



SydWest
ANNUAL REPORT
Connecting Cultures
Building Community

2015





Who We Are

For the past 30 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 part of Australian society.

We help people of all ages and cultures, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Our diverse programs and services and quality aged care and disability services support people living in greater Western Sydney.

Our Vision

**Connecting
Cultures.
Building
Community.**

Our Mission

SydWest Multicultural Services is a leading community organisation that is helping people of all cultures to become empowered through direct services and representation. We contribute to building the social capacity of communities in Greater Western Sydney through our relevant services, skills and evidence development. We focus on people who are vulnerable and most in need, such as youth and children, seniors, people with disabilities and humanitarian entrants across the life course.



Our Core Values

- Integrity** We champion the rights of all people to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Diversity** We value each person's right to participate in all aspects of society.
- Passion** We inspire and motivate others to make a difference in their own lives and to the lives of others.
- Professionalism** We commit to providing exceptional services.
- Innovation** We generate and drive new models of service delivery to meet our clients' needs.
- Respect** We acknowledge opinions and ideas without judgement.
- Accountability** We commit to the mission of the organisation and respect the process.

Table of Contents

Management Reports	4-7
Celebrating 30 Years in Western Sydney	8-9
Our People Our Volunteers	10-11
Our Programs	
– Settlement Services	12-23
– Aged Care and Disability Services	24-29
– Families and Young Children	30-35
Our Events	36-37
Our Funding Bodies and Partners	38-39



Chairperson's Report

The past year has been both challenging and full of opportunities for SydWest Multicultural Services. The community sector in which we operate has experienced a range of State and Federal reforms over recent years, including regulatory changes to funding and business models. To stay relevant and competitive in this environment, SydWest like many other organisations has seized on this opportunity to review our purpose and strategies, explore partnerships and service funding opportunities and evolve and improve quality of governance.

I am pleased to report that during the year, SydWest successfully collaborated with Settlement Services International (SSI) and other multicultural service organisations to confirm ongoing funding for our important settlement programs. In addition, our Aged Care and Disability Services division has passed a number of important reviews, including meeting the requirements of the NSW Disability Service Standards and therefore certifying SydWest as an approved disability service provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Recognising the need to continually improve and to help steer SydWest into the future, the Board worked closely with management and staff to undertake a strategic planning review of the organisation. Our aim is to ensure that SydWest continues to move forward successfully with a focus on client-centred service delivery, innovation and quality programs, and positive partnerships and collaborations. This will be done through a right mix of strong leadership, and a dedicated team of staff, with people development being a key focus and clearly articulated strategy. Overall, these factors have helped to place SydWest in a strong and healthy structural and financial position for the future. This is particularly fitting as we celebrate our 30th anniversary year, marking three decades of service to the local community in Western Sydney.

Established in 1985 as a resource centre for refugees and migrants, SydWest has continually responded to meet the growing needs of the community. Cognisant of the need to take a more holistic approach and seek out innovative solutions to some of the most difficult problems of our constituents, our services now include aged care, disabilities and family services. Thirty years on, we can proudly stamp our reputation as a go-to organisation for individuals and multicultural community groups and a key player within the



community sector. SydWest is about connecting cultures and building communities. Our services and programs are centered on empowering individuals and helping newly arrived people, particularly from non-English speaking backgrounds, to become independent and valued citizens. Our bilingual community care workers take an empowerment approach to provide quality aged care and disability services to people across the region. And our staff, which are the heart of the organisation, remain passionate and committed to helping and empowering people in the region each year.

I would like to acknowledge the dedicated staff and volunteers including my fellow Board members, who work tirelessly to contribute to the success of this organisation. On behalf of SydWest, I would also like to sincerely thank our partners and funding bodies who continue to recognise and support the important work that we do.

