

Seniors Aged-Care - SE NSW Multicultural Newsletter

Queanbeyan Multilingual Centre Inc
Newsletter

February 2010

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Community Partners Program

*Are you elderly and in need of personal support but have difficulties with the English language?
Are you unsure of who to talk to or where to go?*

If your answer is yes, then the Community Partners Program (CPP) may be useful to you.

The CPP program aims to improve access to aged-care services for multicultural clients by:

- raising awareness about aged-care services in multicultural communities
- working with aged-care services to support them to deliver culturally appropriate care.



Luki Choudury, Cooma/Snowy CPP Information Coordinator (far left) at local Harmony Day celebrations.

CPP-funded organisations employ Aged-Care Information Officers to work with multicultural communities within particular regions. In South-East NSW, there are Aged-Care Information Officers at:

- Queanbeyan Multilingual Centre
- Goulburn Multicultural Centre
- Monaro Family Support Service in Cooma.

Aged-Care Information Officers provide the following services:

For multicultural communities:

- education and information sessions on aged care services
- information and resources in community languages
- links to appropriate services.

For Aged-Care Service Providers:

- links with local CALD communities
- information on the cultural needs of older persons from CALD communities
- advice on culturally appropriate care
- cultural briefings and information sessions
- links to CALD resources and networks.



Catriona Heath, CPP Regional Manager (center) and Gillian Seeley answer questions and handout information on aged care services at the Queanbeyan Multicultural Festival.

CPP

Matmatha's Story

"Australia is a beautiful country to live in but I am so lonely here."

I keep hearing these words as I talk to the many older people who have spent their lives proudly providing for their families in Australia..

Matmatha is not untypical of the many people who brought their families to this region some years ago to make a fresh start .

With little English and three children to care for, she and her husband worked several casual jobs with difficult hours sometimes leaving the children at home alone,

She tried to make Sunday a special family day as it was difficult to find family time with their busy worklife. The children went to the local school and made lots of friends but she and her husband worked long hours and seldom met anyone outside of their own country group.

When the children grew up, they moved interstate and only visited on special occasions. Eight years ago, her husband died. He was a heavy smoker.

Matmatha's husband did the big chores around the house, spoke enough English to get by and drove the car.

Matmatha is now 82. She spends most of her day at home. She struggles with English and avoids talking to people when she goes to the local shop. She walks into town but her arthritis and breathlessness from a heart condition are making it more and more difficult. Her children visit from

interstate when they can but they have very busy lives with their families and work.

On her neighbour's suggestion, she spoke to one of our community workers at the multicultural centre. She was quickly put in contact with the local home care services who explained through an interpreter what support she was entitled to receive.

As a result, hand rails and an emergency button have been installed in her bathroom, she has meals delivered by the Meals on Wheels service, she goes to the shopping mall in the community bus with other people from her country, and she often attends lunches and information sessions at the multicultural centre.

Matmatha had not been aware of the home care services available to her and others in a similar situation. She had felt isolated and depressed not knowing how to cope.

She didn't complain and her family thought she was managing well.

At a recent lunch, Matmatha said: "I am so grateful to be included in the activities at the centre but I still remember as a child the closeness of my big family, uncles, aunts and all the children I played with, I loved the daily trips to the markets with my mother, and all the neighbours gathering to celebrate a birthday or a special occasion. It seems like only yesterday."



What is Dementia?

Symptoms of dementia may include loss of memory and confusion, difficulty in performing day-to-day or familiar tasks, and changes in personality, mood, and behaviour. Frequently repeating something or losing the thread of a conversation are noticeable symptoms.

Dementia mostly affects people over the age of 80 years however, it's important to remember that most older people do not get dementia.

It is also important to remember that individuals experience dementia in different ways. People with dementia still retain their sense of touch and hearing, as well as their ability to respond to emotion.

If you suspect dementia, it's important to get a medical diagnosis as early as possible to ensure that you or the person you care for receives early access to treatment, support, information and medication.

People with dementia often have a keen ability to develop new strategies and behaviours to compensate for what they have lost.

There is plenty of free information available on Dementia so contact us to find out more.

See our contact details on page 4.



Croatian Ladies Prayer Group

The Croatian Community is one of the oldest in Queanbeyan. The Croatian Ladies Prayer Group maintain the songs and traditions of their home region in Croatia and participate regularly in the festivities of Queanbeyan and the events at the Queanbeyan Multilingual Centre.

