers, and all our members for their support. A special mention and thanks to our funding bodies, local Councils, our local State and Federal MP's, across the North West region for their continued support and commitment during these uncertain difficult times. To our partners and supporters listed in our report who have provided us their invaluable support I wish to extend my thanks and appreciation to you all.

By focusing on our core businesses at the MRCNW, investing in our programs and services, leveraging our strong partnerships and continuing to be guided by our purpose and values, we will overcome the challenges faced by the pandemic and continue to create value for all our stakeholders while striving for a better tomorrow.



# OUR EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## GULTEN METIN

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It gives me great pleasure to be writing this years Annual Report 2020-2021. The past year has been one of change like no other with the outbreak of COVID-19 then with the Delta variant of the pandemic, followed by severe weather events, and natural disasters like the earthquake, affecting our lives. There is no doubt that the events of the past year will resonate with us well into the future.

Although it has been a difficult year, what is pleasing to note and showcased throughout our report is how we continued to demonstrate our ability to meet these challenges and continued to deliver all our programs to our communities and retained our funding ensuring ongoing sustainability of our services.

Looking back to the year, there is so much we can be proud of as an organisation with our swift transition to digital technology, building capacity, establishing more partnerships and continuing to adjust our services to ensure that practical and relevant essential supports were always available to meet the needs of our community members across the north west.

MRC North West Region's mission has always been to provide quality services that assist our communities to settle and participate in all aspects of life. This rewarding and privileged work is only possible because of our incredible staff, our compassionate Committee for their seamless expertise, our partner organisations and the ongoing recognition by the three tiers of Government of our proven capabilities. We are so grateful for this continued support which will go on to transform many lives into the future.

As we move our focus on to the forthcoming year, it is clear we will continue to face challenges that are not foreseeable, but we are committed to collaborating with our communities and key partners and respond effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of our communities. We will continue to work hard as a team to bring a sense of normality into periods of not so normal times and rise to any challenges ahead.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our funding bodies, our local Councils, local State and Federal MPS and our networks across the North West region, for their continued support and interest in the MRCNW; to our partners thank you all, without our partnerships we would not be able to achieve the positive outcomes for our community. The connection and collaborations with all our stakeholders have become an asset that has proven invaluable, and forever embedded in our organisation.

In concluding, I feel very privileged to lead a team of dedicated staff for going above and beyond to support our clients and communities when they needed us the most, thank you for the professionalism, care, and commitment you have all shown throughout the year and the many volunteers who have given us so many hours of dedicated voluntary service. My sincere thanks to all our Committee of Management, and in particular, our President, Mr. Hakki Suleyman and Treasurer, Mr. Daniel B. Wallace for their many hours of dedicated support, advice and contributions through what has been another year like no other.

Although we continue to face adversity with the pandemic, we will rally together as we have and respond with sheer determination, resilience, commitment and compassion. We emerged through the year as a sustainable and viable organisation providing meaningful essential services for our communities and we will continue to do so well into the future.

# OUR TREASURER

## DANIEL BENJAMIN WALLACE

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On behalf of the Committee of Management, I am extremely pleased to present the financial report of the Migrant Resource Centre Northwest for 2020/2021. Notwithstanding the limitations caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the MRCNW has yet again this year been successful to navigate its operating environment, ensuring the continuity of all commitments to our clients and the broader community. Our on-going financial stability and strength are the foundation stones of a dedicated, well managed and respected organisation.

Income from our funding bodies for the year 2020/21 totalled to \$3,880,269 whilst Expenditure amounted to \$3,123,866, thus leaving a balance of \$756,403. This balance comprises of funds received prior to the opening of the financial year for various on-going programs that spread across 30th June 2020. It also includes amounts that could not be spent owing to lockdown restrictions caused by the COVID pandemic viz., planned well-being activities, social group meetings and excursions. All activities became virtual online sessions. In addition, included is, expenditure for the purchase of two sedan vehicles for pooling between outreach staff to deliver services to our frail, disabled and needy clients for Home Care Packages, NDIS Program & RTO programs, other Capital expenditure for updating laptops/tablets, purchasing air filtering systems for both our premises and last but not the least, employment of four more staff to meet our increased workload. Lastly, expenditure also included, pertains to postponed essential celebrations such as Volunteers Day, Chairperson's Dinner, Student Graduation Night, AGM & Annual prep, staff training, teambuilding, and wellbeing costs.

Furthermore, the account that holds funds under the Severance Pay, Personal Leave, Long Service Leave and Annual Leave categories has not been updated since the past seven years. The money currently held in the nominated account for this purpose stands at \$128,353.89 and needs to be topped-up (please refer to Audited Financial report page 14, under Provisions from our Auditors) to \$673,546 which is a difference of \$529, 991.88. In keeping with our Constitution, any such changes of our existing accounts will require the consensus of a special COM meeting. Current restrictions permitting, such a meeting is scheduled to be held as soon as possible.

Going forward, MRCNW will continue to strengthen its financial position as it deals with operational and strategic challenges, with a renewed focus on investing in our workforce and their well-being, earmarking further planned investment into technology and new service models aligned with our strategic direction and vision.