During the financial year, two Board Members, Balraj Sangha and Dr Russel Dickens, retired on completion of their term, and I would like to acknowledge their long service to the organisation. Similarly, I thank our past CEO, Susan Vogels who retired after 12 years of service to the organisation. I also have the pleasure of welcoming new Board Members, Dr Moninderjit Singh, Raquel Ricafort-Bleza and Bridget Sarris, all of whom bring diverse experience and innovation to the Board. Finally, I have the privilege of welcoming our new CEO, Elfa Moraitakis. With a wealth of knowledge and experience combined with her commitment to SydWest and the sector more broadly, Elfa is well placed to lead us into the future.

Om Dhungel
Chairperson

SydWest Board of Directors



Om Dhungel
Chairperson



Noel Hiffernan
Director



Robert Fitzgerald
Director



Dr Chandrika Subramaniyan
Director



Dr Moninderjit Singh
Director



Raquel Ricafort-Bleza
Director



Bridget Sarris
Director



CEO's Report

I feel very proud and privileged to be presenting my first Annual Report on the 30th birthday of SydWest Multicultural Services. What a journey it has been.

Given the current climate within the not for profit sector, a review of our operations and services was inevitable this year. As a result we developed a new three year strategy and formed innovative partnerships to ensure that people in Greater Western Sydney are fully engaged and continue to receive the best and most appropriate care. This year, SydWest helped to empower thousands of individuals in the region, including refugees and humanitarian entrants settling into the community, families with young children, youth, seniors, and the aged and people with disabilities.

Some of the highlights this year include our Aged Care and Disability Support Services team achieving an outstanding Quality Review of Services by the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency. Following a vigorous auditing process through a third party verifier, SydWest is now an official Disability Service provider preparing its way for the rollout of the NDIS. Funding from the Department of Social Services assisted in a solid partnership with the Western Sydney

Local Health District for the 'Health and Active Living Project'. This program allows a large number of our seniors to remain active and independent in their homes and their community. Our partnership with the Office of Heritage and Environment and Dharma Karma, with the support of the Western Sydney University and Blacktown City Council for the innovative 'Our Place Our Environment' project, is seeing our community members gain an environmentally healthy attitude by identifying values within their own culture.

SydWest's active involvement in the NSW Settlement Services Program Partnership with Settlement Services International, guarantees that our newly arrived refugees and humanitarian entrants continue to be assisted in settling in the Greater Western Sydney region. Our newly formed partnership with Mission Australia for the Going Home, Staying Home Program means that all migrant communities at risk of homelessness now have a place to reach out for help. In addition, our Youth Employment Pathways partnership with Evans High School, Mitchell High School and Nirimba TAFE, funded by the NSW Department of Education, is successfully helping local students to find their way back to education and employment.

Our CALD Early Intervention Program committed to The Hive to mobilise culturally diverse communities in Mt Druitt to connect to bring meaningful change in the area for the benefit of our children and our socially disadvantaged parents. This is an important collaboration of service providers and the community led by United Way, with the support of the Department of Family and Community Services.

During the year, SydWest was also part of a collaborative move involving all partner Migrant Resource Centres in NSW in the first 'Standing Together Day of Action'. SydWest proudly led the way in Blacktown, calling for and showcasing our cohesive way of living, alongside local religious leaders and the broader community. We also worked closely with the Family Worker Training and Development Program to provide opportunities for staff to gain a better understanding of Aboriginal culture and promote our cultural differences. This partnership increased the representation of culturally and linguistically diverse people at the 18th Annual Mt Druitt Reconciliation Walk in May.

SydWest enjoyed a number of other proud moments this year; the nomination of the 'EWON Pay Your Bills Day' for the ZEST Awards, the presentation on Parenting Education at SSI's 2014 Conference and the presentation on our Social Cohesion Project at the 2014 Blacktown Conference.

A year of success requires leadership through time of change, along with a lot of hard work from our loyal and dedicated staff. The team work, effort and passion of everyone is the key to the results achieved this year, and I thank each and every one of my colleagues for maintaining high standards and understanding the need for change in order to remain relevant. Finally, I wish to thank my very supportive Board of Directors who are working closely with all staff to ensure that our objectives are met.

Elfa Moraitakis
CEO



During the year, SydWest was also part of a collaborative move involving all partner Migrant Resource Centres in NSW in the first 'Standing Together Day of Action' calling for and showcasing our cohesive way of living.



