



EDAC NEWS

Newsletter of the Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre
Autumn 2004

Message from the Executive Officer

Welcome to *EDAC News* once again. We are looking forward to an exciting year ahead.

I recently uncovered some outdated but interesting documents which brought back memories of the struggle and challenges we had in the earlier days of consumer advocacy (two decades ago). One document called **A Fair Go** for people with disabilities, recommended reforms of the Equal Opportunity Act and the inclusion of people with disabilities in community participation. I am glad to say we have come a long way from those days, with protective legislation and policies in place, including the DDA, Disability Services Standards and other social justice policies.

Australians have a traditional instinct for a *fair go*. It is probably as close as we can get to a shared core value. Australians pride ourselves on our human rights record. Whilst we are pursuing further improvement and rights for people with disabilities we should also spare a thought to other disadvantaged groups who are also struggling for equal opportunity and social rights. Those that need protection are almost always the voiceless, the powerless, and the marginalised. This includes people with disabilities and those of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, particularly refugees, whether they are TPV holders or asylum seekers. I believe that Australia's treatment of refugees stands in contrast with what we stand for, that is, *a fair go for all*. This edition of *EDAC News* features the work of Spare Lawyers for Refugees Online Advocacy Centre and an article from *The AGE* relating to comments from Associate Professor Harry Minas about current refugee policy.

I am also delighted to introduce new staff members and volunteers at EDAC and their related projects. Welcome Leah Ciancio, Carmen Harrison, Francis Adupa Ekwang and Peter Cliff.

Michael Kendrick PhD, a well known international consultant whose work is familiar to many people in Australia was in Perth recently. Having attended his workshops in the past and found his approach to disability services and philosophy invaluable, we sent two new staff and volunteers to his recent workshop on "Services for people with disabilities" – controlled by people with disabilities and their families. There was a feeling that he had not quite covered the more marginalised (if one can put it this way) group of people with disabilities, being people of CaLD and Aboriginal backgrounds. But nonetheless the workshops were productive and practical.

In April we will be holding our first workshop for people with disabilities and Carers in understanding disability, what it means to them and how to access disability services, thanks to funding received from the Office of Multicultural Interests. We will keep you informed of future events.

Jenny Au Yeong

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Photos above of lion dancing at the re-opening of the firebombed Foo WIn restaurant and the Multicultural Carers Group

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Silent Voices: women with disabilities and domestic violence

This partnership project, between PWD, EDAC and ECU, was funded by Lotterywest as a social research grants program. Judith Cockram, the researcher, found that family and domestic violence against women is a pervasive and serious problem. It is a violation of trust and an abuse of power in a relationship where a woman should have the right to absolute safety. The research explored how women with disabilities suffer a double disadvantage in accessing services and the lack of support in protecting and safeguarding them and their families from harm and abuse. These issues were illustrated in case studies provided by the participants.

107 agencies responded to this study. Their responses revealed:

- 72 agencies provided services to an estimated 709 women with disabilities who had suffered family and domestic violence in the two years preceding the research
- 270 women or 38% had acquired a disability after the abuse
- 20% of the women were from a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- 28% of women were from an Indigenous background.

Agencies had identified areas of need to assist them to respond more effectively to women with disability. It is obvious that much work needs to be done to protect the rights of women with disabilities and improve access to services for domestic violence.

The report was launched by the Minister for Disability Services, Sheila McHale in December 2003. The Minister also announced a \$10,000 grant from the Domestic Violence Unit in DSC to commence training in this area.

The full report can be downloaded from www.edac.org.au/publication.html

TRAINING CALD SUPPORT WORKERS

This partnership project between ELBA and EDAC is funded by the Disability Services Commission. Its main objective is to identify candidates from a culturally and linguistically diverse background who would be interested in accessing appropriate training to enable them to become support workers for younger people who have disabilities.

The project has so far recruited six people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds to enroll in the Certificate III – Disability. The six people who were chosen had to meet the selection criteria of being of bi-lingual, bi-cultural background, have a specific interest and desire to work in the area of disability, have completed high school to Year Ten and have sufficient English to do the course.

The course is being delivered by TAFE at their Mt Lawley Campus. It is a full-time course for one semester and includes a practicum of four weeks. The course is fully funded by the project.

Another intake will occur in April for the second semester beginning in July.

Anyone interested in doing the course and being part of the project please contact: Carmen Harrison, Project Consultant on 9388 7455.

City Farm Workshops: Fun and Work for Youth

In July 2003 one of EDAC's new project consultants, Leah Ciancio, began work on the Department of Education and Training funded "Beyond Scope" project. The one year project aims to help ensure more young CaLD people with disabilities pursue meaningful work pathways. Leah has a strong background in the anthropology of migration, the community arts as well as recreation for people with intellectual disability. Drawing on her diverse portfolio, Leah has designed some exciting workshops for youth that are due to commence at City Farm at the end of March. The workshops will allow multicultural youth aged 14 - 18, to talk freely about work and have their voices heard.

