

# Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)

## ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



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Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Annual Report 2021-2022

November 2022

Design and Publication by the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) © Melbourne Australia

ISBN 1 876735 90 2

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## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

After more than two years of serious disruption, the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (MIC) is well on the way to resuming normal face to face services. While the return to office-based activity is welcome it has taken a great deal of planning and organisation, as well as tremendous patience from both our staff and our clients.

The MIC team, led by Jessica Bishop, has performed magnificently through a period of tremendous uncertainty and there is no mistaking the energy and enthusiasm for getting back to the office and again working face to face with clients. No problem has ever got the better of Jess. Her capacity to tackle an endless array of COVID challenges, often with little lead time, has been an inspiration to those who have worked with her.

A big upside of the return to normalcy is the role that our highly valued volunteers will once again be able to play in the Centre's day-to-day life. Staff and clients have missed their presence and we look forward to their return.

Disruption has not prevented 2021/2022 from being a year of significant achievement, the highlights included:

- Supporting close to 800 newly arrived individuals from refugee and family stream migrant backgrounds at over 2420 casework sessions
- Providing one-to-one employment mentoring services to 250 job seekers, including placing 79 individuals into jobs
- Supporting close to 200 older people from diverse backgrounds to access Aged Care services
- Supporting 34 people with a disability from diverse backgrounds to access disability services, including the NDIS
- Providing one-to-one counselling and a therapeutic group program for 19 women who were victim/survivors of family violence or at risk of experiencing family violence
- Matching 30 older people experiencing social isolation with a volunteer visitor who speaks their language and who provided regular visits (held remotely during COVID-19 lockdowns)
- Holding over 100 group information sessions and life skills workshops for newly arrived individuals from refugee and migrant backgrounds on a range of different topics aimed to empower them in their settlement in Australia
- Holding four weekly playgroups – two for parents and pre-school aged children from multicultural backgrounds and two for grandparents and their grandchildren from Chinese backgrounds
- Holding two weekly homework support programs for primary school aged children and regular one-to-one tutoring sessions for secondary school aged young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds
- Holding a range of youth program activities to support young people from newly arrived refugee and family stream migrant backgrounds, including young men's and young women's programs, a young leader's camp, a driver education program, a synchronised swimming program, an employment program and school holiday programs
- Holding two driver education programs to help people understand the road rules and successfully obtain their driver's licence, including 10 subsidised driving lessons
- Holding women's empowerment programs aimed to increase women's safety, promote gender equality and prevent family violence, including digital and financial literacy programs for women, a women's driving program and a range of women's and men's discussion groups
- Holding consultations and subsequent information on family violence with migrant and refugee



community leaders and community members, aimed to increase understanding of what constitutes family violence and how to seek help

- Working alongside migrant and refugee community and faith leaders to support them in supporting their communities, including chairing the Migrant Community Leaders Network (Eastern Melbourne)

I've been pleased to welcome a number of Parliamentary representatives to MIC this year including the Victorian Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ros Spence, Federal Assistant Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Hon. Jason Wood, Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, Gabrielle Williams, Member for Box Hill Paul Hamer and Member for Chisholm, Gladys Liu. All have been impressed with what they have seen especially MIC's role in helping clients find employment. Our staff have conveyed to all visitors the genuine satisfaction they feel in seeing clients succeed in gaining employment and at a time when the labour market shortage has become a national issue, the MIC's role is becoming more valuable by the day.

In August 2009 Hannah Kinross, a valued MIC staff member was tragically killed in a plane crash whilst preparing to walk the Kokoda Trail in Papua New Guinea. In Hannah's memory, MIC and her family established the 'Hannah Kinross Fund' used to assist young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds to participate in organised sport and other healthy activities, and the 'Hannah Kinross Award' - a peer voted award for the MIC staff member whose work over the year was thought to best meet the mission and vision of the MIC.

In 2021/2022, the Hannah Kinross Fund assisted 5 young people to participate in local sports clubs and other healthy activities and the Hannah Kinross Award was awarded to Sally Brooks, Strategic Engagement Coordinator.

Twenty-two individuals and families were assisted through the MIC's Settlement Support Fund – money raised through fundraising activities and provided to people from newly arrived refugee and migrant backgrounds who were experiencing financial hardship and crisis.

I would like to acknowledge the incredible support of the Commonwealth and Victorian governments which has enabled MIC to survive the two most challenging years in its history. It is not often stated but the long-standing support provides a huge vote of confidence to the work that the MIC team does, as well as providing confidence that this work will be able to continue well into the future.

I have been supported wonderfully as Chair by the best Board I could ever hope for. Despite busy lives they have remained incredibly committed, enduring early morning meetings which are never easy in Melbourne winters and constantly thinking of how the MIC can be made even stronger. To all of them, my thanks for their terrific contribution throughout the year.



Tony Robinson  
November 2022

# ABOUT US

## Our Purpose

The Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (MIC) supports culturally and linguistically diverse people and their families, older people, people with disabilities and their carers, community groups and service providers in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne to enhance their settlement and access to services and strengthen their participation within the community.

## Our Region

The MIC operates in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne. The region covers the Local Government Areas of Boroondara, Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges.

## Our Vision

The MIC will take a lead role in the coordination of current, relevant information and the provision of services that will strengthen and stimulate opportunities to enhance the lives of new and existing migrant populations of the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.

## Our Values

MIC operates with:

- Honesty and integrity
- Respect for the individual and the community
- Equality and fairness
- Commitment to the communities in which we serve
- Professionalism
- Probity



## Our Objectives

The objectives of the MIC are to:

- Provide poverty support and emergency relief programs to migrant families and individuals suffering financial crisis, destitution, misfortune, helplessness and sickness;
- Deliver post-arrival services relevant to new migrants and refugees in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne (the region) to ensure effective local settlement and orientation;
- Enhance direct provision of settlement services to migrants in the region;
- Provide a primary focus for settlement planning, coordination and delivery in the region, with the objective of ensuring effective and culturally sensitive service provision to migrants by mainstream agencies;
- Enhance existing links with and between a range of service providing agencies in the region;
- Identify service gaps and/or shortfalls in relation to migrants by mainstream agencies within the region and provide advice and assistance related to appropriate service delivery in the development of new,

alternative or additional services for migrants to bridge gaps and shortfalls;

- Assess duplication of service within all areas of migrant settlement and to facilitate an effective network grid for the minimisation of duplicate services;
- Investigate technology-based solutions for the provision of information on services available within the region to the wider community; and
- Carry on any other activity, which in the opinion of the majority of the Board of Directors would comprise the spirit and intent of the Board.

## Our Service Model

Our service model is based on the needs of the communities we serve. The needs of the communities in which we serve are identified through:

- Consultations with migrant communities across the region;
- Recurring or new trends identified through the provision of service; and
- Consultations with other service providers through mechanisms including MIC convened working groups or MIC participation on networks and working groups coordinated by other service providers.



## Our Customers

The Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (MIC) has four customer groups:

- Newly arrived migrants and refugees, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and others who identify as diverse and who seek access to aged care or disability services, residing in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne
- Local Agencies
- Local Communities
- Local Businesses

The MIC assists each group to obtain information about each other.

Although the four groups have distinct service requirements, there is also a common theme - they are seeking information and advice about each other.

It is the responsibility of the MIC to identify and put in place mechanisms that strengthen linkages between the four groups that enable them to resource each other more effectively.

## Our Staff

In 2021/2022, MIC employed 51 staff. Between them they speak 29 different languages. The role of each staff member is detailed below.

1. Jessica Bishop – CEO
2. Judy McDougall – Senior Project Officer
3. Aseel Al-Hakeem – Project Worker
4. Daniel Anang – Youth Settlement Worker
5. Jacquie Arulanandam – Settlement Program Coordinator
6. San San Aye – Playgroup Facilitator
7. Wesley Bawia – Settlement Worker/Strategic Partnerships Program Worker
8. Ruth Bignell – Family Violence Counsellor
9. Sally Brooks – Strategic Engagement Coordinator
10. Lorraine Busuttill – Homework Support Program Facilitator
11. Pui Yee (Winyion) Chan - Finance Officer
12. Zhaohua Chang – Playgroup Facilitator
13. Virginie Charoux Mindiel – Administration Officer
14. Ngun Cer Cin – Project Worker
15. Mervat Dahdoule – Volunteer Coordinator/Community Visitors Scheme Worker
16. Nim Yan Fung – Bicultural Support Worker
17. Mursha Gapasin – Project Worker
18. Jing Hua Guo – Bicultural Support Worker
19. Zang Kho Khai (Steven) Haukip – Settlement Worker
20. Karen He – Jobs Victoria Mentor
21. Lian Ding Hmung – Community Employment Connector
22. Tial Hnem – Settlement Worker/Project Worker
23. Amber Huang – Settlement Worker/Project Worker
24. Geraldine Jeremiah – Access and Support Program Worker
25. Rohan Joshi – Youth Settlement Worker
26. Alexia Keskerides – Youth Settlement Worker
27. Deedar Khudaidad – Access and Support Program Worker
28. Barbara Laug – Family Violence Counsellor
29. Daniel Lian – Settlement Worker/Housing Worker
30. Safieh Loulagar – Settlement Worker/Migration Agent





31. Esera Maung – Settlement Worker
32. Te Sin Mawi – Bicultural Support Worker
33. Sophie McKenzie – Settlement Worker/Project Worker
34. Seyyedehmasoumeh Nemati – Bicultural Support Worker
35. Khuang Mang – Strategic Partnerships Program Worker
36. Juliet Noonan – Settlement Worker/Project Worker
37. Saturnino Onyala – Settlement Worker
38. Mehul Patel – Settlement Worker/Driving Program Coordinator
39. Sa Law Eh Pe – Bicultural Support Worker
40. Marijo Pozega – Settlement Worker (Family Support Specialist)
41. Lingzhi Ruan – Project Worker
42. Sian Kap Sang – Bicultural Support Worker
43. Sawm Suante – Settlement Worker
44. Ciin Khan Huai Sukte – Jobs Victoria Mentor
45. Linda Tan – Access and Support Program Worker
46. Robyn Tan – Homework Support Program Facilitator/Settlement Worker
47. Marguerite Ton – Settlement Worker
48. Elisa Yeung – Settlement Worker
49. Ali Jan Yousufie – Youth Settlement Worker
50. Houra Zare Lavassani – Settlement Worker/Strategic Partnerships Program Worker
51. Wanling Zhang – Access and Support Program Worker/Migration Agent



## Our Volunteers

In 2021/2022, 42 MIC volunteers provided support to MIC clients across a range of programs and activities. These included supporting people from newly arrived refugee and migrant backgrounds to navigate public transport and attend medical or other essential appointments, access local recreational programs and services, provide conversational English language support, one-to-one tutoring of secondary school aged students, supporting MIC to deliver material aid to clients, and provision of administrative support in the MIC office. Volunteers also assisted with a wide range of MIC group-focused activities such as primary and secondary school Homework Support Programs, playgroups, holiday programs, children's programs, and excursions.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, scope and the delivery of MIC volunteering roles alternated between in-person face-to-face volunteering to virtual volunteering, in accordance with safety guidelines and government directives. We thank our volunteers for their flexibility, responsiveness, and willingness to adapt accordingly to changing circumstances.

We also acknowledge and extend our deepest appreciation for the contribution MIC volunteers play in assisting us to deliver our programs, and their essential role in helping MIC clients.

## **Student Placements**

In 2021/2022 MIC supported 5 students to undertake a student placement with MIC. Students were studying Bachelor of Community Services, Diploma of Community Services and Diploma of Youth Work courses. Due to COVID-19 lockdowns and remote work, MIC supported a significantly lower number of students than usual in 2021/2022. We look forward to welcoming students back to MIC in 2022/2023.

## SUPPORT FOR NEW ARRIVALS

### Settlement Engagement and Transition Service (SETS)

The Settlement Engagement and Transition Service (SETS) provides support to individuals and families from refugee backgrounds and holders of permanent residency family stream migrant visas from countries where English is not the first language for the first five years of their settlement in Australia.

We work with individuals and groups from migrant and refugee backgrounds to identify and address their needs - we provide information on the range of options available to them, support them to access services and resources that meet their needs and assist them to build new skills to navigate the new Australian cultural and social environment. The program includes a youth service to work with young people aged 12 to 25 years, recognising that their settlement needs and experiences are different to the needs of their parents and families.

### Casework & Referrals

A total of 726 clients received SETS casework support across 2,427 sessions; 632 were low intensity clients and 94 medium intensity clients. A total of 2,658 referrals were made: 2,284 external and 374 internal referrals. The most common reason for seeking assistance was civic participation, youth support, migration advice, financial issues, material assistance, education/training assistance, housing support, employment assistance and general settlement assistance.

Clients requiring low intensity casework support generally present with the knowledge and skills required to settle into their new community with minimal assistance. A total of 91% of clients stated the casework support addressed the issues they were experiencing with 79% indicating that the support taught them how to solve problems on their own.

**“I really appreciate all the things MIC helped me with”**

**“A tha tuk English holh le ca a thiam lo mi caah kan sut tung pi an si. Kai lawm”**

**“Very good service especially for people who do not speak English. Thank you”**

### Employment Casework Services

A total of 66 clients accessed settlement employment casework support – 48 were adults and 18 were young people under 25 years. Clients identified upskilling, gaining employment and gaining recognition for overseas employment experience and qualifications as goals they were wanting to achieve. Employment casework included assessing a client’s needs and employment goals and providing advice on education and employment options, as well as making referrals to employment support programs and services. Where appropriate employment caseworkers assisted clients to write resumes, search for work, develop interview skills and/or prepare job applications. 96% of clients assisted indicated they found MIC’s employment support helpful and workers easy to understand with 84% stating the

assistance helped them develop their skills to achieve their goals. 68% of clients stated that they met their goal after accessing MIC support with 60% indicating that they learnt how to solve problems on their own.

### Migration Casework Services

MIC employs two qualified migration agents who give advice, provide detailed information and help clients to understand immigration processes in assisting family members overseas to migrate to Australia. A total of 59 clients were assisted with migration support across 84 sessions. 82% of clients indicated being satisfied with the service and 96% found MIC migration agents helpful and easy to understand.

## Housing Casework Services

The MIC Housing Program assists individuals and families to find private rental housing, supporting individuals and families to understand tenancy obligations and expectations, as well as the private rental system and processes in Australia. The program builds relationships with local Real Estate Agents and strengthens their capacity to support SETS clients by helping them understand the plight of people from newly arrived refugee and migrant backgrounds who often do not have a rental history in Australia and who might lack English language proficiency. Clients are also assisted to apply for public housing and social housing and/or referred to crisis accommodation providers where appropriate.