30 Celebrating 30 years in Western Sydney

YEAR ANNIVERSARY ★★★

SydWest Multicultural Services was established in 1985 as the Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre, offering practical assistance and services to refugees and migrants who were settling into the area. In 2008, the centre moved to our current premises in Blacktown, and today we are known as SydWest Multicultural Services, providing settlement services and programs as well as aged care, disabilities and family services to the wider multicultural community.

Over the years, we have evolved to meet the growing needs of the community. On any given day, we provide English reading and writing classes, information sessions, casework, driver knowledge classes, homework help for students, multicultural men and women's support groups, playgroups and aged care and disability support services to name a few.

We epitomise a functioning and healthy multicultural community. Our bilingual staff, carers and volunteers live and breathe multiculturalism every day demonstrating how different people from different backgrounds can respect each other's differences and cultures while working for the common aim of helping others, and all the time sharing a passion for Australia. Over the years we have become a key player in the welfare sector community, establishing and encouraging strong relationships among the many service providers and organisations across Greater Western Sydney. Today we are recognised as the go to organisation on all matters of cultural diversity in the region.

30 years of empowering people



"Soon after I arrived here from Sudan, I came to SydWest for homework help in Maths and English. I thought it was a great program because it helped me so much. I have since graduated with a BA in Science, and I keep coming back to work and volunteer with youth." (Acuoth, SydWest youth worker and volunteer)



"I provided a free migration and legal service to SydWest clients for six years, ran many legal workshops for new communities and have represented SydWest at both national and international conferences. This is truly a multicultural organisation providing important services for new Australians. I have really enjoyed working with the many different cultural communities at SydWest and as a result, have discovered a lot about cultural diversity." (Chandrika, SydWest Board member)



"Being a volunteer teacher for SydWest has been an extremely rewarding program that has allowed me to gain new experiences in the career that I love." (Alicia, SydWest volunteer)



"I love SydWest and am happy because of the friends I make at the social groups." (Waheeda, Iraqi refugee)



"I am very grateful to Australia and to SydWest for helping me to meet people and learn about Australia at Mervat's Arab speaking group." (Yagup, Syrian refugee)



"I will never forget that when I needed help, the people who helped me were those at SydWest – they are like my family." (Hamide, SydWest community care worker)



"SydWest was the first place where I got information about TAFE courses, the first place where I learnt about computers which all helped me with my studies and gave me foundations to study further. Now when I'm helping SydWest clients, I tell them this is where I began and you too can have a good start for your future life." (Abulla, SydWest Community Engagement Coordinator)



"SydWest gave me my first ever job and allowed me to see the world through the people I have worked with and helped through my work." (Saffna, former SydWest staff member)



"I went to the Family Harmony sessions at SydWest because I want my daughter to grow up to have a good and happy life." (Manal, Iraqi refugee)



"The English conversation classes at SydWest are helping me to improve my English. I am a very sociable person and I would like to meet more people here." (Deuki, Bhutanese refugee)



Our People

SydWest boasts a passionate, fully qualified and experienced staff, who represent the diversity of the people we service and support. Our 55 staff and 57 community care workers offer many different languages and understand the complex cultural issues facing our clients.

Our Volunteers

A team of 25 dedicated and talented volunteers and a further 26 student placements provided invaluable support during the year, assisting in conversational English classes, driver training, social support, group facilitation and more.

SydWest volunteers include retired professionals, students and others, including settled migrants, who want to give back to the community.



Volunteering at SydWest: a rewarding and empowering experience

Gay Havercroft (pictured left) became a volunteer English conversation teacher at SydWest because she wanted to use her strong communication skills in some way.

“I’m teaching a Bhutanese group the basics of English, things like the alphabet and every day phrases. I’m also learning some Nepalese at the same time. For me it’s about the satisfaction of working with and helping other people, learning from them and making new friends. They appreciate what I am doing and they give me hugs and smile when they grasp something new. SydWest is a beautiful organisation with beautiful people,” Gay says.

