

DATE: 30 August 2019

Media Opportunity

Embracing diversity in health care

Multicultural Health Week is a state wide event that highlights the importance of language and culture in health services.

This year, South Western Sydney Local Health District will be marking the week with a health information forum for Iraqi and Syrian communities on Tuesday 3 September.

Iraq and Syria remain the key countries for Australia's humanitarian program, with more than 10,600 Iraqi and over 6150 Syrian refugees settling in the south west in the last five years.

In 2018, 2183 refugees settled in the south west, 46 per cent of the NSW total.

The theme of this year's week is health literacy for new and emerging communities, which is how people understand information about health and health care, and how they apply that information to their lives.

"Health literacy affects a person's ability to fill out complex forms and locate providers and services," NSW Refugee Health Service Senior Bilingual Community Educator Program Coordinator, Lidija Sestakova, said.

"It is our role as health professionals to embed health literacy into systems, ensure effective communication and to help those with limited English language skills navigate health care."

The health information forum for Iraqi and Syrian communities will be held from 10am at Fairfield Senior Citizen's Hall and includes speakers, cultural entertainment and health information stalls.

Spokespeople:

- South Western Sydney Local Health District Senior Multicultural Health Promotion Officer, Yvonne Santalucia
- NSW Refugee Health Service Senior BCE Program Coordinator, Lidija Sestakova
- NSW Service for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS), Ashraf Sedrak
- A consumer from the Iraqi or Syrian community will be available to share their perspective

Please contact the media team on 8738 6848 if you would like to attend.