

3 September 2018

Improving health literacy of south western Sydney's multicultural community

South Western Sydney Local Health District is delighted and proud to host the venue for the state-wide launch of NSW Multicultural Health Week today at Liverpool Hospital.

The District is happy to support the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service which is funded by the NSW Government to coordinate Multicultural Health Week in partnership with the multicultural health services across the state's local health districts since 2009.

Ms Amanda Larkin, Chief Executive, South Western Sydney Local Health District, said south western Sydney was the heart of multicultural Australia and a most appropriate location to open the awareness week.

"Around 45 per cent of the south western Sydney population was born overseas and more than 50 per cent speak a language other than English at home," Ms Larkin said.

"Our residents from so many cultural backgrounds bring colour, energy, passion and talent to our great south west.

"However they also need our support as they embrace the challenge of settling into a new country.

"The theme of the 2018 Multicultural Health Week is health literacy with the tagline 'Talk, Listen, Ask – for better health' is very important in our culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities."

The NSW Government is investing more than \$2.2 million in multicultural health care in south western Sydney in 2018-19.

Ms Larkin said the Health District was looking forward to launching its Cultural Competency Training for staff to increase their capacity to work effectively with the region's multicultural groups during the awareness week.

"We are committed to improving health literacy across our CALD communities in the region and our new competency training will help us to achieve this aim," Ms Larkin said.

"In addition the District offers a range of services through our Multicultural Health Unit to support equitable access to healthcare for people from CALD communities."

Some of these programs include:

- Quit and Fit, a Vietnamese Tobacco Project,
- Arabic Healthy Living Project
- CALD Stepping On program, and
- Bilingual Community Education Program.

The District is also home to the NSW Refugee Health Service, which supports the health and wellbeing of people from refugee backgrounds.

From 2012-2016 the south west welcomed more than 10,000 refugees and people entering Australia on humanitarian grounds - about half of the NSW humanitarian and refugee intake.

To cater for the region's CALD communities, the District offers language services in 87 languages.

The interpreting team has about 55 accredited staff and more than 200 contracted interpreters.

For more information on Multicultural Health Week, go to:
www.multiculturalhealthweek.com.