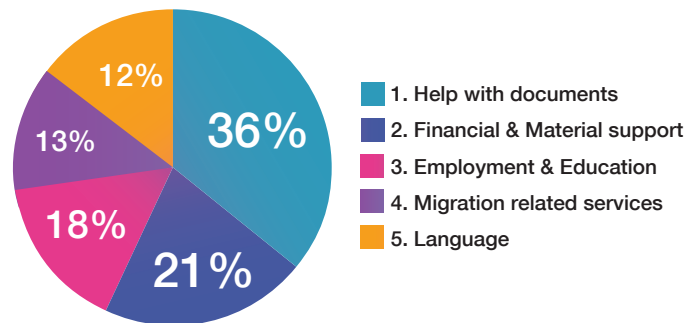


Our Programs: Settlement Services

Our Settlement Services team provides tailored case management support to help refugees and humanitarian entrants who have been in Australia for less than five years and are dealing with priority issues of settlement. We support and empower people so that they can access and navigate mainstream services for themselves as they settle into their new life in Australia.

During the year, SydWest collaborated with Settlement Services International and other migrant services in NSW to secure funding under the Department of Social Services' Settlement Services Program (which comes into effect from 1 July 2015).

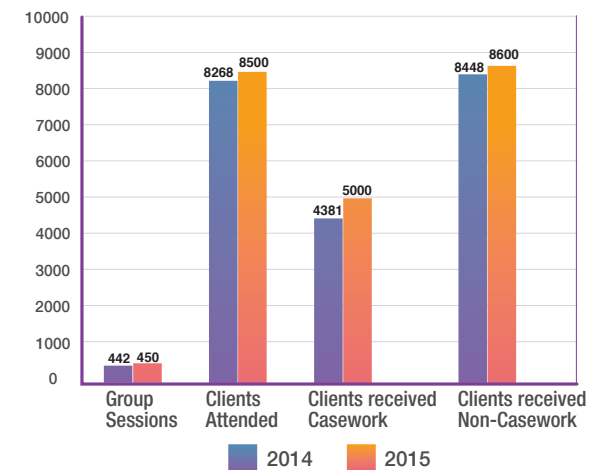
Top 5 issues facing refugees and humanitarian entrants during the year



In 2014-15, the top 5 countries of birth of our clients were:

- Iraq
- Iran
- Sri Lanka
- Afghanistan
- Bhutan

Client participation comparison





Year Highlights

5,000

people received
casework assistance.

We assisted and
empowered

22,100

humanitarian entrants,
refugees and newly arrived
migrants to settle into
Greater Western Sydney.

8,600

people received
non-casework assistance.

8,500

people attended

450

group sessions.

Our **Casework**, including Complex Case Management support, helps refugees and humanitarian entrants who are settling into Greater Western Sydney. Our experienced and bilingual case managers listen to the needs of individuals providing them with support and tools to move forward. We run regular information sessions to help people with settlement issues, community education on the Australian way of life, and provide referrals to mainstream services.

Our **Going Home, Staying Home** program began in November and has been providing specialist support to individuals or families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, so that they can find appropriate, affordable and sustainable housing.

Funded by Mission Australia, (through NSW Family and Community Services) the program has helped people to secure housing in the private and public rental markets and resolve issues that would otherwise have rendered them homeless.

We helped

123 people

to keep a roof
over their heads.



What some of our Going Home, Staying Home clients had to say:

“ You brought my strength back to life. Without SydWest, I could not have found a shelter. ”
(A single female client assisted in securing a granny flat after suffering domestic violence and homelessness.)

“ Knowing SydWest Multicultural Services is a big treasure for us. ”
(Newly arrived couple after receiving help to get their bond money returned.)

“ If we knew such services exist, we would have never been exploited that much. ”
(One client admits after a rental information session at SydWest).



Meet Mano and her husband Thiru, who were assisted in securing government housing after finding themselves homeless. The elderly couple turned to SydWest for help and were referred to our Going Home, Staying Home caseworker, who worked with the Department of Housing to secure wheel chair accessible housing in just 36 days. *“Thank you for your kind support. We could not have found a place without your help. We were given temporary housing while our dedicated caseworker looked for suitable housing. We are now very comfortable and peaceful in our new home,”* Mano says.

