



Health Issues Centre
Consumer voices for better healthcare



victorian refugee
health network

WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE HEALTH LITERACY OF WOMEN FROM REFUGEE BACKGROUNDS

Stage Two – Final Report

August 2017



Health Issues Centre
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Executive Summary

Between June 2016 and June 2017, Health Issues Centre and the Victorian Refugee Health Network received funding from the Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust and Australian Communities Foundation to undertake the second of a three stage project on the accessibility of health information by refugee communities in Victoria. This report is collaboration between Health Issues Centre and the Victorian Refugee Health Network.

The first stage of this project sought to better understand the health information needs of refugee communities. This second stage captures the opinions and recommendations collected through consultations with refugee community members, refugee health nurses and refugee and asylum seeker support workers.

The second project aimed to determine: (1) the extent to which existing resources were addressing the health information needs of refugee communities and (2) how accessible they are to communities in Victoria. An environmental scan was carried out using the four themes that emerged from the first phase of the project:

- practical assistance in understanding and accessing health services
- health literacy for self-management
- support for families, and
- mental health-related issues.

The scan highlighted an abundance of health information resources in English for refugee communities. However at the consultations, refugee community members, nurses and support staff highlighted that for the most part, they had not previously seen or used the majority of resources we found during the scan.

A multitude of reasons were offered at the consultations as to why existing health information was not accessible to refugee communities. These included a lack of awareness that these resources exist, difficulty in understanding concepts such as 'Medicare', ability to read, write and understand in one's own language, a preference for information to be sought in person and a tendency for resources to be culturally inappropriate.

Two key recommendations were emphasised by participants at both consultations. Firstly, the need to build a health workforce that is confident and skilled to practice in a culturally safe manner and to know where to access quality health information for refugee communities. Secondly, to recognise the importance of offering health information in a variety of ways such as online, printed and especially in face-to-face small group education sessions. Underpinning both sets of recommendations is the need for continuous involvement of community members in the health information cycle, from design right through to dissemination and evaluation of health information.

Building on the project's findings and recommendations, Health Issues Centre and the Victorian Refugee Health Network will seek funding for the last stage of the project. This will involve developing a pilot program or model of practice for refugee nurses, and refugee and asylum seeker support workers which reflect the recommendations listed above.

Acknowledgement

Health Issues Centre would like to first and foremost thank the refugee women, refugee health nurses and settlement workers who generously shared their stories, insights and recommendations with us at the consultations.

We would also like to make special mention of the Victorian Refugee Health Network especially Philippa Duell-Piening and Samantha Furneaux for providing us with support and expert advice throughout the project.

Zoe Dragwidge, health promotion student on placement with Health Issues Centre, for conducting the environmental scan.

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Further information

If you would like more information about the project, please contact Esther Lim on (03) 8676 9050 or email e.lim@healthissuescentre.org.au.

Introduction

Health information is all around us but how accessible is it to refugee communities?

In 2015, Health Issues Centre and the Victorian Refugee Health Network were funded by the Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust to undertake the first of a three stage project on the health information needs of refugee communities. We consulted with women of Syrian, Karen, Afghan, Iranian, Sierra Leonean and Sudanese backgrounds who identified a variety of health information topics that would help refugee communities to stay healthy. These included, but were not limited to:

- health and community services in Australia and how to access them
- the difference between public and private health services
- treatment options and medication safety
- healthy eating and physical activity
- the impact of family violence, divorce and family breakdown
- coping with stress, depression and anxiety

Read 2015 report [here](#).

Based on this, the second stage of the project focused on finding out:

1. whether any of these topics were already covered in existing health information
2. how accessible existing information is to refugee communities, and
3. if not accessible, how can these resources be made more accessible to refugee communities.

Our findings and recommendations are presented in this report.

Environmental Scan

In order to determine the extent to which these topics were addressed or not addressed in current health information, Health Issues Centre carried out an online environmental scan of existing health information resources for refugee communities.

The purpose of the environmental scan was to identify:

- what type of resources are currently available for refugee communities
- what topics are being covered
- which organisations have developed these resources, and
- who these resources have been developed for (i.e. main target audience)

We used online search engines such as Google to search and obtain this information. Additional resources were also identified through a primary resource website. For example, Diabetes Victoria's website provided us with a range of secondary resources. Where relevant, we made use of online research databases.

Between January 2017 and February 2017 two search rounds were carried out. The first was intentionally broad to allow for any health-related resources to emerge. The second search targeted

topics that emerged through our initial consultation with the refugee women community members in 2015.

Appendix 1 is a consolidation of the resources identified, presented by health topic.

Consultation Methodology

In this stage of the project, two consultations were carried out in February and June 2017. Each consultation lasted for four hours and was attended by refugee community members, refugee nurses and settlement workers.

Recruitment for these consultations was facilitated by Health Issues Centre and the Victorian Refugee Health Network. The five refugee community members who participated in the 2015 project were invited back to the project. Of the five, two women of Assyrian and Afghan background were available and agreed to be involved. A third community member, a woman of Karen background, was also invited by the Victorian Refugee Health Network and she participated in both consultations.

Two staff members from the Victorian Refugee Health Network, two refugee health nurses, one settlement case manager and one refugee health coordination support worker also attended the consultations. They were from the following organisations:

- [AMES Australia](#)
- [co-health](#)
- [EACH](#)

In the first consultation, findings from the environmental scan were presented. Participants were asked if they were aware of or had previously used any of the resources found through the scan. In the second consultation, draft recommendations on how to improve access to these resources were offered and feedback was sought from the women and staff. This report outlines their recommendations.

Refugee community members were reimbursed for their time and input into the project. The reimbursement covered their attendance at the consultations, travel and other out of pocket expenses such as childcare where appropriate.

Limitations of the project

This was not an academic research project but rather a consultation with a small group of refugee community members and staff working in the refugee health sector. As such, ethics approval was not sought. There is also the possibility that the online environmental scan did not fully capture the multitude of ways (e.g. face-to-face) in which health information is currently exchanged in refugee communities.

