

FECCAe-NEWS

The Newsletter of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia

WELCOME TO THE NOVEMBER/DECEMBER EDITION OF FECCA'S E-NEWS

Message from Chairperson, Mary Patetsos

Welcome to the November/December edition of FECCA's e-News. I am very pleased to write the introduction to this last newsletter of 2017. It has been a big year with many wins for Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. I was interested to read the recently published Scanlon Foundation's 2017 Mapping Social Cohesion Report where we see that there continues to be strong support in Australia for multiculturalism and positive attitudes toward migration. While the report did also show an increase of discrimination based on skin colour, ethnic origin or religion, FECCA's role in protecting the interests of CALD Australia continues to be as important as ever.



Earlier this year FECCA's long, hard fight against the proposed changes to Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act was won when the Senate rejected attempts to water down the hate speech laws. Then, in October FECCA and the multicultural community of Australia celebrated the scrapping of the proposed citizenship legislation when the Senate removed the proposed Bill from the debate list after the Government, which faced certain defeat of its proposed legislation, failed to bring it to a vote.

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WELCOME TO THE NOVEMBER/DECEMBER EDITION OF FECCA'S E-NEWS *continued*

Other wins for FECCA and the diverse communities of Australia include the 'yes' vote for marriage equality demonstrating support for equality and non-discrimination, and the rejection by Queensland voters of the racist agenda of One Nation and its backers in the November State election.

Finally, FECCA was grateful for the recognition by the Australian Government of the central role FECCA plays in representing the voices of CALD Australian. Appearing before the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Dr Lachlan Strahan, First Assistant Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, commenting on the Australian Government's funding of FECCA, said: 'Engaging at both the advisory and grass roots levels ensures that multicultural policy is well-informed and robust.' FECCA is pleased that the Government has acknowledged that FECCA's advocacy helps to shape inclusive, equitable, and accessible government policy and services.

These positive developments underline the pivotal role FECCA has in Australia and the importance of our work to ensure an inclusive and harmonious multicultural society.

In spite of the positive movements mentioned above, FECCA has expressed concerns with persistent attempts to change Citizenship laws. FECCA is also concerned with a recent report confirming what we has been saying for many years—that migrant workers,

including students and backpackers are being grossly underpaid and need stronger protections. FECCA has called on the Government to ensure employers are held accountable for any exploitation and regulatory bodies are sufficiently resourced to ensure all vulnerable workers are protected and paid a fair wage.

FECCA will continue to work together with the Government and other stakeholders in making sure that we find positive ways to make migrants feel welcome and part of Australian society. Future areas for FECCA include continuous work in aged care, ensure CALD participation in the NDIS, and expand our role in capacity building for new and emerging communities. We are very proud of the work we have done in 2017 and we look forward to continue working even harder in 2018. We look forward to FECCA continuing be part of the changes that make Australia a truly inclusive and diverse multicultural nation.

Finally, I wish to thank each and every one of you for your tireless support of FECCA and CALD Australians. I wish you all the very best over the summer and look forward to re-connecting for a vibrant 2018.

Mary Patetsos
Chairperson

**Federation of Ethnic Communities'
Councils of Australia (FECCA)**

FECCA NEWS

On December 7, 2017 FECCA celebrated a year of achievements for a multicultural Australia with the release of two major reports. The Chairperson of FECCA, Ms Mary Patetsos, said that the two reports, **'Access and Equity to Feedback and Complaints Mechanisms for Multicultural Communities'** and **'Australia's Bilingual and Bicultural Workforce'**, would form a vital resource for government and agencies in their communications with Australia's diverse communities. Senator Zed Seselja, Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs, said in a video message: 'I commend FECCA for its invaluable support for the multicultural access and

equity policy which promotes government services, programs and policies that are accessible and achieve similar outcomes for all, regardless of cultural and language background.' Ms Patetsos said, 'It was a great opportunity for me, as newly elected Chairperson of FECCA, to meet our allies and supporters and to set out our priorities for the year ahead. I was delighted that representatives from Commonwealth government departments including Prime Minister and Cabinet, Social Services, Human Services and Health attended. It was great to share the evening with SBS who have worked closely and constructively with FECCA on many issues of shared interests.'



FECCA NEWS

FECCA has made several submissions recently, including:

Submission into the review of National Screening and Assessment Form looking at responses to survey questions in relation to the Aged Care Quality Review of the national screening and assessment form (NSAF). [Click here](#) to read the full submission.