**“MIC helped my family find a house and assisted me to get a bond loan”**

**“Inn lo Kong ah siseh adang dang kan mah nih kan tuah khawh lomi azeipoh kan chimh hna i lungtho tein an kan tuah piak le an kan tuanpiak mi ah hin kalung atling bik kan inn chungkhar zong kan inuam bik.”**

**“MIC is helpful regarding housing but also for many other things, they tell us a lot of things and they are very helpful for my family.”**

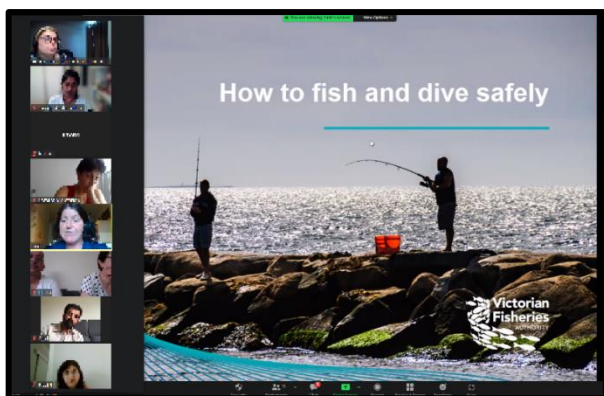
A total of 116 clients were assisted with housing related issues over 469 sessions. During this time the MIC housing service was able to secure private rental for 23 families after submitting 72 private rental applications: a 32% success rate. The program was significantly impacted in 2021/2022 by the COVID-19 pandemic, the rising cost of living and the fluctuating housing market, hindering the availability of affordable housing options. MIC collected feedback from clients being supported to secure private rental housing and those who were supported to access public and social housing. 79% of clients supported to secure private rental stated the support they received gave them a better understanding of what they needed to do to resolve their housing issues with 74% stating they had an increased understanding of the responsibilities of tenants and landlords. 71% of clients indicated that the MIC addressed their housing needs and a further 88% stated that the support they received helped them in their settlement.

For clients supported through the social housing system, 79% of clients stated the support they received gave them a better understanding of what they needed to do to resolve their housing issues with 91% indicating MIC helped them to understand their housing options. A further 91% of clients stated that the support provided helped them to understand how the public housing system worked and that they learnt about other services such as Office of Housing where they could go for assistance.

**“非常感谢东区东区移民中心组织一次又一次的讲座。使我们了解更多信息。”**

**“Thank you MIC who organised a lot of talks that helped us to know different information”**

## Information Sessions



■ Online information session presented in with Victorian Fisheries

Information sessions are delivered to newly arrived communities to build greater understanding and increased capacity to respond to various settlement issues and learn about available services and how to access them. From July 2021 to June 2022, MIC facilitated 70 information sessions which were delivered to a total of 1,033 participants from Chinese, Hakha Chin, Zomi, Karen, Iranian, Falam Chin, Mizo, Arabic and mixed language-group communities.

Session topics were identified by considering the needs expressed by clients and communities through casework and feedback, current community issues and information which would assist participants to successfully settle in Australia. Some session topics covered in the information sessions included how to apply for Centrelink benefits including the COVID-19 disaster

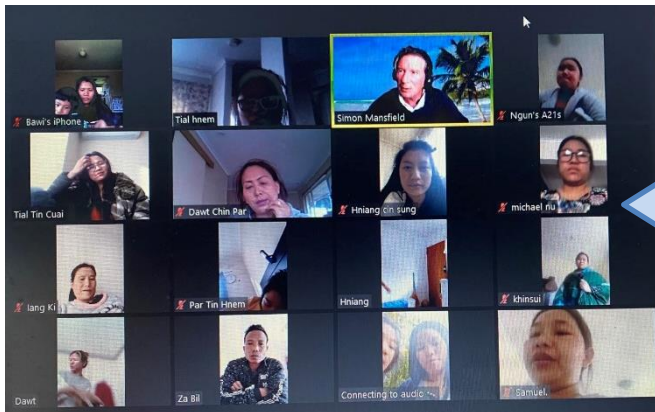
payments, cyber safety and scams, understanding and accessing COVID-19 vaccines and boosters, Medicare, breast health, pedestrian safety, CALD voter information, understanding energy bills, understanding, and accessing

counselling services, employment services and worker rights, migration, Australian culture and government, fishing regulations, and money management.

Sessions were held in partnership with multiple local community service and government agencies including Berry Street, Eastern Access Community Health (EACH), Australian Bureau of Statistics, Services Australia, Consumer Affairs Victoria, Multicultural Centre for Women’s Health, Victoria Fisheries Authority, RoadSafe Eastern Metro, Australia Energy Foundation and Whitehorse City Council.

The COVID-19 restrictions, continuous lockdowns, and community hesitancy to come together face-to-face in 2021/2022 saw 96% of information sessions conducted online reaching 1,033 participants. A total of 94% of clients

felt the information sessions helped them to answer or address needs they were facing with 97% stating the sessions assisted in their settlement. Collaborating with agencies and presenting on various services resulted in 93%



■ Hakha Chin online Information session on money management presented in collaboration with Berry Street

“Chung khar phaisa hman ning a kan thiam ter ti ah ka hmuh”

“This program will help me a lot on how to manage my money”

of participants indicating they gained an increased understanding of services which could assist them with 91% expressing feeling more confident to

participate in their wider community after attending the sessions.

**Greater Understanding, Greater Access**

The COVID-19 pandemic generated a large amount of information that was disseminated to many Australians. However, due to language and cultural barriers some newly arrived

communities faced challenges in accessing health services and understanding health advice and government directives.

Community members from Falam Chin backgrounds

were unable to access government information due to it not being translated into their language. They faced challenges in making an appointment to receive their COVID-19 vaccinations due to language barriers, lack of knowledge of how to make an appointment and transport to access clinics. As a result, MIC SETS team worked in collaboration with Eastern Access Community Health (EACH) to run an information session for the community and then provide a pop-up COVID-19 vaccination clinic for members of the Falam Chin community. Interpreters were present and staff helped to schedule each participant for their vaccination appointment. The program proved very successful with 67 community members receiving their vaccinations in one day.

“MIC le EACH pawl ih tawrel sak nak zarah kan sungzaten tui ni ah kaakuai sii kan dawt ngah ih kan lungawi”

“We are thankful to MIC and EACH for organising the event and all my family members got vaccinated today.”



■ Pop-up COVID-19 vaccination clinic

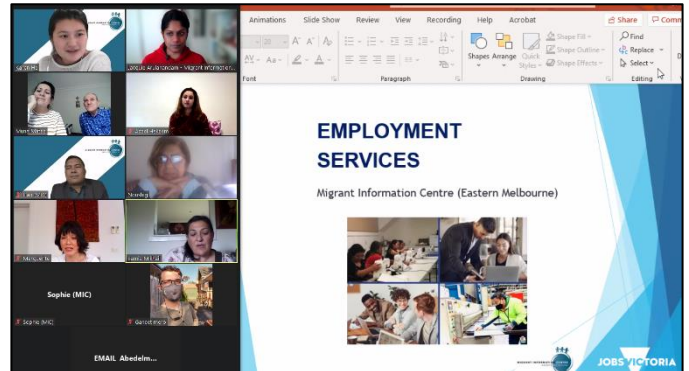


■ Online Information session for the Chinese community on COVID-19 updates presented in collaboration by Multicultural Centre for Women’s Health

## Employment Information Sessions

Of the 70 information sessions delivered in 2021/2022, 10% had a specific employment capacity building and pathways focus, in which 59 participants took part from Iranian, Hahka Chin, Karen Zomi and Arabic-speaking backgrounds.

Sessions were conducted in collaboration with MIC's Jobs Victoria Mentor Service (JVMS), MIC's Community Employment Connectors (CEC) Program, Nursery and Garden Industry Victoria, COVE Training and The Difference Incubator.



■ Online Information session for the Iranian community on employment services presented in collaboration MIC's Jobs Victoria Mentor Service (JVMS) and MIC's Community Employment Connectors (CEC) Program

**“Mirang holh kan thiam lo caah rian hmuh a har tuk, kanmah tein rian kawl zong a har tuk. Atu bantuk in prokarem nan ngeihmi hi a ttha tuk.”**

**“It is hard to get a job because we do not speak English and it is hard to look for ourselves. It is very good that you have this program”**

A total of 92% of participants indicated the employment session helped answer their questions or address their employment needs with 94% stating the sessions helped them in their settlement. 97% of participants indicated they learnt about other services that they could go to for help with 95% feeling more confident to participate in the wider community after attending the sessions.

## Excursions



■ Agency stalls at the multicultural emergency and outdoor recreation excursion

moved through various displays and activities. These included: learning fishing regulations and participating in a fishing activity, interactive wildlife displays, agency stalls, including bush safety, native bush walks and learning about

MIC SETS conducted 4 community excursions in 2021/2022. Excursions aim to build social connections, teach people about free and low cost recreational activities in the community and how to access these places on their own.

MIC conducted two excursions targeting mixed community groups in collaboration with the MIC's Strategic Partnerships Program funded by the Victorian Government, Victorian Fisheries Authority, Yarra Valley Water and Shire of Yarra Ranges. Individuals and families from the Karen, Hahka Chin, Iranian, Zomi, Falam and Mizo communities attended. The event took place at Clifford Park Activity Centre – Scouts Victoria, where communities learnt about emergency and outdoor recreational services.

The excursion was opened with an indigenous smoking ceremony and welcome to country and community groups

**تشکر از همه افرادی که این برنامه رو برگزار کردند. من از “برنامه ماهیگیری و حیات وحش لذت بردم”**  
**“Thank you to all people facilitated this program. I enjoyed learning about wildlife and fishing”**

indigenous culture. The fishing activity continued on from fishing regulation and safety information sessions that were held for each community prior to the event. The sessions explained peoples rights and responsibilities when fishing in Victoria and the excursion provided a space to practice what they had learnt with Victorian Fisheries providing free fishing licences and fishing rods to participants.

The Melbourne city excursions saw the Karen and Hakha Chin communities learn how to travel into the city by public transport, discover new areas such as Federation Square and Melbourne Museum as well as take a boat ride on the Yarra River.

These excursions were family-friendly days where communities members of all ages came together to learn how to access and experience different parts of the city. This is significant for our SETS clients who largely live in outer-eastern Melbourne, more than 25kms outside of the city centre.



Children at the multicultural excursion learning about wildlife conservation through interactive education by Black Snake

“စံးဘျူးဘဉ် MIC လာရဲဉ်ကျဲၤန့ၢ်ပုတေၢ် ရဲဉ်တၢ်ကျဲၤအံၤလၢ ပဂီၢ်အယံၤလီၤ.”

“Thanks, MIC, for organising this program for us”

Only 45% of participants indicated that they had been to this part of Melbourne on public transport previously and 80% stated they became more confident in travelling by public transport as a result of the excursion. Participants indicated an 83% satisfaction rating with 89% indicating they had learnt more about living in Australia as a result of their visit.



Members of the Karen community gather in Federation Square at the City Excursion

### Swimming Teacher Training Program

“I enjoyed learning new skills and making new friends.”

Due to the impact of COVID-19, the swimming pool industry in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne reported significant staff shortages including swimming teachers. MIC approached several pools to facilitate swimming programs for our community members, who explained that there was a decline in people completing the swim teacher training courses leaving a gap in available staff in the industry.

Responding to this challenge, MIC collaborated with several pools across the region and AustSwim to run a Swimming Teacher Training program to train SETS clients to become swimming teachers. Training bilingual swimming teachers from newly arrived communities helped to address barriers for other community members accessing swimming including language barriers and cultural understandings whilst creating job opportunities for clients and addressing the identified industry staff shortage.



MIC delivered the program in collaboration with the MIC's Jobs Victoria Mentor Service (JVMS), the Strategic Partnerships Program, Maroondah Leisure Centre, and AustSwim. The MIC SETS team supported participants to participate in the course and complete all requirements as well as support project partners to deliver the training. MIC liaised with various local swimming pools to arrange the participants' industry hours, which is a requirement of the training and future employment opportunities with Maroondah Leisure, Belgravia Leisure and Aqualink (Whitehorse). A total of 7 participants from Iranian, Zomi and Burmese backgrounds participated in the program.



Four training sessions were completed, along with several meetings with AustSwim and leisure centres, as well as individual sessions with participants to provide support in accessing the training and understanding and completing course requirements. These sessions were not captured in the session count for the group program. All participants completed the AustSwim training course successfully and are in the process of finalising their course assessments and industry hours.

This program is still ongoing as MIC supports participants complete their training, assessments, and industry hours. Feedback gathered showed a positive response. 75% of participants felt more confident in the swimming pool since starting the program with all participants learning more about their local pool and how they operate. All participants indicated having an increased knowledge of water safety and that the program encouraged them to be more physically active with 75% stating being confident to participate in their wider community after attending the program.

## Parenting Programs



■ Online parenting information session with the Karen community

MIC conducted six parenting programs in 2021/2022 that were delivered to Hakha Chin, Karen, Zomi, Chinese and mixed-languages communities with 80 participants attending. Session topics included looking after children in the pandemic, understanding parenting in Australia and pedestrian safety when walking with preschool aged children – a program funded by VicRoads.

The programs showed positive results with 98% of parents indicating the program answered their questions on parenting, and gave them a better understanding of their children's needs. 95% indicated feeling more confident and knowing where to go if they needed more support with parenting.



## Australian Education System Programs



■ Online education information session on Australian secondary education system

“澳洲幼儿园和早教中心与国内的教育理念的区”  
 “I learnt the differences between early childhood education system in Australia and China”

Seven sessions were held to help community members understand the Australian education system. Sessions were delivered to the Chinese, Karen, Hakha Chin and mixed languages communities with 78 people participating. Some of the topics covered included understanding the secondary education system, the Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) program, and children transitioning from kindergarten to prep/primary school.

100% of participants indicated that the sessions helped answer questions and address their needs regarding the Australian education system with all participants indicating they had an increased understanding of the education system in Australia. 98% stated the sessions increased their understanding of services that they could go to for help and how they could access them with 95% of participants stating the information provided will help them to settle in Australia.

## Healthy Lifestyles Programs

The MIC conducted ten healthy lifestyles programs that were delivered to the Karen, Chinese, Falam Chin, Mizo, Iranian, Hakha Chin and mixed-languages communities with 163 people participating. These programs were designed to educate participants about healthy lifestyles and promote behaviour change through a variety of activities. Topics covered included gardening workshops, preparing healthy lunchboxes, cooking demonstrations, keeping physically healthy and promoting mental health. Sessions were facilitated in collaboration with various local agencies including Maroondah Leisure Centre, Aquanation Ringwood, Nunawading community gardens, EACH and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Specialist Women’s Services.

A total of 91% of participants indicated having a better understanding of health services in Australia, and 98% stated the session helped them understand how to live a healthier life. 95% stated that the session gave them ideas for healthy activities that they could try on their own, 97% indicated that they would try these at home.

“ပမိုလ်လ်ကဟ့ၣ် အါထီၣ်တၢ်သိၣ်လိခါ ဆုညါန့ၣ်လီၤ”  
 “We wish to have more sessions like this in the future.”



■ Karen light exercise sessions held at Ringwood Lake Park in collaboration with Aquanation

## Primary School Homework Support Programs

MIC conducted 2 primary school homework support programs, facilitated by SETS staff and volunteer tutors. The programs were delivered to children attending Croydon Primary School and Great Ryrie Primary School. Sessions are usually held after school in schools, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions, 89% of sessions were held online with a total of 63 sessions delivered across the two schools.