Findings

The findings from our consultations are presented according to the following themes:

1. To what extent are the health information needs of refugee communities addressed in existing information?
2. How accessible is existing health information to refugee communities?
3. How can health information be made more accessible to refugee communities?

1. To what extent are the health information needs of refugee communities addressed in existing information?

In 2015, the women who participated in the project identified a series of health information topics that would help them, their families and their communities stay healthy in Australia. These topics were summarised and four main themes emerged:

- Practical assistance in understanding and accessing health services
- Health literacy
- Support for families, and
- Mental health-related issues

Based on the themes identified, the desktop environmental scan revealed that an overwhelming amount of health information already exists in Australia for refugee communities. For almost every sub-topic under each theme, Health Issues Centre was able to find at least one resource in a language commonly used by refugee communities in Australia. These included Assyrian, Arabic, Bengali, Dari, Karen and Sudanese.

Table 1 provides a snapshot of the information found, categorised by each of the themes and sub-topics identified in 2015. Links to most of these resources are available in Appendix 1 (page 13).

Table 1: Environmental scan snapshot of resources found

Themes	Resource found?
Practical assistance in understanding and accessing health services	
<i>Health and community services available in Australia</i>	✓
<i>Appointment systems and referrals to specialist</i>	✓
<i>Medicare, bulk billing and healthcare card</i>	✓
<i>Difference between public and private health services and methods of payment</i>	✗
<i>Transport or explanation of how to use public transport</i>	✓
<i>How to access subsidised services (e.g. counselling, allied health)</i>	✓
<i>Healthcare rights</i>	✓
Health literacy	
<i>Medical treatment and use of pharmacies</i>	✓
<i>How to read prescriptions and follow medicine instructions and dosage</i>	✓
<i>Use of herbal and natural medicines and interaction with western medicine</i>	✗
<i>Healthy eating and physical exercise including reading food package labels</i>	✓
<i>Preventing spread of diseases</i>	✓
<i>Immunisation</i>	✓
<i>Sexual health and reproduction</i>	✓
Support for families	
<i>Coping with stress such as family violence, divorce and family breakdown</i>	✓
<i>Dealing with teenagers and intergenerational relationships</i>	✓
<i>Children respecting parents, parents respecting children</i>	✗
Mental health-related issues	
<i>Stress, depression and anxiety</i>	✓
<i>The roots and risks of engaging in gambling, taking illegal drugs and alcohol consumption</i>	✓
<i>The interaction between physical and mental health</i>	✗

2. How accessible is existing health information to refugee communities?

Findings from the environmental scan were presented at the first consultation. This involved providing participants with a variety of examples across the sub-topics and in different languages. Participants were then asked if they were aware of these resources. Their perspective for why these resources were or were not as widely known or used by refugee communities was also sought.

It was hypothesised prior to the consultation that while there was an abundance of health information available for refugee communities, there was a disproportionate lack of awareness in the community about this information. This was supported by participants at the consultations who confirmed that they had not previously been aware of or had used the majority of the resources presented to them on the day.

This raised the question: why is existing health information not as accessible to refugee communities as it should be? The women and staff cited the following reasons:

- Not aware all these resources even existed (true for both community members and staff)
- There is simply too much information available and it is scattered everywhere
- Websites that make available health information resources such as Health Translations can be useful for staff and community educators (if they know about it) but are difficult for refugee communities to navigate, understand and share
- For many refugee communities, a school education prior to their arrival in Australia was not an option. As such they are not able to read or write in their own language much less understand the content of health information resources. This is especially true for women and for this reason they rely on their husbands to translate information for them
- For small and emerging communities, resources in their own languages are limited or not available
- Information provided face-to-face by an individual such as a health service provider (with the aid of an interpreter where required) is preferred over online and/or printed materials
- Concepts such as 'carer' and 'depression' as well as financial schemes such as 'Medicare' and 'pharmaceutical benefits scheme' are often difficult concepts to understand. Such information would need to be repeated using a diverse range of methods such as face-to-face, audio (e.g. videos), written (e.g. pamphlets), pictorially and through storytelling
- Resources are graphically designed well but tend to not be culturally appropriate. For example, a resource about skin cancer using only pictures of light skin people might send the wrong message to dark skin people. It might suggest that they are not at risk of skin cancer or that because their physical signs and symptoms do not match what is shown they do not seek appropriate care
- Existing resources tend to directly translate the English word, rather than take into account cultural context and the use of appropriate words and phrases when translating. Community-tested messages are highly important to ensure health messages are translated accurately
- Messages about health from mothers or 'back home' are sometimes favoured and considered more reliable
- Females are not allowed to discuss sensitive topics such as gambling and alcohol consumption in the family

- Access to a computer or internet might be limited if at all available. Communities may not know how to use online search engines for health information
- Helplines are welcomed by refugee communities but they tend to only be available in the English language and community members are too scared to utilise them as they feel their spoken English is not good enough
- There is confusion about the use of toll free numbers. Community members have the impression that they will have to pay for the call

3. How can health information be made more accessible to refugee communities?

Two main themes emerged from the consultations about how health information can be made more accessible to refugee communities. Firstly, there is a need to better support service providers and staff of health-related organisations with the skills to practice in a manner that is culturally sensitive while providing these workers with information about where to access health information for refugee communities. Secondly, it is important to offer health information in a variety of ways as opposed to text-heavy print or online resources.

Underpinning both themes was a consistent message around the value of involving refugee communities in the design, dissemination and evaluation of health information.

Support and capacity development for health-related organisations

Throughout the project it was clear that there was significant opportunity to ensure the health workforce in Victoria is kept up-to-date with current and new health information for refugee communities. In doing so, staff would be equipped to help facilitate timely access to vital information by communities and prevent the duplication of translated information in the health sector.

The women and staff who attended the consultations encouraged organisations like Health Issues Centre, the Victorian Refugee Health Network and the Centre for Culture Ethnicity and Health to play a vital role in promoting and supporting Health Translations Directory.