In concluding, I thank and commend our Chairperson, Mr. Hakki Suleyman together with my colleagues in the Committee of Management and our Executive Officer, Mrs. Cullen Metin, for their valued strategic vision and outstanding business management. Further, I commend and applaud all our staff, particularly the finance team, for their dedication and efficiency which has been the backbone of another very successful year of our service delivery. Finally, I thank our Auditor, Mr Ryk Eksteen and his team from Collins & Co., Auditors Pty. Ltd., for his timely, precise, and diligent auditing of our accounts for the past financial year 2020/21.



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

COLLINS & CO AUDIT PTY LTD

MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE NORTH WEST REGION INC.  
A.B.N 94 440 426 277  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	2,883,338	1,950,297
Financial assets	3	1,985,301	1,968,211
Trade and other receivables	4	32,048	5,208
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>4,900,687</b>	<b>3,923,716</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	5	332,435	169,441
Intangible assets	6	258,578	394,720
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>591,013</b>	<b>564,161</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>5,491,700</b>	<b>4,487,877</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	7	271,294	47,154
Income received in advance	8	451,024	372,676
Provisions	9	673,546	606,458
Lease liabilities	10	115,622	150,063
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>1,511,486</b>	<b>1,176,351</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Provisions	9	243,240	215,332
Lease liabilities	10	129,351	244,973
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>372,591</b>	<b>460,305</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>1,884,077</b>	<b>1,636,656</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>3,607,623</b>	<b>2,851,221</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Contributed Equity		100	100
Accumulated Funds		3,607,523	2,851,121
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>3,607,623</b>	<b>2,851,221</b>

A complete set of audited financial statements from the  
organisation is available upon request.

# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

COLLINS & CO AUDIT PTY LTD

MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE NORTH WEST REGION INC.

A.B.N 94 440 426 277

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Operational funding income	3,708,578	3,105,230
Other income	153,209	78,557
Interest received	18,482	30,180
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>3,880,269</b>	<b>3,213,967</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Accountancy Fees	-	-
Audit Fees	-	4,060
Communication Expenses	55,052	96,660
Community Activities Expenses	177,180	164,876
Depreciation and Amortisation Expenses	183,793	152,727
Equipment Expenses	104,454	62,437
Finance Charges on Leased Liabilities - Leases Premises	21,284	30,532
Insurance Expenses	2,855	2,604
Legal & Professional Fees	242,191	251,430
Learning Centre Expenses	174,294	156,102
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	-	4,540
Miscellaneous Expenses	1,014	2,951
Motor Vehicle Expenses	13,053	19,654
Payroll Costs	2,076,767	1,879,302
Premises Expenses	38,772	55,191
Professional Resources Expenses	16,619	35,961
Staff Expenses	16,539	8,074
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>3,123,867</b>	<b>2,927,101</b>
<b>Net surplus/(deficit) before income tax</b>	<b>756,402</b>	<b>286,866</b>
Income tax expense	-	-
<b>Net surplus/(deficit) attributable to the Association</b>	<b>756,402</b>	<b>286,866</b>

MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE NORTH WEST REGION INC.

A.B.N 94 440 426 277

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Net surplus/(deficit) attributable to the Association	756,402	286,866
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>756,402</b>	<b>286,866</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income attributable to the Association</b>	<b>756,402</b>	<b>286,866</b>

A complete set of audited financial statements from the organisation  
is available upon request.



# FINANCIAL DECLARATION

**MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE NORTH WEST REGION INC.  
A.B.N 94 440 426 277  
STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

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In the opinion of the Committee the financial report as set out on pages 2 to 15:

- 1 Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Migrant Resource Centre North West Region Inc. as at 30 June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards.
- 2 At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Migrant Resource Centre North West Region Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

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

**Chairperson**



Mr Hakki Suleyman

**Treasurer**



Mr Dan Wallace

**Dated this**

27<sup>TH</sup>

day of

SEPTEMBER

# OUR STAFF

## **Gulten Metin - Executive Officer**

Natasha Kocovski - Executive Assistant

Vesna Bajic - Administration/Reception (St Albans)

## **Finance**

Chamila Fernando - Finance Officer

## **Settlement - SETS Client Services Team**

Victoria Fisher - SETS Team Leader

Sevean Kakos - Administration/Reception (Hume)

Lanfen (Betty) Huang - SETS Client Services

Ban Pitros - SETS Client Services (Hume)

Deng T Yong Deng - SETS Client Services (St Albans)

Laura Di Giorgio - Youth Settlement Worker (Hume)

