

2011

WINTER/SPRING

Inc. No A0048140C



Linking together, proudly serving

AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY SERVICES INC (formerly Australian Polish Community Services)

# What's new?

## My 20-year association with AMCS



I am delighted to share few words about my 20-year involvement with the Australian Multicultural Community Services. It was 15<sup>th</sup> July 1991, when I first began my professional career at the Australian Polish Community Services, then based in Footscray. The agency went through a difficult period in the early 1990s whereby there was no funding to provide support services to the Polish community. Mr. Bill Nowak, one of our original founders was able to secure a one-off grant from the Department of Immigration, for the purpose of establishing needed support services to the disadvantaged members of our community. I was employed as the Project Officer to fulfil the objectives of that program and we had 12 months to establish services or to consider winding down the agency. We were fortunate and through a lot of hard work by a number of people succeeded at that time and continue to do so now. AMCS now provides valuable community services through 11 government funded programs, employs about 70 people and its work is supported by almost 80 dedicated volunteers. I know many organisations see us as a success story in the ethnic community services sector and they take motivation and aspiration from our journey. This journey has not always been easy and includes tribulations and celebrations along the way. For me personally, it has been a great opportunity to utilise my professional skills, learn and develop and meet hundreds, if not thousands, of amazing individuals whose dedication and commitment to others I continue to admire.

Elizabeth Drozd  
Chief Executive Officer

## Cultural Diversity Week 2011

In March all Victorians celebrated Cultural Diversity Week - a highlight in cultural calendar. Celebrations were held throughout the state to recognise our diverse culture. Australian Multicultural Community Services also hosted a "Celebrating Cultural Diversity" event. Highlights included members of Polish, Congolese, Indian and Sudanese communities showcasing aspects of their culture, faith and language and celebrating the benefits of multiculturalism.



Representatives from Congo, India, Poland and Sudan  
*Picture courtesy of Leader Newspapers*

The guest speaker was Elizabeth Drozd, Multicultural Commissioner of Victoria and CEO of Australian Multicultural Community Services. Other guests included representatives from the Department of Health and Ageing, Victorian Police, Centrelink, ACAS, RDNS, Western Region Health Centre and other service providers.

This event was a great opportunity for service providers and the communities to come together to share their culture and network with others.

# Community Partners Program (CPP)



**Information session about diabetes in Ballarat**

Aged Care Assessment Services in Ballarat and Geelong, Ballarat Community Health Centre, City of Greater Geelong, Latrobe Community Health Services and number of aged care facilities in regional Victoria.

In next financial year the CPP Project will explore strategies for responding to the needs of the Polish older community in the whole of Victoria. The CPP Project can assist service providers in ensuring that the elderly members of the Polish community receive culturally appropriate care. In order to achieve this goal we can offer cultural briefing sessions for staff, language cards and other resources, facilitating the provision of brokerage services, referral to social support services and other services for residents in aged care facilities and clients in private homes.

**For more information please contact the CPP Project Officer on 9689 9170 or email [cpp@amcservices.org.au](mailto:cpp@amcservices.org.au)**

During last six months the **Community Partners Program (CPP)** focused on service providers and the Polish community in rural Victoria, particularly in the Geelong, Ballarat and Morwell areas. The activities delivered by the CPP Project Officer for the Polish community included information sessions about options in aged care, living with dementia, diabetes and many more. More than 250 people attended the talks. Polish seniors also took part in two bus trips to the Ballarat Community Health Centre and Eden Park Nursing Home in Geelong. The excursions were a great opportunity for the community to see the facilities and meet the people who work there.

In addition, approximately 125 staff members from various services providers received training about Polish culture and tradition and how to work with the Polish community. Among many organisations that have collaborated with AMCS were the



**Polish seniors during the trip to Eden Park Nursing Home in Geelong**

## Polish Community History Website for Victoria

Australian Multicultural Community Services has been successful in receiving funding from the Victorian State Government Local History Grants Program to establish a Living Website to document the History of the Polish Community in Victoria. This project will involve the development of an interactive website or virtual museum that captures the contributions of members of the Australian Polish community residing in Victoria, the rich history, experiences and lifestyles. The website will provide historical documents, oral histories and will be a useful tool for anyone wanting to find out more about the Polish community in Victoria.

Members of the Polish community have brought with them a rich tapestry of stories, items of historical significance and experiences. These all contribute to who the Victorian community is today. The information to be shared on the website will increase awareness and understanding of the experiences and survival of Poles through times of adversity and triumph, support an understanding of migration at different times throughout our history, the contribution the infrastructure of this state, etc. Some of these stories have been captured but there are many more out there and it is important to get these as they tell the true experiences of the individuals who lived them.

**Anyone interested in participating in the project through donations of resources, materials, stories or time or wanting to find out more can contact the AMCS Secretariat on 9689 9170.**



# Multicultural Brokerage & Support Services



Over the past twelve months, the Community Care Program has worked closely with organisations such as Baptcare, Catholic Homes and RDNS towards the provision of quality care through the **Multicultural Brokerage & Support Services** whilst also strengthening organisational partnerships.

All three organisations are now accessing and purchasing high levels of brokerage services from MBSS.

AMCS Bi-lingual Care Workers are highly trained in meeting the complex needs associated with the care of elderly people with limited English skills living in Melbourne after having immigrated many years ago from various European countries.