Launched in 2016, Health Translations Directory is an online central repository of reliable translated health resources in Victoria. Its purpose is to provide a one-stop shop for health professionals and staff working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities to locate and access high quality translated health information. At the same time, it aims to enable communities to actively manage their own health and the health of those they care for. For this to happen, it is crucial for service providers and other relevant organisations such as Primary Health Networks and Primary Care Partnerships to encourage their staff to register new or revised translated resources with the Directory on an ongoing basis.

There was also a strong recommendation for service providers and staff of health-related organisations to have access to cultural competency and sensitivity training. This is particularly important for front-of-house and reception staff as they are often the first point of contact when

individuals access healthcare. A starting point for organisations is to evaluate staff's current knowledge about cultural issues and offer training that addresses any gaps.

There are also other ways that organisations can increase their understanding of the needs, beliefs and preferences of refugee communities:

1. **Community engagement** - Involve community members throughout the health information cycle. That means seeking their input to:
 - highlight and prioritise the health information needs of their community
 - determine the barriers to information transfer and the most appropriate platforms for information communication
 - co-develop the content of these resources (e.g. selecting appropriate images, culturally appropriate food items)
 - determine the best approach for how to reach communities with these resources, and
 - evaluate whether these resources are widely accepted, used and ultimately effective in supporting refugee communities to stay healthy.
2. **Interpreters and translators** – Consciously and consistently use accredited interpreters and translators when developing health information for refugee communities.
3. **Bilingual/bicultural workers** – Service providers need to acknowledge that bilingual/bicultural workers are a crucial part of the workforce. They are an important bridge between service providers and the refugee community because of their connections and knowledge of their communities. Given the appropriate professional development opportunities (e.g. facilitation skills) and training (e.g. general information on healthy eating and how to access health services), they will be equipped to deliver health information to their communities in a culturally safe and appropriate manner. At the same time, they have a role in supporting organisations to better understand and incorporate community beliefs and preferences in service design and delivery.
4. **Think outside the health space** – Make health information available in places where communities already meet and connect. For example, include health messages in community newspapers (e.g. El-Telegraph) and at community events and festivals, places of worship, sports venues, neighbourhood houses and cafes.

Health information is available in a variety of ways

During the consultations with the refugee women and staff, it was often highlighted that a large proportion of health information available today for refugee communities is text heavy, a direct translation of the English version and only available online.

As mentioned previously, this poses a number of challenges as many refugees in Victoria have limited reading and writing skills in their own language. For others, having access to a computer or the internet remains an ongoing challenge.

There are some important considerations when developing and delivering health information for refugee communities. The following were recommended as key success factors for refugee communities in accessing health information:

- Offer small group education sessions that focus on a specific topic such as how to converse with a doctor, how to use the internet to search for health information, and understanding the health system in Australia
- Offer face-to-face exchange of information as opposed to relying solely on online and written information (e.g. pamphlets)
- Use images, video, cartoons and audio as part of the suite of resources available, and
- Use of storytelling as a powerful tool in conveying health information and the experiences of other community members

Recommendations

Building on the experiences and recommendations provided by the refugee community members, refugee health nurses, settlement case manager and refugee health coordination support worker, Health Issues Centre and the Victorian Refugee Health Network make the following recommendations:

1. The involvement of refugee community members in the development, dissemination and evaluation of health information. This needs to happen consistently and across the health sector, and in partnership with bicultural/bilingual workers. In so doing, ensure that future health information takes into account the cultural needs, beliefs and preferences of refugee communities.
2. Capacity building for staff across the health sector in cultural competency and sensitivity. This will help ensure that every staff member working in health and community services in Victoria is equipped to deliver safe and appropriate care to refugee communities. This will go a long way in building the confidence of refugee communities in seeking the services they need to stay healthy.
3. Support and promote Health Translations Directory as the central portal for reliable health information for refugee communities and staff. Service providers and staff of relevant health-related organisations will need to be encouraged to register translated health information with the Directory and promote its existence on an ongoing basis.

Next steps

Health Issues Centre and the Victorian Refugee Health Network will seek further funding for the final stage of the project. This will involve developing a program or model of practice where health professionals and staff working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and the health sector as a whole, adopt a multi-dimensional approach to disseminating translated health information. Such an approach will include written and online (e.g. videos) resources but will also consider opportunities for small group face-to-face information sessions, in partnership with bicultural/bilingual workers and in places where refugee communities already live, meet and connect.

Appendix 1: Environmental scan findings

Ageing and Alzheimer's

Centre for Cultural Diversity in Ageing – The Centre for Cultural Diversity in Ageing has produced multilingual communication cards in 25 different languages that can be accessed via PDF from their website.

The cards depict a wide range of daily activities/situations and can be used to prompt discussion, assist with directions, clarify needs etc. The cards can be viewed [here](#).

Alzheimer's Australia -Alzheimer's Australia has translated a number of resources on their website in 43 languages other than English. These resources include fact sheets on topics related to dementia, videos produced in different languages/with subtitles and referrals to telephone translating services available. These resources can be viewed [here](#).

Australian Vietnamese Women's Association (AVWA) – AVWA runs a home and community care service providing social support and engagement to the Vietnamese elderly community, people with a disability and their carers. They offer gentle exercise, discussion on health, social and cultural issues, advocacy and referrals, personal care assistance, transport and more. Information on this service can be viewed [here](#).

Carer's Victoria – Carer's Victoria produces some of their brochures and fact sheets in languages other than English. These can be used by carers, family members and/or support workers on topics such as 'Western Services aged programs' and 'Western Services disability programs'. The resources are available in approximately 18 languages and can be accessed [here](#).

MyAgedCare – MyAgedCare has produced translated materials on their website for reference purposes to be viewed online and in PDF format. The materials are available in 18 languages other than English and include information such as assessment, help at home, costs for care and the Aged Care Complaints Scheme. These resources can be viewed [here](#).

Alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs

Quit Victoria: Quit Victoria has produced a range of resources in 26 languages on topics related to tobacco smoking. Some of these resources are free however some require ordering and payment depending on the resource and language required. You are able to search for the required resource via topic, type and language [here](#).

