

SydWest

Multicultural Services

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Connecting cultures. Building community.

Our Vision

Connecting Cultures.
Building Community.

Our Values

Accountability

We commit to the mission and vision of the organisation. We take personal responsibility and initiative in delivering quality work and by respecting the process, we achieve the desired results.

Our Mission

Our mission as a leading community organisation is to contribute to building the social capacity of our diverse communities.

We strive to empower individuals of all cultures by offering person-centred direct services, skills sharing and evidence-based representation.

We focus on the vulnerable and the most in need across their life course.

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Who We Are

For the past 35 years, SydWest Multicultural Services has been assisting and empowering thousands of newly arrived refugees, humanitarian entrants and people from non-English speaking backgrounds to become a valued member of Australian society.

We help people of all ages and cultures, particularly those who are most vulnerable. We support people through our diverse, flexible and integrated programs, including settlement services, women & families, youth, quality aged care and disability services, to lead productive, independent and engaged lives in the community.

Collaboration

We commit to building constructive and positive working relationships with all stakeholders characterised by a high level of acceptance, cooperation and mutual respect.

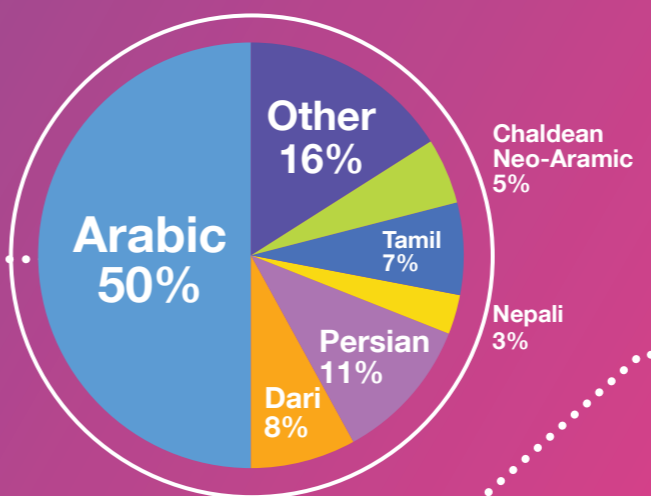
Excellence

We commit to professionalism, best practice and innovation to create the best experience for our clients, allies and the communities in which we practice.

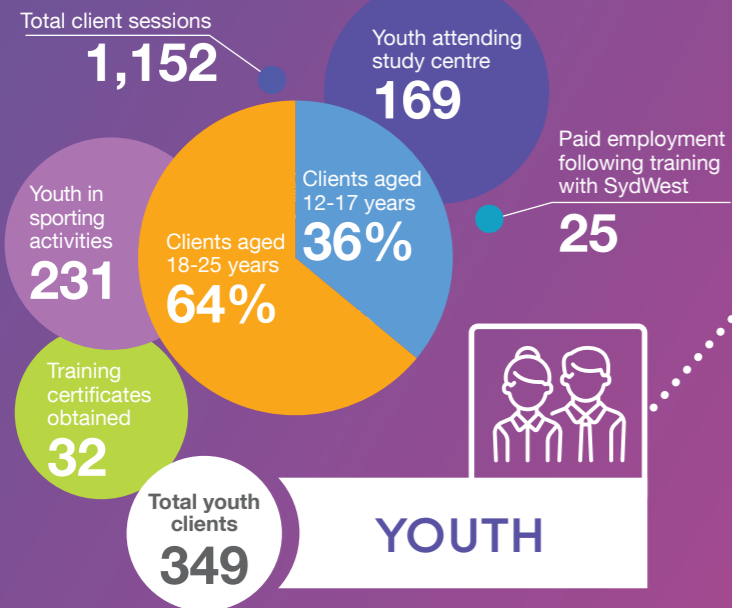


2020 AT A GLANCE

TOP 7 CLIENT LANGUAGES



AGED CARE

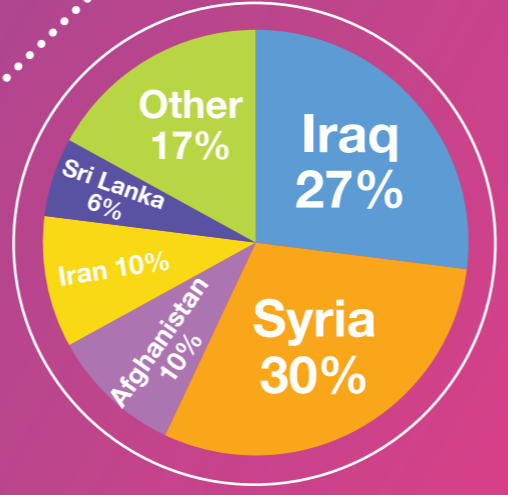


YOUTH

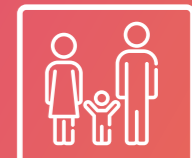
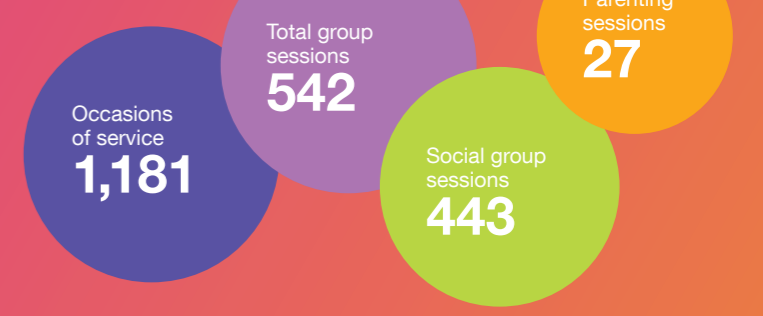
HOUSING



NDIS



TOP 6 COUNTRIES OF BIRTH



FAMILIES

Chair's Report



Raquel Bleza

What an incredible year! 2020 was the best of times and the worst of times. This year has been most challenging not only for our staff but also for our clients.

We saw dips in the number of clients as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic and the concern about staff and clients personal safety. Despite what we're up against, we successfully responded to the challenge and provided services to 2,417 clients.

Over the course of 2020, SydWest initiated a number of programs, most notably the **Domestic Violence Prevention Project**.

Domestic violence is a serious issue in all communities, but one that is compounded in women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds due to a lack of awareness or access to assistance or cultural taboos around seeking help. Research shows women from CALD backgrounds are less likely to report violence and experience more barriers in accessing support services, making them less likely to leave a domestic violence situation than other women. One of the main reasons for under-reporting is the shaming or family disapproval.

The Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research listed Blacktown as having the highest incidents of domestic violence related assaults in 2019. More services are needed, from prevention and early intervention, to rapid re-housing, crisis and transitional accommodation and counselling and other support services.

Other initiatives/programs include:

- **Girls Soccer Program** providing social networks, fitness and improved general health and wellbeing for girls from CALD backgrounds.



SydWest Board, Staff and Governor of NSW

- A \$280K **National Community Connectors Program (NCCP)**, an initiative of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to increase the participation of people from CALD backgrounds with disabilities in the NDIS. Currently there is a large number of CALD people with a disability who are eligible for the NDIS, but are not accessing the Scheme due to a variety of issues, including the understanding of disability and the services that the NDIS offers.
- **Collaboration with University of Queensland** on the impact of COVID-19 on migrant and refugee families.
- **Development of a three-phase COVID-19 Crisis Management Plan** reinforcing SydWest's commitment to keeping our workplace safe, clean and healthy during COVID-19.

Our Team

The SydWest Team is comprised of 155 intelligent, generous, hard-working people who are committed to changing people's lives.

Our CEO, Elfa Moraitakis, has worked tirelessly, with support from the Leadership Team and all the staff, to continue to provide the quality of service that we are known for. Thank you for setting an extraordinary example of commitment, professionalism, and solidarity during the Coronavirus outbreak.

We are united by a common culture of discipline, flexibility and cooperation which has allowed us to continue with our important work.

Partnerships

We work with incredibly generous and supportive organisations who stand by us to deliver the range of services that we provide to the vulnerable communities.

SydWest Multicultural Services wishes to thank the many generous donors who have helped to support our clients and their engagement through the COVID-19 time, both financially or otherwise. We extend our appreciation to our donors, for without their help, we would not have been able to provide material assistance, such as laptops, PCs, tablets and smart phones, to our clients and ensure they can stay connected.

In addition, we also received household goods for clients including those who were previously homeless and those escaping family and domestic violence. These donations have assisted clients to establish and maintain their household as they move forward to a safe and secure future.

Celebrate Success

The staff has demonstrated exceptional performance in service and has to be commended. SydWest has been a Finalist in the Premier's Multicultural Community Medal and a Finalist in the 'Business Excellence - Not for Profit' category of the 2020 Premier's Multicultural Community Medals in May. These awards provide us the opportunity to recognise and celebrate our successes. Congratulations to Elfa and the Team.

What's Ahead

We are proud to share our Annual Report for 2019-2020 which showcases the life-changing work of the SydWest staff and the impact that our services have.

In the age of COVID-19, a number of not-for-profit organisations is seeing donations drop, doors close and cash reserves dwindle. SydWest is fortunate to have a strong financial position thanks to prudent financial management.

In the next 18-24 months, the Board, together with the Leadership Team and staff will work together to guide its strategic, financial and operational planning as more business and social activities have moved online – and are staying there. No industry has been spared in the disruption of COVID-19. Now more than ever, we need leaders that will consider the unique impact it is having in our organisation and the needs of the people that we serve. Leadership support and organisational review will be critical.

COVID-19 is also a time of opportunity. It might well be the time to reimagine who we are, what we do and to make our organisation better in the process. SydWest will grow to service more communities in the Greater Sydney West region with the long-term goal of ensuring that our organisation is sustainable.

This being my last AGM, I would like to thank all my Board colleagues, especially Noel Hiffernan, who has resigned from his position, for your support and solidarity over the past six years. I have been blessed to get to know many of you personally and I thank you for your friendship and the opportunities I have had to learn from you and your work.

To all our staff, volunteers, members, donors, corporate and community partners, I would like to finish with these words shared to me by a very special person who embodied selfless sacrifice and had a passionate commitment to social justice:

*“Who you are is who the world needs.
Thank you for the difference you make.”*

Board Members



Raquel Bleza
Chair



Bridget Sarris
Vice Chair



Dr Chandrika Subramaniyan
Treasurer



Dr Moninderjit Singh
Secretary



Tamara Giles
Director



Noel Hiffernan
Director



Dr Karin Mackay
Director



Vish Viswanathan
Director

CEO's Report



Elfa Moraitakis

The review undertaken for the financial year 2019-2020 is an unforgettable one because not only was it tumultuous but also egregious at times. This year has become a significant point of reference in our lives and etched in our minds, yet it was another year that SydWest met its purpose and continues to do so.

Together, we celebrated at numerous events, we collaborated strongly, and we contributed to a lot of community success stories shared in the pages to follow.

The visit by Her Excellency the Hon. Margaret Beazley was one of our significant highlights this year. Connecting with the local community was not only uplifting for our clients but an opportunity for Her Excellency to hear first-hand about the richness of multiculturalism in Western Sydney and the role that established and emerging communities play towards a cohesive and harmonious society.

The visit by the delegation of the City of Yokohama and their interest in the intricacies in how we so successfully connect with our multicultural communities and engage with our seniors was also a pleasant surprise but also we felt a sense of pride. It was a refreshing sign of sincere interest on a proactive approach to a rapidly ageing population.

With a strong shift in clinical care to ensure our services are 100% consumer-driven and meeting the Aged Care Quality Standards, we had to enhance the capacity of our teams, retrain, and re-learn our approach to service delivery and client engagement.



Iranian Seniors and Governor NSW

Our NDIS team continued strong in a highly competitive environment and a new world order, without compromising their integrity and obligation to the people with disabilities and their families.

Our Community Engagement team actively drove numerous initiatives outside their funding requirements. Our pledge and contribution to the multicultural policy of the Blacktown City Council still stands strong. Our collaboration with DCJ and our community leaders to discuss the increasing numbers of domestic violence incidents in the region was one of utmost importance.

Addressing perceptions, as well as acknowledging the extreme importance community ambassadors have in disseminating information, became strongly evident when the virus outbreak resulted in harsh lockdown. Our Greater Western Sydney Community Leaders Forum quickly shifted from leadership training to an information dissemination channel of accurate advice from all levels of governments and agencies directly to the community. Once more we did what we do best. With a strong connection to community and all the relevant services, we facilitated that conversation in language. The result was a local community well informed and government/medical information shared in the most effective way.