The workshops are designed to inspire young people to think about meaningful work futures, encourage networking, promote fun and expressive activities for motivation and build a sense of self and community. **Leah is looking for students to be involved in the workshops which run over three weeks: 26 March, 2 and 30 April.** As well as having a chance to point out difficulties with the systems, participants will get to devise some solutions and also have some fun. The free workshops will begin with activities like cartooning, body percussion, and shaker or drumming workshops. A colourful local community arts group known as "Junkadelic" has been recruited to help facilitate the workshops.



"Beyond Scope" Project Katanning Workshop



Orleans-style groove which is everyone feels comfortable playing within the group. The jamming sessions performance in which everyone gets to contribute. and gives your spirit a boost!



Earthwise Junkadelic is an open access community arts and Junk Percussion Group. Based at Earthwise in Subiaco, the aim of the group is to create opportunities for people from all walks of life to participate and enjoy group arts activities.

Junkadelic workshops involve teaching the basics of a New a very simple shaker pattern, so that along with the experienced drummers almost always end with a highlight The beat and rhythm is very uplifting

The "Beyond Scope" pilot program involving Junkadelic will be the first of its kind in WA. People who have to deal with language barriers, and come to grips with a new culture and educational system, as well as those issues surrounding their disability are often channelled into existing intervention programmes that aren't designed to meet these specific needs. With further local community and government support, EDAC hopes to see the development of an ongoing program specifically designed to support "Beyond Scope" youth.

Don't miss out on your chance to be involved in the free City Farm workshops and jam with "Junkadelic". Preregister with Leah on 9388 7455 or 0408 945 209 by Tuesday, 23rd March.

Adviser slams visa policy

By Michelle Grattan

AGE newspaper, February 15, 2004

A member of the Federal Government's immigration detention advisory group has added his voice to those calling for refugees on temporary protection visas to be given permanent residence.

Associate Professor Harry Minas, director of Melbourne University's Centre for International Mental Health, says that refugees, regardless of how they got to Australia, should be granted the certainty of a permanent protection visa.

This is "the only basis on which they can rebuild damaged lives and reconstitute fragmented families", he writes in the university's *UniNews*.

Last week, two more Coalition backbenchers, Petro Georgiou and Patrick Secker, called for the Government to show compassion to those holders of temporary protection visa who face repatriation or, if they are judged to be still in danger of persecution at home, being switched to another temporary visa.

Prolonged detention of asylum seekers causes psychological harm to a significant proportion of detainees, Professor Minas writes.

"It is also probable that among those who are recognised as refugees and released into the community, the harm is exacerbated by the difficulty of living in Australia on a temporary basis with a very uncertain future, and by the limitations of TPV-holders' rights, the most important of which is the impossibility of family reunion."

He says the harm caused by detention and the temporary protection regime has been worsened by the systematic vilification to which asylum seekers have been subjected - as queue jumpers and even potential terrorists.

"The most disturbing element of the re-traumatisation of already vulnerable people - by systematic vilification, prolonged detention and the agony of temporary protection - is that it is knowingly done in pursuit of a policy objective."

He says it is now legitimate to mistreat one group of people in order to influence the behaviour of another. It is also disturbing that such mistreatment can be presented in a way that wins public approval, he says.

While the eradication of people trafficking should be vigorously pursued, it was not acceptable to treat asylum seekers and refugees as instruments in this strategy.

"We will make no policy progress until decisions about treatment of asylum seekers and refugees are conceptually uncoupled from the policy goal of preventing people trafficking."

Spare Lawyers for Refugees – Website Launch



The Spare Lawyers for Refugees Online Advocacy Centre was launched in February 2004 by the Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence and the founder, Julian Burnside QC.

Spare Lawyers for Refugees is a non-profit support and advocacy network for people being held in Australian immigration detention centres. The "Spare Lawyers" are members of Australia's legal community who donate their time and expertise to assist asylum seekers to Australia.

Fundamental to the Spare Lawyers for Refugees is a belief in the rule of law. The support network has over 250 lawyers including, barristers, solicitors and law students across Australia. It draws upon the strong culture of pro-bono legal assistance within the Australian legal community. Resources are available at www.sparelawyers.com

The Edmund Rice Centre

Life Skills for Living in Australia

The Edmund Rice Centre provides English language classes, computer skills, cooking, sewing and art/craft classes for Refugees on Temporary, Permanent and Bridging Visas. The Centre also provides activities for Refugee and Indigenous youth, women's groups and social events for families.