Our new look **Learner Driver Mentoring Program**, which began in November, helps financially disadvantaged people through the process of getting their licences; from passing their driver knowledge test, and understanding road safety to getting practical on-road driving experience in our new learner driver car.

Over
50

people took part in the **Driver Knowledge Test** classes in Blacktown and Mt DrUITT with **30** people obtaining their learner driver licences. **60** people attended our road safety sessions. **8** volunteer driver mentors facilitated **222** driving lessons with **15** people obtaining their provisional drivers licences.



Our **Multicultural Support Groups** assist new entrants to the country to come together and learn about the many facets of Australian life in a safe, friendly and supportive environment. Our 12 groups meet regularly and hear from guest speakers on a range of issues including policing, law, education, raising a family in Australia, domestic violence, health and wellbeing and more.

Support groups:

- Afghan Women's Group, Blacktown
- Afghan Men's Group, Blacktown
- African Sisters on the Move, Blacktown
- Arabic Speaking Group, Blacktown
- Chinese Group, Blacktown
- Darsi/Farsi Group, Mt DrUITT
- Friday Arabic Speaking Group, Mt DrUITT
- Iranian Multicultural Group, Blacktown
- Men's Arabic Speaking Group, Mt DrUITT
- Multicultural Men's Group, Blacktown
- Multicultural Women's Group, Blacktown
- Pakistani Women's Group, Mt DrUITT

Our Multicultural Support Groups took part in **social outings** to Bicentennial Park, Nurragyiny Reserve, Stanwell Park, NSW Parliament, Vivid and Kiama Blowhole. **Group outings help to reduce stress and break social isolation, and connect people to their new country.**





The Men's Arabic Speaking Group in Mt Druitt:

“The group helped to reduce isolation and helped me to integrate into the new society.”

Korial

“I have more of an open mind now and a better understanding of the father's role in the family. I also now have a better relationship with my two adult sons.”

Naif

“I gained skills to deal with family conflict, kids safety and family budgeting. As a result of the information sessions I am willing to listen and communicate with my wife.”

Gamal

Highlights

Our **Training and Skills development courses** in Computer skills, English literacy, Beauty care and Floristry gave

70

people the confidence and necessary skills to be able to participate in further education and training in mainstream courses.

Our **Bring Your Bills Day at Blacktown** is a joint project involving the NSW Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW and gives people the chance to meet with Ombudsman staff once a month to discuss their energy bills.

130

people brought their bills to Blacktown with

75

people attending five information sessions to help them understand the system and discover ways to reduce their energy consumption and cut their bills.



30

women from our Afghan Women's group and Multicultural Women's group decided to go green and reduce their footprints on the planet by learning more about the environment through workshops and a community garden.



773

people attended

124

group sessions on Family Harmony with **96%** of participants saying that the training was useful and helpful for their families.



Our **Swimming classes** for men and women, in partnership with Seven Hills Aquatic Centre, gave

40

new arrivals the opportunity to improve their swimming skills and learn about risk management, CPR and other water-related life skills.



345

people attended 32 health awareness seminars and

30

people enjoyed free tai chi and yoga classes.





How SydWest has empowered one refugee family

When Khalid and Ramia Alabdulla fled war-torn Syria in 2010 with their six children, they left everything behind except for the clothes on their backs. Concerned for the safety of their children, the family took up UN refuge in Lebanon, and in late 2014 were granted humanitarian visas to come to Australia.

Not long after settling into western Sydney, the Alabdulla family was introduced to SydWest during one of our Family Harmony sessions, and have since been attending information sessions, English classes and multicultural group outings.

Their older children attend SydWest's homework support sessions, and have taken part in our youth holiday programs, where they have been learning to swim, and getting to know other newly arrived children. Ramia has also completed pathway courses at SydWest with a view to building her resume and eventually finding work, while Khalid is working towards setting up his own business.