Quit Victoria also runs free multilingual information sessions, 'Quit Smoking: Breathe Well', which are available for community groups from non-English speaking backgrounds and adult migrants and refugees learning English. These sessions are presented in 5 languages other than English (Arabic, Cantonese, Dinka, Hindi, Mandarin & Swahili) and additional languages using interpreters. Information regarding these sessions can be found [here](#).

Additionally, Quit Victoria works with the Greater Horn of Africa community and has developed some resources specifically for this target group. There is a video in Arabic, plus two posters published in Arabic for the community. They also aired a radio advertisement in 2015 in Arabic for quitting smoking. These resources can be viewed [here](#).

Australian Vietnamese Women's Association - The AVWA assists in the settlement and integration of refugees and migrants of mainly Vietnamese women in Victoria. One of their focuses is the AVWA Illicit Drug and Alcohol Treatment Counselling Service which provides individual counselling, support and referrals concerning drug and alcohol treatment.

They use face-to-face/telephone, individual case management approach to counselling, and assist individuals with the development of treatment plans with short and long term goals. Information on this service can be viewed [here](#).

Drug Info – Drug Info has produced a number of fact sheets on drugs and alcohol, some of these being translated in languages other than English.

They have produced brochures/posters on topics such as 'Drugs and their effects' and 'Crystalline methamphetamine use in the family' in approximately 9 languages (different resources have different languages available). These can be viewed and downloaded [here](#) and [here](#).

Drug Info @ Your Library – Drug Info @ Your Library provides up to date information about alcohol and drugs on their website and also through local public libraries in NSW.

They have uploaded resources on their website in 22 languages on topics such as alcohol information for parents with children, Cannabis, drug information for parents and approaching drug issues with your family. These resources can be viewed [here](#).

Arthritis

Arthritis Australia – Arthritis Australia provides information sheets in 10 languages other than English on topics such as areas of the body, medicines, general management, condition specific issues etc. These can be downloaded directly from their website with the majority available in PDF format. These can be viewed [here](#).

Arthritis & Osteoporosis NSW – Arthritis & Osteoporosis NSW has translated their health information sheets in 10 languages other than English on topics such as 'What is arthritis?', 'Dealing with pain' and medicines to help relieve pain and symptoms.

These information sheets can be downloaded directly from their website in PDF format [here](#).

Cancer

Cancer Council Australia – Cancer Council Australia has created the CALD Cancer Resource Directory for cancer related information with a wide range of publications/resources in languages other than English.

Users can search the directory by category, resource type, audience (general public or health professionals) and also via language.

Resources include fact sheets, newsletters, booklets, websites, DVDs, CDs, videos etc. and are from a range of state/territory wide websites and resources. The directory can be viewed [here](#).

Cancer Council Victoria - Cancer Council Victoria has produced resources in 27 languages other than English on cancer information, prevention and support which can be downloaded directly from their website [here](#).

In addition to translated information, they run cancer support groups for Greek, Italian, Chinese and Jewish communities (as well as English speaking). Cancer Council Victoria can assist individuals with finding the right support group for them, and groups can be searched for via [this link](#).

Cancer Council Victoria also runs free health sessions for community groups in 8 languages other than English (Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Mandarin, Turkish & Vietnamese). These sessions cover quitting tobacco smoke and promoting a healthy lifestyle/increasing awareness of shared risk factors for cancer, type 2 diabetes and CVD.

More information about these sessions and to book a session can be viewed [here](#).

Lastly, Cancer Council Victoria allows any page of their website to be translated into approximately 16 languages so individuals are able to choose their preferred language to read information.

Diabetes

Diabetes Victoria - Diabetes Victoria has a number of resources in multiple languages available via their website or via phone order. These include:

- Prevent Type 2 Diabetes Handout (available in 9 languages via PDF download)
- Live Well with Type 2 Diabetes Brochure (available in 9 languages via PDF download)
- Picture Guides for healthy eating, exercise, foot care & managing diabetes (available in 6 languages via ordering online)
- Health eating video on different food groups, portion sizes, meal plans & cooking methods (10 minute clip in 5 languages via their website)
- National Diabetes Services Scheme Information Sheets has translated 10 diabetes information sheets (available in 10 languages via PDF download)
- National Diabetes Services Scheme Gestational Diabetes Booklets contain information on caring for yourself and your baby (available in 6 languages via PDF download)
- Life After Gestational Diabetes Booklet to help women to stay healthy after having gestational diabetes (available in 6 languages via PDF download)
- National Diabetes Services Scheme Gestational Diabetes DVD available in 11 languages (2 disc set with 2007 & 2012 version)

- NDSS Multicultural Diabetes Portal is similar to the Health Translations site but for diabetes specific information, grouped by language or topics.

These resources can be viewed [here](#).

Diabetes Victoria (ATSI) – In addition to the resources available in multiple languages, Diabetes Victoria has also developed Aboriginal resources in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO). The resources include:

- Feltman & Feltmum (a felt diabetes teaching tool to teach about type 2 diabetes prevention/living well with diabetes in the shape of the human body)
- Picture Guides (4 guides to help Aboriginal people understand diabetes related health messages)
- Healthy eating video (10 minute clip in 6 languages)
- Grapevine (newsletter for Aboriginal people & those with interest in diabetes in Aboriginal community)

The ATSI resources can be viewed [here](#).

This resource page also links to some external resources which are as follows:

- **How's Your Sugar?** – A [website](#) created by and for Aboriginal people with diabetes, showing Aboriginal people telling stories about their diabetes. It was created by Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit, Victoria University & Victorian Aboriginal
- **Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (VACCHO)** – VACCHO & the Victorian Government have collaborated to develop a series of culturally appropriate factsheets on various topics found [here](#).
- **Check my risk** – Aboriginal *Life!* (Road to Good Health) have developed a Diabetes Risk Assessment tool to identify those at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Found [here](#).

Diabetes Victoria (Webinars in my language) – Diabetes Victoria also delivers free webinars on type 2 diabetes to CALD communities living in regional Victoria. The session covers types of diabetes, symptoms, risk factors, reducing risk and managing your diabetes. A bilingual health facilitator connects with the group live from the Diabetes Victoria office to interact with the group, present information & answer questions.