## **Age Care & Disability Services Team**

Zeinab Hussein - Team Leader

Ahmed Sharif I Adam - Home Care Packages Support Worker

Amal Sery - Coptic Elderly Volunteer Coordinator

Arhet Ibrahim - Home Care Packages Support Worker

Atarjit Brar - Indian/Sri Lankan Social Support group Coordinator

Barbara Furgal - Home Care Packages Coordinator & Access&Support

Chamini Jayamanne - Sri Lankan Social Support group Assistant

Christian Astourian - DnD Program Coordinator

Edina Pajevic - Home Care Packages Support Worker

Gamal Ali - NDIS Care Coordinator & African Elderly Men's

Gulgen Tahir - Turkish Social Support group Assistant

Gulumser Yuksel - Home Care Packages Support Worker

Halima Omar - Home Care Packages Support Worker

Ilse Draper - German Social Support group Assistant

Ismeta Huremovic - Bosnian Social Support group Coordinator

Laurice Demain - Coptic Elderly Volunteer Coordinator

Madlenane Ghali - Coptic Elderly Volunteer Coordinator

Payal Sharma-Indian Social Support group Assistant

Muna Hassen - Home Care Packages Support Worker

Naagla Anis - Coptic Elderly Volunteer Coordinator

Raziye Yilmaz -Volunteer Coordinator / Access & Support

Regine Keys - German Social Support group Coordinator

Shyaamalekhaa Rodrigo - Sri Lankan Social Support Coordinator

Suthaluxmy Kunalan - DnD Administration

Tracey Allan - Disability Advocate

Unal Mehmet - Multicultural PAC Social Support group Assistant

Zehra Mutluel - Turkish Social Support group Coordinator

## **Learning Centre Services RTO & LLO**

Sue Tantaró - Training & Compliance Team Leader

Sanela Makki - Admin & Student Support Officer

Champika Ranasingha- Admin & Student Support Officer





# OUR VOLUNTEERS

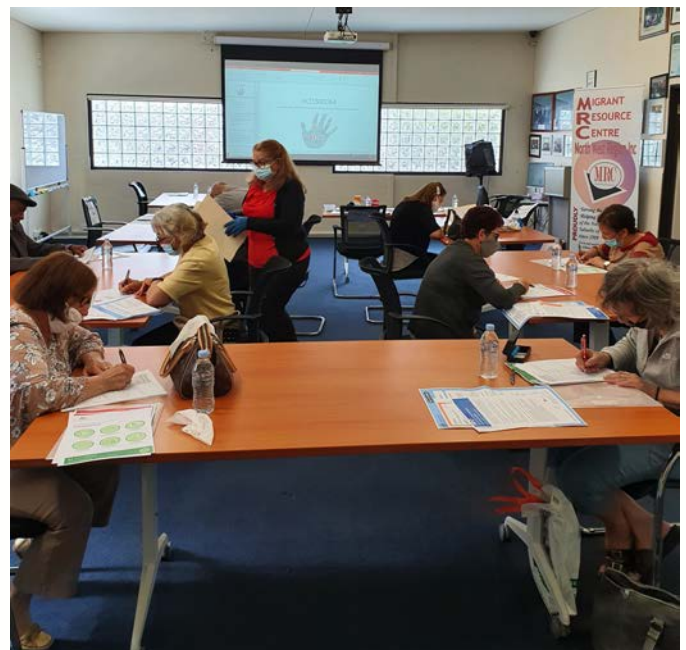
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At MRC North West Region (MRCNW) we are deeply appreciative and thankful for all our volunteers who played an active and selfless role in supporting our programs, activities and events throughout the year. Our programs are very diverse and require compassionate and dedicated volunteers. The many areas that our volunteers assisted our communities included:-

- Working with people and families as they build a new life in Melbourne
- Provide social support to people of all ages
- Give elderly frail, aged people the opportunity to be socially active and engaged with the community
- Help build confidence and independence
- Support people with English conversation
- Assist young people with their studies and build confidence in education pathways
- Assist with events and activities
- Provide administration and project support
- Support people to access mainstream services

The restrictions imposed due to COVID-19 yet again during the period, had a significant impact on our volunteer program, with all volunteer activity being suspended due to the pandemic. This was necessary to protect the health and wellbeing of our volunteers, our clients and our staff. We acted swiftly to develop processes that allowed our volunteers to continue to provide support remotely, via digital platforms.

The success of an organisation is underpinned by its volunteers and staff so we thank them all for their contributions..



# OUR YEAR 2020-2021

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**25+**

**Age Care &  
Disability  
Programs**

**140**

**Hours of Infection  
control and COVID  
safety training**

**150+**

**Young People  
engaged in SETS  
Youth Services**

**320**

**Online  
informational  
sessions hosted  
across programs**

**560**

**Participants in  
Diversity And  
Disability program**

**1550**

**SETS Client Services  
casework**

**8,715**

**Hours devoted to  
welfare check calls  
during COVID-19**

**11,000**

**Clients supported  
and serviced  
across North West**

**148,000**

**Hours of service  
delivery**



# OUR SERVICES

MRCNW across all of its services and programs touch the lives of many people from newly arrived to longer term established migrant communities providing the best positive outcomes for all.

This year our service teams have accomplished another outstanding productive year continuing to act within the aspirations and needs of our community, providing space for voices to be heard, and working with appropriate initiatives that address their needs even during unprecedented times with COVID-19.

Our programs cater for people from all cultures and backgrounds living in the North West regions of metro Melbourne and beyond.

These include:

- Age Care- Commonwealth Home Support Program, HACC PYP;
- Home Care Packages Care Coordination;
- Access & Support Services;
- Settlement SETS Client Services
- Youth Settlement Support;
- Diversity & Disability -Self Advocacy Services;
- NDIS Support Coordination;
- Disability Advocacy;
- RTO and LLO for Education, Training and employment pathway opportunities;
- Community projects;
- And support and information on COVID-19.