■ Homework Support Program Session held online

### PARENT:

“Thank you so much for helping my children and giving your precious time for our community improvement”

The program assisted primary school aged students with homework and increasing their learning competencies. Topics covered included practicing speaking, listening, reading and writing in English, research for assignments, using computers and internet safely and numeracy. With the rapport MIC has built with the schools, children, parents and volunteers, the programs were able to easily move to online platforms during the pandemic.

Creative methods were developed to engage the children online, such as dress up days, games and interactive activities. Feedback from the children indicated that they enjoyed seeing their peers online, particularly when schools were closed during lockdowns, which was an unexpected outcome.

The program collected feedback from students, parents, and teachers to assess the impact of the program. A total of 73% of students indicated the program helped them with their homework with 86% indicating it helped them to improve their English.

89% of parents also indicated the program helped their child in their schoolwork with 94% of parents indicating their children became more confident at school. 83% of parents indicated feeling more confident to participate in other school or community activities after participating in the program with 86% stating the program helped them understand the Australian school system.

87% of teachers at the schools where the programs are run indicated that the program benefited the students, with 83% indicating an improvement in the overall performance of students in the classroom. 87% of teachers indicated improved English among students with 91% of teachers indicating that students had become more confident in the classroom because of the program.

What did you learn in the MIC Homework Support Program?

STUDENT: “I learnt I need to practice doing something more and more if I want to improve”

What is one thing you enjoyed?

STUDENTS: “Being together”

“Learning new things”

“Stories”

“Seeing other people”

What did you find beneficial about the MIC Homework Support Program?

TEACHERS “A supportive space for kids to learn”

“Encouragement of their work – reading/writing/number work in small or one-to-one groups”

“Students grew more confident”

## Secondary School Homework Support Program

One home homework support program was delivered for secondary school aged students with 64 sessions conducted. Due to COVID-19 restrictions the program was adjusted to be effectively delivered online. Rather than holding a group program as was the case when delivered face-to-face, MIC matched each student or small group of students with a volunteer tutor for one-to-one virtual homework support. This was found to be more beneficial to students, as the tutors were able to assist each student with their specific needs, which included assistance with their homework, practicing English reading, writing, speaking and listening and support to undertake research for assignments. 67% of students indicated the program helped them with their homework and improved their work in class. 67% also indicated the program helped them improve their English with 67% indicating that they felt more confident to join other activities at their school.

## Playgroups



■ Storytime at the playgroup

MIC delivered four playgroups consisting of 157 sessions collectively. There were two playgroups delivered for grandparents from Chinese backgrounds and their grandchildren, and two multicultural playgroups with most participants being from Zomi, Karen, Falam Chin and Hakha Chin backgrounds. The playgroups provide an opportunity for parents and grandparents from migrant and refugee backgrounds and their preschool aged children/grandchildren to come together in a fun, safe and supportive environment.

The groups aim to build social relationships with others for both adults and children, practice speaking English, learn about child development and early childhood education in Australia and learn play ideas and activities to implement at home. Due to the impact of COVID-19 and social restrictions, some playgroup sessions were held on-line which helped families to stay connected and reduce isolation experienced during the lockdowns.

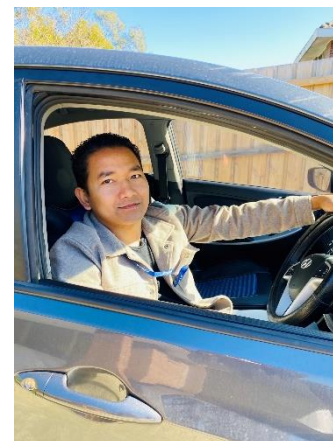
The programs showed positive results with 98% of parents indicating that the program supported them in the parent/grandparent role and gave them increased knowledge on how to look after their children in Australia. 97% stated the program was beneficial for their family. A further 94% of parents stated they learnt about other services in their local area and felt that their children were better prepared for kindergarten. 100% of parents indicated they felt safe and welcome in the program.

## Driver Education Program

MIC's Driver Education program in partnership with VicRoads aimed to build participants' understanding of Australian road rules and responsibilities, understanding the dangers of drink and drug driving and maintaining road safety.

Two driver education programs were delivered consisting of a total of 12 sessions to the Hakha Chin and Zomi communities. On completion of the programs each participant received 10 subsidised driving lessons with a registered driving instructor.

A total of 97% of participants stated that the program answered questions they had about driving in Australia with 100% indicating an increased understanding of the road rules. 93% of participants stated that the program increased their understanding of services that are available and felt more confident accessing these services on their own.



## SETS YOUTH PROGRAMS

### Youth Swimming Program



■ Synchronised swimming session with Eastern Sirens

MIC planned to deliver an 8-week swimming program but due to the shortages of swimming teachers the program was adjusted to a synchronised swimming program. MIC conducted a 7-week synchronised swimming program in collaboration with Eastern Sirens Synchronised Swimming Club and VicHealth. Due to the pool having an unexpected closure 7 instead of 8 sessions were delivered. The program was aimed to increase participants' confidence in the water, learn about water safety and introduce them to a new recreational activity. A total of 9 participants from Zomi, Hakha Chin, Afghan and Mizo

“It was great learning things about water safety”

communities participated in the program.

### Young Leaders Program

The Young Leaders program provided an opportunity to build the capacity and confidence of young people from refugee backgrounds to become leaders amongst their peers and within their communities, utilising their settlement experience to assist other newly arrived youth. This program delivered 6 training sessions in partnership with the Strategic Partnerships Program and was held as a 4 day camp at Phillip Island. Participants were offered the opportunity to join a team to help MIC staff to plan and implement programs for young people and engage in peer support and leadership opportunities for other young people who have recently arrived in Australia. Twenty young people from Zomi, Hakha Chin, Falam Chin, Afghan, Pakistani, Iranian, Chinese, Vietnamese and Egyptian backgrounds participated. Following the program, participants were given an opportunity to utilise the skills they had developed to successfully plan and facilitate the MIC Youth Public Transport Marathon program, in partnership with the MIC SETS Youth Team.



■ Team building exercise at the Youth Leadership Camp

congregated with people they knew, mostly from the same cultural background as themselves, the interactive workshops encouraged engagement with others, thus forming new friendships and discovering common interests. An unexpected positive was seeing how the multilingual skills of these young people managed to find a common language they could each speak together, enabling new and diverse friendships to be formed. As young people learnt about skills and the qualities of good leadership, they were encouraged to practice, identify, and write it down when they saw it, which kept the concept of leadership not only in the workshops but part of the day-to-day activities that took place at the camp.

The program brought together young people from various countries, language groups and stages in their settlement. Whilst initially participants

“By doing different activities we all could see that everyone has different leadership skills. It also helps me to realise we all have the skills, but we just need to practice how to use them. I appreciate for

The program received positive feedback with 83% of participants stating their skills had improved after attending the program and 89% indicating that the program had increased their confidence. 89% of participants felt the program gave them new communication skills with 83% stating that the program helped them with ideas on how they could demonstrate their leadership skills and 78% indicated that they would become more involved in their local community as a result of the program.



## Youth Services Marathon

The Youth Services Marathon is designed to expose young people to different youth and community services in their local area, through a race format. Young people learn where different services are located by travelling on public transport and learning about what each service provides for young people. The program aims to reduce barriers faced by young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in accessing a new service for the first time. In addition, the program offers participants the opportunity to connect with others and build friendships. The program also provided an opportunity for young people who participated in the leadership program to utilise their leadership skills in assisting MIC SETS Youth Workers to facilitate this program for their peers.

“I enjoyed learning about new places. The competition was fun. It was good meeting new people”

A total of 15 young people participated, visiting relevant services in the east including EACH, Youth Health Clinic, REALM (Ringwood library), Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS), Headspace, Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC), Foundation House, MIC (Ringwood and Box Hill offices), EVs and

Whitehorse Youth Connexions. The program received positive feedback with 100% of participants stating they learnt more about using public transport and developed a better understanding of local services and how to access them on their own with 89% stating that they would become more involved in their community after attending this program.



■ Participants of the Youth Service Marathon Program plan their journey

## Youth Driver Education Program

The Driver Education program (Changing Gears) was conducted during the school holidays with 9 young people from Zomi, Hakha Chin, Afghan and Mizo backgrounds. The program was delivered in collaboration with the VicRoads Community Road Safety Program and was delivered as a four-day training program supporting young people affected by social and learning challenges, including where English is not their first language, to obtain their learner permit. The program provided driver education as well as support to understand and access VicRoads.

MIC Youth Workers supported each participant to book, attend and obtain their learner permits. All participants indicated the program answered questions they had about driving and that the program increased their understanding of driving and road rules in Australia. 100% stated the program strengthened their

“I learnt a lot about roads and its rules which really helped me a lot when I was doing the

understanding of how to pass the learner driving test with 89% stating the program strengthened their understanding of what services were available to them and how to access them.

## Young Women's Program



■ Activity boxes delivered to participants

The Young Women's program provided a safe space for young women to connect and share with each other and build their resilience, confidence and self-esteem. Through group discussions, team building and hands-on creative activities, the program assisted participants to develop confidence, self-esteem, and appreciation for one another. Due to COVID-19 lockdowns the program was unable to meet face-to-face, however, MIC Youth Workers created and distributed activity packs to each participant's house and met on Zoom to connect and do the activities together. Participants learnt to recognise and manage their thoughts and feelings, navigate relationships and develop the skills and resilience to enable them to actively engage in their education, community and family life. MIC conducted the program over seven sessions with 6 young women aged 13 to 17 years.

"What I learnt during the program was that patience is most important and I have my confidence back."

"It was good to learn about other services"

Lockdown restrictions lifted for the final session of the program which enabled the young women to come together for a celebration picnic in the park. All participants stated that the program helped them engage with new people and strengthen their friendships despite lockdown restrictions. 83% indicated they learnt about other programs and activities in their local area and understood how to access these services on their own.



■ Celebration session in the park

"This program is really important for me, and I want to thank everyone who supported me for including me in it, so I really appreciate it Thank you"

## Young Men's Program

The Young Men's program aims to address issues young men from a refugee or a migrant background are facing in their initial settlement. The program is designed to increase resilience, cultural awareness, self-esteem and emotional well being through self-reflection, anger management and effective communication skills. MIC conducted 5 sessions with young men from Iranian, Zomi, Hakha Chin and Arabic backgrounds. The program was held at EV's Youth Centre and activities were conducted in collaboration with Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS).

The program had positive feedback with all participants indicating that the program helped them learn about other programs and activities in their local area and how they could access them. 50% stated the program helped them engage with new people and strengthen friendships with 100% stating they feel comfortable to attend other MIC programs in the future.

## Youth Graffiti Workshop

“I really enjoyed learning new skills and catching up with people”

The Youth Graffiti workshop was an additional program MIC conducted to engage young people who were experiencing social isolation and disconnection from school and peers during ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns. MIC ran the session in collaboration with Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS) and Wizard OT, an art therapy group. Art supply kits were created for each participant and dropped off to their homes with the session running online with a graffiti artist leading the workshop. The program engaged young people to develop creative skills which they could use as a form of expression and do on their own, while still connecting with others through an online platform.

All participants indicated that they learnt a new skill through the program with 60% stating the program helped them connect with other people, 40% of participants indicated that this MIC activity was the first time that they had participated in a MIC youth program and 100% of participants stated they felt comfortable to attend other MIC activities or programs in the future.

## Youth Employment Programs

The Youth Employment Program aimed to improve employability of young people, while helping them to understand how to apply for jobs and the expectations of employers in Australia. The programs helped to develop the skills of young people in performing job searches, communication and interview skills, goal setting, and time and task management. MIC delivered two programs over 5 sessions with 21 young people from Zomi, Hakha Chin and Karen backgrounds.

“This session was interesting for my future and how to search for a job”

The program was facilitated in collaboration with Swinburne TAFE, and the MIC Jobs Victoria Mentor Service (JVMS) and the Community Employment Connector (CEC) program. The partnership allowed participants to learn about other support services and programs available to them to gain employment. As a result, some participants contacted the MIC SETS Youth Worker and were able to connect with the Jobs Victoria Mentor Service which provides individual support for people to become job ready and find suitable employment.

The program received positive feedback with 88% indicating the program helped to increase their confidence in finding a job. 76% of participants stated that they learnt new concepts regarding employment, they felt confident to tell their friends and family about what they had learnt and that they learnt more about living in Australia because of the program.

## Youth Holiday Programs

MIC conducted two youth holiday programs with 12 young people participating. Due to COVID-19 restrictions not all planned holiday programs could be delivered with participant engagement also being affected. One activity was a



virtual holiday challenge that aimed to connect with young people throughout the holiday period. Young people had to select one exercise challenge that they were going to take on during the holidays. Given a choice between star jumps, walking or running, they had to undertake this activity on 10 of the 14 days of the holidays and log their progress online. Participants who completed the challenge received a prize. The activity aimed to engage with young people during lockdown, provide a space to meet their peers virtually, as well as keeping physically active.

“Today is very good day and I’m very happy to see different places in the city”

A City Discovery Day was also conducted that brought young people together, supported them to travel on public transport to Melbourne city and discover activities they can engage in on their own. All participants stated the program showed them places and services in Melbourne that they could connect with and 94% stated that they felt confident to visit these places on their own or with family. 87% indicated becoming more confident to travel on public transport because of the program with 94% stating the program helped them to engage with new people and strengthen friendships.





# EMPLOYMENT AND JOB SEEKER SUPPORT PROGRAMS

## Jobs Victoria Mentor Service

The Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (MIC) commenced the Jobs Victoria Mentor Service (JVMS) funded by Jobs Victoria in July 2021. The MIC JVMS aims to support people from CALD backgrounds to become job ready and maintain sustainable employment for up to 6 months. Mentors provide one-to-one support to job seekers who are long term unemployed or at risk of long-term unemployment, identifying employment goals and assisting to address barriers they face in securing employment. Mentors also build relationships with local employers and continue to support both employees and employers to maintain employment placements for up to 6 months after being placed into work, addressing any issues that may arise during this time.

In 2021/2022 the work of the MIC JVMS included:

- Promotion of the MIC JVMS at over 30 information sessions with people from the Chinese, Zo, Hakha Chin, Iranian, Arabic, Zomi, Falam, Mizo and Karen communities, as well as presentations at the CCOEI Employment Forum, Australia Day Celebration Stall for Victoria Hongkongers Association Australia, Melbourne AMEP Vet Course and Career Expo, Pine Library with Job Co and workshops on Micare traineeships, Job readiness and work rights for AMEP students and resume writing for the Taiwanese Community. Promotional material for the program was distributed to key stakeholders including migrant and refugee community associations, local councils, Job Actives, Job Advocates, AMEP providers, Registered Training Organisations, community service organisations and local networks such as the Eastern CALD English Education and Employment Network and the Migrant Settlement Committee.



- Registering 250 jobseekers to the MIC JVMS program. The main languages spoken by jobseekers accessing the program were Arabic, Cantonese, Burmese, Hakha Chin, Falam Chin, Mandarin, Persian, Zomi and Vietnamese. Jobseekers were a mix of Australian Citizens, permanent residents and temporary visa holders.
- Placing 79 jobseekers into new employment opportunities and supporting 10 jobseekers to maintain employment for at least 26 weeks. The main industries jobseekers were placed into included various factory and manufacturing roles, community services, cleaning, hospitality, administration and agriculture.
- Building relationships with employers including ongoing collaborative relationships with 29 employers and connecting to 52 employment opportunities. Ongoing relationships with local employers include factory work, retail, individualised support services, hospitality, sales, office administration and cleaning. Main employment opportunities included apprenticeships, marketing, customer service, administration, case management, hospitality, cleaning and factory work. MIC JVMS also connected with Brotherhood of St Laurence Given the Chance Program and Career Seekers for corporate opportunities such as finance and engineering.