The webinars are delivered to the following community groups in their chosen language:

- African (delivered in English)
- Arabic
- Greek
- Indian (delivered in English)
- Italian
- Mandarin
- Vietnamese

The sessions run for approximately 60 minutes with approximately 10 people required to run the sessions. A local meeting space with an internet connection is required, and Diabetes Victoria will provide a laptop and projector. You are able to download the booking forward via the Diabetes Victoria website [here](#).

Disability

AMPARO Advocacy – AMPARO Advocacy is a non-profit organization which provides advocacy on behalf of people from a non-English speaking background with disability.

They have produced two fact sheets to provide information to people from CALD communities about disability and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The fact sheets cover understanding disability in Australia and information about the NDIS specifically, available in 30 languages. These can be viewed [here](#).

Positive Partnerships – Positive Partnerships main focus is to improve the educational outcomes for school-aged students living with autism across Australia, and they do this through providing workshops for parents & carers, professional learning for teachers and online learning.

They have developed resources for families of CALD backgrounds that have been translated into 6 different languages (Arabic, Greek, Simplified Chinese, Thai, Turkish & Vietnamese).

These resources include translated fact sheets on autism and videos with family stories on caring for children with autism (English with subtitles/vice versa).

The videos can be viewed [here](#) with the translated fact sheets on the left-hand side of the page.

Action on Disability within Ethnic Communities (ADEC) - ADEC is a Victorian organization that aims to empower those with a disability from Non-English speaking backgrounds, their carers, and families to fully participate as members of the Victorian community.

They provide a number of resources in multiple languages which include:

- Mental Health Audio [Recordings](#) (11 languages)
- ADEC [Brochures](#) (8 topics in 8 languages)
- ADEC [DVD](#) (6 languages but at a cost)
- ADEC also allows their website to be translated into 103 different languages, so that all information provided on their site can be viewed in an individuals preferred language.

The landing page for these resources can be found [here](#).

Domestic violence

Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research (QCDFVR) – QCDFVR has produced 12 fact sheets for women and mothers on various topics related to domestic violence. Only 3 of the 12 fact sheets have been translated to languages other than English, and these are available in Dari, Mandarin & Vietnamese.

These fact sheets include 'Babies and Toddlers', 'Children 4-12' and 'Young People'. These can be viewed [here](#).

Safe Steps - Safe Steps is a Family Violence response Centre with the vision for women and children to live free from violence.

If a woman speaking a language other than English requires assistance with a family violence situation, they can contact Safe Steps to request an interpreter. Safe Steps will then call the individual back at a time that suits them.

They also offer brochures available as printable PDFs in 11 languages other than English which can be accessed [here](#).

Immigrant Women's Support Service - The Immigrant Women's Support Service has produced fact sheets on both domestic and sexual violence via their website. They are available in 15 languages other than English and can be downloaded via PDF format [here](#).

Gambling

Gambler's Help - Gambler's Help provides free and confidential support to people affected by problem gambling, as well as their families and friends. They allow their websites language to be changed to Arabic, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese and Vietnamese, plus they also offer useful information in Spanish, Turkish, Greek and Italian. This information can be viewed [here](#).

In addition to the above translated information, Gambler's Help has teamed with five ethno specific agencies to provide In-language counselling services. These agencies have been funded to provide support to members of the Chinese, Arabic and Vietnamese communities. This information can be found [here](#).

Gambling Help Online – Gambling Help Online provides free 24/7 chat and email counselling, plus support services with counsellors with expertise in problem gambling and online services. This is helpful for those who may be reluctant or not able to receive face-to-face assistance in their state.

Gambling Help Online provides gambling help information and resources translated into 17 languages, and if their language is not represented they are referred to TIS to speak to an interpreter in their language. The translated information can be viewed [here](#).

General health information – resources that cover multiple health information

Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS) - MHAHS is a state-wide service hosted by the Sydney Local Health District which supplies factsheets on both HIV & Hepatitis in 22 languages other than English. The factsheets can be downloaded directly from their website but you must be able to read English in order to find this information. The factsheets can be viewed [here](#).

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) – TIS provides interpreting services to people who do not speak English and to agencies/businesses that need to communicate with their non-English speaking clients. They contract over 2500 interpreters in more than 160 languages.

Their website allows you to view information, such as FAQ's, help with using the service and document translation information, in 18 different languages (with 5 new languages coming soon). Their website can be found [here](#).

Centre for Culture Ethnicity & Health (CEH) – The Centre for Culture Ethnicity & Health provides a range of resources, training and research for both health services and refugee communities.

CEH provides free community information sessions to refugees, migrants and asylum seekers on topics such as blood borne viruses (BBVs) and sexually transmissible infections (STIs). They can also include information such as sexual health, puberty & adolescence, healthy relationships, harm minimization of alcohol and other drugs. The booking page can be found [here](#).

CEH also has a ‘Knowledge Hub’ section on their site which contains resources, information and publications developed by CEH. These resources/publications can be searched for via audience (community members or service providers); with the majority being developed in consultation with the community and tested with focus groups. Publications are available in a wide range of languages and have topics including:

- BBVs/STIs
- Gambling
- Vaccinations
- Contraception for women
- Getting medical help outside business hours
- Hygiene
- Tuberculosis
- Understanding the Australian Medical System
- Using medicines correctly

The ‘Knowledge Hub’ can be viewed [here](#).

Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland (ECCQ) - ECCQ help to support and advocate for the needs of CALD communities in Queensland. They have produced 3 pages of translated health resources that are applicable across all states in Australia. These can be viewed [here](#)

In addition to these resources, they have also produced the following:

- ‘Healthy Shopping Tour’ DVD on making healthy food choices (downloaded via their website, available in 8 languages including English)
- Asthma self-management leaflet (ordered via order form, email or phone, 8 languages including English)
- Posters on chronic hepatitis B in CALD communities (accessed via their website, 3 languages other than English)

These resources can be viewed [here](#) and [here](#).

Multicultural Health Communication – This service was developed by the NSW Government as a coordinated state-wide approach to provide information on health issues/services to those who speak languages other than English. Again although this is a NSW initiative, the resources found on this website are applicable to most states and territories.

