



MID NORTH COAST MULTICULTURAL NETWORK MEETING MINUTES

Monday 21st November 2016, 1pm – 3pm

Attendance: Jane O’Dwyer (MVNS) , Mavis Barnes (MNC Refugee Support Group), Maria Fatarella (MNC Refugee Support Group), Kerrie Wood (Gowrie NSW), Sahba Clara Delshad (Multicultural NSW), Anthea Addison (Community member), Leonie Carr (DHS), Kelley Chapman (Mission Australia)

Apologies: Michelle Greenwood, Lucia Bokulic, Alex Burns, Clara Koch, Anke Peeters, Marette Smith

1. WELCOME

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

2. BUSINESS ARISING

As this meeting was the first for 12 months the Terms of Reference was delayed until a following meeting.

3. GUEST SPEAKER – Sahba Clara Delshad Multicultural NSW Community Engagement Officer, Coordinator for the Northern NSW Regional Advisory Council (RACS)

Sahba advised Multicultural NSW aims to build and maintain social cohesion and harmony in the community. Her role with the RAC covers Northern NSW from Tweed Heads to Taree. The RAC includes 15 members comprising of 7 government and 8 community members. There are 4 meetings held each year which identify and discuss issues that are affecting their community and aim to resolve them. If necessary, issues can be escalated. Sahba gave an overview of the grants scheme and advised she is happy to help or answer questions at a later date.

4. SERVICE DELIVERY REPORTS

Mid North Coast Refugee Support Group

Mavis advised the knitting project which she coordinates is ongoing. They sent items previously to Naru which was expensive at \$1000. It was decided to send items to Berlin with the flood of refugees into Europe during winter. These were sent via a local contact which was more cost effective. The group has established a relationship with Catholic Care in Newcastle where they are now sending donated items. Blankets had been purchased and donated for Syrian arrivals. They are now seeking donations of items for children from 0-5yrs and 5-12yrs age group. The response has been great with donations being taken to Newcastle approximately 1/week. There are issues with finding a suitable storage facility for donations. Mavis also advised this year they had a guest speaker who spoke on the refugee crisis in Germany. Donations were put towards a local bicycle project in Germany.

Mavis advised the group has bi monthly meetings for general members with the alternate month an executive meeting. The AGM will be held on 3rd December where Tania Kelland from Catholic Care Social Services Newcastle will be the guest speaker. Tania will take donated Christmas gifts back with her. Mavis advised the group has 64 active members with an extensive email list.



Mavis advised the Home Among the Gum Trees program recently hosted 24 migrant and refugee women in partnership with the Community Migrant Resource Centre in Sydney. The women visited the Koala Hospital, Sea Acres and cooked for a cultural exchange meal at the Scout Hall.

Mavis advised there would be a showing of the film 'Constance on the Edge' on the 10th December at 6am at the CWA Hall in Port Macquarie. An entry fee of \$10 would be charge to cover purchase of viewing rights.

Department of Human Services – Centrelink MSO

Leonie who is based in Coffs Harbour advised her role is to support community service providers rather than work directly with customers. Workers are able to contact her for help with clients. Leonie also advised that mandatory multicultural staff training is being rolled out through Centrelink nationally and will be completed by 2019.

Mission Australia

Kelley advised Mission Australia is a facilitating partner delivering evidence based programs. Partners include MSS, Biripi, Uniting Care and Childcare Services and is also involved in sector development. Kelley noted that between January and June 2016 they only had 5 CALD families involved in the C4C program. Kelley questioned if the programs were culturally appropriate which generated some discussion. Discussion followed around identifying families correctly and data collection. Kerrie noted the importance of picking up a child's background during intake. This generated a general discussion around cultural appropriate services and the possibility of running training in 2017.

Gowrie NSW (Inclusion Support Program)

Kerrie advised she has a self reflective tool to help educators on how to respond to the children and their families which could be helpful. Further discussion followed on working with CALD children. Kerrie gave an overview of her service and recent changes. Kerrie will present at the next meeting.

Migrant Settlement Project (Manning Valley Neighbourhood Services)

Jane gave an overview of a current community engagement project with migrants on the mid north coast titled 'Kitchen table conversations' using the Harwood model which basically looks at people's dreams/aspirations, barriers to achieving this and ideas for overcoming the barriers. Conversations have been held at Taree, Tuncurry, Kempsey and Port Macquarie TAFE's and a community session in Taree. Arising theme's have been consistent across the area with a focus on employment, language issues impacting mainly on employment and social involvement, access to language classes and family. Conversations with stakeholders will be held early 2017.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

SHEV Update

Jane gave a general overview of temporary protection visa (TPV) and safe haven enterprise visa (SHEV) and the differences. Jane to attach fact sheets with the minutes. Jane advised that information she received stated that as of October 2016 500 SHEV had been granted nationally, 75 of these were in NSW. There has been a lot of talk and inquiries in the settlement sector around what regional areas can provide as far as services, study and employment and how

**Migrant Settlement Project
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welcoming communities would be. Sahba advised regional councils had been sent a request of information regarding the same areas and responses had been received but not from all councils. General discussion followed around services, interpreting, limited housing and employment issues. There was also discussion around the possibility of Home Amongst the Gum Trees as a possible option for individuals and families on a SHEV or thinking of applying for a SHEV to visit and find out more about living in a regional area before moving and/or applying.

Future of the network: interest, expectations, suggestions

Attendees expressed an interest in being able to meet and share service information and discuss recent updates in the settlement sector. It was suggested that a topic be selected for each meeting for discussion or presentation.

6. NEXT MEETING

February 2017 date and venue to be advised
Inquiries to rmw@mvns.org.au