- Successfully reaching all target Milestones. In November 2021, MIC JVMS program reached the targeted milestones of 48 registrations and 20 placements. In May 2022, MIC JVMS program reached the targeted milestones of 168 registrations, 63 placements and 10 outcomes.
- MIC JVMS team became part of the planning committee for the Eastern CALD English Education and Employment Network, attended the Community Leaders Network meeting and participated in the JVMS State-wide CALD Working group.

## Community Employment Connector Program

The Community Connector Program (CEC) is a new program in 2021/2022 funded by the Victorian Government, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing to provide culturally responsive and individualised support to help jobseekers facing barriers to entry and re-entry to employment pathways, particularly in the wake of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. It helps people aged 16 years and over from CALD backgrounds to negotiate available employment and training services via proactive outreach. It provides information and refers clients to relevant employment, training, education, and social support services.

Although the program was initially funded until June 2022, the Victorian Government, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing has extended the funding period of the CEC program to June 2023.



In 2021/2022, a total of 219 clients were supported and referred to relevant employment, training, education, and social support services despite the stage five restrictions in Victoria at the start of the program. To establish the program and promote the program among CALD communities, the CEC provided outreach at libraries, shopping centres and community events, delivered information sessions in partnership with MIC Jobs Victoria Mentors and Settlement caseworkers, met and consulted with community and faith leaders, attended Church based youth activities and sent short text messages and surveys promoting the program to CALD communities in the Eastern Metropolitan Region.

## **FAMILY VIOLENCE PROGRAMS**

In 2021/2022, MIC established our Family Violence Working Group - an internal team comprising MIC staff from SETS (including our SETS Program Coordinator, Specialist Family Support Worker and other SETS staff with an interest in best practice family violence work), Family Violence Prevention Project Officer, Family Violence Counsellor and chaired by our Senior Project Officer. The team works to implement best practice prevention and intervention work across the organisation, including ensuring coordination and consistent messaging within family violence programs, groups and sessions across the organisation, as well as driving the organisational alignment to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Framework (MARAM). In 2021/2022 the work of the team included establishing staff best practice discussion groups to consider case studies and how best to implement the MARAM in practice and began the process of reviewing MIC policies and procedures and risk mitigation strategies to bring these in line with MARAM best practice.

### **Women's Counselling Program**

The MIC receives funding through the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Specialist Family Violence Program to support women from CALD backgrounds who have experienced, are experiencing or at risk of experiencing, family violence. In 2021/2022, 13 women received one-to-one counselling related to their experiences of family violence.

In May and June 2022 as COVID-19 restrictions were easing and it became appropriate to meet face-to-face, a group program was held for six women from Zomi backgrounds that focused on respectful family relationships. The group provided a space for women to explore gender roles and identity in their community and families, and articulate ways that their settlement experiences were shaped by these constructs. The group aimed to be experiential and participant led. We look forward to continuing to provide this group in 2022/2023.

Early 2022 saw the resignation of long-term MIC team member Barbara Laug from the Family Violence Counsellor position. We thank Barb sincerely for her work as the Family Violence Counsellor, and for maintaining a counselling presence within MIC until new counsellor Ruth Bignell could commence in April 2022.

### **Strengthening Connections for Family Violence Prevention - COVID-19 Family Violence Project**

The Strengthening Connections for Family Violence Prevention – COVID-19 Family Violence Project was a 2-year project funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). The project aimed to increase awareness of family violence within targeted refugee communities from Burma residing in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne by building the capacity of faith and community leaders to understand and respond to instances of family violence within their communities, and to help connect families that have experienced or who are at risk of experiencing family violence to support services by breaking down barriers they might face to engage with the service system and by empowering them to make informed decisions.

In 2021/2022, 6 meetings were held with the Steering Committee consisting of representatives from EDVOS, Eastern Community Legal Centre, Victoria Police, Regional Family Violence Network, Women's Health East, Deakin University, Yarra Valley Water and HealthAbility. During the meetings, program updates and consultation findings were shared with the representatives to enhance understanding of the barriers faced by the target communities to accessing family support services. The representatives were also encouraged to provide feedback regarding program delivery and share network opportunities.

In 2021/2022 the project focused on the Karen and Falam Chin communities residing in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne and continued working with Hakha Chin and Zomi communities who were targeted for the project during 2020/2021. Two consultations were held with the Karen and Falam Chin leaders to understand their needs to better support the community members when experiencing family violence and other family conflict. Two consultations were also held with women to seek their understanding of family violence and attitudes towards accessing services. Based on the findings from the consultations, 8 tailored information sessions were

delivered to community leaders and to the wider Karen and Falam Chin communities to increase their knowledge of family violence, how to access available services and how MIC can support families experiencing conflict and/or violence. The feedback received from the participants indicated that they gained an increased understanding of different definitions of family violence in Australia and where to seek support.

The MIC also worked with EDVOS, The Orange Door (inner east) and Victoria Police to discuss cultural sensitivity when working with multicultural communities and the possibility of developing culturally appropriate service pathways to better respond to the needs of newly arrived refugee families. Through the discussion, the service providers developed a better understanding of MIC's role in supporting multicultural communities and are continuing to work alongside MIC in supporting refugee and CALD clients in eastern Melbourne. This program concluded in June 2022.

## Supporting Multicultural and Faith Communities to Prevent Family Violence

In 2021/2022, MIC received funding to facilitate the *Strengthening Refugee Families in the Eastern Metropolitan Region Project*, a 3-year project funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). The program aims to increase awareness of family violence and healthy relationships, promote gender equality, and break down traditional attitudes that contribute to the use of violence against women among refugee communities residing in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.

The work of the program in 2021/2022 included:

- A 6-week young women's program delivered to a group of Year 11 students from refugee backgrounds at Melba College, co-facilitated by the MIC SETS caseworker and Foundation House. The program aimed to increase understanding of what constitutes a healthy relationship, setting healthy boundaries in relationships and understanding consent.
- Two 6-week Men's Group programs which aimed to increase participants' understanding of family violence and awareness of the harms of family violence to the victims and children were delivered to the Zomi and Hakha Chin communities. During the sessions, participants were encouraged to share their experiences of settling in Australia and changes in family dynamics. A wide range of issues including the role of men, parenting, and respectful relationships were discussed throughout Zomi Men's Group. At the conclusion of the program, participants expressed a desire to have more discussions around the changing role of men in Australia, and as a result, MIC will be delivering another 6-week Men's Group program to Zomi men in 2022/2023. The Hakha Chin men's group involved discussion time on the impact of settlement on men and time for playing badminton.
- Filming of two respected community leaders from Hakha Chin and Zomi backgrounds who created video-messages about healthy relationships and non-acceptances of violence that will be widely shared amongst their respective communities. The scripts for each video were developed through two co-design workshops held with the Hakha Chin and Zomi community leaders.
- Two Respectful Relationships programs were delivered to English as an Additional Language (EAL) students at Yarra Hills Secondary College and St. Peter Julian Eymard Primary School to increase participants' understanding of what constitutes healthy relationships, consent and the capability to nurture respectful relationships.

"It is a privilege to join this men's group. I enjoyed it very much. I will try to join future sessions if you organise one."

## SETS Domestic and Family Violence Programs

As part of the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program, in 2021/2022 MIC was contracted to deliver a range of programs and activities aimed to increase awareness about what constitutes family violence, gender equality and the family violence service system to newly arrived individuals and families from refugee and family stream migrant backgrounds. This work also included specific programs to enhance the safety of women and to empower them to make informed decisions about their lives.

The programs delivered included:

- Six group information sessions to 57 participants from Hakha Chin, Chinese, Karen, Arabic and mixed-languages backgrounds. Topics covered were relevant to the prevention and early intervention of family violence amongst newly arrived communities which included understanding family violence, gender equality and healthy family relationships.

The program received positive feedback with 90% of participants indicating that the sessions helped answer the questions they had and addressed their needs with 100% of those attending stated the sessions helped them learn more about healthy relationships and 95% indicated the session helped them learn more about dealing with conflict in a relationship.



- A women's financial literacy program targeting the Iranian community was conducted in collaboration with Berry Street who delivered their Saver Plus program. Saver Plus provided financial education to the women to understand money management, develop positive saving habits, setting realistic goals and how to save to achieve their financial goals. 83% of participants indicated that the sessions helped them understand how to manage money and save better with 100% of women stating that the information provided in the sessions would help them to settle in Australia.
- Seven Digital Literacy programs for women from Vietnamese, Hakha Chin, Iranian, Zomi, Karen, Chinese, Falam Chin and Mizo communities attending. MIC worked in collaboration with Eastern Libraries Digital Literacy team who delivered sessions on how to use your digital device to access important records from Centrelink, Medicare and MyGOV; how to process payments and claims via the smartphone; how to use, access and upload documents on email via the smartphone; and signing and filling pdf forms using the smartphone. Sessions were delivered at REALM library where participants were exposed to and learnt about the local library service, what they offer and how they can access resources. The program received positive feedback with 96% of women indicating the session helped them become more confident to access and use online services.
- Two men's groups that explored gender equality, strategies for resolving conflict without violence and anger management strategies. The programs were held in partnership with the MIC's "Supporting Multicultural and Faith Communities to Prevent Family Violence" project (see above) and targeted men from Zomi and Hakha Chin backgrounds with a total of 12 SETS eligible clients participating, however many non-SETS eligible clients engaged in the program due to a growing interest in these topics.

The program received positive feedback with all men stating that the program gave them an increased understanding of the changing roles of men in Australia and 89% stating they had a better understanding of the challenges faced by parents in Australia. 100% of men stated they have an increased understanding of respectful relationships after attending the program, including the changing nature of relationships and the importance of

"I learnt about understanding the roles of men in Australia. Also, I learnt what I should avoid and do in my family."

communication between partners. All men who participated indicated having an increased understanding of family violence and felt that the information provided will help them settle more successfully in Australia.



“Thank you for making this program. I learnt about what consent means, what are unhealthy relationships and Australian rules about dating and marriage.”

- Two Women’s Programs were held – one for young women in Year 11 (in partnership with the “Supporting Multicultural and Faith Communities to Prevent Family Violence” project (see page 28) and the other with adult Zomi women (in partnership with the MIC family violence counsellor). The groups focused on topics such as gender equality, how women can have safe, healthy relationships and build stronger families in Australia. One program was held at a local community centre with childcare provided and the Young Women’s program was held at a local secondary school, co-facilitated by Foundation House.
- A Driver Education program for women. The program included 6 online driving education sessions on understanding road safety, getting around safely, road rules and enforcement, and the dangers of drink and drug driving in Victoria. All participants were then provided with subsidised driving lessons with a registered driving instructor to help develop their skills and become safer drivers.

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS

## Capacity Building and Participation Program, Strategic Partnerships, Refugee and Asylum Seeker Program



In 2016, MIC was successful in attaining four-year funding under the then Victorian Government's Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division (MASC), Capacity Building and Participation, Strategic Partnerships Refugee and Asylum Seeker Program. In 2020/2021, the program was transferred to the newly established Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Multicultural Affairs unit. This program works in partnership with refugee and asylum seeker communities to achieve sustainable settlement outcomes and to assist community association committees and other community leaders to facilitate group and community activities and build their capacity to better meet the needs of their community members.

The program includes the facilitation of a steering committee comprising of local service providers to oversee the program. It also provides brokerage funds to assist people seeking asylum to enhance their access

to essential services and/or to fund short term crisis interventions where appropriate.

Agencies represented on the steering committee included: Women's Health East, Maroondah City Council, Yarra Ranges Council, Eastern Access Community Health (EACH), Victoria Police and AMES.

In 2021/2022, the program supported the Karen, Falam Chin, Mizo, Hakha Chin, Zomi, Zo and Iranian communities.

Activities undertaken with refugee communities in 2021/2022 included:

- Holding 30 weekly English classes for Falam Chin women in partnership with Chin Community Victoria (CCV) association with up to 9 to 13 participants attending each week and 15 weekly sessions with the Mizo community with 15 participants. Classes were delivered online. Participants reported that they enjoyed the English conversation program because it was taught by a community member and they felt more comfortable asking questions and speaking English. Some women used the English they learnt at shopping centres and on public transport.
- Employment support included White Card training for Hakha Chin community, two employment support sessions for Asylum Seekers, TPV, and SHEV holders in partnership with the Iranian community and one employment support session for the Zomi community in partnership with TDI and Contribute Group. These initiatives increased employment opportunities for community members and feedback was positive.
- Four sewing groups with women from Zomi, Hakha Chin, Falam Chin and Mizo backgrounds. The Zomi sewing group had 8-10 participants and the program was held through Zoom for 10 sessions and 17 onsite sessions. The average number of attendees was 7. The Hakha Chin women's sewing program had 8 to 10 participants with an average of 7 to 8 women attending the program weekly. The Mizo sewing group had 5 regular participants and the program was held weekly online via Zoom. The Falam women's sewing program was held weekly at the CCV office and they had 12 participants. Feedback indicated that 100% of participants gained sewing skills that enabled them to make their own clothes, increase their knowledge and understanding of programs and services and reduced their social isolation.

- Holding five sessions of Zomi traditional dance practice with 10 participants. Participants performed for Cultural Diversity Week at a community event organised by Knox City Council and Eastern Regional Libraries.
- Two excursions in partnership with City of Whitehorse taking asylum seekers/TPV/SHEV holders to Bounce Inc. and Movies at Forest Hill Chase – 15 people attended the Bounce excursion and 20 attended the movies.
- An excursion to Melbourne City and Yarra River cruise with the Karen community. Over 60 adults and school children attended and they learnt how to access public transport and use Myki and the history of the City of Melbourne during the cruise.
- MIC and the Victorian Fisheries Authority conducted a 2-day program for CALD communities including asylum seekers, TPV and SHEV holders to learn about fishing rules and regulations in Victoria. This program consisted of a family fishing day excursion at Wonga Park. Lunch was provided and people had an opportunity to learn about multiple services who attended on the day such as Ambulance Victoria, Fire Services Australia, Shire of Yarra Ranges, Yarra Valley Water and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. Four Falam Chin families consisting of 20 people attended with asylum seekers to learn how to fish within regulations, and learn about fire safety, wildlife and flora through a bushwalk on the day. A second fishing day was organised for the Hakha Chin community and 42 people attended the program. Feedback indicated people were happy with this event and had a good day. Participants could practice fishing on the day, supervised by Victorian Fisheries Authority. Fishing equipment was provided and it was a good opportunity for the community to socialise safely after Covid 19 restrictions.
- Holding meetings and activities for older people from the Hakha Chin and Falam Chin communities to help reduce social isolation and to encourage older people to stay active. Six sessions were held on ZOOM with five to seven people from the Hakha Chin community and four sessions with the Falam Chin community with twelve to fourteen people attending each session. Falam Chin seniors also went on an excursion to Redwood Forest. Five seniors from the Falam Chin community attended 2 days of training delivered by Cinespace and Yarra Ranges council to learn how to make short films using their mobile phone. Four of them successfully made story telling short films that were launched in Mooroolbark and played at the Refugee Celebration event at Central Ringwood Community Centre. A warm water program was also held for Hakha Chin seniors and 4 to 5 people participated.
- Leadership training was held with ten members of the Eastern Karen Association of Victoria (EKAV).
- Assisted leaders to liaise with the EACH COVID-19 Vaccine team for group vaccinations for Falam Chin and Mizo community members. A total of 65 members from the Falam Chin community and over 70 people from the Mizo community completed the COVID-19 vaccine double dose clinics delivered by EACH Mobile Vaccination team. Four COVID-19 vaccination clinics were organised in partnership with local community churches and EACH for the Zomi community with an average of 75 community members attending the clinics.
- Holding telephone consultations and seven meetings with leaders from the target communities including women and youth leaders to assist with the governance of their associations and planning support for their communities. This work included assistance with searching for, applying for grants and writing grant acquittals, discussing leadership and governance challenges and successes, providing information and training on how to comply with Consumer Affairs rules for effective governing of an Incorporated Association, COVID-19 awareness and technological upskilling to run activities to support their members remotely during the pandemic.