The pair say they are grateful to Australia and to SydWest for helping their family to settle successfully into their new country. *"SydWest has been teaching us to depend on ourselves and we are very happy with the system in Australia."*



Youth Programs

Our comprehensive **Youth Program** targets young refugees, humanitarian entrants and migrants who are settling into Australia – with a particular focus on 12 to 25 year olds living in the Blacktown and Penrith LGAs. We provide support to young people from a range of cultural backgrounds, including Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Sudan and other parts of Africa.

Engaging, connecting
and inspiring young
people

Highlights

Our **youth caseworkers** helped

161

young people including
70 new clients to access
appropriate and relevant
youth services in the area
independently.

We **boosted our youth programs in Mt Druitt** to cater for the rise in refugee youth to the area.
15% more youth took part in indoor social soccer at Mt Druitt PCYC, the homework support program on Wednesday afternoons and the new school holiday programs.

More than
350
young people attended
23 information sessions
on topics including social media, fire safety awareness, career planning, job search skills, employment related computer skills, men's health, healthy relationships, social cohesion and identity, resolving conflict, goal setting, employment workshops, drugs and alcohol, social skills, and water safety.

100

primary and high school students received regular educational and social support at our weekly homework centres at Blacktown, Mt Druitt and St Marys.

We teamed up with local schools to deliver **resilience building programs and life skills** to their refugee students through tours, youth camps and info sessions.



Kids on homework support classes:

“ SydWest has helped me and others and convinced me to do my best and I have had so much fun with them. ”
Namaray, Year 7

“ SydWest has helped me by encouraging me to try my best at all times. Their workers are always very nice, they show care towards you and they always offer to help you. What I also like is that they’re always there to help you, no matter what. ”
Israa, Year 7

“ I come to homework help to learn and there are many teachers who can help you! So if you are not certain, you should come to this homework help class. ”
Lathan, Year 6

“ The homework centre has helped me with my homework. ”
Reedwan, Year 9



Engaging youth through sports

Our **Football in the Park soccer program** held on Saturdays at Campbell Reserve and the **Indoor Social Soccer program** at the Mt Druitt PCYC attract up to 45 young people each week, primarily from Bhutanese, Nepalese, Sudanese, Afghan, Syrian and Iranian communities.

Some of our youth took part in the Dream Asia Unity Football Festival at Sydney Olympic Park, while some saw Sydney FC take on Brisbane Roars as part of the Celebration of Multiculturalism in NSW Sports.

SydWest supports the successful **Star Basketball program** which empowers 150 at risk young people in the Blacktown area by building self-esteem, life skills and resilience through sports and a commitment to education. Fifteen young people from Star Basketball made it to the under-16, under-18 and under-20 teams of Blacktown Storms in the NSW Basketball Youth League. Six teams from Star Basketball competed in both the July and December national Sudanese basketball tournament held in Melbourne.

Rising Stars

During the year, US scouts selected **Deng Acuoth** from the Star Basketball to attend the **Adidas Nation International Camp in the United States**, which brings together young basketball talents from across Europe, America and Oceania and exposes them to scouts from the NBA.

"This program has been really good. It's keeping us out of trouble and it motivates me," says Deng.



Deng Gak, who was selected for the Australia National under 17 Championship in 2014, was also selected in the Australian team to play for the under 19 World Championship in 2015. Deng's team started with the elimination series in China for the Asian Pacific region and progressed to the competition in Europe.



Kids on the swimming intensive classes:

“ I loved the swimming lessons and I loved the noodles. The teachers were very good. ”
Yamana, Year 5

“ When we were swimming we were learning something new, like how to swim on our back, freestyle and how to turn in the water. We had fun. We see new people and make new friends. ”
Younna, Year 7

“ It was good to learn to swim because Australia is surrounded by water and that is why we should learn. I liked the freestyle. The teachers were nice and not angry with us. ”
Mohammed, Year 7

School Holiday activities helping to meet the social needs of young people from different cultural backgrounds

Highlights

23

children learned essential swimming skills in a nine-day swimming intensive at Aquatic Safety Training Centre at Seven Hills.