Redesign of Dementia Consumer Support Consultation Paper where FECCA noted that culturally sensitive assessment tools should be utilised when assessing people from CALD backgrounds. Additionally, older people from CALD backgrounds are often excluded from dementia research due to language barriers, leading to gaps in the evidence base. According to the latest census data (2016) around 17% of Australians over the age of 80 speak little to no English. This is important information that needs to be taken into consideration when planning any future dementia policy. [Click here](#) to read the full submission.

Submission into mental health and suicide prevention survey where FECCA emphasised that people from CALD communities, with a lived experience of suicide, should engage and participate in planning, implementation and evaluation of strategies and services that specifically

target CALD individuals and communities. This will make monitoring and reporting outcomes much easier as they get involved in the process from the onset. [Click here](#) to read the full submission.

Submission to Consultation on Secondary Use of Healthcare Data where FECCA acknowledged that while the secondary use of data available through the My Health Record might be beneficial to the overall population, it can have negative effects and raise privacy concerns for some. FECCA urges the government to take the needs of vulnerable groups into consideration when creating the relevant policy. [Click here](#) to read the full submission.

FECCA Submission into the National Digital Economy Strategy where FECCA emphasised that the National Digital Economy Strategy should recognise that the digital literacy of migrants can vary greatly, and that there is sometimes a gap in ability, basic skills, and attitudes to technology. The National Digital Economy Strategy should include actions to support those who require further assistance. [Click here](#) to read the full submission.

Events attended by FECCA staff



FECCA was proud to have a staff member in Geneva speaking before the UN Committee reviewing Australia's performance in implementing the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination along with other Australian organisations representing Australia's First Peoples, refugees and asylum seekers. Dr Alia Imtoul spoke about citizenship, racism in the workplace, exploitation of migrant workers, the rise of right wing discourse and the use of racist rhetoric by public figures and political leaders.

FECCA NEWS

Events attended by FECCA staff *continued*

FECCA staff attended the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) conference in Melbourne. Youth from CALD backgrounds from across the country met to discuss youth, multiculturalism and social cohesion in an interactive and incredibly interesting setting which left the FECCA representative with a positive outlook on the future considering the calibre of Australia's future leaders.



I am not just a refugee'—youth discussing the importance of recognising the many roles a multicultural youth advocate is involved with at the MYAN conference in Melbourne, 23-24 November 2017.

On December 4, 2017, FECCA Chair, Ms Mary Patetsos and Senior Policy and Project Officer, Ms Cristina Giusti met with Minister Wyatt to discuss the aged care workforce and the new National Aged Care Diversity framework.



With around 1,300 Australians currently on transplant waiting lists, and a further 12,000 people on dialysis, FECCA encourages all our members and supporters to make their donation decision count and join the Australian Organ Donor Register (AODR). Thanks to a new registration process, it is now faster and easier than ever to register your decision on the AODR. Visit donatelife.gov.au and you can register in just minutes. Registration counts, with 9 in 10 families agreeing to donation proceeding when their loved one is a registered donor.

As part of a Community Grant received by FECCA from the Australian Organ and Tissue Authority (OTA) earlier this year, FECCA joined the national discussion

around organ and tissue donation publishing a special edition of *Australian Mosaic*. This edition focuses on engaging culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in the discussion. [See here](#) for the special edition of *Australian Mosaic* with tools and resources necessary to start discussions on organ and tissue donations in your community.

Be part of the discussion and make your donation decision count. Register to save lives at donatelife.gov.au and share your decision with your loved ones.



STAKEHOLDER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES



Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW
Representing all communities

For the first time in the history of the organization, a woman from the Spanish-speaking community will hold the position of Chair at the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW. Ms. Marta

Terracciano has been elected Chair of ECCNSW at the Annual General Meeting of the organisation, celebrated in Sydney on the 29th of October. For more information, [click here](#).

5TH NATIONAL ELDER ABUSE CONFERENCE | 19-20 FEBRUARY 2018 | SOFITEL SYDNEY WENTWORTH

HOSTED BY Seniors Rights Service

[together making change](#)

[DRAFT PROGRAM](#) | [SPONSORSHIP & EXHIBITION](#) | [INFORMATION](#) | [CONTACT](#)



