



MID NORTH COAST MULTICULTURAL NETWORK MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 28th February, 10am – 12pm

Attendance: Jane O'Dwyer (MVNS), Mavis Barnes (MNC Refugee Support Group), Kelley Chapman (Mission Australia), Marette Smith (Galbaan House), Mick Vujanov (HNE Health), Penny Avery (Legal Aid NSW)

Apologies: Michelle Greenwood, Lucia Bokulic, Anke Peeters, Kerrie Wood and Leonie Carr

1. WELCOME

The Chair (Jane O'Dwyer) welcomed the network attendees and noted apologies.

2. BUSINESS ARISING

Cultural Awareness Training

Jane advised since the November meeting she had contact SSI to discuss running cultural awareness training in Port Macquarie and Taree. Group discussed the challenges of getting services to pay for training for a target group which is a minority to most services. Mick suggested contacting STARTTS. Jane will follow up options and costs.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

TPV/SHEV Update

Jane advised she participated in a TPV/SHEV Regional Working Group teleconference for the first time on 24th January. Member of the group were developing a community readiness document which can be used as a tool to assess communities as to areas considered ready or not ready, areas which can be address and those which can't. Document will also be used as a tool to inform people on TPV/SHEV about potential areas to move to. The group welcomes participation of refugee support group who could provide support to visa holders through Home Amongst Gum Trees or if people move to the area. The next teleconference is to be held on April 4th; Jane to advise details to refugee support groups. Mavis advised community readiness is on the agenda for the MNC Refugee Support Group this year.

Harmony Day

Jane advised she has purchase rights to 5 viewings of the documentary 'Constance on the edge.' Film aims to raise awareness of refugee settlement in regional areas and the issues refugee's face settling. Plan to show the film during the week of Harmony Day at Taree Art Gallery and Port Macquarie (venue and date TBC) for community members. Aiming to hold a viewing for service holders also in both areas. Fifth viewing is to be decided, possibly Forster.

Refugee Week

Jane advised of a project idea for refugee week which would need support to get off the group and was still in the ideas stage. Suggested having a worker from each Northern Settlement Services and GLAPD as the services who implemented the Mingoola Project as an example of refugee settlement in a regional area. Speakers could provide an overview of what was involved to get the project off the grounds, things to be considered and how is the project going now.

**Migrant Settlement Project
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After discussions with Alex Burns (NSS), Alex suggested expanding the idea to include others speakers including local Chamber of Commerce and Department of Agriculture who could talk on local information and possibilities. Mavis was to discuss with the support group and gauge interest in supporting the event.

4. SERVICE DELIVERY REPORTS

Galbaan House – Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Service

Marette advised she has seen an increase in CALD clients over the years. She been proactive engaging with the TAFE English class to build up a relationship with students and raise awareness of domestic violence and available services.

Mid North Coast Refugee Support Group

Mavis advised the group has been receiving contributions of blankets, knitted and other garments and children's toys to be taken to Catholic Care in Newcastle. Tanya who attended the AGM took back a van load of donations. Mavis gave an overview of the Home Amongst the Gum Trees (HAGT) program which first started in Melbourne. When possible the group hosts individuals or groups to have a holiday in the Port Macquarie area such as the weekend in November with women from Western Sydney for the weekend. Some members of the group liaising with Coffs Harbour to gather information and ideas.

Mavis advised the group would be happy to support the showing of Constance for Harmony Day. The group are also hosting 'The Bridge Project,' a musical theatre production which aims to bring to people together. It involves a Turkish Muslim, a Christian and an Australian Jew. The production will be held on the 21st April in Kendall. Other events coming up include a Palm Sunday Vigil out the front of the Glasshouse, Palm Sunday Rally and the showing of the film 'Chasing Asylum' at CSU in 2-3 months.

Migrant Settlement Project (Manning Valley Neighbourhood Services)

Jane advised that some other regional areas were looking to refresh and reenergise the 'Refugee Welcome Zone.' In Bathurst this is being lead by local Refugee Support Group. They were also driving an employment forum focusing on refugees. Sutherland group were making the welcome zone as the focus for the year. This was seen as a good way to involve councils. Mick gave an overview of the history of refugee settlement in the Bathurst and Tamworth areas. For both areas employment was a key element. Tamworth has a strong multicultural group.

Mission Australia

Kelley advised Mission Australia is keen to support cultural awareness training. General discussion followed around similarities to trauma informed training Kelley has participated in and supports. The training has been very successful informing and changing a number of organizations practices.

5. NEXT MEETING

May 2017 date and venue to be advised

Inquiries to rmw@mvns.org.au

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