The website is similar to the Health Translations (Victoria) website in that users are able to search for resources via language and also view resources in an A-Z library. Resources are available in either PDF, audio, video or as links to websites with further information.

The website is slightly outdated and some of the resources that have been uploaded are quite a few years old and are photocopied from an existing resource. These resources can be viewed [here](#).

NSW Refugee Health Service – The NSW Refugee Health Service (part of the NSW Government) offer multiple multilingual health resources for refugees, many of which can be downloaded & viewed from their website. If not available to be viewed & downloaded from their site, NSW Refugee Health Service provides contact details to order the resources. Although some resources are specific to NSW, many of them are applicable across all states & territories.

Resources include:

- NSW Health Care System Information Booklet (available in 20 languages)
- Breathing Space (DVD with stories of overcoming TB for refugee communities in Australia – available in 6 languages)
- Health Check DVD (for recently arrived African communities in Australia – available in 8 languages)
- Let's Talk About Cancer (booklet with general information on cancer – available in 4 languages)
- Cervical Cancer & Pap Tests (booklet to increase Karen women's awareness – 2 languages)
- Healthy Mouth: Something to Smile About (DVD on oral health – available in 6 languages)
- Your Pregnancy, Your Health (DVD on having a healthy pregnancy – available in 4 languages)
- Talking about Medicines (Audio file discussing safe use of medicines – available in 3 languages)
- Accessing Health Services (CD available in Somali)
- Food Safety for men & their families ([PDF booklet in English](#))

The resource page can be viewed [here](#).

Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services – DHHS Tasmania has developed resources to help promote safe and hygienic use of bathrooms and toilets for those who may be less familiar with Western-style facilities.

Health services can download images without text or pamphlets (in 13 languages) for use in their facilities. These can be viewed [here](#)

Eastern Health – Eastern Health Language Services has created cue cards to assist health professionals and their clients communicate with each other, due to having English language difficulties or communication problems.

The cue cards include images representing aspects of family, community, instructions, descriptions, medical issues etc.

The cue cards are available in approximately 70 different languages and to access these you must enter your name, organization & email address for statistical purposes. They can be viewed [here](#)

Mater Online – Mater Health Services comprises several hospitals, health centres and more, and is supported by the Mater Foundation who link community and philanthropic support to health services and research.

Whilst they are based in Brisbane they do have a page on their website with approximately 35 Australia & NZ wide links to external websites on a range of different health topics in various languages. Some of these include diabetes, mental health, domestic violence, breastfeeding, hepatitis, immunization, parenting, nutrition and more. For many of the websites Mater has provided a direct PDF link to each different publication in their listed language. These resources can be found [here](#).

Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Health) – Migrant Information Centre has created a number of online multilingual resources for migrants.

They have produced information sheets in approximately 12 languages that cover topics such as aged care, kindergartens, healthy living in Australia, money management and respite services. These information sheets can be found [here](#).

Community Health Hub – Community Health Hub is a community initiative created by West Moreton Oxley Medicare Local, Mater Health Services, Queensland African Communities Council, University of Southern Queensland and Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, to provide access to health information in spoken languages for people of refugee backgrounds. They have produced health information videos in Arabic, Swahili, French, Somali, Dinka, Kinyarawanda & Kirundi.

These videos are on topics such as seeing a doctor, emergencies, hygiene, cancers, safe use of medicines, stress & pressure, vaccinations, HIV, women's & men's health and more. Some videos are only produced in certain languages, and the website provides instructions on how to burn the videos onto DVD for viewing. The website and videos can be viewed [here](#).

Multilingual appointment card update - The multilingual printable appointment card was developed to help culturally and linguistically diverse Australians easily access their healthcare appointments. It aims to improve non-English speaking clients' attendances to health care appointments and reduce failure to attend dates.

The tool allows you to fill in your client/patient's appointment details in English and print them in their preferred language. Patients can use the card to locate and remember their next appointment. You can access the current tool [here](#).

RDNS Talking Books – RDNS is Australia's oldest provider of home nursing/health care services and provides general and specialist care to help individuals maintain independence whilst living in their own homes.

The talking books developed can be read & listened to, with information sheets on different health topics in 4 languages other than English (Greek, Italian, Macedonian & Vietnamese). Due to their clientele, the talking books are aimed towards older individuals (60+). So far the talking books only provide health information on type 2 diabetes and dementia (only in Vietnamese) and are available to be listened to via an internet connection. Alternatively, users can print off sections of the book to read in the languages available.

In order to meet the health literacy needs of their targeted population, the talking books are written at a grade 6 English level and then translated into the grade 6 translated language level.

RDNS have advised that in the future they would like to publish more resources in more languages however this is dependent on funding available. The talking books can be viewed [here](#).

The Vietnamese dementia talking book was created and evaluated via a qualitative study by RDNS, and was developed in partnership with Vietnamese consumers. A strength of this study was that it used co-design with the Vietnamese community to develop the resource, and participatory action research principles to ensure the final book was user-friendly, relevant and culturally appropriate. This talking book on dementia has been well received by the Vietnamese community. The study can be found [here](#).

Health Translations (VIC Dept. Health) - The Health Translations Directory provides direct links to translated health resources produced in Australia, rather than uploading their own resources. They include information on the Australian healthcare system, abuse, cancer, alcohol and more.

They have over 12,000 multilingual resources which are regularly reviewed (green tick indicates it has been reviewed within the last 3 years). The website is easy to use with the ability to search for health information via topic, language or mixture of both. The website can be viewed [here](#).

Goulburn Valley Health - GV Health is the main referral health service for the Hume region, with 70% of the primary catchment living in Greater Shepparton (11% of those living in the area are born in non-English speaking countries).

‘My Health In Shepparton’ has been published by GV Health as a local guide for refugees and asylum seekers on accessing health care in Greater Shepparton. This PDF is available for download from the GV Health website and is available in 3 languages other than English. It covers topics such as:

- Shepparton Medical Centres
- Emergency Department
- Medications
- Interpreters
- GP’s
- Wellbeing & emotional support
- Disability support

GV Health has advised that they promote the resource widely to agencies across Shepparton to use with clients and are currently in the process of launching digital resources/videos to support the document. The document is also used, where appropriate, when providing refugee tours for those newly arrived to the community to places like pharmacy, pathology, dental and medical imaging. Information on this resource can be viewed [here](#).