23

youth visited the Sydney Aquarium and CDB.

23

young people from culturally diverse backgrounds took part in a three-day leadership camp involving the Blacktown Local Area Command and Initiative of Change.

33

young people attended an excursion to the Opera House and Harbour Bridge.

Engaging and connecting young people through events

Over

400

young people attended our **youth events** which engage young people through sports, key speakers and activities and connect them to other youth in the area.

80

young people attended a **Youth Week Conference** in Auburn organised in collaboration with Auburn Diversity Services, CMRC, Auburn City Council, TAFE and other agencies as part of youth week celebrations in Western Sydney.



A **Penalty Shoot-Out**, involving the Western Sydney Wanderers and Football United at Campbell Reserve, gave young local football enthusiasts the chance to improve their football skills and discover more about sporting activities and clubs.

A **free BBQ and Football Gear Giveaway** with Football United attracted **35** young people from the area.

100

students from local schools attended a **Fire Awareness Day** at Blacktown Showground, learning more about fire awareness and safety through demonstrations and discussions with NSW Fire and Safety.

200

young people attended a **Multicultural Youth Festival** at the Blacktown PCYC, organised in partnership with other local organisations. The Festival started a conversation among young people about some of the grassroots issues facing youth today as well as ways to embrace community harmony and social cohesion.



Our Programs: Aged Care and Disability Services

We provide quality Aged Care and Disability Services to assist people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to live independently in their homes and in the community for as long as possible. These services are available to older people, people with disabilities and their carers who live in the Cumberland Prospect region (Blacktown, Holroyd, Parramatta, Auburn and Hills Local Government areas).

Our services include the **Home Care Packages Program**, the **Commonwealth Home Support Program**, and the **Community Care Support Program**.

Our **Home Care Packages Program** (funded by the Department of Social Services) provides a variety of services to frail aged people with more complex care needs and their carers, or who require a range of services to help them continue living at home independently.

Services can include:

- Personal care services
- Daily living activities
- Nutrition, hydration, meal preparation and diet
- Clinical care
- Continence management
- Mobility and dexterity
- Leisure interests and activities
- Support services including help around the home

Empowering seniors, people
with disabilities and their carers



Our services are provided by 57 well-trained, qualified and bilingual Community Care Workers who speak a range of languages including Arabic, Croatian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Farsi, French, Hindi, Italian, Maltese, Persian, Polish, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil, Ukrainian and Urdu.

163

people received

Home Care Package services

(129 women and 34 men).

Preparing for the future in aged care

During the year, our Aged Care and Disability Services team has been transitioning to the new consumer directed care (effective 1 July 2015) which is designed to provide greater choice and flexibility to clients. All case managers, care coordinators and care workers were trained to provide quality and culturally and linguistically diverse care, with SydWest successfully meeting all the required standards in a Quality Review conducted by the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency.

Our **Community Care Support Program** (funded by Ageing, Disability and Home Care NSW) provides care and support services to meet the individual needs of people with permanent functional disabilities (aged between 18 and 64) and their carers so that they can remain living at home independently.



Our **Commonwealth Home Support Program** (funded by the Department of Social Services) provides basic care and support services to meet individual needs of frail aged clients (aged 65 years and over) and their carers, so that they can remain living at home independently for as long as possible.

Services include:

- Personal care
- In-home respite care
- Social support
- Domestic assistance
- Community Options Case Management and Counselling Support and Information Advocacy (for Community Care Support program clients)



Highlights

118

people received
domestic assistance

67

people received
personal care

76

clients received counselling
support and
information advocacy

49

clients received
respite care

61

clients accessed our **Brokerage Service** including **56** clients from mainstream organisations. This service assists service providers to find culturally appropriate care for their clients in Sydney's greater west.

Our **Seniors Kiosk** allows seniors to stay in touch with computer and internet technology and stay connected with family and friends here and overseas through basic computer training sessions.



Our regular **Social Support Groups** for seniors and carers help to increase social engagement through regular meetings, social outings, information sessions and group sharing.



