



Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council

Meeting communique

The first meeting of the second term of the Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council (the Council) was held on the Gold Coast on 11 December 2019.

The Council started by hosting a community consultation on improving mental health outcomes and reducing the risk of suicide in culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Council members facilitated roundtable discussions with stakeholders from the multicultural sector as well as mental health professionals from the Gold Coast region.

Discussion focused on what is and isn't working well to improve mental health and reducing suicide. Some key takeaways included:

- There appears to be a greater openness amongst some culturally and linguistically diverse communities to talk about mental health, although more needs to be done to address stigma.
- The language used to describe mental health is often negative and compounds stigma.
- Many things contribute to poor mental health, such as racism and discrimination, unemployment and housing stress.
- Training should be provided to key contact points to identify poor mental health and risk of suicide (e.g. GPs, teachers and school counsellors, religious leaders etc.).
- Culturally appropriate information and resources is needed for parents to talk to and support their children with positive mental health.

A report has been compiled outlining the findings from the community consultation and is available on the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs website.

After the consultation, Council members met with representatives from the Queensland Mental Health Commission and Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre to discuss the key themes from the consultation and possible strategies for addressing issues raised.

The Council endorsed their Work Plan for the next three years, focusing on the key priorities of employment; combating racism and improving social cohesion, particularly in regional Queensland; and engaging young people regarding attitudes towards multiculturalism through a community consultation.

The Council was also provided a presentation on the review of the Multicultural Queensland Month held in August 2019. Council members discussed how to increase engagement with young people across the State, leverage from other State-wide campaigns, such as Senior's Week which is also held in August and encourage people to nominate for the Multicultural Queensland Awards.

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for February 2020 in Brisbane.