The Centre provides generalist casework, referral and advocacy services to humanitarian entrants and migrants in the north metropolitan area. It offers lifeskills development and education in household management and family care to recently arrived refugee and humanitarian entrants in the Perth metropolitan area.

Information and learning for migrants and refugees coping with their new surroundings include:

- Renting a property
- Nutrition - the right foods to eat and drink
- Proper foods for school lunches
- Cooking simple and cheap meals
- Using household appliances
- Safety at home and the beach etc.
- Looking after your house and garden
- Hospitals, doctors, pharmacy and medical benefits
- Health and Hygiene.

YOUTH LEISURE PROGRAM

The program is for Refugee Youth aged 10 - 16 years, it is held on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings. The activities range from outdoor activities to Centre activities in art and craft.

For further information contact:
Nihal Iscel
Community Settlement Worker
The Edmund Rice Centre
18/22 Chesterfield Road
MIRRABOOKA
Phone: 9440 0625



The Australian Federation of Disability Organisations

After more than two years of hard work, the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations has been registered with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission.

The National Ethnic Disability Alliance's (NEDA) Executive Officer Lou-Anne Lind, together with Sue Egan the Executive Officer of the Physical Disability Council, were the Co-Convenors of the Disability Federation Working Group. The Working Group was made up of representatives from the eight funded national disability peak bodies (as well as the National Indigenous Disability Network) and was charged with the responsibility of overseeing the establishment of the Federation. NEDA was also the auspicing body for the establishment funds.

This has been a challenging and labour-intensive project for NEDA and we are thrilled that the organisation is now a legal entity and can begin working on the issues facing people with disability living in Australia. NEDA will continue to support the work of the Federation. Diana Qian (NEDA's President) will become a Director on the Federation Board.

For more information visit www.disfed.org.au

Disability Pilot Program

An exciting new initiative has been introduced to assist people on a Disability Pension, who would like assistance to get back into the workforce either in a part-time or full-time capacity. Participation in this program is voluntary and does not jeopardise the client's status for the Disability Pension.

The benefits to the clients are that they receive professional and financial support to instigate training, career counselling, vocational assessments, work trials and other forms of relevant assistance. The aim is to develop a professional, individual and targeted approach that results in the clients gaining appropriate and sustainable employment.

If you are interested in finding out more about this program please contact:

Jill Ashcroft at WorkFocus Australia,
Mirrabooka, on 9349 8599.

Multicultural Housing Advocacy

The Multicultural Services Housing Advocacy Program was recently launched by Minister Sheila McHale. The Program is funded by the Department of Community Development to help migrant families and individuals to:

- Maintain their tenancies in private rental accommodation;
- Develop links to community resources and other services;
- Increase their knowledge and skills to maintain stable accommodation; and
- Increase their knowledge and understanding of services available to migrants.

The program also seeks to support and educate service providers and the real estate industry to increase their knowledge of particular issues for migrants and the services available to assist them.

For further information contact Jasbir Mann, Coordinator on 9328 2699 or email mha@mscwa.com.au

Cultural Diversity in WA - a demographic profile

The overview of *Cultural Diversity in WA* provides 2001 Census data on birth-place, languages spoken at home, age, geographic distribution, and religious diversity of the population of Western Australia. This profile has been produced for service providers, multicultural communities, students and for general circulation.

Some facts and figures include the following:

- ◆ In WA almost half a million people, or more than a quarter of the population were born overseas. The overseas born exclude the second and third generation Australian born.
- ◆ Of those born overseas, the main countries of birth since 1996 have been the UK, New Zealand, Italy and Malaysia.
- ◆ Approximately half of the overseas born population in WA were born in non-English speaking background countries such as Italy, Malaysia and India.
- ◆ People of more than 200 different nationalities live, work and study in WA .
- ◆ In WA as many as 170 languages are spoken and more than 100 religious faiths are practiced.

Unfortunately, statistics of people with disabilities living in WA were not included collection of census data. For further info contac OMI on 9426 8690 or visit www.omi.wa.gov.au

Mental Health Materials

The *Protocols and Guidelines for production of translated mental health material* and a *Catalogue of existing translated mental health material* is now available on the website of the West Australian Transcultural Mental Health Centre (TMHC).



This resource was developed as part of an Office of Mental Health-funded research project undertaken by the West Australian TMHC in partnership with Edith Cowan University and the former Multicultural Access Unit.

A national review of resources found that there are many translated mental health resources available which are incomprehensible even to those who speak the language to which they have been translated. This prompted the development of essential criteria, based on 'best-practice' guidelines, which must be met for producing future translated mental health resources.