International Women's Day



SydWest Seniors in Action

Staff and the community

It was the period where we also started seeing increased levels of stress and anxiety amongst our staff and the community. The ability to be agile and have contingency plans is a strong indicator for the whole of the community sector: that we still stand strong and we can adapt and respond accordingly to adverse situations. We quickly moved into delivering case work online without too many technical challenges from our end. Following many months of remote work, we have now firmly realised that virtual cannot replace the face-to-face engagement. Human connection cannot be replicated online, although it will be complementing future planning.

Our Community Care staff have been the shining stars throughout this period. When fear was strong amongst the general community, the majority stayed connected to their consumers and delivered services without hesitation. The importance of the work Care staff perform is finally acknowledged and we hope workforce accreditation and training will become a focus for government into the future. As our Care staff stand tall and proud, we congratulate and thank you all for your service to the community.

Our people are our greatest asset

During the the last quarter of the year, we focused strongly on the mental health of our staff and we were reminded that our people are our greatest asset. A quick team survey on our relevance given the

disruption in service delivery, our purpose as an organisation and our values, resulted in a powerful sense of commitment to the communities we serve.

There was a stronger than ever need to focus on our pathway to societal impact. Thank you to all the SydWest authentic colleagues joining me every day in building community resilience and assisting the vulnerable. Our focus was and will remain on maintaining a strong and ethical culture and modelling our values.

Thank you to my Leadership Team that supported me and each other throughout a challenging year. Thank you to my Board of Directors and our CFO Raman Bhalla. A sad farewell to my Chair, Raquel Ricafort-Bleza and our Directors Dr. Moninder Singh, Bridget Sarris and Noel Hiffeman that stood by me since my appointment in this role. The last six years under your governance have been of consistent growth and sustainability for the organisation.

A deserving "thank you" needs to go out to all our funding bodies for their flexibility during the second half of the year.

A short report can never capture our every-day lives at SydWest, but I am sure the pages that follow brilliantly showcase our achievements this financial year.

The virus might have paused some of our plans, but we are already in the path of not just bouncing back but bouncing forward!

Watch this space.



SydWest Office Staff

Aged Care Services

The Aged Care Services team has continued to record steady growth in consumer numbers across both Home Care Packages (HCP) and the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). Compared to last financial year, total client numbers increased by 5.1%, not taking into consideration the number of exited clients.

Consumer Satisfaction Surveys carried out throughout the year indicated a

client satisfaction rate of over **95%**.

This is all credit to the high-quality care standards practiced by our Aged Care Team, both office and field based.

The new Aged Care Quality Standards came into effect on 1st July 2019. Since then, there has been significant progress in our quest to align our service delivery to the new standards. We gained a deeper understanding of the expected outcomes of all standards but of most significance was the Personal Care and Clinical Care standard. As a result, the importance of clinical roles has taken center-stage in our vision for the future. There now is and will continue to be more in-depth engagement with clients at initial assessments, during reassessments and at any other times to determine and respond to clients' personal and clinical needs. There is also now a huge focus on monitoring and effectively responding to clients' deterioration.

COVID19

Despite all the good things that have happened, the year came with a few challenges. The top two for Aged Care Services were regarding COVID19 and Care Worker Recruitment. Every individual and business had been affected by COVID19 in one way or the other but as you may all be aware, elderly people have the highest risk. SydWest took all the necessary measures to make sure consumers and staff were safe.

Aged Care Excursion



Aged Care Exercise Group

Although we managed to continue with most of our business as usual throughout the pandemic, we had to stop all face to face social support group meetings.

Our vulnerable social support clients were heavily disadvantaged; for most of them, these face-to face meetings are the only social interaction they have. A few groups were able to continue meeting via virtual platforms such as Zoom, Messenger and WhatsApp. Unfortunately, even within these few groups, not all the consumers had access to these virtual platforms and the majority lack the language skill to be able to do so. It is without doubt that language is the biggest barrier for CALD seniors and therefore there is need for this cohort to be afforded additional support in any situations of challenge compared to the general population. Some of our consumers receiving services at home chose to suspend services and some of our care staff, especially those with school age children also chose to take time off work to care for their children during schools' closure. In certain instances, services had to be suspended because consumers or care workers had or had been in close contact with somebody who had COVID19 symptoms.

Recruitment was already a challenge pre-COVID19 and the outbreak of COVID19 only exacerbated the challenge. We primarily target bi-lingual care workers and some languages are just not easy to find. When COVID19 hit, there was a lot of misunderstanding, misinformation, fear, and anxiety especially among CALD communities. Some newly recruited care workers asked to have their service put on-hold before they even started. We also had to put all recruitment on-hold and we lost some candidates we had lined up for interviews. Things have started going back to normal as people are starting to learn to live with COVID19. We continue to look for prospective care workers and therefore welcome new applications anytime. Although COVID19 has had a negative impact on our service outputs, it has not, in any way dampened our hope for the future!

Looking ahead

Looking ahead as Aged Care Services, our vision is to become one of the biggest Aged Care service providers for CALD communities and an expert on CALD aged care issues in the whole of NSW. It is my dream to see Aged Care operations, in the long run, expanding to the extent of being able to cater for more needs of the elderly consumers, such as allied health services, home modifications and home maintenance, thereby giving more choice to consumers while creating new streams of income to plough back into service delivery.



Mereline MurimwaRarami
Manager

Aged Care Services

(continued)

Aged Care Services

DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE

- Housekeeping
- Grocery shopping
- Meal preparation
- Laundry assistance
- Basic domestic cleaning



SOCIAL SUPPORT

- On-site & community based support
- Outings
- Dance & yoga classes
- Art classes



PERSONAL CARE & CLINICAL CARE

- Personal hygiene, bathing & showering
- Dressing and grooming
- Help at mealtimes
- Continence management
- Clinical assessments
- Nursing Services



FLEXIBLE RESPITE CARE

- In home respite
- Carer respite
- Community access



TRANSPORT

- To / from appointments, outings, shopping trips
- Shopping from a list



OTHER ACTIVITIES

Other activities can be arranged on request

As your trusted service provider and partner, we understand your needs so you can live at home with dignity, confidence and independence.

We are here with you every step of the way, providing you with your own personally designed programs.

Aged Care Success

from our Social Support Groups (SSG) clients

I always look forward to Fridays and my Serbian SSG. I have been attending for more than 7 years and am very happy with everything.

I have been a member of the Chinese Women's SSG for decades and am very happy as the group was formed to meet friends, communicate and socialize. The SSSG has assisted me in many ways – I've gained new knowledge and new things. It's a place to meet friends and socialize and receive latest information. I am very satisfied.