In the photo (right), the Croatian Ladies perform their traditional songs at a special Community Partnership Program for the many CALD senior residents of Queanbeyan.

In the photo below, the Croatian Ladies raise funds for their group with pastries and cakes at the Queanbeyan Carnivale - Multicultural Food and Dance Festival held each year.



A young Croatian woman fetches water while the older ladies sing traditional Croatian songs as they spin their wool and weave their garments.



A lot of work goes into the preparation of Croatian pastries and cakes for the Multicultural Festival at which the Croatian Ladies Prayer Group also perform their tradition songs and dances.

Did You Know?

Domestic Assistance or home help is available to help elderly people to remain independent at home. Generally the domestic assistance service includes: vacuuming, sweeping, cleaning the kitchen, and bathroom. If required additional support can be arranged.

Personal Care is also available including help with cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing, bathing and dressing. Also available are allied health services such as podiatry, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology and dietetics.

Respite Care is a break from the caring role which helps you rest and recover, and find the balance between caring for others, and caring for yourself. Respite can be used occasionally, or on a regular basis. It is also available when the unexpected happens or in an emergency.

Residential aged care is where an older person moves to accommodation where personal care and housekeeping are integrated including support for showering and dressing and nursing care. Residential care options are hostel (low) care and nursing home (high) care. A hostel usually has a room with en-suite with minimal help pro-

vided. In a nursing home you will probably share a room and bathroom and you will be provided with higher levels of personal and nursing care, as well as assistance with meals and/or moving around the building if necessary.

Frail older people and younger people with disability in NSW and their carers who are having difficulty managing in their own homes are eligible for help.



If you have any questions, contact us at any of the location listed on page 4.

AGED-CARE INFORMATION FOR THE MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY

**Queanbeyan
Multilingual Centre**
12 Rutledge St
Queanbeyan NSW 2620
Ph (02) 6297 6110
Fax (02) 6297 0386
Email: info@qmlc.org.au
WebSite: www.qmlc.org.au

**Cooma
Monaro Family Support
Service**
59 Vale St
Cooma NSW 2630
Ph (02) 6452 3450
Fax (02) 6452 6080
Email: luki.choudhury@monarofss.org.au

**Goulburn
Multicultural Centre**
49 Bradley St
Goulburn NSW 2580
Ph (02) 4822 6373
Fax (02) 4822 6563
Email: info@gmc.org.au
WebSite: www.gmc.org.au

**NSW Sth Coast,
Young**
Contact Queanbeyan
Multilingual Centre

**We're on the Web
QMLC.ORG.AU**

What's Happening In Your Region

QUEANBEYAN

Queanbeyan Multilingual Centre (QMLC) holds regular weekly information sessions for seniors in Queanbeyan on aged care services and healthy living. Session topics include care and health services, mental health, home care, home maintenance, meals-on-wheels, hearing and mobility equipment, ACAT assessments, managing dementia, and dealing with depression.

QMLC also organises seniors' aquarobics and regular multicultural lunches. **Contact QMLC** (02) 6297 6110 for more information.



COOMA / SNOWY MOUNTAINS

Monaro Family Support Service (MFSS) coordinates information sessions for the local multicultural community.

Cooma and the Snowy Mountains was probably the birthplace of multiculturalism in Australia and is still attracting overseas employees who continue to find employment and with the Snowy Scheme and who bring new families often with dependent parents.

Seniors are invited to the monthly multicultural lunches where information on different topics is discussed. Monaro Family Support Service also assists local health and aged-care services to provide accessible and culturally sensitive services to the multicultural community. A directory of local aged-care services is also available for the community. **Contact MFSS** on (02) 6452 3450 for more information.



GOULBURN

Goulburn Multicultural Centre (GMC) runs regular information sessions and workshops for the many CALD residents of Goulburn and has recently updated its Directory of Aged-Care Services in the region. Goulburn also has early settled European communities as well as new communities from Asia and Africa. These communities meet at Goulburn Multicultural and discuss the needs of these communities and their families. Specific information sessions are held on age care services and options. **Contact GMC** on (02) 4822 6373 for more information.



Aged-Care Services Directory

We have been busy updating the directories of aged care services in Queanbeyan, Cooma and Goulburn.

These have information and contacts for:

- Respite Care
- Residential Care
- Home and Community Care
- Home Living Support

If you would like to obtain a copy of a directory or need further information, contact the relevant CPP agencies listed on this page.