The *Catalogue of existing translated mental health material* contains information on:

- translated resources available – (including fact sheets on a range of mental disorders) to give to patients from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- location of resources
- language(s) used for translated materials
- the date on which materials were published; and,
- if any costs are involved.

For information, please ring Dr Bernadette Wright on 9224 1760 or visit www.mmha.org.au/watmhc/

Disability Consultations

The Ministerial Advisory Council For Disability Services would like your views about the access barriers in your life. The Minister for Disability Services, the Hon. Sheila McHale, MLA wants your views on how to create the most accessible capital city in Australia and ultimately the most accessible State.

Contact Gail Ambrose by phone: 9426 9379; fax: 9226 2316, freecall for country callers: 1800 629 269; TTY: 9426 9321; email: gail.ambrose@dsc.wa.gov.au

Have your say on the ninth standard

The Disability Services Commission has proposed that a ninth Standard be added to the Disability Services Standards – "Protection of human rights and freedom from abuse".

They are inviting comments and suggestions at workshops to be conducted at The Niche, 11 Aberdare Road, Nedlands on the 29th March.

To attend please call Stephanie Catchpole on 9426 9727 or email Stephanie@dsc.wa.gov.au



Free Refugee Awareness Concert

Sunday 28th March, 4-7pm

Subiaco Theatre Gardens, 180 Hammersley Road, Subiaco.

Featuring multicultural music by Blue Grass Parkway, Working Voices Choir, Ilan Zagoria, Tatterjack and Ros and Stephen Barnes.

A group of Shenton Park mothers have organised the concert in an effort to assist a local Afghani family whose Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) is due to expire.

"We are concerned for this family, and particularly for the children, who may have to return to a war-torn country which is struggling to meet the most basic needs in housing, education, public health and general security," said organiser Lisa Adams.

"The system of three-year TPVs is stressful for refugees. They have suffered the trauma of war in their home country, plus the life threatening risks associated with finding refuge in another country. On top of this, refugees in Australia are now forced to continue their lives with the fear and uncertainty of not knowing where they might be living from one year to the next."

The concert is also an opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge the contribution of organisations which provide support to refugees. EDAC will be hold an information stall to foster greater awareness of our services and strengthen local community links.

Carers WA Education Workshops

Do you know any Carers who have just begun to care for someone at home? Or, perhaps they've been caring for a while but want to know a bit more about what is available for them? Or, maybe they would like some time out and need a bit of inspiration?

Carers WA has developed six fun-filled, informative education sessions lasting no more than a few hours each. Each session will explore different aspects of the caring role. The first workshop starts on the 17 March at 10am at Melville Bowls Club, 592 Canning Highway, Alfred Cove. To register contact Joanna on 9444 5922 or joanna.cafferty@carerswa.asn.au

Carers WA Learning Circles

Learning Circles are flexible, provide a new way to share information, help groups explore areas of their caring role that may not have been explored and are easy to facilitate. Free training will be held on March 30 and 31 in the metropolitan area and will be conducted by Tara Ludlow and Neil Carver-Smith.

Training will be on what learning circles are, how to facilitate a learning circle and the topics for the learning circles. If you would like to find out more, or register your interest, contact Chris on 9202-8616 or Tara on 9202-8610.

Women on Wellness Week

WOW week is dedicated to young, mature and elderly women with a focus on keeping healthy and happy.

WOW week is a collective effort of government, local government, women's health centres and other community organisations to reach under-served, disadvantaged women in the community.

Of the top ten causes of death (68.6%) per year such as heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, all cancers, breast cancer, pneumonia, lung cancer, organic psychotic conditions, diabetes, most are preventable. WOW week's purpose is to invite women to learn to reduce these risks by actively participating in preventative health services and to promote women's holistic wellbeing.

WOW week will be launched a week prior Mother's Day on Sunday 2 May 2004, at the Western Power Parklands in Kings Park. It aims to enhance the efforts of children, husbands, and siblings to keep families healthy. Throughout the week a number of events will be hosted by organisations, including walking groups, outings, women's check ups, healthy food forums and chat groups.

Health care providers, local governments, businesses and recreational associations are invited to participate. Service providers are offered the exciting opportunity to promote their services and to initiate/ strengthen partnerships at metropolitan and local levels with the hope of progressing towards sustainable community development.

If you are interested in participating contact the Women's Health Coordinator Vilma Palacios on 9224 1606 or email vilma.palacios@health.wa.gov.au

ISHAR Self Nurturing Program for CALD carers

Carers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are invited to participate in a free Self Nurturing Program from 7 April - 8 September every fortnight on Wednesdays from 9.30am - 12.30pm at ISHAR Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, 8 Sudbury Place Mirrabooka.

Places are limited and bookings will be taken on a first come first served basis. For further information or registration please call Andrea or Madhavi on 9345 5335