I have been attending the Chinese Women's SSG for 8 years and love to socialise with friends. I have volunteered to help others too. I am relaxed, happy and healthy and able to help others in the group. Attending Group has made me independent and I always look forward to group.

As a member of the Chinese Seniors SSG, I have been coming for 18 years and am very happy. Outings and activities have helped me in many ways. Singing has made everyone happy.

I joined the Iranian SSG several years ago and have learnt lots of new things through group. The program has been great this year.

Thank you SydWest for the wonderful work you do! My mother recently had a visit from her case coordinator and SydWest's registered nurse. We found her to be very knowledgeable and helpful and all in a manner which related extremely well with the clients. Jan was very intuitive and approached matters with sensitivity, assisting my mother in discussing her issues and hopefully improving her wellbeing.

I have been with the Maltese SSG for more than 12 years. I am lonely at home, so enjoy the company of others and it makes me feel better when I can attend the group and socialise.

I joined the Maltese SSG 9 years ago and I enjoy meeting my friends there. SSG has improved my quality of life as staying at home is like shutting oneself off.

You make a huge difference to my mother's life, as I am sure all SydWest care coordinators do to all of your clients. Just a chat brightens up her day and sometimes that is all the elderly at home really need! So, thank you and keep on doing the wonderful work that you do with such passion.

Disability Services



Lucia Bruno
Manager

Reflecting over the past year, I would like to acknowledge and thank all the NDIS team members who have readily provided quality support services to their Participants and families.

Through the endless hard work from of our dedicated team, we will continue to support our Participants and their families all the way through their NDIS journey. The past year has allowed us to be fully engaged within the NDIS and I am pleased to say it is working well. The Team continued to evaluate its services to certify it met the expectations of Participants and their families while remaining sustainable under the NDIS.

The NDIS Team provided person centred, individualised support to Participants from the CALD community within Western Sydney, Penrith and Nepean areas. They continue to offer choice and control to all their Participants so they can work towards achieving their NDIS goals and interact with others who have comparable interests and life experience. The Team's prominence on community participation and skills building provides our Participants with abilities that will continue to assist them throughout their lifetime.

Disability Services



The Participants' NDIS plans are implemented in a manner that they receive the maximum benefits to reach their goals.

Our independent Support Coordination team supports NDIS Participants and their families to understand and implement the funded supports in their plan, as well as further link them to community, mainstream and other government services. A combination of supports are utilised to work towards increasing Participant capacity to maintain relationships and live more independently while ensuring that NDIS goals are achieved during the time of their NDIS plan and further preparing them for their up and coming NDIS Plan Reviews.

We are excited to continue to work with our current Participants, their families and look forward to the opportunity to engage and support new Participants from the CALD community.



Disability Services at Home



NDIS Individual Core Support

14,287

hours of service delivered



NDIS Support Coordination

1,738

hours of service delivered

Community Engagement

This financial year, SydWest Multicultural Services expanded and made some significant achievements through the Community Engagement Division despite this not being a typical year with the second half dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Strengthening Western Sydney Communities - funded by the Department of Home Affairs through the Fostering Integration Grants program and with financial contribution from SydWest and SSI - targeted 50 African young people through a range of early intervention initiatives that encouraged social, economic as well as civic participation. A total of 45 African young people completed a 5-week leadership development program that built their public speaking skills facilitated through the Toastmasters series, personal branding and financial literacy. Two young people were offered scholarships to attend the 'We are all Sydney Community' initiative'. 10 of the young people were linked to employment opportunities with Woolworths, Coles and other businesses.

The young people are currently engaged in the Navigating Home project, a partnership with Western Sydney University which explores the role of creative cultural practices with African diaspora in Australia using documentary and film to shed light on their resettlement story in a way that challenges negative stereotypes.

Youth Enhanced Support Service (YESS)

SydWest secured a partnership with Parramatta Mission, funded through WentWest Ltd, for a mental health early intervention service targeting young people from CALD backgrounds and their families residing in the Blacktown, Cumberland, Parramatta and Hills Shire Local Government Area respectively. This is a much-needed service for the young people due to the way mental health is understood by many cultural groups, creating a barrier to accessing vital support. SydWest's Youth Peer Support Worker provided support to Parramatta Mission's clinicians, offering advice on culturally appropriate ways of working with young people and their families.

Settlement Clients Group Outing



Clement Meru
Manager



Youth Uni Taster Visit to WSU

Youth Transition Support

The youth services continued to engage newly arrived young people through a number of initiatives to support their transition to further education and employment: The study centres operating from SydWest's Blacktown and Mt Druitt sites attracted an average of 23 students weekly and provided vital support to students who had to adapt to a new educational system and whose newly arrived parents had limited capacity to provide assistance with school work.

Another successful initiative was the 'School-to-work' program which offered career development sessions to young people to equip them with skills to navigate the Australian job market.

Employment Pathways

Another successful implementation of the Employment Pathways project which was a 3-phase initiative offering career development workshops delivered through Blacktown TAFE, engagement with businesses at an industry lunch attended by fifty-three representatives from the business community and a successful Blacktown Employment Accelerator for the third year running.

The Accelerator event attracted a total of **89** job seekers who interacted with fifteen employers and recruitment agencies in the areas of nursing, disability, security and small business.

Greater Western Sydney Community Activation

This initiative was funded through the Community Capacity Building (CCB) component of the SETS over the May to June 2020 period. Virtual training workshops engaged a total of fifteen leaders from a range of new and emerging community groups across the Western Sydney corridor, equipping them with skills and knowledge to deal with significant change. The mentoring component of the initiative applied learnings from the training sessions and offered peer learnings.

The leaders will continue to engage through bi-monthly community forums in the new financial year and inform SydWest's planning and service design.

Community Engagement

(continued)

We work hard to build capacity, confidence and independence in all our clients and their families, helping them to integrate and become productive members of their local community. We are very proud of all our achievements this year.

Refugee Week 2020

SydWest in partnership with MECA hosted a series of virtual events to celebrate Refugee Week 2020. The activities included food demonstrations hosted on 17th and 18th June at MECA's garden featured 15-20 minute presentations of recipes from Iraq, Iran, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Catering Service. The events attracted a total of 700 guests.

19th June 2020 featured 20 poetry recitations from a diverse range of refugee and migrant communities.