Seniors Rights Service is delighted to host the 5th National Elder Abuse Conference on 19-20 February 2018 in Sydney. The 2018 Conference comes at a pivotal moment in terms of Australia's response to elder abuse. In mid-2017 the Australian Law Reform Commission reported on its findings from one of Australia's largest public inquiries into elder abuse. Also, in recent years there have been a number of high profile elder abuse cases that have received national media attention, as well as reports of systemic neglect

of older people, highlighting the urgent necessity of addressing the issue. The Conference will bring over 500 academics and researchers, policy makers and government agencies, public servants, service providers, people with lived experience and community workers who have contact with older people together to exchange ideas, solutions and experiences at the 2018 Conference where delegates will work together making change. Register on <http://togethertmakingchange.org.au/>



Australian Government
Department of Human Services

The Department of Human Services wishes to inform migrants on Bridging Visas, on Temporary Protection Visas or Safe Haven Visas to re-enrol in Medicare. If you

are on any of these visas your Medicare card is due to expire on or before 31 December 2017. Visit a Medicare Service Centre as soon as possible to apply for your new card. Don't wait for your card to expire. The Medicare Service Centres will have reduced staff and opening hours from 22 December 2017 to 2 January 2018. Visit a Medicare Service Centre as soon as you can to avoid possible delays. Go to humanservices.gov.au/enrolmedicare for more information.

STAKEHOLDER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES



The banner features a colorful geometric pattern of triangles on the left. On the right, it includes the University of Melbourne logo, the Refugee Council of Australia logo, and the text: "REFUGEE ALTERNATIVES Improving policy, practice and public support". A prominent orange button says "Register Now >". Below the button, it states "13 - 14 February 2018 | Arts West Building, University of Melbourne Parkville, Victoria".

The Refugee Council of Australia's Refugee Alternatives Conference 2018, co-hosted by the University of Melbourne, is a two-day event focusing on improving policy, practice and public support for refugee and asylum seeker issues. The event brings together a broad range of expertise covering topics of displacement; protection; cooperation; wellbeing; resilience; education; advocacy; and unity. The speakers will discuss these topics across the local, national and international space and bring

their extensive and complimentary expertise to the discussions, notably and vitally, that of lived experience. For more information and to register, [click here](#).



The Fair Work Ombudsman is making a difference for new arrivals to Australia with the development of six videos to help visa holders understand their workplace rights. Each video that has been produced builds on the Fair Work Ombudsman's commitment to remove barriers that prevent migrant workers from accessing workplace assistance. The new videos

are available in 16 languages: Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Korean, Hindi, Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Filipino, Portuguese, Thai, and Nepali. The new and updated resources are available at <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/language-help>. Also, any employee or employer who has questions or concerns about their workplace rights and obligations can obtain free advice and assistance by visiting www.fairwork.gov.au or calling the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 59 and information on the website is available in up to 30 different languages.

STAKEHOLDER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES

With the grass pollen season upon us, we thought it timely to remind you of the thunderstorm asthma resources the Department of Health and Human Services have available for the community. Following last year's thunderstorm asthma epidemic, which saw thousands of people in Geelong and Melbourne experience breathing difficulties, the epidemic thunderstorm asthma forecasting system was launched. Translated fact sheets about thunderstorm asthma are available on the [Better Health Channel](#). There are also translated posters about thunderstorm asthma in

multiple languages which can be found on the [Health Translations](#) website. If you have any questions, or would like more information, please contact the Department of Health and Human Services on 03 9096 5565.



Young workers and apprentices will be better equipped to stand up for their rights in the workplace with new resources released today through a partnership between the Fair Work Ombudsman and the Foundation for Young Australians. Six new videos are available on the [Fair Work Ombudsman's YouTube channel](#),

addressing issues commonly experienced by young workers and providing tips for dealing with workplace concerns. The Fair Work Ombudsman and the Foundation for Young Australians worked together to explore current issues facing young people in the workplace. A range of specialised [resources for young workers](#) is available on the Fair Work Ombudsman website. Employees and employers who have questions or concerns about their workplace rights and obligations can seek assistance through the My Account portal at www.fairwork.gov.au or by calling the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94.



Racism. It Stops With Me has started rolling out an exciting social media campaign. The first video was released on Saturday 11 November. The [next instalment](#) has just been released and is