ISIS Primary Care – ISIS is the result of an amalgamation of Brimbank, Westgate and Wyndham community health services, funded predominantly by DHHS.

In regards to refugee health, they offer support for refugees and asylum seekers living in Brimbank, Hobsons Bay and Wyndham on learning to live in Australia, finding/using health services, healthy living, communicating with doctors/health workers etc. The service is free but requires an appointment, with free interpreters available.

Unable to find the 'pictorial guides' on their website and ISIS PC did not respond with information regarding these. Their refugee health information can be found [here](#).

South Eastern Medicare Local - SEML worked with Enliven (a not for profit organisation) to develop resources for refugee communities around after hours medical care. These resources can be viewed [here](#).

They also produced YouTube resources in 3 languages other than English on topics such as getting ready for school, a healthy start to life, feeling sad or worried etc. These can be viewed [here](#).

QLD Health Department – The Queensland Health Department has published/linked to multiple health resources on their website in a variety of different languages.

You are able to view resources via language and topic, with approximately 17 different health topics and over 60 different languages. The resources include PDFs and links to websites with translated information.

Many of the links were broken on their website but when viewing information via health topic rather than language most of them worked. These can be viewed [here](#).

The Water Well Project – The Water Well Project is a not-for-profit health promotion charity which aims to improve the health and wellbeing of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers by improving health literacy. They partner with organisations already working with people from these backgrounds to deliver interactive, culturally-sensitive and free health education sessions that are tailored to the needs and interests of these community groups.

The sessions are delivered by volunteer health professionals (mostly doctors, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals), and are delivered across Melbourne and the Barwon region. The sessions run for 1-2 hours, with a minimum of two volunteer health professionals and 10-15 community participants. Where necessary, they will arrange for an interpreter from TIS to translate in the relevant language/s.

The topics that can be covered in a community education session can be found [here](#). If given enough notice, they are able to cover alternative topics also.

Those who represent a refugee or asylum seeker support organisation can request an education session [here](#).

Healthcare rights

Department of Human & Human Services – DHHS has translated the Australian Charter for Healthcare Rights in Victoria into 23 languages other than English and has made this available via the Health Translations website. This resource can be viewed [here](#).

Health Complaints Commissioner – The Health Complaints Commissioner's website has the organisation's two main brochures, 'Making a Complaint' and 'My Health Records, My Rights', translated into 26 community languages, including 8 languages with voice recordings and transcripts. These resources can be viewed [here](#).

Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission - The Human Rights Commission has included translated information on their website on topics such as discrimination, your rights in Victoria and how to make complaints in languages other than English. These resources can be viewed [here](#).

They also have interpreters available to speak to about understanding what the commission does and how they can help.

Intergenerational issues

Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland (ECCQ) – One of ECCQ’s projects, ‘The Learning Together Child Protection’, resulted in the production of parental tips for parents of CALD background collected from families who have successfully resettled in Australia. These are in the format of audio/mp3 files and videos, and are available in Swahili, Juba Arabic and Bahasa.

They focus on topics such as helping your children with school, getting to know about life in Australia and changing in order to help their children. These can be viewed [here](#).

Australian Vietnamese Women’s Association (AVWA) – AVWA runs 6 playgroups across Melbourne which presents a bilingual program to strengthen family relationships while addressing educational disadvantages. They do this via supporting Vietnamese families in low socio-economic suburbs. These playgroups help ensure children reach a high level of bilingualism, while their mothers learn to socialize and practice their English language skills in a supportive setting. Information on this service can be viewed [here](#).

Medicare, bulk billing and similar services

Department of Human Services - The Australian Government DHS website provides translated information about their payments and services available in PDF format. The resources are published in approximately 70 languages other than English and can be viewed [here](#).

If someone wants to discuss Medicare related matters in their chosen language they are referred to contact TIS National rather than DHS directly.

The Human Services website does not provide translated information about bulk billing on their website.

Mental health

The Forum of Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (FASSTT) – FASSTT have produced resources available for survivors of torture and trauma which are available for purchase from their website. There are two relevant resources on their site that are tools for their audience to use which are:

- Relaxation Tapes in community languages (progressive relaxation & mindfulness practice in 9 languages \$5-\$10)
- Looking After Yourself: Hints & Tips for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (in CD format in 9 languages \$55-\$65)

These resources can be viewed [here](#).

Mental Health in Multicultural Australia (MHIMA) - MHIMA provides advice and support to service providers and governments on mental health and suicide prevention for people from CALD backgrounds.

They have translated resources available for use by health practitioners when working with individuals and families from CALD backgrounds on topics such as anxiety, bipolar mood disorder, challenging behaviours, depressive disorder etc. They are available in 22 languages other than English and can be viewed [here](#).

MHIMA has also assisted in the development in 6 audio files in approximately 8 languages other than English on topics such as dealing with difficult times, helping those around you, seeking help if you're experiencing depression etc. Each clip runs for approximately 2 minutes and can be found [here](#). Their website also directs health professionals and consumers to TIS [here](#).

Reconnexion – Reconnexion aims to support people experiencing tranquiliser dependency, anxiety or depression to achieve wellbeing. They have three fact sheets that have been translated into approximately 23 languages on topics 'Benzodiazepines (Tranquillisers and Sleeping Pills)', 'Hints for Better Sleep', and 'Breathing Techniques'. These fact sheets can be viewed [here](#)

Transcultural Mental Health Centre (TMHC) - TMHC works with people from CALD diverse communities, health professionals and partner organisations across NSW to support good mental health.

They have produced resources in 37 languages other than English on various topics such as stress, promoting wellbeing, problem solving and setting goals, anxiety in children and more. These resources can be downloaded in PDF format direct from their website [here](#)

Beyond Blue – Beyond Blue has linked to organisations that have produced mental health resources in languages other than English (rather than produce the materials themselves). They have therefore stated that they are not responsible for the advice or information provided in these resources. These are on topics such as pregnancy and new parents, information for families and general mental health information. These resources can be viewed [here](#).