Digital Literacy

SydWest partnered with Blacktown TAFE to design a digital literacy training to respond to the need for target group clients to acquire the skills to navigate online platforms to access support services and group activities. 70 clients learnt to use online platforms, including Zoom and WhatsApp, to access online Yoga, citizenship, cooking classes as well as leadership training. Public donations of computers and laptops allowed families and students easy access to services and schooling.

International Women's Day 2020

International Women Day 2020 held in March 2020 at Blacktown Arts Centre was marked by the launch of new film, "Solace" produced by Saba Vasefi a multi-award-winning artist, film maker and poet. The program also featured discussion by a panel of speakers, including Elfa Moraitakis (CEO, SydWest Multicultural Services), Sen. Mehreen Faruqi (Greens Senator), Hon. Sophi Cotsis MP (Member of the NSW Legislative Assembly, Member for Canterbury, Shadow Minister for Better Public Services) and Councilor Carol Israel (Blacktown City Council) who shared insights on the inclusion of multicultural women in the Australian art industry and leadership at the three levels of government.

Refugee Week



M-Series Project

As an extension of our use of sport as a community integration tool, SydWest Multicultural Services became a key stakeholder in the M-Series project since its inception in March of 2019.

Standing for **Multicultural-Series** and funded by STARTTS, the M-Series is an innovative program which uses futsal and football to assist newly arrived humanitarian entrants and migrants to build social capital and connections, with the ultimate goal of supporting their transition to life in Australia.

As part of the M-Series project, SydWest established a representative futsal team, SydWest FC, that participated in multiple tournaments and events. The project also created other opportunities for SydWest FC to participate in local competitions and charity tournaments, which has built the young people's networks and broadened their horizons in sport.

One young person in particular, **Heritier Penekatamba**, stood out as a talented and dedicated player. Through connections with SydWest, Jarrod Galbraith-Martin the M-Series founder, Heri had the opportunity to compete with the project's representative team 'Mosaic' in a number of high-level competitions across Sydney. In addition, he was offered the opportunity to join the University of Technology Sydney Football Academy with a potential for being granted a scholarship at the university following HSC completion. Heri is also now playing outdoor football with NPL team Hawkesbury City FC. Heri hopes to continue progressing and one day play professionally.

SydWest looks forward to continuing to drive health, wellness and personal and professional development using the world game of Football!



SydWest FC Team

Corporate Services



SydWest Multicultural Services is the door to essential services for thousands of people. Every day, we deliver vital services to clients across the greater Western Sydney via our offices at Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Rouse Hill, Penrith and Castle Hill. Our aim is to provide trusted services that are professional, helpful and friendly.

Throughout the year, the Corporate Services team remained committed to provide effective and efficient back of office operations in the area of human resources, communications, information and communications technology, administration, property management and customer service support.

We are committed to achieving excellence in service delivery. We continue to make service improvements across the breadth of our corporate services and programs with the goal of making it as accessible as possible for staff and the community we serve.

I thank all our dedicated staff and colleagues for making possible our successes over the past year. I particularly appreciate the outstanding customer service our frontline staff deliver every day. They support the community from all backgrounds, who are often in complex or vulnerable situations. I am continually inspired by the compassionate, professional way they serve our clients.

I would like to acknowledge all our volunteers for their time in supporting our clients and thank them for their passion and commitment.

Looking Forward

We are all working in a dynamic and challenging environment – the continual and rapid pace of communications and technology advances, changing expectations of the community and stakeholders. We are committed to listening and understanding what and how we can improve our performance – particularly in terms of how the community and stakeholders perceive us in terms of our services, efficiency, effectiveness and integrity.

We will continue to learn from experience, from our measures and feedback. We will build on our achievements, learn from successes and mistakes, and direct our resources to what matters most.



Nikolayka Bentcheva
Manager

OUR KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2019-20



IT Transformation Project

Today, more than ever before, we have the opportunity through new technology to make our services more accessible. Our aim was to achieve Business Scalability, Data Protection, High Availability and Security Improvements. We embraced new technologies to adapt to the fast-changing digital environment.

The implementation of Cloud Server, Office 365 and VoIP phone technology met the needs of staff and ultimately improved the services offered to our clients.



Customer Service Satisfaction

We strive to have an ongoing dialogue with our clients about their experience with our staff. We continued to utilise the Smiley Digital (Happy or Not feedback terminals) to give onsite clients a simple way to share their voice. Capturing data from our clients gives us valuable feedback insight for continuous improvements.

88.24% positive index received from over 1800 responses during the year.



Staff Support Satisfaction while working from home due to COVID-19

As we all know, 2020 has been a challenging year for everyone and circumstances have made it even more important for us all to stay connected and the achievement of the IT Transformation Project allowed office staff to work from home for four weeks during the most critical time of COVID-19, allowing us to support our office staff and field care workers to stay connected with our clients. During the home working weeks, the Smiley Digital was utilised to capture feedback from office employees. Our office staff kept regularly in touch with the care workers to ensure they were supported while on the road to provide an essential service to our aged care and disability services clients.

We received over 450 responses with the majority of staff happy with the level of support received from management with an 87.36% positive rating.

100%

Positive outcomes from the Staff Annual Survey

100% positive rating

SydWest's Management genuinely support equality between women and men and values differences in people.

I am familiar with the SydWest's Vision, Mission and Values.

I really care about the future success of SydWest Multicultural Services.



Ergonomic Improvements

We introduced sit-stand desk solutions used as a 'hot desk' and some height adjustable desks across the offices, including ergonomic mouse pads.

Corporate Services

(continued)

'We believe that the key to good customer service is building good relationships with our clients and our offices are open to serve the wider community in a positive, helpful and friendly business environment.'

STAFF AWARDS

We recognised staff for their outstanding work performance, work life balance and personal development. Our Staff Rewards and Recognition Program acknowledged the significant contributions individuals and teams make toward fulfilling SydWest's Values (Accountability, Collaboration, Excellence), objectives and goals and recognised those who have made a difference, in the following categories:

4
staff received the
ACE Award

1 team/2 staff
received the
Health & Wellness Award

3
staff received the
Personal Development Award

Corporate Services Team, Health & Wellness Award



STAFF RECOGNITION

We recognised and celebrated the loyalty of staff through their long-term service to SydWest Multicultural Services.

31
staff were
recognised with
5 Years of Services

12
staff were
recognised with
10 Years of Services

4
staff were
recognised with
15 Years of Services



58
Office staff



97
Care workers



30
Volunteers




9
Staff promoted



7
Training sessions per team



20
Training sessions all staff



143
Individual staff training



286
Health & Wellness activities

Our Stories

Blacktown Emerging Leaders Advocacy (BELA)

The conclusion of the BELA program was marked by the graduation in October 2019 of eleven young leaders from recently arrived refugee and humanitarian entrant communities.

