

Date: 20 August 2014

Healthy workers are happy workers during Multicultural Health Week (1-7 September)

This year's theme for Multicultural Health Week is *Healthy Workers*, focusing attention on people from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background.

South Western Sydney Local Health District Multicultural Health Services Manager Balwinder Sidhu said, of more than 3 million workers in NSW, 19 per cent speak a language other than English at home.

"In Australia, workers spend about one third of their lives at their work place. So it makes sense for working Australians from all multicultural backgrounds to begin their program to get healthy at work," Ms Sidhu said.

"There are many little things you can do in the workplace to help improve your overall health, and we are using Multicultural Health Week to spread the message – in many languages.

"If workers are healthy, they are happy not only at work but at home with their families," she said.

This year's theme *Healthy Workers* promotes the NSW Office of Preventative Health Program; Get Healthy at Work, which addresses modifiable risk factors for chronic disease in workers.

Multicultural Health Week encourages all workers, including those from multicultural backgrounds to:

- Make sustainable changes to their lifestyle
- Move more and increase physical activity
- Eat well and learn healthier eating habits
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Quit smoking
- Reduce alcohol consumption

Ms Sidhu said Multicultural Health Week provided the opportunity to highlight the importance of equitable access to health information and resources for all Australians – including those whose first language may not be English.

"Australians are lucky to have a huge amount of reliable health information at their fingertips. However, for those whose first language is not English, it can be more difficult to access and understand the information," Ms Sidhu said.

"Multicultural Health Week gives us an opportunity to draw attention to all of the resources available for those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds," she said.

A booklet containing practical tips and advice on how to stay healthy at work has been developed and is available to download in English, Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese at www.multiculturalhealthweek.com

Multicultural Health Week is a state-wide event, held every September to highlight the importance of language and culture in health services as well as providing an opportunity to raise health issues in multicultural communities.

Translated health information is available at www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au.