# SETS Client Services

SETS Client services program delivery was significantly impacted by COVID-19 this year, with a marked decline in new arrivals into the Humanitarian Settlement Program. The year also saw the loss of face-to-face contact across the communities that MRCNW works alongside for the delivery of all services, creating real service provision challenges during the 2020-21 year.

The teams response to the pandemic has been outstanding, with our staff working with the communities during lockdowns and engaging them in programs that upskill them with digital literacy and be connected, not only with MRCNW but with the wider community. Real progress was made in enhancing service delivery, particularly in the areas of mental health, youth work, employment and family violence as well as general community capacity building.

In addition to this, the team played a pivotal role in promoting the vaccination uptake across Melbourne's North Western suburbs. In collaboration with our community leaders our team delivered innovative and creative approaches to inform our broader CALD communities about COVID-19, restrictions and vaccine requirements with the use of a range of social media messaging platforms to keep communities updated and aware; these approaches have been a real highlight during the year.





## Women of the World

Our Women of the World program met weekly participating in word games, COVID-19 information sessions, Parenting in a New Culture Course and joined the Sister Works sewing program, promoting self employment opportunities.

The Sister Works program saw the WOW group create beautiful pieces of jewellery and ornaments through upcycling discarded material, which would have gone to landfill. Sister Works provides opportunity for the WOW to sell their crafts in their social enterprise shop in Richmond.

The WOW group celebrated Harmony Day at St Dominic's Primary School, which included an art exhibition, cake decorating class and decorating a tablecloth with messages of hope. We shared a multicultural lunch with the greater St Dominic's Community which strengthened our relationships which in turn helped us keep socially connected through another long lockdown.

We kept our program running, using a blended method of delivery via Zoom which allowed the WOW to practice their conversational English and keep socially connected even in challenging times.





COVID-19 Response

MRCNW partnered with Community Health Services, Local Councils, education providers and the Victorian State Government to actively educate and advocate for increased access to the COVID-19 Vaccinations and supports to ensure our diverse communities are fully vaccinated. We have also educated and helped our communities to access support services when families were unable to work during the Melbourne Lockdowns.

Multiple COVID-19 information sessions were held in Arabic & Tamil online, ensuring that our communities were able to receive the answers to their COVID-19 related questions from highly knowledgeable clinicians.

A fun and novel way of delivering the vaccination information was through writing and recording a song on YouTube named “Bye Bye Corona”. This innovative song was sung by popular Iraqi singer Adeen Al Iraqi and funded by the Federation of Ethnic Community Council of Australia.





## Melton Bi Cultural Workers Project

This year MRCNW in partnership with Melton City Council and the Victorian State Government supported the Tamil Community with COVID-19 education, pop up vaccination clinics, material aid, employment support and women's health sessions.

We initially targeted the Tamil Community living in Melton, however we were able to support the community across Melbourne and Geelong as all our communication was done digitally. MRCNW disseminated current COVID -19 information through Tamil social media, Tamil FM, Health Sessions using Zoom and educated mums and toddlers using music and songs. During our strictest lockdowns, MRCNW delivered food parcels to our most vulnerable families ensuring their needs were met. During our 3 day pop up clinic we were able to book in 75 community members to get their vaccinations, in which they all received a personalised "Thank You" card courtesy of the children from the Tamil Language School.



## Road Safety for New Arrivals

The importance of having a driver's license in a new country when settling successfully as a new arrival is paramount. Our program provided a sense of independence, flexibility, and most of all convenience to be able to access services, participate in social and recreational activities in the community, secure learning opportunities and employment pathways more easily. Restrictions had an impact on having the sessions and the driving lessons face to face and safety information sessions were delivered online. We have had to extend the driving lessons until easing of restrictions are announced by government officials.





## Youth Settlement

The Hume Youth Settlement Hub Club came to the end of its 3 year term and is now the Hume Newbies.

Both programs which are funded through the Hume City Councils Community Grant's Funding provide newly arrived young people with fun group activities which are facilitated with experienced youth workers. Participants have made friends, practiced conversational English and have learnt how to straddle both their old and new cultures.

After the 2020 lockdowns the Hume Newbies started off 2021 meeting at the Broadmeadows Town Park enjoying new friendships and playing games. Partnering with Spectrum and Reclink we merged our experience in facilitating sports and outdoor activities, which was embraced by the Newbies.

Once again our program pivoted to Zoom during the lockdowns and our team started to work with Kangan Institute to encourage their Youth AMEP to join in our online activities which was been embraced by the students and staff.

We extend our appreciation to our partners for supporting our youth people to thrive and develop a strong sense of belonging and resilience during not only their settlement but also beyond.





# Age Care & Disability Services

Our Age Care and Disability services team successfully prevailed another year of uncertainty and mode of operation disruptions due to the pandemic in this reporting period of July 2020 to June 2021.

Our well-established Commonwealth Home Support Programs (CHSP), Home and Community Care-Program for Younger People (HACC PYP) and Disability Advocacy programs accomplished delivery of services without interruptions albeit all the challenges faced.