The eight months training equipped the young leaders with skills in public speaking and advocacy which some of them have already implemented in addressing local community issues. The graduation was attended by Hon. Kevin Conolly, Parliamentary Secretary for Education and Member for Riverstone.

A BELA Success Story

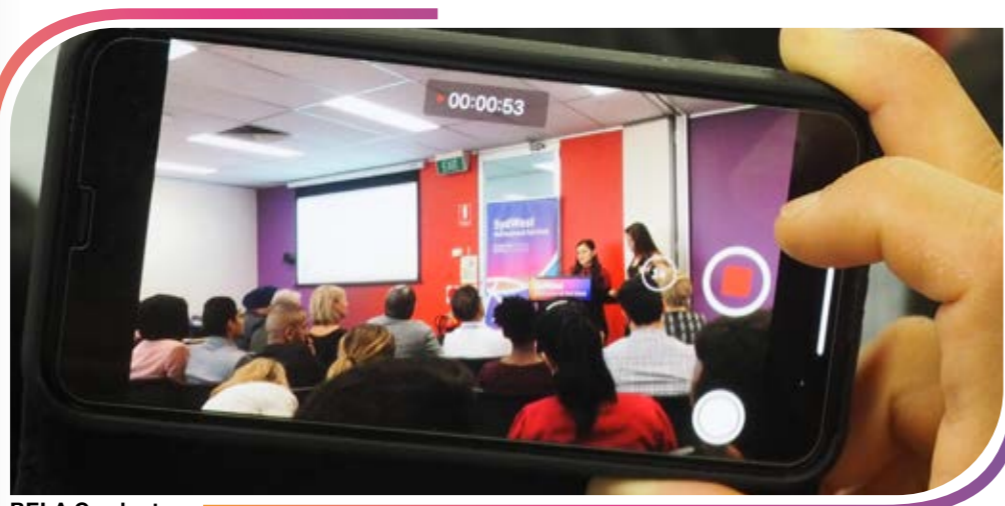
Shahida Haydari is a 21 year old from Afghanistan who arrived 2017 on a permanent resident family visa, sponsored by refugee parents.

Prior to starting the Blacktown Emerging Leaders Advocacy program, Shahida had no knowledge of advocacy. She was not a confident public speaker and had little to no knowledge of mental health and services supporting young people. She also had limited information of services.

Through BELA program, Shahida acquired skills in advocacy, leadership and grew to be a confident young woman who enjoys public speaking. She is now extremely motivated and ambitious.

Shahida is currently studying Business at Western Sydney University. She now knows how to develop her own website and created one for her clothing business. She participated in the Miss World Australia beauty pageant where she represented and embraced her culture. She assisted in organizing a peaceful protest with other young people to help raise awareness of the injustice in her home country, Afghanistan. Shahida is looking forward to starting a social enterprise soon.

She has also engaged and worked with Headspace, Refugee Council of Australia, Afghan Women on the Move, Head space, Thrive Refugee Enterprise and the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network(MYAN).



BELA Graduates

Families client-volunteer secures job with NSW Health

Arslah Khan first came to SydWest as a client with three young children, joining the Mt Druitt Mother Support Group in 2013. Arslah appreciated the support she received from the group so much, that in 2016 she started volunteering with the team to help other mothers in the community with the support they need.

Originally a medical doctor in her native Pakistan, the volunteering experience helped her gain confidence in an Australian role while she took the Australian Medical Council exams. Upon completion, she then completed her Statement of Attainment in Medical Records and Coding.

In June this year, Arslah secured a full time role as a Medical Coder at St George Hospital. SydWest workers supported her through the application process, with one providing a reference.

Our Mothers Support Groups for women in the Blacktown and Hills local government areas are a great way for women to meet up and share with others while their children are cared for in adjoining rooms. This gives parent a break and the chance to discover more about parenting, education, health and wellbeing and other topics of interest.

Arslah



Our Stories

(continued)

Online Penrith Food Redi Program

During the pandemic, 10 clients from newly arrived Arabic, Iranian and Nepalese communities joined our Penrith Food Redi program, in partnership with Penrith City Council in May 2020.

The participants learnt different recipes with ingredients provided by Penrith City Council, which they shared with their family members. Each week they learned about different types of food to cook and share it with their family.

Cooking together brought a vibe of connectedness, sharing, engaging, and they all tried a new healthy food to achieve a healthy diet as well as positive life changes.

They also learned how to keep their kitchen safe as well as buying cost effective products for their daily cooking.