Oral health

Dental Health Services Victoria (DHSV) - DHSV has provided oral health advice and guides in brochure format about services at the Royal Melbourne Dental Hospital in 12 languages other than English. They provide information on dental services, day surgery/visitors guide, important patient information & oral health information.

They also allow most pages of their website to be translated in 103 languages. The translated brochures can be viewed [here](#).

In addition to the translated dental information, DHSV also provides language interpreter services to patients at The Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne. These services can be accessed viewed [here](#).

The Sydney Children's Hospital Network - The SCHN has a number of fact sheets on their website translated to languages other than English. They only have one fact sheet for oral health on the topic 'Caring for your child's teeth' directed at parents. This PDF fact sheet is available in Arabic, Chinese (Traditional) and Vietnamese which can be viewed [here](#).

Pregnancy and parenting

Starting Blocks – Starting Blocks provides parents with information about early childhood education and care, helping them make the best choices for their children and family. They have produced a number of factsheets, brochures and posters on topics such as preparing for childcare and choosing the right service for your child, which are translated into 6 different languages (Vietnamese, Punjabi, Korean, Hindi, Chinese & Arabic).

These resources can be viewed [here](#).

Murdoch Children's Research Centre (Health Happy Beginnings) - Murdoch Children's Research Institute undertakes research into infant, child and adolescent health, and is the largest child health research institute in Australia.

The 'Healthy Happy Beginnings' program was launched in 2014 with the aim to give refugee women in Melbourne's West access to health care and support during pregnancy. The program is a community-based, socially inclusive program for Karen women from Burma and their families based in Werribee.

The program is designed to promote health literacy, health promotion & understanding of the Australian health system in the context of pregnancy and early childhood. Women are offered individual appointments for antenatal care with a midwife and interpreter, and also group information sessions with nurses/midwives and bicultural workers.

The research fellow for this program has advised that these programs are verbally run and MCRI has not created any resources in the Karen language as part of the program. They have also advised that *"...this program has a particular focus on verbal sharing of information and storytelling in women's language to improve health literacy."*

Those running the program have asked the women if they would like further online/video resources but they have indicated they are happy to watch a DVD that is interpreted during the session, as most don't have internet access/are unconfident navigating online.

This project sits within a larger initiative from Murdoch Children's Research Institute (Bridging the Gap: partnerships for change in refugee child and family health).

Information on this program can be viewed [here](#).

Australian Breastfeeding Association – Australian Breastfeeding Association have produced free pamphlets on two breastfeeding topics (Breastfeeding and Childcare & Breastfeeding Confidence) for personal use or to be distributed by health services. The brochures are available in 13 different languages as well as English.

Information on these pamphlets can be viewed [here](#).

The fact sheets can also be ordered in CD format for \$15 [here](#).

Public transport

Public Transport Victoria (PTV): PTV has produced a number of online resources in 11 languages other than English in either video or PDF format. The resources include information on myki basics, penalty fares and general public transport information.

They also have phone lists for general public transport information in 13 languages which individuals can call for information. Information on these resources can be viewed [here](#).

Safe use of medicines

NPS MedicineWise – NPS MedicineWise works with the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) and other organizations to create resources that provide information for CALD communities on the quality use of medicines.

They have produced multiple brochures that can be downloaded on different aspects of medicines, available in 10 different languages. This can be viewed [here](#)

RDNS - Royal District Nursing Service have produced a series of Medicines Reminder Cards in 8 languages other than English. They are aimed to help remind people when to take tablets, what to take them with, how to apply certain medications etc. These resources can be viewed [here](#).

Department of Health & Human Services - DHHS has produced a fact sheet on vaccine side effects in PDF format in 27 languages other than English. This fact sheet advises on common side effects that may occur after a vaccination. DHHS have made this fact sheet available via the Health Translations website [here](#).

Stroke and cardiovascular disease

Stroke Foundation - Stroke Foundation has translated their fact sheet 'All about stroke' into 7 different languages (Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Macedonian and Vietnamese) which includes information on what stroke is, how it can be prevented, and treatment/rehabilitation.

They have also translated their resource 'My Stroke Journey' for stroke survivors and their carers in Vietnamese.

Both resources can be downloaded directly from their website and can be found [here](#).

Heart Foundation - The Heart Foundation has produced 7 information sheets in approximately 16 languages available on their website on topics such as heart attack, chronic heart failure and healthy lifestyle. They have also produced audio presentations on similar topics available as MP3 downloads from their website. These resources can be viewed and downloaded [here](#).

Women's health

Multicultural Centre for Women's Health - MCWH is a national voice for immigrant and refugee women's wellbeing in Australia, and they have created a multilingual library online catalogue.

The catalogue contains over 5000 resources in over 70 languages on women's health and wellbeing. You can search their catalogue via subject, language and publication date and once you have found a publication you'd like to access, you can email them to request a copy.

Some of the resources include medicine management, abortion, menopause, ageing in Australia, pregnancy etc. The catalogue can be viewed [here](#).

They are also in the process for uploading their e-Resources to their website, but they have listed the options available and a number to contact them to request online copies. These can be found [here](#).

The Royal Women's Hospital – The Royal Women's Hospital has uploaded many fact sheets on various health topics to do with women's health on their website. Some of these topics include recovering after an operation, breast biopsy tests, breast changes, breastfeeding and contraception. Some of these resources are only available in English but some are also offered in other languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Hindi, Turkish, Vietnamese and more. These fact sheets can be viewed [here](#).

Jean Hailes - Jean Hailes for Women's Health is a national not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving the knowledge of women's health and to provide a trusted health service for women.

They have made 5 of their brochures/fact sheets available in languages other than English which can be downloaded directly from their website. They are on topics such as endometriosis, being healthier, menopause etc. and are available in approximately 13 languages. It should be noted that these resources are found in the 'For Health professionals' section so consumers may not think to access them from this area. These resources can be viewed [here](#).