Our self-Advocacy program Diversity and Disability is expanding delivery beyond Melbourne metropolitan into regional areas of Victoria. Our more recent services namely Home Care Packages and NDIS services are expanding and have welcomed a steady growth.

Our dedicated Team members of Support Workers, Social Support Coordinators, Care Coordinators and Support Coordinators needed to be agile and demonstrated the competence and efficiency required to adopt to an unpredictable fast paced service delivery environment. The team have provided quality service and achieved minimum possible service disruption to all our consumers and participants, whilst ensuring the most vulnerable receive extra care.

Professional development and training opportunities for staff and volunteers continued to be on the top list for the MRCNW during the year, to ensure that MRCNW workforce and volunteers are skilled and qualified to deliver a service meeting consumer need and consistently, equipping them with the ability to respond to the challenges posed by a changing sector.

The team had another successful year in building new partnerships and delivered streamlined services with all our stakeholders, partner organisations from the aged care and disability sectors, and ethno-specific community clubs/groups.

The Aged and Disability team wishes to extend their gratitude to all stakeholders that cooperated during the period for the benefit of our consumers and the community at large.





# Turkish Social Support Group

Turkish Speaking Social Support Individual Program delivers a service aimed at recruiting and training volunteers to provide support, companionship and friendship to socially isolated people who are elderly or people with disability. The program matches volunteers to clients who have similar interests, hobbies or backgrounds. Clients then have the opportunity to take part in social activities maximizing their general wellbeing. Due to COVID restrictions these activities were ceased face to face with welfare checks conducted.



The Turkish Speaking Social Support Groups Program is a program that aims to increase the social networks of people by providing an opportunity for group members to interact socially with each other through group activities. Activities are designed to promote different types of engagement in health and wellness. these include light exercise for physical well- being, art, craft, puzzles and word- searches to increase mental awareness and information sessions for better health and general knowledge.



During COVID-19 restrictions and lock down periods, we continued to provide regular wellbeing checks over the phone with the clients. We also provided information to help assist clients with their needs. Word search and puzzle books were mailed out to client's homes to keep them actively engaged during strict lockdown periods.





# Indian & Sri Lankan Social Support Groups

MRC North West proudly offers a range of groups, activities and programs to build social connections, encourage gentle activity and exercise, and increase confidence in clients living independently in the home and community. One of these programs includes the Indian Social support group program funded by the Department of Health.

The group met at Jamieson Way Community Centre every Friday from 10am to 3pm. We provided morning tea and lunch to our Friday group, with morning tea served to all the group members of the Monday group. The Indian and Indian & Sri Lankan support program is designed to support elderly people to remain living in their home and in the community by enhancing their everyday living skills and opportunity to meet people from not only the same cultural background and language but from other cultures as well. The younger Indian and Sri Lankan community members with a disability also participate in the social support program engaging in the range of planned well being activities, building their capacity and awareness with information provision and attending to some of the excursions.

Due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions we were unable to organize face to face meetings for some part of the year. We were quick to transition at the start of our program to online Zoom sessions which in the beginning was hard for some of our group members as they were not very familiar with the technology. But after consulting with client's families, and with their assistance we were able to setup their computer's and digital technology for the meetings online. Some clients used iPad's, some tablets and some utilised their mobile phones. All of them were looking forward to our weekly sessions online as they had no other means of social activity.

Special mention and thanks to Cara Matsa from Melbourne Football Club who arranged to deliver six (6) zoom exercise sessions for our group, who benefitted from the activities. All that participated on the sessions had very positive feedback and were very happy in participating in the program according to their capacity.



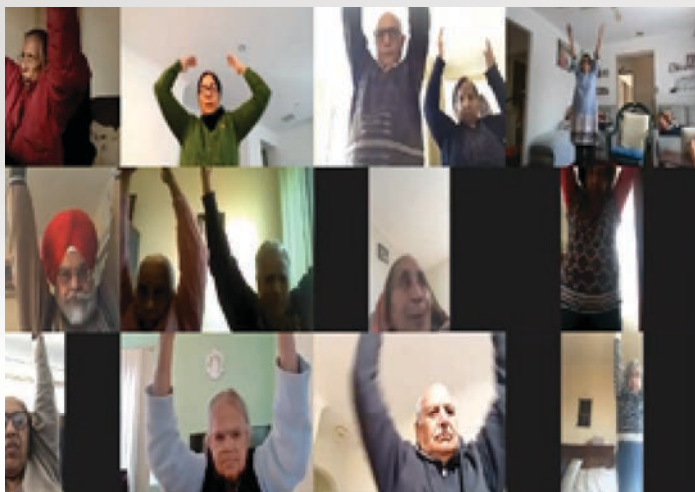
# Indian & Sri Lankan Social Support Groups

We organized a range of cooking demonstrations via our Zoom sessions. It was a very popular activity for all as many group members shared their healthy recipes which other group members were interested in preparing later for their families; so popular that clients started to share their pictures with each other.

A lot of activity and craft materials/resources was delivered to the client's home in a COVID safe manner, before each session took place, for them to be prepared for the activities on Zoom.