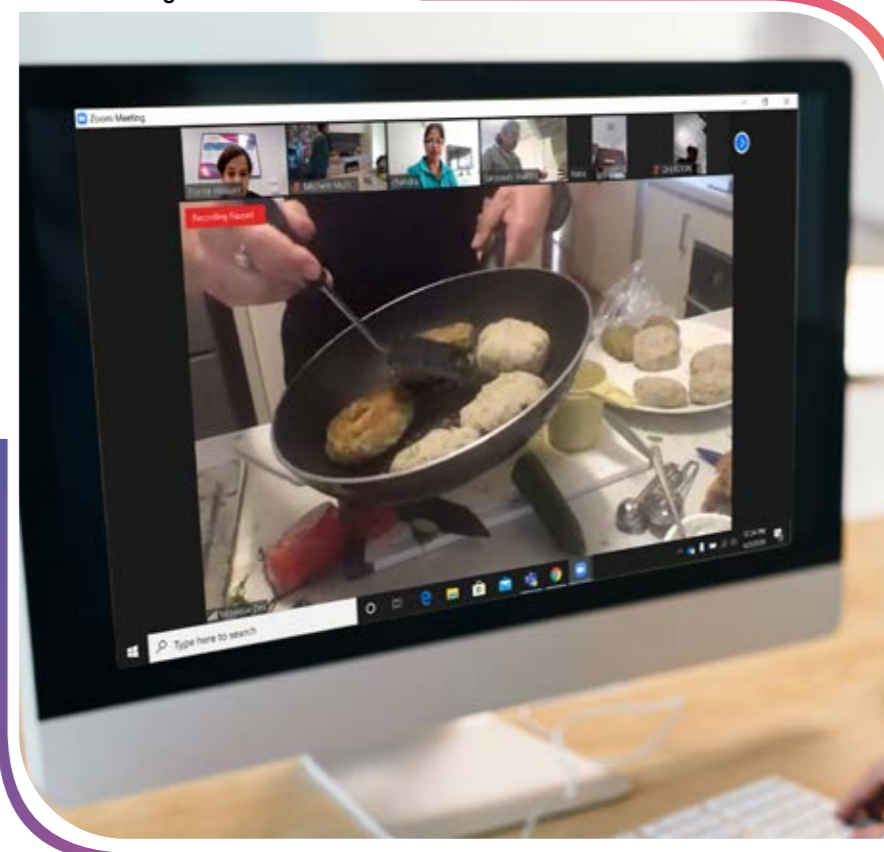
Arina's Story

Arina (not her real name) fled Iran for Turkey escaping grave social, financial and emotional circumstances and is now a refugee trying to settle in Australia. She and her mother fled their country seeking safety. After a long journey and many years of waiting, she was granted refugee status and arrived in Australia in 2017 with the hope of starting a new life.

As a single parent and a victim of Domestic and Family Violence, Arina tried very hard to overcome several challenges in her settlement journey, including limited English language skills, inability to drive and social isolation. Through support from SydWest she has taken a step toward her personal and professional goals.

She has developed links with the broader community to overcome social isolation. She enrolled in tertiary education to reach her potential. Finally, she acquired a driver's license. As an active SydWest volunteer, she is now empowering other newly arrived refugee women, and is progressing with her education while being a full-time mother looking after her child as well as caring for an elderly mother.

Online Cooking Class with Food Redi



Our Stories

(continued)

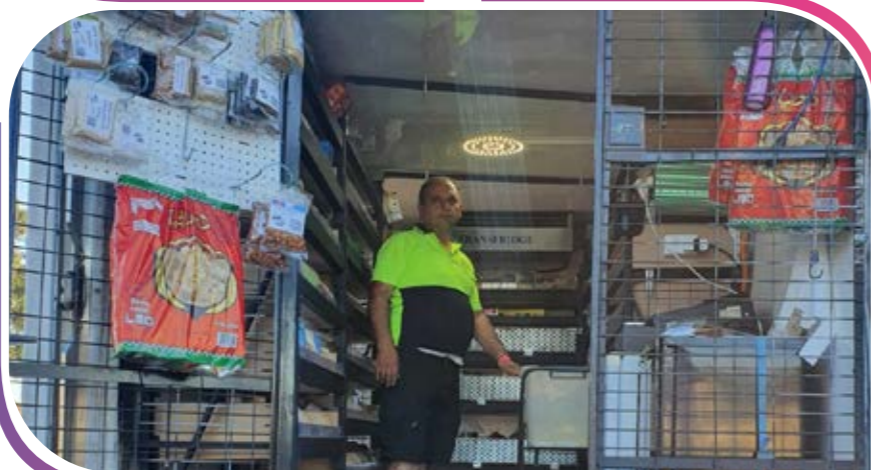
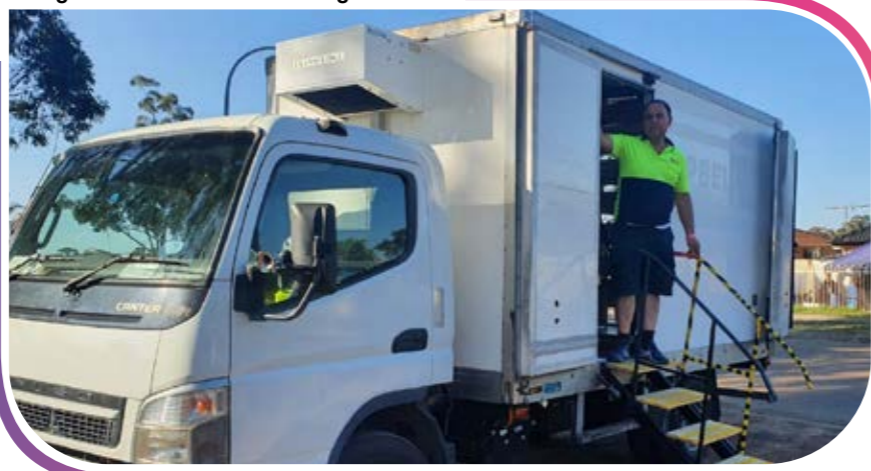
The Walking Market

During recent government restrictions, many members of our multicultural communities had limited access to traditional groceries and products.

Enterprising SydWest client George Wahbeh, from Syria, launched 'The Walking Market', home-delivering Arabic foods and ingredients to families around Blacktown, Penrith, Mount Druitt, St Clair and St Mary's. In a short amount of time, 'The Walking Market' has received rave reviews from customers for its great prices and convenient, on-time delivery.

Working at a supply warehouse, George received support from his employer and his SydWest case worker, Mervat, to launch his new small business. He is now focused on 'The Walking Market' on a full-time basis and has recently invested in a refrigerated van to further expand his operations.

George Wahbeh and 'The Walking Market'



Maher Gurgees

When Maher arrived from Iraq in 2016 on a Global Special Humanitarian Visa, he quickly got to work on developing his skills and improving his outlook.

With the assistance of the SydWest Settlement Services team, Maher enrolled in TAFE – first to study English, then to study Logistics & Warehousing. We were able to help Maher secure a placement at IKEA, who noticed his hard work and decided to retain him in a paid role in August last year.

Initially on a 20hr per week contract, Maher impressed management at IKEA so much that they've now put him on a full-time contract and broadened his remit to continue developing his professional skills.

Maher currently also volunteers with SydWest, supporting with the Men's Social Group and Senior Support Group, both in Mt Druitt.

Maher Gurgees



Our Events



Tamil Festival of Light



Seniors Week



Seniors Christmas Celebration

Blacktown Business Lunch



BELA Graduation



International Women's Day



Annual General Meeting



Youth End of Year Formal



Settlement End of Year Celebration



Photo Exhibition

Capturing the Moment: Images of Making Australia Home is a travelling photographic exhibition, launched by Elfa Moraitakis, CEO of SydWest Multicultural Services at the 2019 Annual General Meeting.

The exhibition is a collaboration between SydWest Multicultural Services, English Conversation volunteer Tutor Judith Bennett and our clients in the English Conversation classes. The images show the shared experiences of refugees and migrants in the resettlement process and the impact that English Conversation classes have in helping make a new home.