- Holding four community leaders network meetings with four community representatives attending as well as local agencies including local councils, SES and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.
- Holding nineteen information sessions on scams, game hunting and wildlife protection, COVID-19 vaccination information and clinics, Energy Compare information session, business setup and fishing regulations.
- Holding sports activities including a swimming program for Karen children, badminton for Zomi men, badminton for Falam Chin community members and volleyball for the Mizo community.



## Strategic Engagement Coordinator

Funded as part of the Strategic Partnerships Program the Strategic Engagement Coordinator (SEC) aims to strengthen community engagement, social inclusion, economic participation and settlement outcomes for people from refugee, migrant and/or asylum seeker backgrounds living in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) of Melbourne. The SEC role involves developing appropriate responses to redress emerging needs and challenges through creating partnerships, new initiatives and collaborations.



In 2021/2022 the work of the SEC included:

- Identifying gaps in service provision for people from refugee and migrant backgrounds and developing and delivering seven different projects including:
  - 1) An information, advice and referral service for people seeking asylum and on Temporary Protection Visas (TPV) and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEV). This program supports individuals and families to navigate Australian systems, providing information and advice about local service providers, access to health care, service eligibility, local English classes, employment options and other queries as they arise. In 2021/2022 this program supported 295 individuals and families.
  - 2) Supporting migrant and refugee community associations and groups to organise meetings, apply for grants, hold festivals and events and apply for funding. In 2021/2022, 17.5 hours were spent supporting these groups.
  - 3) A Mental Health Literacy Project in Partnership with NEAMI that aimed to increase knowledge and awareness of mental health within the Zomi Community. A workshop was co-designed with faith and community leaders and delivered to 11 participants.
  - 4) The *Equip and Empower Program*, an initiative developed by MIC providing support to people who are ineligible to access settlement support programs and where no mainstream service is available to assist them or who face significant barriers to accessing mainstream services on their own. In 2021/2022, this program supported 220 individuals and families.
  - 5) The *Eastern Employment Pilot Initiative* that focused on improving economic participation for people from migrant and refugee backgrounds through the provision of individualised support and

relationship building with local employers. In July 2021, this program was transitioned into the new Jobs Victoria Mentor Service.

- 6) The *Swim Teacher Training Initiative* focused on working with local leisure centres to upskill people from CALD backgrounds to become bilingual swim teachers. MIC programs partnered with Maroondah Leisure Centre and Austswim to support the training of participants. 10 participants registered for the training.
  - 7) The completion of a homework support program for primary school aged children at Manchester Primary School in Mooroolbark. The last session was held on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July with 10 Students attending.
- Co-facilitating the *Eastern CALD English, Education and Employment Network* (3 E's Network) in partnership with the MIC SETS team and MIC Employment Team. The network aims to:
    - Enhance opportunities for people from CALD backgrounds who are newly arrived in Australia to access English language classes and education pathways and programs and access meaningful employment.
    - Create partnerships between industry groups, support workers, employers, and people from newly arrived CALD backgrounds.
    - Work collaboratively to understand and address barriers to accessing English, education and employment opportunities for people from CALD backgrounds.
    - Provide opportunities for information sharing and collective action amongst service providers.

Four meetings were held with an average of 17 service providers attending each meeting from a range of agencies including AMEP providers, Services Australia, local Councils, Job Active providers, Department of Home Affairs, Training organisations and other community service agencies. Guest speakers and presentations included Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN), Foundation House on supporting young people from refugee backgrounds during the COVID pandemic, MIC Employment team on the new Community Employment Connector (CEC) and Jobs Victoria Mentor Service (JVMS) programs, Jobs Bank on addressing barriers to employment for people from CALD backgrounds, Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions, Swinburne AMEP and Learn Locals on Neighbourhood Houses and training.

Outcomes from the network include providing a forum for information sharing and updates during the COVID pandemic, sharing new employment opportunities and initiatives, networking opportunities for participants and network members gaining a greater understanding of the experiences and barriers to securing work for people from newly arrived migrant and refugee backgrounds across the region.

- Co-facilitating the *Eastern Migrant and Refugee Community Leaders Network*. Four meetings were held with an average of 6 community leaders attending each meeting. Guest speakers included the Deputy Chair from the Victorian Multicultural Commission, Refugee Council of Australia regarding resettlement processes, Victorian Electoral Commission, State-wide Emergency Service (SES), Shire of Yarra Ranges and City of Maroondah to provide updates on grants and council matters, Victoria Police to connect to community leaders and update on police roles in the community, MIC Community Connectors Program and MIC Family Violence Program.
- Assisting the delivery of information sessions and programs identified as a need by the community including connecting MIC staff to Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Victorian Game Authority (VGA) to provide community education on hunting





and wildlife regulations; coordinating two multicultural fishing days in collaboration with Victorian Fisheries Authority, DELWP, Local councils, Victoria Police and Fire Services Victoria.

- Participating in COVID 19 pandemic response and recovery activities including participation in the Vaccine Rollout Working group for the Eastern Region, connecting Knox Council to Zomi and Iranian communities for COVID recovery initiatives, working with EACH Community Engagement team to coordinate COVID 19 education and information sharing for CALD communities and providing community

intelligence to the State Government.

- Regular attendance at Networks and meetings including State-wide SEC meetings, Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee (KMAC), Monash Multicultural Advisory Committee (MMAC), Migrant Settlement Committee, Strategic Partnerships Steering Committee Meeting, presented at Navigating the East Forum on MIC Services and attended the National FECCA Conference.

## Support for Asylum Seekers, Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) holders and Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV) holders

As part of the Capacity Building and Participation Program, Strategic Partnerships, Refugee and Asylum Seeker Program, MIC provided critical support funds and facilitated group programs for asylum seekers living in the community on Bridging Visas, as well as people on Temporary Protection Visas (TPV) and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEV). These programs aim to enhance access to essential services and increase social and emotional wellbeing

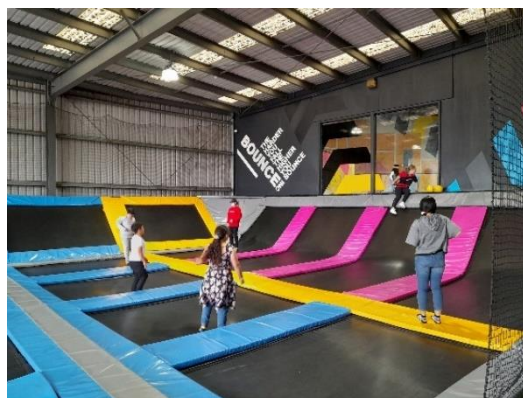
In 2021/2022 MIC provided critical aid and support to 194 individuals and families. This included COVID-19 payments for asylum seekers on a bridging visa with no income.

MIC provided a total of \$37,189 to 194 individuals and families for emergency relief in the form of food vouchers, bill payment or assistance to pay basic living expenses. This included \$27,979 of payments to support 146 individuals and families who were experiencing additional financial hardship due to COVID-19. Compared to last financial year, we continued to witness a significant rise in requests to access COVID- 19 emergency support from this cohort. According to the applicants' feedback, this was due to losing employment or being cut off from government payments.

People who accessed this program were from a range of countries including Iran, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, China, India, Togo, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe, Burma, Lebanon and Fiji. Funds assisted with paying utility bills, providing supermarket vouchers, essentials vouchers, covering health costs, and Myki top up.

Other activities provided for people seeking asylum and TPV and SHEV holders included:

- Providing information and advice about support services available to individuals and families including health services, employment services, material aid and other services.
- Facilitating information sessions covering Employment and two local excursions to 'Bounce' in Blackburn and Forest Hill.
- Holding a multicultural fishing day aimed at providing social interaction as well as education about fishing in Victoria, emergency services and local wildlife and plants.



## Priority Response to Multicultural Communities (PRMC) Program

In response to increased financial hardship amongst people from refugee and migrant backgrounds because of COVID-19 and loss of income, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), Multicultural Taskforce provided funding to MIC to support individuals and families under Phase 3 of their Priority Response to Multicultural Communities during coronavirus grants. Funds were provided to MIC to distribute food vouchers and to provide critical support to assist with daily living expenses that individuals and families were unable to meet due to financial hardship experienced because of the pandemic. Due to high demand, most funds were distributed within one month of the program commencing. A total of \$14,200 was distributed to over 75 individuals and families.

## Yarra Ranges Partnership Program

MIC received funding from the Shire of Yarra Ranges under the Partnerships Program to help build the capacity of the early years sector to better understand and respond to the needs of families and their pre-school aged children from refugee backgrounds. The MIC employs a project coordinator and a bilingual Hakha Chin project officer who works with Lancaster preschool to engage refugee families in their children's learning, and provide information sessions at the preschool for families and support to centre staff. The program also works with parents from Hakha Chin backgrounds with low English language proficiency to increase their understanding of the role of early childhood education, including supporting them to join parent committees, working bees and fundraising to encourage their participation in their children's education.

The project involves supporting kindergartens and primary schools in the Shire of Yarra Ranges to transition children from kindergarten into primary school by supporting families, as well as building capacity within primary schools to better understand the needs and experiences of refugee families.

In 2021/2022, the project provided information sessions for parents, held a consultation with families who live in Yarra Ranges and parents with primary school aged children to better understand their needs and the information they required about the education system in Australia, and liaised with two different primary schools and three preschools about transitioning children from kindergarten to prep.

Feedback indicated that 100% of parents of primary school aged children who attended the MIC session stated that they had a better understanding of the Australian education system and school expectations and 91% reported that they had more confidence in participating in wider school activities, 9% were not sure and 71% of parents reported that they have attended wider school activities, including social events and working bees since participating in the program. 66% of participants reported that they cannot attend parent committee meetings because of the language barrier, lacking confidence with their English language skills and/or stated they were too busy to attend.

Through the regular attendance of the MIC's bilingual worker at Lancaster preschool employed through the project, families stated that their children had more confidence at the start of the year and parents were more comfortable to speak to the staff when needed. The staff reported that the bilingual worker was very helpful as she spoke two community languages, Burmese and Hakha Chin. Staff reported this has been helpful in assisting to translate newsletters, emails and communicating with families about the School Transition Statement. *"Having a bilingual worker has been a great benefit to our program and in including all our families. It was great to see so many Chin families join our working bee and clean-up day this year."* The parents stated that the information session helped them to understand the education system and school expectations.



# AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

## Access and Support Program

In 2021/2022 the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (MIC) received funding from the Victorian Government under the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP) program and the Commonwealth Government under the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) to deliver the Access and Support (A&S) program in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR).

The A&S Program provides short term, individual support for people who need help to access services so they can stay living at home. The A&S Program works with older people, younger people with disabilities and their carers who have difficulties accessing HACC PYP, CHSP and other services due to their diverse needs. Diverse needs include but are not limited to language, culture, religious background, dementia, financial disadvantage, LGBTQIA+, homelessness or those at risk of homelessness, veterans, care leavers and parents separated from children by forced adoption or removal. The MIC's A&S Program is one of approximately 50 similar programs in Victoria and one of 7 in the EMR.

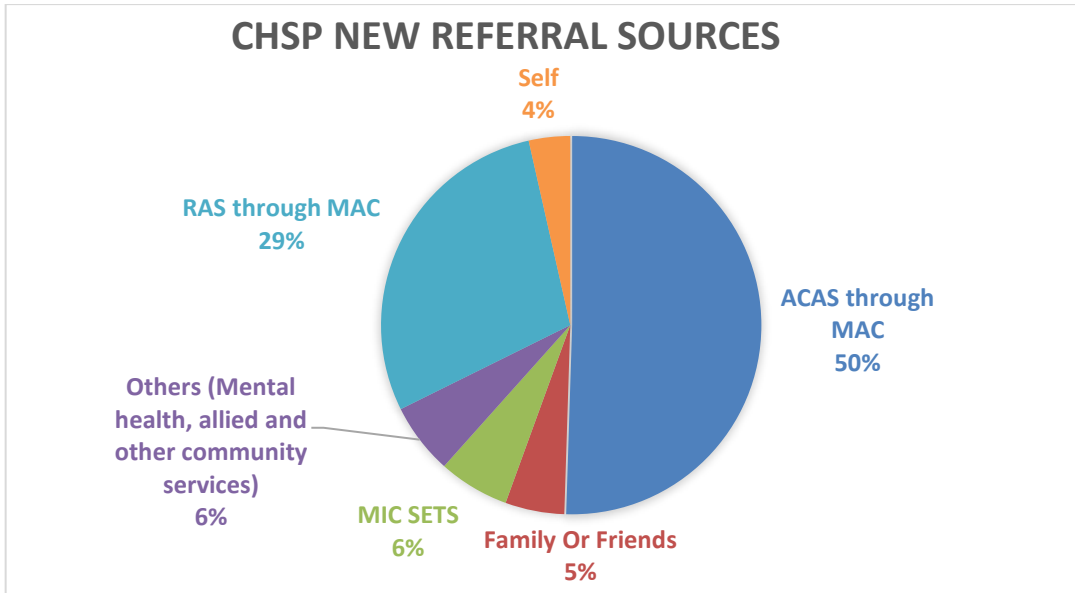
Additionally in 2021/2022, the MIC received funding from the Victorian Government under HACC PYP to deliver the Volunteer Coordination Program that links volunteers to those under 65 years with a disability, to support them in participating in everyday activities, maintaining or rebuilding their confidence, improving their social connectedness and emotional wellbeing and keeping them healthy and active whilst living at home.

COVID-19 had a significant impact on MIC's A&S program and HACC PYP Volunteer Coordination program service delivery during the 2021/2022 financial year. Following the Department's guidelines, MIC's A&S Program continued to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic, however, many clients declined links to services, particularly those that enter the home or offer other face-to-face services due to risk of contagion. A&S workers nevertheless have been contacting clients to check on their wellbeing and to ensure that they continue to receive the support they need. Contacting clients was conducted over the phone or through other digital platforms such as WeChat, WhatsApp and Viber. Home visit appointments were arranged on a case-by-case basis, where phone or digital means were not practical or possible for our clients.