Group sessions also included the celebrating of special Festivals, such as Easter, Diwali, and New Year. Clients really enjoyed participating in these sessions with their traditional attire and presented food demonstrations, followed by quiz games, and sharing stories on how they celebrated cultural festivals back in their home countries.

A big thank you to all the facilitators that were engaged in the information sessions, to Jamieson Way Community Centre and to all the family members who assisted in setting up the zoom sessions and showing their parents how to start the meetings online.



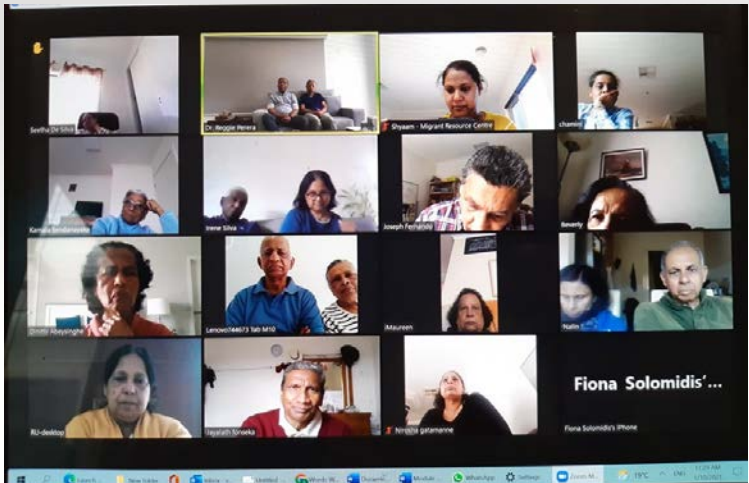


# Indian & Sri Lankan Social Support Groups

The Sri Lankan Social Support group program provides opportunities for social interaction, physical activity, outings and participation in a range of activities for aged clients of the Sri Lankan community in the Western region.

Due to the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions, face to face activities had ceased during the period and we were able to continue interacting via telephone and via Zoom online sessions. The key focus during this period was to continue offering support to our clients and to have them engage in health and well being activities.

Our clients enjoyed meeting via online sessions as they could still socialise amongst each other even if via virtual platforms. Client feedback has been positive even during these unprecedented times, stating they looked forward to the many active sessions we had planned from lite exercises at the start of our Zoom meetings to interactive activities such as word games, scramble word presentations, singing and their favourite session BINGO. Another activity clients enjoyed most was when they were given the opportunity to share stories of their past, each one every week.



The key focus during the year was to continue to support the health and wellbeing of our clients. We continued to do regular wellbeing checks over the phone and activity packs were sent to clients homes to keep them occupied. Everyone is looking forward to planned activities at the community Centre to interact and engage face to face and to go on excursions together.





## African Elderly Social Support Group

The African Elderly social support group funded by both Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) and Home and Community Care Program for younger people (HACC- PYP) is a social support group for people who are frail, elderly or with a disability who desire to continue living independently in their own home and aims to provide a tailored program with a range of activities catered for each client's needs which supports independence and quality of life.



With COVID-19 restrictions the group activities face to face and the annual camp trip was unfortunately cancelled until further notice of easing of restrictions Statewide. To continue engagement and to alleviate any sense of isolation the group activities were conducted via online and digital delivery methods. Many of the sessions included sharing of stories, healthy well being gentle exercises and information on COVID-19. The group did enjoy some outings during periods of easing of restrictions with trips to the park.

**Really enjoyed seeing friends at the MRC SSG activities ...'**

## Bosnian Social Support Group

The Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) for our Bosnian social support group clients was received well with clients participating in activities such as, crafts, information sessions, health promotion, excursions, and well being activities during the year. Again this year the group adapted to using technology and connecting to the Bosnian social support group program via online during parts of the year, due to the impact of COVID and lockdowns.

The group was able to stay connected with each other and enjoy online sessions including doing trivia, quizzes and activities whilst also socialising online. The clients vocalised how very happy they were with the group and one client said "I can't wait for Tuesday, thank you MRC for doing a fantastic job of keeping us from becoming socially isolated" especially during lockdown.

When the group was able to meet in person, activities continued with art and crafts, wellness, and excursions including visits to shopping centres and parks. The highlight for this past year was the End of Year Celebrations, where the clients were able to enjoy a day out together with lunch and activity packs to take home provided by the MRC.





## German Social Support Group

Our German social support program activities are all developed in collaboration with our clients to meet their needs, as well as to support their goals. During COVID-19 restrictions and lock down periods, we continued to provide regular wellbeing checks over the phone and activity packs were provided via post to our clients homes to keep them occupied and alleviate any sense of isolation. There was one opportunity to meet as a group with an outing for lunch which was received very positively.

Feedback from our clients have been very positive even during times of uncertainty.



**'Thank you MRC for the social outings and activities ...'**

## Coptic Social Support Group

Our Coptic CHSP Social support program activities continued to be developed in collaboration with our clients to meet their needs, supporting our clients goals and meeting their well being activities and needs.

During COVID-19 restrictions and lock down periods, we continued to provide regular wellbeing checks over the phone and activity packs were provided via post to our clients homes to keep them occupied and alleviate any sense of isolation. Feedback from our clients have been very positive even during times of uncertainty. We were fortunate to have some easing during the period and managed to have outings such as picnics to the park for lunch, craft activities and cooking demonstrations by our lovely clients.