This exhibition is a visual accompaniment to the SydWest **Stories of Making Australia Home** published in 2017 and has been on display at Penrith City Library and is currently at the new SydWest Mt DrUITT office.

SydWest is seeking hosts in 2021 for the Capturing the Moment: Images of Making Australia Home Photo Exhibition, where it can be on public display for 6-8 weeks.

Images of Making Australia Home



**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF SYDWEST MULTICULTURAL SERVICES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020**

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of SydWest Multicultural Services ("the Company"), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the responsible persons' declaration.

In our opinion, the financial report of the company is in accordance with *Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (a) presents fairly the Company's financial position as at 30 June 2020 and its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards, and *Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis of Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act)* and the ethical requirements of the *Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code)* that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Global Pandemic

We draw attention to Note 2.14 to the financial report, which describes the Company's assessment of the coronavirus pandemic. At the time of this report, the coronavirus pandemic continues to spread in many countries across the globe. This crisis has and will continue to have a significant economic effect on global and local economies, for example due to restrictions in production or social distance on public events. The impact on the company and its stakeholders is unable to be reliably measured or predicted at this time due to the rapidly evolving nature of the pandemic. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

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under the Professional Standards
Legislation.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF SYDWEST MULTICULTURAL SERVICES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020 (CONT'D)**

The Board's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Board of the Company is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *ACNC Act* and the needs of the members. The Board's responsibility also includes such internal control as the responsible entities determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Board is responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the responsible entities either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could be reasonably expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

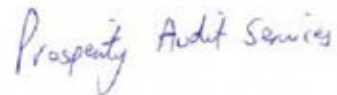
As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Committee.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF SYDWEST MULTICULTURAL SERVICES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020 (CONT'D)**

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the Committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



PROSPERITY AUDIT SERVICES



LUKE MALONE
Partner

15 October 2020
Sydney

**SydWest Multicultural Services
Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020**

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

	Notes	2020 \$	2019 \$
Income			
Grant funding		4,610,914	4,572,220
Services		6,503,016	4,860,864
Other Income		752,902	586,743
	3.1	11,866,832	10,019,827
Expenditure			
Employee benefits expense	3.2	7,820,709	6,547,565
Service delivery expense		1,586,797	956,106
Interest Lease Expense		43,812	-
Property and utilities expense		23,022	471,533
Unspent client funds		444,903	547,356
Travel expense		336,355	322,269
IT expense		285,561	242,789
Depreciation expense		387,237	92,669
		10,928,398	9,180,287
Net Surplus for the year		938,434	839,540

This statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

Statement of Financial Position

	Notes	2020 \$	2019 \$
ASSETS			
Current			
Cash and cash equivalents	3.3	9,171,993	8,031,921
Receivables & Prepayments	3.4	283,912	627,570
Total Current Assets		9,455,905	8,659,491
Non-current			
Property, Plant and equipment	3.5	333,360	234,532
Right of use assets		1,489,505	1,782,892
Total Non-current Assets		1,822,865	2,017,424
Total Assets		11,278,771	10,676,915
LIABILITIES			
Current			
Creditors and accruals	3.6	2,154,854	1,580,175
Grant received in advance		181,397	818,753
Provisions	3.7	578,023	474,300
Lease liabilities		261,766	370,827
Total Current Liabilities		3,176,040	3,244,055
Non-current			
Provisions	3.7	310,424	317,221
Lease liabilities		1,150,298	1,412,065
Total Non-current Liabilities		1,460,722	1,729,286
Total Liabilities		4,636,762	4,973,341
NET ASSETS		6,642,008	5,703,574
FUNDS			
Accumulated Funds		6,642,008	5,703,574
TOTAL FUNDS		6,642,008	5,703,574

This statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

Our Funding Bodies and Partners 2019-2020

SydWest receives its core funding for programs from:

During the year, we also received grants from the Roads and Maritime Services NSW, Community Migrant Resource Centre (CMRC), Multicultural NSW, National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and Blacktown City Council.

The Department of Health	NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)
The Department of Home Affairs	Mission Australia
The Department of Social Services	National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
Settlement Services International (SSI)	
NSW Department of Education	

SydWest would also like to thank some of our key partners in 2019-20:

Ability Links	Multicultural Youth Affairs Network NSW (MYAN)
Aged Care Assessment Services	Nepean Multicultural Access
Association of Bhutanese in Australia, Sydney	Nova Employment
Australian Department of Human Services	NSW Department of Justice
Australian Retailers Association (ARA)	NSW Health – Western Sydney Local Health District
Blacktown and Mt Druitt Community Health	NSW Police Force
Blacktown City Council	NSW Refugee Health Service
Blacktown Older People's Mental Health Team	NSW Settlement Partnership members
Blacktown Police	Parramatta Mission
Blacktown Soccer Football Association (BDSFA)	Penrith City Council
Blacktown Youth Services Association (BYSA)	Penrith Women's Health Centre
Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Nirimba, Nepean and Blue Mountains TAFE	Priority Populations Integrated & Community Health
Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Quakers Hill and Penrith Police Area Commands	Refugee Council of Australia
Brahma Kumaris Australia	Salvation Army
Cancer Institute NSW	Sathya SAI International Organization of Australia and PNG (NSW Region West)
Cumberland Council	St Marys Area Community Development Project Inc
Dementia Australia	STARTTS
Diabetes NSW	Surf Life Saving NSW
Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW	TAFE NSW
Evans High School	The Hills Shire Council
Football NSW	Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute
Hearing Australia	Wesley Mission
Hepatitis NSW	Western Sydney Family Referral Service
Hills community Health	Western Sydney LHD Oral Health Network
Hillsong City Care	Western Sydney Local Health District
Initiatives of Change Australia	Western Sydney University
Legal Aid NSW	Western Sydney Wanderers FC
Marist180	Westmead Breast Cancer Institute
MECA Mt Druitt	Wheelchair Sport NSW
Merrylands NSW Australia Days for Girls Team	Wise Employment
Multicultural Health Service	Yourtown
Multicultural NSW	

SydWest

Multicultural Services

sydwestms.org.au

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Mt Druitt NSW 2770
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Penrith

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Community Connection Building
114–116 Henry Street
Penrith NSW 2750

Rouse Hill

Vinegar Hills Community
Centre
29 Main Street
Rouse Hill Town Centre
NSW 2155

Castle Hill

The Community Hub
Castle Hill Towers Shopping
Centre
6-14 Castle Street
Castle Hill NSW 2154