Some of the specific services include – general CACP and EACH direct care with a focus on culture and language, support with medical appointments and the basic translation, culturally sensitive personal care and culturally responsive meal preparation and presentation.

**If you are interested in accessing MBSS to purchase services please contact the Community Care Manager, Louise Czarnoch on 8371 2303 or email on [louisec@amcservices.com.au](mailto:louisec@amcservices.com.au)**

## PUBLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD

AMCS has now made many of their publications available for free download. Anyone interested in any of our publications now have the choice of purchasing professionally finished hard copies for a small cost or can download the reports they want for free.

For more information visit our new website [www.amcservices.org.au](http://www.amcservices.org.au)

## Supported Access Pilot Project

We are pleased to inform you that the Minister for Ageing has recently approved a three year extension of the Supported Access Pilot Project (SAPP) position. It will allow our organization to move to the new role in the context of Home and Community Care (HACC) Diversity Planning and Practice. Australian Multicultural Community Services is in a strong position to assist generic agencies to respond to the needs of their specific groups and individuals. Our bi-lingual worker will continue to provide support to HACC eligible people, carers and families from Polish background to understand, access and negotiate the HACC service system.

**For more information on how to use the service, please call the SAPP Coordinator on 9689 9170 or email [sapp@amcservices.org.au](mailto:sapp@amcservices.org.au)**

## Other AMCS Services

### Community Aged Care Packages

We currently have 125 CACP packages and provide services from two sites - Melbourne and Geelong. The majority of our clients are from a Polish and other Eastern European background and we are in the process of implementing a culturally competent service model that will deliver a range of community aged care services to the broader community.

**For more information please contact the Community Care Manager Louise Czarnoch on 8371 2303.**

### Planned Activity Groups

Centre-based support service and respite for frail older persons and people with disabilities. Activities include outings, craft, entertainment and exercises. This program operates on Mondays and Wednesdays in West Sunshine and on Fridays in Geelong.

**For more information please contact the Program Coordinator Anna Suchowiecki on 8371 2317.**

### Community Visitors Scheme

Polish speaking volunteers are available to visit isolated residents in aged care facilities to offer companionship and friendship.

### Friendly Visiting Program

One to one visits provide friendship and social integration for people who are assessed as socially isolated.

**For more information please contact the Program Coordinator Joanna Kafłowski on 8371 2318.**

# Multicultural Community Services Exchange

This project is undertaking a feasibility study to explore the potential of extending existing partnerships with other cultural groups with the aim of creating a Multicultural Community Services Exchange (MCSE). The purpose of the MCSE is to explore ways of a greater exchange of information, support, training and mentoring with ethnic communities in the Western Metropolitan Region to establish and/or to increase their organisational sustainability. The project encourages ethnic groups and organisations within this region to contact **Wendy Bennett on 8371 2310 or via e-mail: [spo@amcservices.org.au](mailto:spo@amcservices.org.au)** if they wish to find out more about the project.

The MCSE is jointly funded through The William Buckland Foundation and the Community Support Fund in the Department of Planning & Community Development.



## English Classes available – Tailored to your needs

AMCS is able to offer pre-accredited English classes to organisations and members of the community in the Eastern & Western Metropolitan Regions. If you have staff, volunteers or community members who could benefit from developing their English language skills in spoken or written English, or their listening skills we can explore the opportunity to tailor classes to meet particular needs to support employment and training. An example may be classes that focus on English for OH&S purposes. Classes can be delivered at suitable locations in the City of Maroondah in the eastern region and City of Maribyrnong in the western region.

**For more information & to discuss possibilities please contact Wendy Bennett on 8371 2310 or via e-mail: [spo@amcservices.org.au](mailto:spo@amcservices.org.au)**



## AMCS services

- Community Aged Care Packages
  - Community Visitors Scheme
  - Friendly Visiting Program
  - Polish Older Persons Outreach Program
  - Planned Activity Group
  - Supported Access Pilot Project
  - HACC Access
  - Brokerage
  - English Classes and Computer Courses
  - Emergency Relief Program
  - Multicultural Emergency Relief Case Management Program
- For more information about AMCS services please call administration on 96899170 or email [info@amcservices.org.au](mailto:info@amcservices.org.au)**

## OFFICE SPACE AND MEETING ROOMS FOR HIRE

AMCS offers office space and business meeting facilities fully equipped to cater for a range of purposes including: board meetings, interviews, training programs, meetings, presentations, workshops, etc. The rates are very reasonable and both hourly and full day options are available during business hours.

**For more information and bookings please call administration on 96899170 or email [info@amcservices.org.au](mailto:info@amcservices.org.au)**



Australian Multicultural Community Services is supported by funding from the Australian Government under the Community Partners Program (CPP).

### Main office

Suite 111,  
44-56 Hampstead Rd  
Maidstone 3012  
Ph: 9689 9170  
Fax: 9687 7446  
[info@amcservices.org.au](mailto:info@amcservices.org.au)  
[www.amcservices.org.au](http://www.amcservices.org.au)



### Geelong office

258 Latrobe Terrace  
1st floor  
Newtown 3220  
Ph: 5222 8056  
E-mail:  
[krist@amcservices.org.au](mailto:krist@amcservices.org.au)