## Access and Support Program

Our Access and Support program continued to support clients from diverse backgrounds who experienced barriers in service access and provision throughout the year.

The program works with individuals and service providers to remove barriers for eligible clients enabling them to access the necessary care and support they need so they can remain living independently in their homes and community whilst services continued.

During the first half of the year there was a range of information sessions delivered and events attended promoting the benefits of the program. With COVID-19 restrictions the program continued to assist those in need via digital platforms with regular welfare checks to eligible clients.

### Good News Story

Access & Support Worker was approached by Mrs Semra Mehmet very overwhelmed and in need of assistance with her services suddenly ceasing.

Born in Cyprus Mrs Mehmet migrated to Australia in 1972 with her family. She only could speak Turkish with very limited basic English.

Due to her chronic health problems over the years, causing her pain and tendencies of dizzy spells, she was referred to receive domestic assistance whilst living independently at home.

Services that were in place suddenly had stopped just before COVID lockdown with no apparent reasoning provided according to Mrs Mehmet, confused and upset by the whole thing she found it difficult to follow up and needed support in how to access those services again.

Upon our team making enquiries with a few phone calls to My Aged Care and local providers in the area, it was advised that services were cancelled by the client instead of having them paused. As a result the team explained this to our client and managed to find availability with a provider after extensive scoping and phone calls. Mrs Mehmet was so pleased with the outcome she stated, "I am very happy with MRC and the staff, especially Raziye. They always stop and listen and help me with my problems. I can call them anytime I need something like making phone calls or filling out forms when I don't understand."

Mrs Mehmet has since been encouraged to join and participate with the Social Support Group (outings) delivered at MRCNWR every Friday.

*"I wasn't receiving my domestic assistance for a very long time and was very upset. Thanks to MRC and Raziye, they helped me with this as it is very important for me. Because I do not speak very well English, Raziye always helps me when I need things done."*



# Home Care Packages Program

Our Home Care Packages program continues to provide case management, support and services to our frail, elderly seniors in the community, to remain living at home for as long as possible; and enables choice, control and flexibility in the way that their care and support is provided to them when in their own home. Our program continued to grow over the past 12 months, and is currently supporting 19 seniors on all 4 levels of care.

As in the first, scary year of the pandemic, our Support Workers continued providing necessary services in a very reliable manner to all clients. That meant continuing the very activities that were considered very risky during the numerous lockdowns: visiting different homes, assisting with medical appointments and going shopping (usually on their own so the elderly clients could remain safely at home).

Our program which is under a Consumer Directed Care (CDC) approach, empowers our clients to continue to manage their own lives through transparency and having more control in decision making about their health & well being needs.

A special thank you and mention to our team of Support Workers and Coordinators for providing the highest level of care during the year and more so during COVID-19.



**Fun fact**  
**60% of our Support Workers gained their qualifications (Certificate III in Individual Support and/or Certificate IV Disability or Ageing Support) at our own RTO!**



# Disability Advocacy & DnD Program



Our Disability Advocacy and DnD program has continued to be very successful in providing services to our clients, where we have made a difference in their lives and their families.

Our Disability Advocacy program yet again assisted many clients in need of one on one assistance to help them solve any issues they may have in access to information and services and understanding their rights.



Our DnD program continued to run the arts, music and woodwork groups. Also, our parents group was very successful. In partnership with ECCV we ran self-advocacy and wellbeing groups for CALD people with a disability in Dandenong, Broadmeadows and St Albans areas.

We supported an average of 7 people for each group that we facilitated for a total of 320 participants on an ongoing presence throughout the financial year 20/21.



The biggest challenge was the lockdown that forced all of our groups to be moved to an online platform. Some of our groups had to stop running because of the nature of the activities and the inability of participants to join. In the forth coming year we will continue to be running self-advocacy support groups and expand the program to the regions.

Our YouTube channel "DnD your life your voice", which is a great opportunity to learn about self-advocacy and get important information and resources continued fortnightly live sessions and received well by our communities.

A special thanks once more goes to the MRCNW management and staff for their dedicated support throughout the year and to Victorian DFFH, all of our partners including ECCV, CEH, Scope Australia, Yooralla, Moreland and Brimbank councils.





# NDIS Support Coordination

MRC North West Region has been providing Support Coordination services as an approved NDIS provider for the last 2 years with our professional and dedicated team of staff.

The Support Coordination Team uses case management principles to ensure that our clients are assisted to create their support programs that meet their needs.

Our Team work in collaboration with participants empowering them to engage with service providers and to develop independence in program design, implementation and maintenance of their identified supports.

NDIS Team receive ongoing training and support to work across all life stages of people with a disability.



Our Support Coordination Team uses management principles to prepare Action Plans to ensure NDIS participants and their families continue to receive the essential disability supports they need.

It was very essential that continuity of support during the lock down was guaranteed thus we made sure that we reached all participants and their family to make sure they were being supported as services got disrupted during the year.