## Direct Client Services

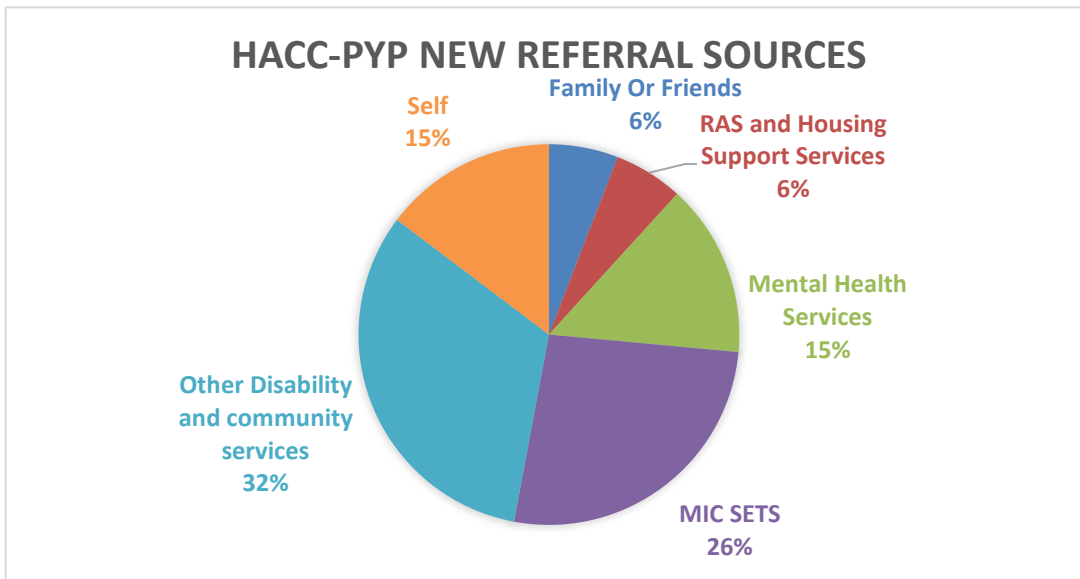
### CHSP services:

In 2021/2022, a total of 199 clients were assisted under the CHSP Program. Of the total new client referrals, 4% were self-referrals, 5% referrals from family members and relatives, 6% from the MIC SETS program, 29% from the Regional Assessment Services (RAS), 50% by Aged Care Assessment Services (ACAS), and 6% were referred from other health and community services.



**HACC-PYP Services:**

In 2021/2022, a total of 34 clients were assisted under the HACC PYP program. Of the total new client referrals, 15% were self-referrals, 6% were made by the clients’ family members, 26% were made by the MIC’s SETS program, 6% were made by the Regional Assessment Services and Housing Support Services, 15% were received from mental health service providers, and the remaining 32% of new referrals were received from other disability and community services such as special schools, GP, and other health professionals.

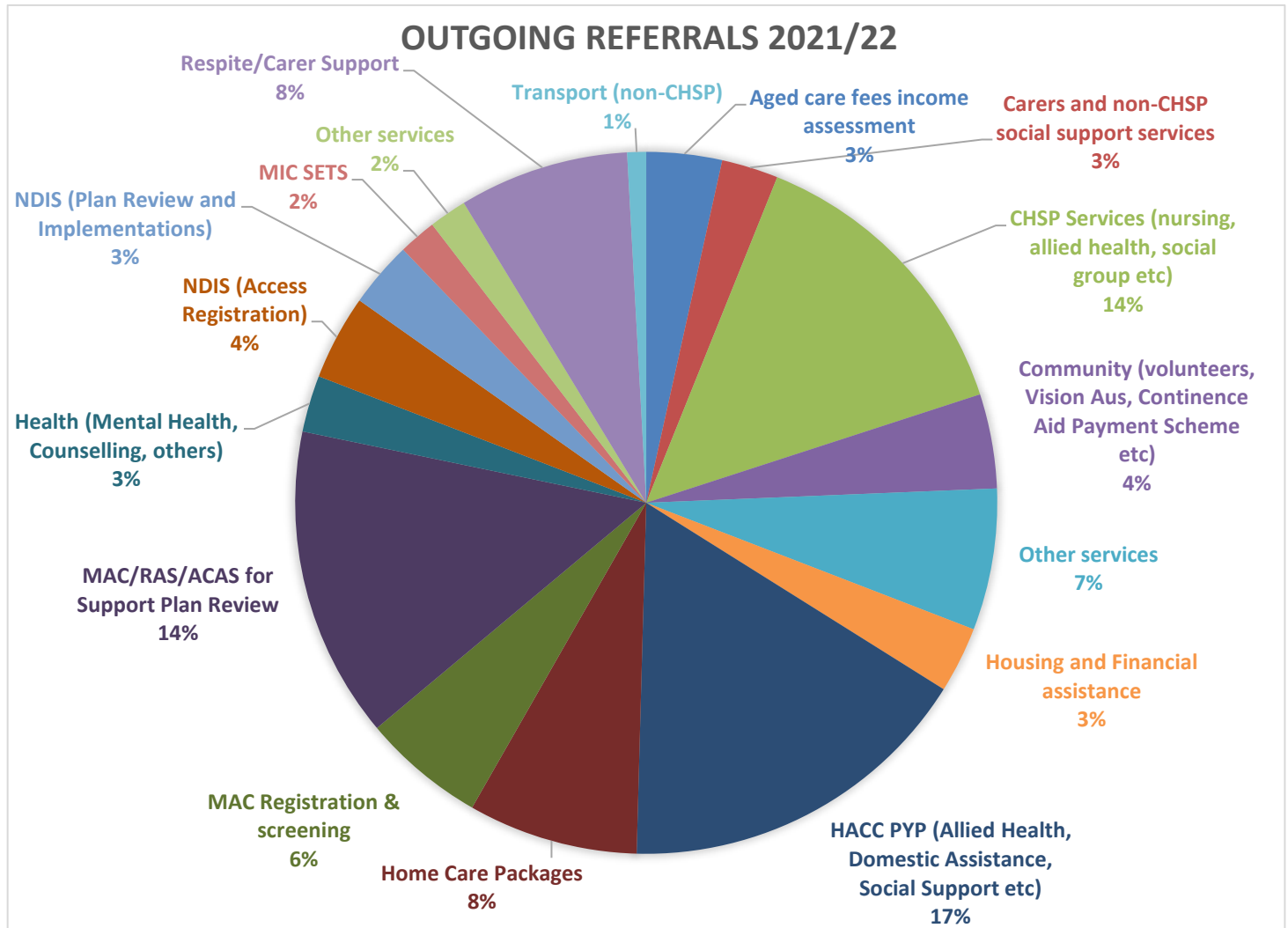


**Volunteer Coordination Program:**

In 2021/2022, the Volunteer Coordination Program spent 318 hours in promoting the program to community services and individuals, recruiting new volunteers and registering their interests, developing training materials for volunteers, and connecting volunteers to individual clients. A total of 14 volunteers and clients were registered in the program in 2021/22. Services offered to clients included but were not limited to companionship and social interaction, helping with school homework, assignments and English learning, and accompanying clients to outdoor activities such as outdoor exercises, socialising, shopping and other community access.

**Outgoing referrals to other services**

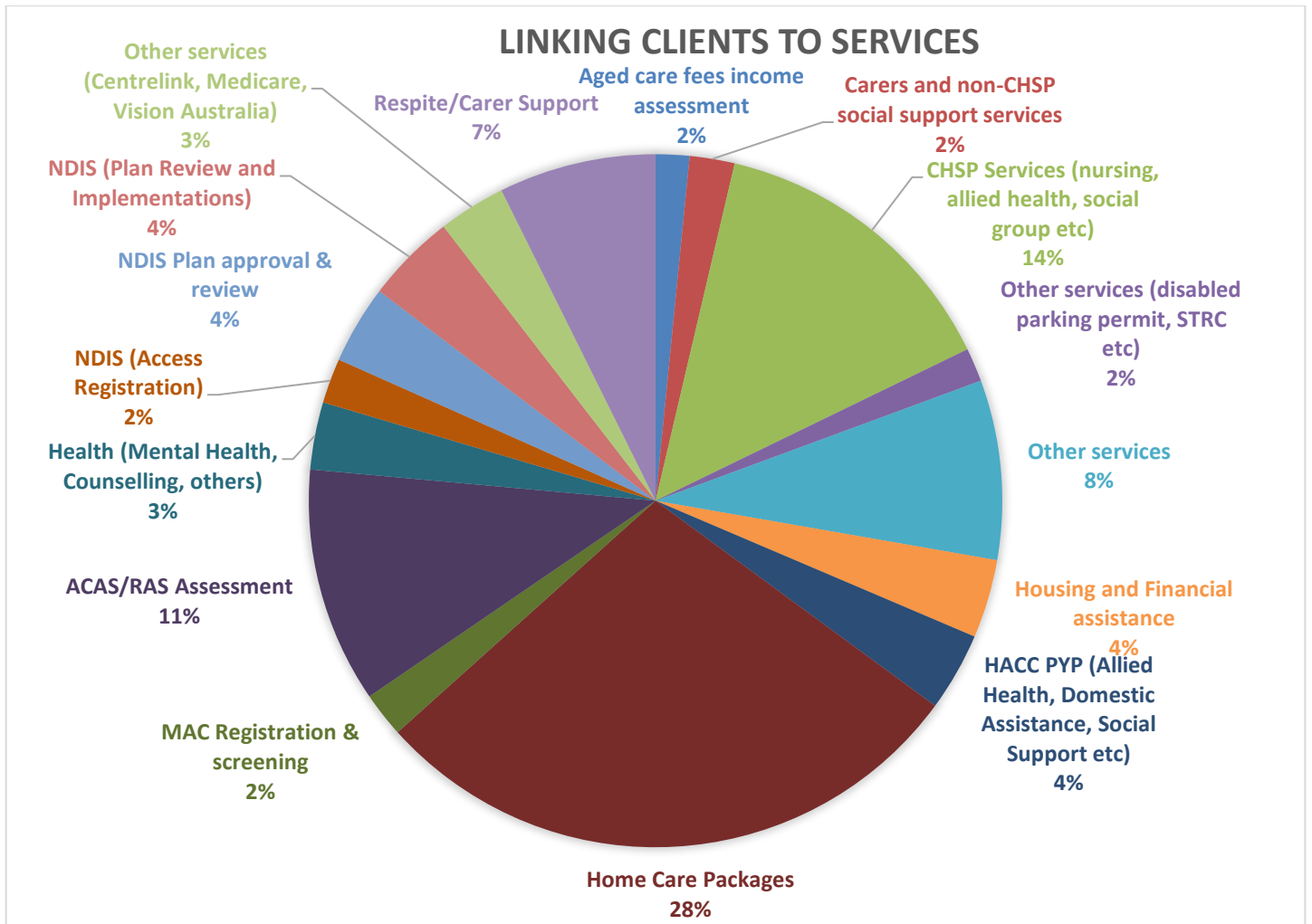
A total of 230 referrals were made to external services for clients under both CHSP and HACC PYP programs. These referrals included but were not limited to My Aged Care (MAC) for registration and requesting for RAS/ACAS support plan review, services under CHSP and HACC PYP such as domestic assistance, personal care, in-home respite, social support, transport, and Allied Health services, Centrelink, registration for National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Home Care Package providers, housing support, Financial Support Services, carer support services, and other support services in the community. A&S assisted clients with applications for Centrelink payments, the Continence Aids Payment Scheme, carer cards, companion cards and disability parking permits.



**Linking clients to other services:**

In 2021/2022, a total of 191 services were accessed by our clients through the help of MIC’s A&S Program. These included but were not limited to CHSP services, NDIS planning and implementation, carer support, mental health services, home care package providers, housing support, financial assistance services, social support, respite, and other services.





### Non-Direct Client Work

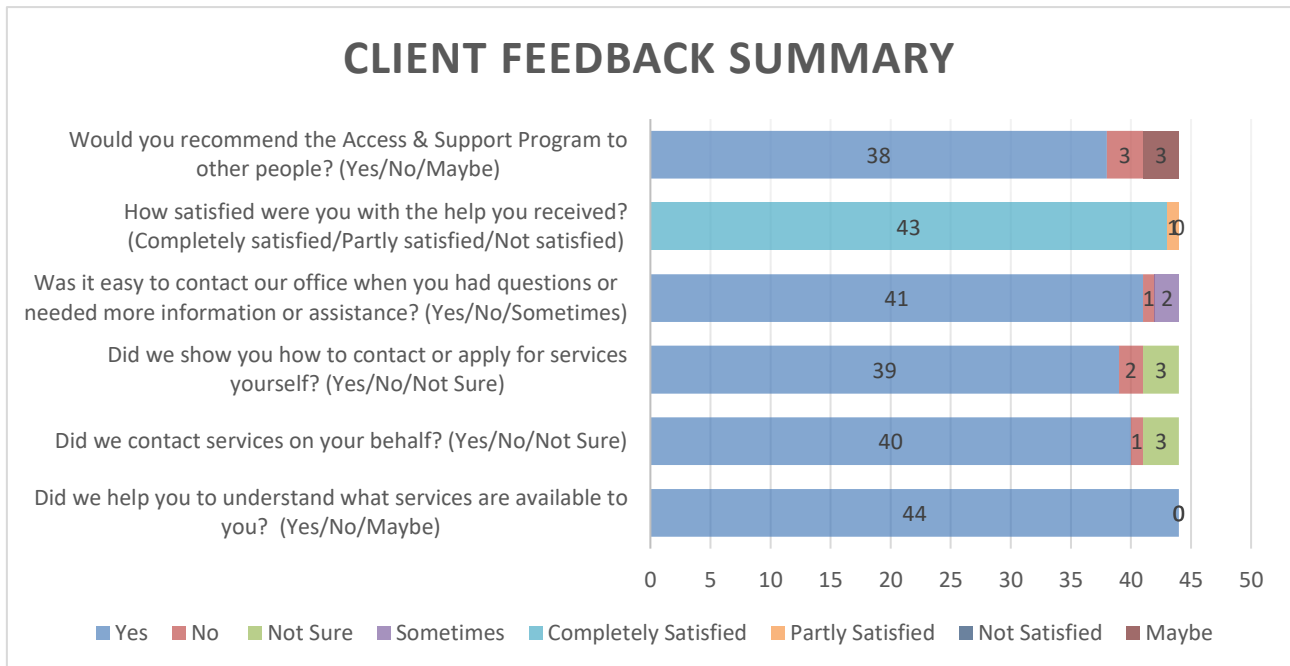
The A&S Program spent significant time promoting the program to both community members and service providers in the EMR. Promotional activities undertaken included formal and informal presentations about My Aged Care, CHSP, HACC PYP, and the Volunteer Coordination Program to seniors’ social groups, special primary schools, and outreach to older people and people with disabilities at community events.

The A&S Program also assisted other service providers through providing information and advice about working with a particular community group or individual to better meet the needs of people with diverse needs.