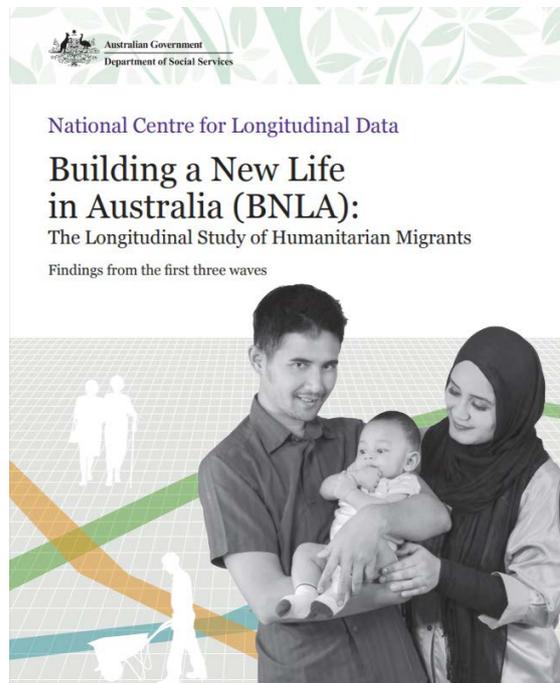
ready for you to share on your networks. [Click here](#) to learn more about the campaign.

STAKEHOLDER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES



Australian Government
Department of Social Services

The Department of Social Services has released a report covering the three first waves of the long term project '*Building a New Life in Australia (BNLA): the Longitudinal Study of Humanitarian Migrants*'. This is a long term project researching how humanitarian migrants settle into life in Australia. This report provides a quick and easy reference for policy makers and service providers needing evidence to inform their work. It provides a detailed description of migration experiences, settlement experiences and socio-economic characteristics of a large group of humanitarian migrants. It also examines the association between variations in these characteristics and experiences with the settlement outcomes of respondents. To read the report and learn more, [click here](#).



Australian Government
Department of Human Services

A new video featuring Multicultural Service Officers, Di Hong Lam, has recently been released via the Department of Human Services' social medial channels including Facebook and Twitter. It is titled 'Let's get

digital, digital' and showcases the digital information sessions held with other service providers, such as the Australian Taxation Office and Community Migrant Resource Centre. Maintaining good relationships and sharing knowledge during sessions such as these all help to improve the way we serve our community. The Department of Human Services hopes that by liking and sharing posts released by them they can promote their services, such as the translated information on the [Information in your language](#) webpage. Please check out, like and share the following links:

Human Services Facebook: www.facebook.com/HumanServicesAU/videos/1256986141074454/
@HumanServicesAU Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HumanServicesAU/status/928076843948720128>

STAKEHOLDER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Important changes to child care fee assistance

Did you know from July 2018 there will be changes to child care fee assistance?

The New Child Care Package will make child care more affordable for most Australian families. In fact, most lower and middle-income families that are eligible will receive a higher subsidy than they do now. Key facts about the New Child Care Package to be aware of:

- From 2 July 2018, the current Child Care Rebate and Child Care Benefit will be replaced by a single Child Care Subsidy.
- Families earning less than \$185,710 will have no cap on the amount of child care they can claim, while those earning over \$185,710 and under \$350,000 will benefit from an increase in the current cap of \$7,613 to \$10,000 per child, per year.
- The level of Child Care Subsidy that can be accessed will depend on combined family income, the activity level of both parents (based on the parent who does the least amount of activity) and the type of child care the family uses.

- Recognised activities include but are not limited to: paid work (including leave), approved study or training, actively seeking work, volunteering and self-employment.
- To ensure that children in Australia's most vulnerable families and communities have the opportunity to access quality early learning and child care, the new package will include a safety net.

The current system doesn't change until 2 July 2018. More information about what families need to do to prepare for the change will be available in early 2018. To find out more about the New Child Care Package, and to estimate what your new subsidy may be, visit education.gov.au/childcare. The estimator is easy to use and only takes a few minutes to complete.



Diaspora organisations have become increasingly visible players on the global stage, involved in projects ranging from peacebuilding, advocacy, humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction. Following the success of the inaugural Diasporas in Action Conference in 2016, the convening organisations have continued to facilitate

ongoing learning and collaboration regarding the role of Diasporas in peace, development and humanitarian action through the Diaspora Learning Network (DLN). The DLN is currently working to establish a solid membership base. We invite individuals, organisations, institutions and companies who have an active research or practice interest in diaspora communities to join the DLN. Membership is free, and will provide you with the opportunity to contribute to topical dialogues and access opportunities for collaboration with fellow members. To become a member, simply complete the membership form. See the following links for more information and for registration:

Personal registration: <http://diasporaaction.org.au/dln-member-registration/Organisation/Institution/>

Companies' registration: <http://diasporaaction.org.au/dln-organisation-registration/>

DLN web page: <http://diasporaaction.org.au/diaspora-learning-network/>

2016 Diasporas in Action Conference: <http://www.diasporasinaction.org.au/post-conference-2/>