Creating awareness and attending to participant needs and helping them to transition to tele-health to be able to receive support remotely has significantly assisted to reduce anxiety in participants and their families during the pandemic lockdowns. during the year



REGISTERED  
NDIS  
PROVIDER





# Learning Centre Services

Although there were challenges during the year, training saw very positive completion rates for many of our students with over 50 students graduating and many of them gaining employment in the aged, disability and community sector, this is a testament to the great work of our dedicated staff/team, trainers and our students.

COVID-19 has had a devastating effect on the training industry, presenting many challenges to the sector ranging from online learning to students being unable to complete placement components of courses.

The lockdowns required a significant pivot of both operational and delivery activities from classroom-based learning to remote learning and working. Despite the quick adaptation of staff, remote learning was difficult for several cohorts, particularly those learning English, and as a result student retention and recruitment numbers significantly declined.

Our Language, Literacy and Numeracy program continued to see interest by our communities with over 15 students engaged in our English classes via Zoom.

Our students gained adequate English language skill sets to apply for further educational pathways into accredited Certificate courses that will in turn assist them into their preferred employment venture.

On the right we have a snapshot of one of our fabulous trainers Adrienne and three of our students in one of many LLN program sessions conducted during the year. Which we continued to have positive feedback from our students on our blended delivery methods.

Several of our students who completed their theoretical training have had to wait to complete their work placement due to many work placement partners forced into strict lockdown restrictions during the pandemic. Our team will continue to assist our students to complete their placement obligation.



### Basic Computer Skills

The Basic Computer skills classes began during the year before shutdown which proved to be very essential for many of our students, building their capacity on basic computer literacy and skills. The sessions were developed around our student's needs and not around a training package, as the program was a pre-accredited program that we could adjust to meet the needs of our students learning requirements. Many of the students enjoyed sessions on preparing their resumes and how to prepare themselves when seeking employment online.

### Reconnect Program

The Reconnect Skills First program operated with success yet again this year together with our project partner agencies. The program which targets the most marginalised and vulnerable communities, provided intensive support that is required to take the first steps towards training, education, and employment. Although there were restrictions with many training programs going on hold from face to face to online due to the pandemic, case officers worked tirelessly with the participants to assist, motivate and help alleviate any sense of social isolation and systemic barriers towards economic inclusion. All our 40 participants involved in the program either completed their certificate course branching out to future pathways of education, whilst some gained employment while others were referred for Case Management. The project continues to be a tremendous success engaging many vulnerable people.



### Good news story

Hein had a vision to further her education after completing the AMEP program. In 2017, Hein approached the team and spoke of her desire to work in the age & disability community services sector; she enrolled into the LLN and once completing a year of LLN she enrolled and continued her study in Certificate III in Individual Support. She was so consumed with her learnings that she wanted to continue her educational pathway and proceeded with enrolment to the Certificate IV in Disability, which she successfully completed.

Hein had an opportunity to apply for a job as a Home Care Support Worker and did very well in securing employment. Her success was identified by the department who approached Hein to be part of an advertising campaign with the Department of Education showcasing her achievements and we were proud that it all started with the Migrant Resource Centre North West Region. Hein's success is one of many our team and our organisation strives to encourage for all.





# OUR PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

Department of Health  
Department of Home Affairs  
Department of Social Services  
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing VIC  
Department of Education and Training – Skills First  
Department of Premier & Cabinet  
Department of Transport - Community Road Safety  
Office of Disability - Victorian Disability Advocacy  
Office of Multicultural Affairs  
National Disability Insurance Scheme - NDIS  
National Disability Services  
Adult Community and Further Education - ACFE  
Alzheimers Australia Vic  
AMES Australia  
Moreland City Council  
Brimbank City Council  
Moonee Valley City Council  
Maribyrnong City Council  
Hume City Council  
Melton City Council  
Federation of Ethnic Communities Council AU  
Ethnic Communities Council VIC - ECCV  
Victorian Multicultural Commission  
VicRoads  
Victoria Police  
Westgate Road Safety Group  
Office of Public Advocate  
ANZ Trustees  
Federation of Chinese Associations  
Horn of Africa Senior Women's program  
Scope Victoria  
Cancer Council Victoria  
Centre of Culture, Ethnicity & Health

Action on Disability within Ethnic Communities  
Carers Victoria  
St Albans Connect  
Jackson School  
Furlong Park School for Deaf Children  
YMCA Camp Manyung  
Western Health - Sunshine Hospital  
Helping Hands Mission  
Harcourts Foundation  
Diabetes Australia  
Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund  
Sacred Heart Primary School  
St Albans Connect  
Westpac Bank – Community Grants  
Bendigo Kangan Institute (BKI) TAFE  
Victoria University  
Collins & Co Audit Pty Ltd  
SCOA - Settlement Council of Australia  
RMIT University  
LASA - Leading Age Care Services Australia  
Brotherhood of St Lawrence  
St Dominic's Primary School  
Dianella & Plenty Valley Community Health -  
DPV Health  
Leading Age Care Services Australia  
Russell Kennedy Lawyers  
Centre for Multicultural Youth  
Brotherhood of St. Laurence  
St John of God  
Co-Health  
Kids on the Kerb  
Spectrum MRC  
Youth Now  
Melbourne Football Club



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