Information and secondary consultations were provided to NDIS providers, CHSP service providers, community health services, Regional and Aged Care Assessment Services, public and community housing support services, Home Care Package providers, disability support services, carer support services, neighbourhood houses, hospital social workers, and mental health services such as Partners in Recovery, disability gateway and carer’s gateway.

## Client Feedback

The A&S Program collects feedback from clients (and/or their carers) by telephone or emails after they are exited from the program. Telephone interpreters are offered to all clients from non-English speaking backgrounds where necessary. In 2021/2022, 118 clients were exited and 44 clients and/or their carers provided feedback. Some of the reasons for not participating in surveys are due to health and cognitive issues (for example, memory loss, dementia, deafness, etc.), moved out of the area, deceased, or calls not answered.



Some of the comments received from clients included:

*The worker helped me understand the services available and provided the necessary information. I do not understand English and have little knowledge about services.*

*The worker was very helpful. She made it very easy for me by providing all the necessary information and explained clearly. She also made me feel very comfortable and guided me with her knowledge.*

*The worker followed up with me regularly.*

*The worker advised me on the process to help me contact providers independently.*

*Thanks to the worker and the government for providing such a good program to help us.*

*I think it will be great if you could explain all the other services provided by MIC besides the Aged Care only.*

*I feel disappointed as most services were not able to meet my father's needs due to language barrier. I am exhausted and need a short break from time to time but not able to find any suitable support workers to communicate with my father.*

*There are a lot of people like me who are easily confused and have no knowledge of any services. It is important to have someone like you to guide us step by step.*

*The whole process was smooth, and the worker followed through all referrals and I was extremely happy with the services.*

*We tried applying for NDIS ourselves but we were not successful. We didn't understand fully what was required. After the worker came into the picture, she made the process easy.*

## Community Visitors Scheme (CVS)

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health, the MIC's Community Visitors Scheme (CVS) program addresses needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Home Care Package recipients living in their own homes, as well as CALD residents living in Residential Care Homes who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing social isolation or loneliness. Through the CVS, culturally and linguistically appropriate volunteers are matched with residents, providing companionship and friendship through regular ongoing visits.

In 2021/2022, 34 Home Care Package recipients, and 5 residents in residential care homes received MIC community volunteer visits under the CVS program. The MIC has 42 volunteers comprising 18 languages including Arabic, Cantonese, Dari, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Hokkien, Italian, Macedonian, Mandarin, Shanghainese, Singhalese, Spanish, Tamil, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

CVS promotion is facilitated through direct program dissemination to Home Care Package Aged Care providers, government funded Aged Care Homes, health professionals, and CALD community groups, as well as through network meetings, newsletters, and word of mouth.

Virtual visits via telephone, Facetime, WeChat, and WhatsApp provided CVS volunteer visitors alternate modes for continued engagement and social connection with program participants during periods of visitor restrictions and heightened exposure concerns because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

# TRAINING AND PARTNERSHIPS

## Professional Development Training

In 2021/2022, MIC staff delivered 19 professional development training workshops to local service agencies and groups. 386 individuals attended the workshops, which covered topics such as cultural awareness, understanding culture and diversity in practice, visas, service eligibility and services available for asylum seekers in eastern Melbourne.

Four additional workshops were held in partnership with local service providers for their staff. Topics covered assisted participants to understand the specific service needs of recently arrived individuals from migrant, refugee and/or asylum seeker backgrounds and to discuss best practice service delivery for culturally and linguistically diverse individuals, families and communities.



## Participation on Advisory Groups and Networks

The MIC provided information and advice on the needs of our client groups through attending meetings, making presentations and participating on networks. These included: Migrant Settlement Committee, Knox City Council Multicultural Advisory Committee, Monash Council Multicultural Advisory Committee, Yarra Valley Water Customer Advisory Group, Together for Equality and Respect Leadership Group, Eastern Metropolitan Region Alliance, Outer Eastern Refugee Health Network, Cultural Partnerships Reference Group, Yarra Ranges Emergency Relief Network, Pre-school Participation Working Group, Best Start Executive, Whitehorse Youth Issues Network, Maroondah Youth Services Providers Network, Elder Abuse Strategic Advisory Group, Eastern Homelessness Network, Blackburn English Language School Council, Network of Asylum Seeker Agencies Victoria, SETS Community of Practice meetings, Maroondah Partners in Community Health and Wellbeing Committee and RoadsafE Eastern Metro.

## THE YEAR AHEAD

In 2022/2023, MIC will continue to support individuals, families and communities from diverse backgrounds, while continuing to support and work alongside local agencies to best meet their needs. We look forward to resuming our 'new normal' working a hybrid model of face-to-face alongside virtual service provision.

MIC welcomes the re-opening of international borders and welcoming new arrivals from refugee and migrant backgrounds into our programs and services.

The year ahead will see MIC continue to work towards Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Management Framework (MARAM) alignment through our Family Violence Working Group, alongside a suite of programs aimed to promote gender equality, empower women and challenge gender stereotypes that can drive instances of family violence.

MIC will consolidate the work of our Employment Team who made an enormous contribution in their first year of service during 2021/2022 and we look forward to supporting a greater number of clients through these services in 2022/2023.

We look forward to supporting our community to move beyond the challenges of COVID-19 and into a more positive year for all. In 2022/2023, our work will include:



### Client Services for Individuals and Families

- Providing casework services to people from refugee backgrounds and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency to support their settlement in the EMR, including specific services for young people aged 12 to 25 years.
- Providing an outreach service at four local secondary schools as well as to students studying at Swinburne TAFE, Croydon Campus.
- Providing migration advice to individuals hoping to sponsor relatives to join them in Australia.
- Providing employment services to assist people to find suitable work and stay employed.
- Providing employment and education pathway advice and referral to mainstream employment services.
- Providing counselling and therapeutic groups for women from CALD backgrounds who have experienced, are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing family violence.
- Providing counselling and social and recreational activities for young people from CALD backgrounds who have disengaged or who are at risk of disengaging from education, employment and/or community.
- Providing information, advice and referrals and administering critical material aid support for asylum seekers, Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) and Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV) holders across the EMR.
- Assisting people from diverse backgrounds to access Commonwealth funded home support programs and people under 65 years of age with disabilities to access appropriate services.
- Recruiting volunteers to visit socially isolated older people from CALD communities who are in receipt of Commonwealth funded aged care packages or who are living in residential aged care.

## Services for Migrant and Refugee Communities and Groups

- Holding over sixty information sessions with refugees and family stream migrants with low English language proficiency on local services and life in Australia.
- Providing driver education programs for newly arrived adults and youth from refugee backgrounds.
- Offering life skills programs, including healthy lifestyles programs, parenting programs, information sessions on the education system in Australia, excursions and activities to increase civic participation and confidence in using public transport.
- Holding support groups for women who are experiencing, have experienced or are at risk of experiencing family violence.



- Working with refugee community leaders, faith leaders and women's group to create safe and accessible pathways into family violence services when required and building capacity amongst refugee leaders and communities to better understand and promote gender equality.
- Providing a range of programs to support young people aged 12 to 25 years from refugee and family stream migrant backgrounds including sports activities, leadership programs, young men's and young women's groups, employment programs and holiday programs.

- Delivering four weekly playgroups for parents and grandparents from refugee and family stream migrant backgrounds and their preschool aged children/grandchildren.
- Holding three weekly homework support programs for secondary and primary school students.
- Working with community leaders of refugee communities to build their capacity to better meet the needs of their members.
- Continuing to support a strong network of volunteers to assist with MIC's programs and fundraising activities.

## Services for Agencies

- Providing tailored training for service providers to support them in
- Continuing to develop strong relationships with service providers in the region to ensure the best possible outcomes for mutual clients and address emerging needs, through initiatives such as the Eastern CALD English, Education and Employment Network, delivering tailored training workshops for service providers, attending a range of local networks and working collaboratively on joint projects.
- Providing advice and resources to agencies as required.

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Directors present this report on the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) (MIC) for the financial year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

## Directors

The names of each person who has been a Director during the year and to date of this report are:

1. Mr Anthony Robinson (Chairperson)
2. Ms Rebecca Burdon
3. Mr Sudharma Hiremath
4. Mr Kai Leung
5. Mr Mark Melican
6. Ms Lisa Dean
7. Mr Johnathon Mitchell (Resigned August 2021)
8. Ms Alyssa Owens (Appointed September 2021)
9. Ms Cate Coleman (Appointed September 2021)

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

## Principal Activities

The principal activity of the Company during the financial year was to provide services for people from refugee and migrant backgrounds to support their settlement and strengthen their equity of access to the services and opportunities that Australia has to offer.

## Short term objectives

Migrant Information Centre's short-term objectives are to:

- Deliver post-arrival services relevant to new migrants and refugees in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne, to ensure effective local settlement and orientation.
- Provide poverty support and emergency relief programs to migrant families and individuals suffering financial crisis, destitution, misfortune, helplessness and sickness.

## Long term objectives

MIC's long-term objectives are to:

- Enhance direct provision of settlement services to migrants in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.
- Enhance existing links with and between a range of service providing agencies in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.

- Identify service gaps and/or shortfalls in relation to migrants by mainstream agencies within the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne and to provide advice and assistance related to appropriate service delivery in the development of new, alternative or additional services for migrants to bridge gaps and shortfalls.
- Assess duplication of service within all areas of migrant settlement and to facilitate an effective network grid for the minimisation of duplicate services.
- Investigate technology-based solutions for the provision of information on services available within the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne to the wider community.

## Strategies

To achieve these objectives, MIC has adopted the following strategies:

- MIC strives to attract and retain grant funding from all levels of government and philanthropic trusts and foundations in order to resource services for client groups.
- MIC has established reporting arrangements to ensure that the governance structure is well informed for monitoring, planning and decision-making.
- MIC strives to attract and retain quality staff and volunteers who are committed to working with people from diverse backgrounds, and this is evidenced by low staff turnover. MIC believes that attracting and retaining quality staff and volunteers will assist with the success of the MIC in both the short and long term.
- Staff and volunteers are committed to providing the best possible outcomes on behalf of people from diverse backgrounds with whom the organisation is involved. This is evidenced by the success of new and existing programs in support of people from refugee, migrant and other diverse backgrounds who have accessed the service. Committed staff and volunteers allow the MIC the ability to engage in continuous improvement.
- MIC's staff and volunteers strive to meet consistent standards of best practice and provide clear expectations of professional accountabilities and responsibilities to all stakeholders. This is evidenced by the performance of staff and volunteers against these accountabilities, and ensures staff are operating in the best interests of people from diverse backgrounds and MIC.
- MIC builds partnerships with a range of community stakeholders, and this is evidenced by ongoing support of MIC's projects and initiatives. MIC ensures community stakeholders understand and are supportive of the objectives of MIC through ongoing communication and education.

## Performance measures

Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) measures its performance both qualitatively and quantitatively. Examples of measures used include:

- Number of individual clients who receive services
- Number of contacts between clients and MIC's staff
- Number of individuals attending information sessions held by MIC
- Feedback from clients on their satisfaction with the services provided by MIC



## **MIC Directors**

### **Mr Tony Robinson, Chair**

*Appointed: 01/04/2016, reappointed 01/04/2017, reappointed on 01/04/2020*

*Prior to Chairing the Ausgrid reset Customer Panel, Tony led the AustNet Services Customer Forum. This followed over five years at the Brotherhood of St Laurence. Before that he served as Member for Mitcham in the Victorian parliament, culminating as Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Assisting with Veterans. As a Minister, Tony was involved in major reforms to the state's liquor and gaming industries as well as assisting with the establishment of the new Australian Consumer Law and the transfer of credit responsibility to the Commonwealth.*

### **Mr Kai Leung, Deputy Chair**

*Appointed: 01/04/2014, reappointed 01/04/2017, reappointed on 01/04/2020*

*Kai currently practises law as a partner in a Melbourne-based law firm. Before becoming a lawyer, he spent more than 10 years managing corporate services as CFO of public-listed and private companies. He has a strong interest in the successful settlement of migrants and refugees. Kai read law at Monash University, holds an MBA and a BBus, and is a Fellow of CPA Australia.*

### **Ms Lisa Dean, Secretary**

*Appointed 01/04/2020*

*Lisa has worked extensively in housing and homelessness and the community care sectors. With a training and quality improvement background, Lisa currently works with community aged care providers, to ensure that people can access services that are inclusive and support their individual preferences, beliefs, values and needs.*

### **Ms Rebecca Burdon**

*Appointed: 20/06/2018, reappointed on 01/04/2020*

*Rebecca is the Managing Director of the Energy Transition Hub at the University of Melbourne. She has a background in economics. She has worked in New Zealand, Australia, and the United Kingdom, and led projects in other countries including Zimbabwe, Ghana, Cape Verde, Trinidad and Tobago, and Iran. She has held senior management and board-level roles for government, regulatory, commercial and not-for-profit entities. Rebecca was the Treasurer of The Social Studio – a social enterprise that provides education and work experience to young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. She is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.*

### **Mr Sudharma Hiremath**

*Appointed: 01/04/2017, reappointed on 01/04/2020*

*Sudharma has extensive experience in managing corporate and operational services in both the commercial and not for profit sectors and he has worked across three continents and has key interests in the areas of housing/homelessness, domestic violence and the settlement of new migrants. Sudharma's strengths include strategy, corporate governance, risk and compliance, and operations. Sudharma's academic qualifications include an Executive Master of Business Administration, a Post Graduate Diploma of Applied Corporate Governance and a Bachelor's Degree in Alternative Medicine.*

Currently, Sudharma is the Risk and Compliance Manager at Community Housing Limited and its Subsidiaries and in the past has served as Risk Manager at Victoria Legal Aid, and Corporate Services Manager at Launch Housing. Sudharma is an Associate Member of the Governance Institute of Australia (AGIA) and Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ICSA).

**Mr Mark Melican**

Appointed: 01/03/2015, reappointed 01/04/2017, reappointed on 01/04/2020

Mark is the Principal of Blackburn English Language School which has three campuses; one in Blackburn, a second in Croydon North and a third in Wodonga. Mark has over 25 years' experience in teaching with a focus on teaching English as an additional language.

**Mr Johnathon Mitchell**

Appointed 01/04/2020, Resigned August 2021

Johnathon is a Youth Services Manager at AMES Australia. Johnathon resigned from the MIC Board on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

**Ms Alyssa Owens**

Appointed 17/09/2021

Alyssa is an educator. She brings over a decade of experience across the educational ecosystem in a variety of geographies and cultural contexts. Currently, she leads curriculum design and implementation across Asia Pacific, South Asia, Middle-East and Africa for Generation, a global education-to-employment non-profit. Her focus today is providing unemployed people with training and connecting them with meaningful work. In previous roles as a teacher, coach, parent advocate and curriculum leader, her work has always aimed to address the problem of educational inequity by increasing opportunities. She is excited to bring this experience to serve MIC's stakeholders.

**Ms Cate Coleman**

Appointed 17/09/2021

Cate is a values-driven program manager and executive with over a decade of experience working in not-for-profit social justice organisations including The Social Studio, the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, and international non-profit Give2Asia. Cate has tertiary qualifications in Behavioural Science and International Development from LaTrobe University.

