



Industry Partnership

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Community of Practice

2017-18 update

Membership of the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Community of Practice (CoP) consists of practitioners from specialist DFV services, women's services, and broader homelessness services. Attendees work across the full spectrum, from small, rural and regional services, right up to large, metro services.

In the first CoP, we established the frameworks and best practice currently used within organisations in responding to the needs of culturally diverse clients. A human rights approach and trauma informed care were identified as common frameworks used by practitioners.

The second meeting focused on gaps in service and challenges for clients. The key issues raised included themes of positives and negatives of continued cultural connection for clients who have experienced DV, implications for children who have a parent who is visa insecure, restrictions of service eligibility and stretching of resources in organisations. The need was identified for strong advocacy where practitioners encounter systems abuse and racism experienced by clients in mainstream society and also in accessing services. Strategies for responding to these issues were identified. These including soft entry to services through community events and parenting groups, guidelines for effective use of interpreting services, providing an inclusive and welcoming environment when clients enter services, and expanding capacity of workforce and particularly CALD identifying workers.

In the third meeting key priorities for future work of the group were clarified. These included discussion, documenting and sharing information and practice, networking and collaborating, building capacity, innovation, and problem solving. Discussion topics in these sessions included the complexity of different visa requirements and changing entitlements and immigration policies. It was noted in particular that more women are presenting homeless with tourist and students visas and not entitled to special provisions if experiencing domestic violence and face further challenges in obtaining sufficient documentation for any children born in Australia. The second discussion topic was sharing of resources for clients and the need for easy to read and accessible materials for orienting clients to their rights and to services. Resource mapping was identified as a key area for further discussion.