## **Company Secretary**

Lisa Dean was appointed Company Secretary on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

## Meetings of Directors

During the financial year, 10 meetings of Directors were held. Attendances by each Director were as follows:

Director	Number eligible to attend	Number attended
Mr Anthony Robinson	10	9
Ms Rebecca Burdon	10	8
Mr Sudharma Hiremath	10	9
Mr Kai Leung	10	10
Mr Mark Melican	10	10
Ms Lisa Dean	10	9
Mr Johnathon Mitchell	2	0
Alyssa Owens	8	8
Cate Coleman	8	7

## Member's Guarantee

The company is incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* and is a company limited by guarantee. If the company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the company. On 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 the number of members was 15. The total members' guarantee amounted to \$150 (2021: \$120).

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.



Mr Tony Robinson, Chair

Dated 11/10/2022

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the Year Ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022

REVENUE FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES	2022	2021
	(\$)	(\$)
Department of Home Affairs	1,497,944	1,485,456
Department of Health	277,164	297,419
Department of Health and Human Services	-	126,226
Dept of Family, Fairness and Housing	124,893	-
Department of Jobs precincts & regions	371,155	-
City of Knox	5,164	6,304
City of Monash	10,558	9,000
City of Manningham	-	10,191
City of Whitehorse	2,000	2,658
City of Maroondah	9,272	1,960
CMY-Centre for Multi Youth	14,862	-
Department of Premier and Cabinet	620,696	522,879
Federation of Ethnic Communities	23,228	116,819
Vic Roads	20,299	23,715
Yarra Ranges Council	23,977	32,918
Donations and Fundraising	2,070	4,200
Interest received	925	2,080
Government Initiatives	-	50,000
Other income	14,118	26,240
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>3,018,325</b>	<b>2,718,065</b>

**EXPENSES**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>(\$)</b>	<b>(\$)</b>
Employee Benefits Expense		
Professional Development	(17,594)	(4,330)
Recruitment costs	(1,665)	(1,435)
Superannuation contributions	(234,175)	(190,631)
Wages & Salaries	(2,159,773)	(1,869,661)
Holiday Pay	(179,106)	(158,384)
Long service leave	(116,719)	(25,261)
Workers compensation	(21,071)	(16,207)
Total Employee Benefits Expenses	(2,730,103)	(2,265,909)
Depreciation expense	(13,260)	(7,840)
Other Expenses from Ordinary Activities		
Audit fees	(5,558)	(5,549)
Bank charges	(573)	(643)
Board expenses	-	(230)
Catering/Refreshments	(11,328)	(4,051)
Computer expenses	(25,332)	(11,325)
Dues & Subscriptions	(5,804)	(4,726)
Facilitators/Speakers Payment	(17,594)	(37,808)
Insurance	(7,456)	(7,945)
Motor vehicle expenses	(6,873)	(4,546)
Office equipment	(8,251)	(8,861)
Other operating expenses	(56,900)	(39,738)
Photocopier expense	(1,781)	(980)
Postage	(2,669)	(1,507)
Rental Outgoings	(52,481)	(64,299)
Service Delivery - Interpreting & Translating	(34,782)	(39,453)
Service Delivery - Meeting Expenses	-	(146)
Service Delivery - Direct Client Support	(47,781)	(90,946)
Service Delivery - Printing	(1,347)	(327)
Stationery	(4,645)	(3,316)
Telephone and fax	(9,809)	(8,288)
Transport Subsidies/Expenses	(7,878)	(2,659)
Venue Hire	<u>(14,235)</u>	<u>(13,934)</u>
<b>(Loss) Profit for the year</b>	<b>(48,115)</b>	<b>93,039</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income, net of income tax</b>		
Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss	-	-
Items that will be reclassified to profit or loss when specific conditions are met		
<b>Total comprehensive (loss)/income for the year</b>	<b><u>(48,115)</u></b>	<b><u>93,039</u></b>

**Statement of Financial Position As at 30 June 2022**

<b>ASSETS</b>			
CURRENT ASSETS	Note		
Cash and cash equivalents	4	<b>1,832,442</b>	1,919,405
Trade and other receivables	5	<b>10,811</b>	71,863
Other assets	6	<b>320,000</b>	320,000
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<b>2,163,253</b>	2,311,268
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	7	<b>25,174</b>	14,217
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<b>25,174</b>	14,217
TOTAL ASSETS		<b>2,188,427</b>	2,325,485
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	8	<b>285,909</b>	193,498
Employee benefits	10	<b>436,012</b>	430,384
Other financial liabilities	9	<b>1,020,618</b>	1,213,829
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<b>1,742,539</b>	1,837,711
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Employee benefits	10	<b>35,601</b>	29,372
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		<b>35,601</b>	29,372
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<b>1,778,140</b>	1,867,083
NET ASSETS		<b>410,287</b>	458,402
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained earnings		<b>410,287</b>	458,402
TOTAL EQUITY		<b>410,287</b>	458,402

**Statement of Changes in Equity For the Year Ended 30 June 2022**

2022

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2021	458,402	458,402
(Loss) /Profit for the year	(48,115)	(48,115)
Balance at 30 June 2022	<u>410,287</u>	<u>410,287</u>

2021

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2020	365,363	365,363
Profit/ (loss) for the year	93,039	93,039
Balance at 30 June 2021	<u>458,402</u>	<u>458,402</u>

## Statement of Cash Flows For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

	2022	2021
Note	\$	\$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Receipts from customers	3,062,265	3,313,149
Dividends received	-	-
Interest received	925	2,080
Other receipts	16,188	220,201
Payments to suppliers and employees	<u>(3,142,124)</u>	<u>(2,760,177)</u>
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	<u>(62,746)</u>	<u>775,253</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Purchase of PPE	(24,217)	-
Proceeds from disposal of Financial Assets	-	<u>(200,000)</u>
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	<u>(24,217)</u>	<u>(200,000)</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	(86,963)	575,253
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	<u>1,919,405</u>	<u>1,344,152</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	4 <u>1,832,442</u>	<u>1,919,405</u>



## Notes to the Financial Statements for Year Ended 30 June 2022

The financial report covers Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd as an individual entity. Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd is a not-for-profit Company, registered and domiciled in Australia.

The functional and presentation currency of Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd is Australian dollars. The financial report was authorised for issue by the Directors on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

### 1. Basis of Preparation

#### (a) Special Purpose

In the opinion of those charged with Governance the Company is not a reporting entity since there are unlikely to exist users of the financial statements who are not able to command the preparation of reports tailored so as to satisfy specifically all of their information needs. These special purpose financial statements have been prepared to meet the reporting requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards and Accounting Interpretations, and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 *Presentation of Financial Statements*, AASB 107 *Statement of Cash Flows*, AASB 108 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors* and AASB 1054 *Australian Additional Disclosures*.

### 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

#### (a) Revenue and other income

##### Grant

##### Grant Revenue

Government grants are recognised at fair value where there is reasonable assurance that the grant will be received and all grant conditions will be met. Grants relating to expense items are recognised as income over the periods necessary to match the grant to the costs they are compensating. Grants relating to assets are credited to deferred income at fair value and are credited to income over the expected useful life of the asset on a straight-line basis.

##### Other income

Other income is recognised on an accruals basis when the Company is entitled to it.

#### (b) Income Tax

The Company is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

#### (c) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of GST.

## 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

### (c) Goods and services tax (GST)

Cash flows in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

### (d) Property, plant and equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment.

Items of property, plant and equipment acquired for significantly less than fair value have been recorded at the acquisition date fair value.

#### Land and buildings

Land and buildings are measured using the revaluation model.

#### Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment are measured using the revaluation model.

#### Depreciation

Property, plant and equipment, excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful life to the Company, commencing when the asset is ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are shown below:

Fixed asset class	Depreciation rate
Computer Equipment	20% - 33.3%
Fax & Photocopier Equipment	10% - 50%
Furniture & Fixtures	10%
Motor Vehicles	12.5%

At the end of each annual reporting period, the depreciation method, useful life and residual value of each asset is reviewed. Any revisions are accounted for prospectively as a change in estimate.

### (e) Impairment of non-financial assets

At the end of each reporting period the Company determines whether there is evidence of an impairment indicator for non-financial assets.

Where an indicator exists and regardless for indefinite life intangible assets and intangible assets not

yet available for use, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated.

Where the recoverable amount is less than the carrying amount, an impairment loss is recognised in profit or loss.

## 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

### (e) Impairment of non-financial assets

Reversal indicators are considered in subsequent periods for all assets which have suffered an impairment loss.

### (f) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

### (g) Leases

#### *Deviation from Accounting Standards*

The Company has elected not to apply AASB16 Leases, which requires the right-to-use assets and lease liabilities connected with most leases to be recognised on the Statement of Financial Position.

### (h) Employee benefits

Provision is made for the Company's liability for employee benefits, those benefits that are expected to be wholly settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Employee benefits expected to be settled more than one year after the end of the reporting period have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may satisfy vesting requirements. Changes in the measurement of the liability are recognised in profit or loss.

### (i) New Accounting Standards and Interpretations

The AASB has issued new and amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations that have mandatory application dates for future reporting periods. The Company has decided not to early adopt these Standards.

### 3. Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments

Those charged with governance make estimates and judgements during the preparation of these financial statements regarding assumptions about current and future events affecting transactions and balances.

These estimates and judgements are based on the best information available at the time of preparing the financial statements, however as additional information is known then the actual results may differ from the estimates.

The significant estimates and judgements made have been described below.

#### Key estimates - impairment of property, plant and equipment

The Company assesses impairment at the end of each reporting period by evaluating conditions specific to the Company that may be indicative of impairment triggers. Recoverable amounts of relevant assets are reassessed using value-in-use calculations which incorporate various key assumptions.

#### Key estimates - provisions

As described in the accounting policies, provisions are measured at management's best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period. These estimates are made taking into account a range of possible outcomes and will vary as further information is obtained.

### 4 Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Cash on hand	659	659
Bank balances	<u>1,831,783</u>	<u>1,918,746</u>
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>1,832,442</u>	<u>1,919,405</u>

**5 Trade and Other Receivables**

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Trade receivables	<u>10,811</u>	<u>71,863</u>
<b>Total current trade and other receivables</b>	<b><u>10,811</u></b>	<b><u>71,863</u></b>

**6 Other Financial Assets**

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Term Deposits held	<u>320,000</u>	<u>320,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>320,000</u></b>	<b><u>320,000</u></b>

**7 Property, plant and equipment**

PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
Furniture, fixtures and fittings At cost	24,259	24,259
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(23,108)</u>	<u>(22,243)</u>
Total furniture, fixtures and fittings	<u>1,151</u>	<u>2,016</u>
Motor vehicles		
At cost	62,788	62,788
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(57,560)</u>	<u>(50,587)</u>
Total motor vehicles	<u>5,228</u>	<u>12,201</u>
Office equipment		
At cost	9,000	9,000
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(9,000)</u>	<u>(9,000)</u>
Total office equipment	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Computer equipment		
At cost	36,815	12,598
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(18,020)</u>	<u>(12,598)</u>
Total computer equipment	<u>18,795</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total property, plant and equipment</b>	<b><u>25,174</u></b>	<b><u>14,217</u></b>

**8 Trade and Other Payables**

CURRENT	Note	2022	2021
		\$	\$
Trade payables		68,948	63,981
GST payable		93,813	42,180
Accrued expenses		7,086	7,086
PAYG Withholding		71,976	46,270
Accrued salaries and wages		39,059	27,896
Other payables		5,027	6,085
		<u>285,909</u>	<u>193,498</u>

Trade and other payables are unsecured, non-interest bearing and are normally settled within 30 days. The carrying value of trade and other payables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances.

**9 Other Financial Liabilities**

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Income in advance	<u>1,020,618</u>	<u>1,213,829</u>

**10 Employee Benefits**

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Current liabilities		
Long service leave	236,538	261,173
Annual Leave	<u>199,474</u>	<u>169,211</u>
	<u>436,012</u>	<u>430,384</u>
Non-current liabilities Long service leave		
	<u>35,601</u>	<u>29,372</u>
	<u>35,601</u>	<u>29,372</u>

**11 Members' Guarantee**

The Company is registered with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and is a Company limited by guarantee. If the Company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the Company. At 30 June 2022 the number of members was 15 (2021: 12).

## 12 Key Management Personnel Disclosures

The remuneration paid to key management personnel of the Company is \$ 86,876 (2021: \$ 83,663).

## 13 Auditors' Remuneration

	2022	2021
Remuneration of the auditor for:	\$	\$
- auditing of the financial statements	<u>5,558</u>	<u>5,549</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><b>5,558</b></u>	<u><b>5,549</b></u>

## 14 Contingencies

In the opinion of those charged with governance, the Company did not have any contingencies at 30 June 2022 (30 June 2021:None).

## 15 Events after the end of the Reporting Period

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Company, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Company in future financial years.

## 16 Statutory Information

The registered office and principal place of business of the company is:

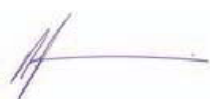
Migrant Information Centre (Eastern  
Melbourne) Ltd 27 Bank Street  
Box Hill VIC 3128

## Responsible Persons' Declaration

The responsible persons declare that in the responsible persons' opinion:

- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable; and
- the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulation 2013*.



Mr Tony Robinson, Responsible Person

Dated 25 October 2022

**LDB Audit Services Pty Ltd**

ACN 123 774 569 ABN 59 123 774 569

1-3 Albert Street, Blackburn Vic 3130

PO Box 550, Blackburn Vic 3130

Telephone: 03 9875 2900

Facsimile: 03 9875 2999

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Working as One

**Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd**

27 084 251 669

**Auditor's Independence Declaration under Section 60-40 of the Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 to the Responsible Persons of Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd**

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2022, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

LDB Audit Services Pty  
Ltd Suite 1-3 Albert  
Street BLACKBURN VIC  
3130

Hilton  
Miller  
Director

Blackburn, Victoria

Dated this .....26th..... day of .....October ..... 2022

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.



**LDB Audit Services Pty Ltd**

ACN 123 774 569 ABN 59 123 774 569

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[www.LDB.com.au](http://www.LDB.com.au)**Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd****Independent Audit Report to the members of Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd****Report on the Audit of the Financial Report****Opinion**

We have audited the financial report of Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the responsible persons' declaration.

In our opinion the financial report of Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the Registered Entity's financial position as at 30 June 2022 and of its financial performance for the year ended; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1, and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

**Basis for Opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Registered Entity in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (ACNC Act) and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

**Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting**

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Registered Entity's financial reporting responsibilities under the ACNC Act. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

LDB Audit Services Pty Ltd

ACN 123 774 569 ABN 59 123 774 569

1-3 Albert Street, Blackburn Vic 3130

PO Box 550, Blackburn Vic 3130

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Working as One

## **Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd**

# **Independent Audit Report to the members of Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Ltd**

### **Responsibilities of Responsible Entities for the Financial Report**

The responsible persons of the Registered Entity are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the ACNC Act and the needs of the members. The responsible entities' responsibility also includes such internal control as the responsible entities determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the responsible persons are responsible for assessing the Registered Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the responsible entities either intend to liquidate the Registered Entity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

*LDB Audit Services Pty Ltd*

LDB Audit Services Pty Ltd  
Suite 1-3 Albert Street  
BLACKBURN VIC 3130

Hilton Miller  
Director

Date 26 October 2022