280

people attended our 14 Social Support Groups: the Arabic, Bhutanese, Chinese, Croatian, Filipino, Indian Subcontinent, Indian Glenwood, Maltese, Persian, Serbian, Spanish and Turkish Seniors Groups Seniors Groups and the Blacktown and Mt Druitt Carers Groups.



Empowering community groups

A letter of thanks from the Blacktown Chinese Seniors Group

“Our group, the Blacktown Chinese Seniors group has a long history of twenty years...formed in January 1995 by a few Chinese new migrants living in the Blacktown area. Our group has been through many changes, ups and downs, many members have passed away and many new comers join in to keep the group going. The group meetings give us the opportunity to make new friends, so we are not isolated and we get information that concern us, so we know what is happening in our community. As the years go by, we know each other very well, so we are able to share our life experiences. Thanks to SydWest Multicultural Services who through its HACC Social Support Program provide us with a big comfortable room for our group meeting and arrange day outings and shopping trips for us, which make our lives much healthier, happier and easier! Thank you very much!”



Seeding green communities

SydWest is part of the 2015 Our Place programs, funded by the NSW Environment Trust, designed to provide environmental education and practical sustainability skills to culturally and linguistically diverse communities. In collaboration with Blacktown City Council, five multicultural groups have been learning practical skills in saving energy, conserving water and managing household waste, and raising their awareness and skills to live more sustainably.

Encouraging healthy living at home

More than 35 elderly clients took part in a pilot Healthy Older People Partnership program for our elderly clients, where they received regular activity time with their care workers. The aim is to improve the health and wellbeing of older people across the region and help reduce the risk of falls in the homes.

Meet Meet SydWest's oldest aged care client, 102-year old Marija, who lives in Blacktown. This proud centenarian is still going strong, living at home with her son and receiving personal care twice a week from SydWest Community Care Worker, Nada (also pictured). Marija has also been taking part in the pilot Health and Active Living program that sees her doing at least half an hour of exercise a week with her care worker. Marija says she's been doing the exercises daily because they keep her blood circulating and make her feel good.



Empowering people in their homes

Earlier this year, Tracey (pictured right) was forced to seek home care assistance after an injury to her sciatic nerve left her unable to walk. Following a referral to SydWest's Commonwealth Home Support Program, Tracey was entitled to four hours of care a week and was introduced to SydWest care worker, Lorna (pictured left). The pair hit it off straight away.

"Lorna has been great. She comes in for two hours twice a week and I couldn't imagine her not being here. Initially Lorna spent her time cleaning my apartment which had become a real mess because I couldn't walk or do anything, but now she's doing a lot more and helping me to get back on my feet," Tracey says.



Lorna is one of SydWest's qualified bilingual community care workers who assist both aged and disabled clients. Lorna has been working with SydWest for nine years and currently sees 12 clients a fortnight.

"I love my job. What we do is help people stay at home longer. Sometimes my clients want to help me so I let them. Sometimes we cook together or walk the dog. Sometimes with the ones with dementia, I'm not Lorna. I'm someone else. But that doesn't matter. They might have dementia and they may not know my name, but they know when I'm coming and they wait for me. When we see each other, we smile. My job means a lot to me. I'm doing what I want to do," Lorna says.



Our Programs: Families and Young Children

Our **Early Intervention and Family Support team** offer services and programs to help parents and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to raise happy and healthy families. We target parents expecting a baby and families with children up eight years of age who live in the Blacktown and Hills local government areas.

Our **Women's Support Groups** allow women to meet up and share with others while their children are cared for in adjoining rooms. This gives parents a break and the chance to discover more about parenting, education, health and wellbeing and other topics of interest.

We have seven groups that meet during the school terms:

- Blacktown African Women's Support Group
- Blacktown Indian Women's Support Group
- Blacktown Multicultural Women's Support Group
- Castle Hill Multicultural Women's Support Group
- Glenwood Indian Women's Support Group
- Mt Druitt Women's Support Group
- Mt Druitt Tamil Women's Support Group

Supporting and empowering
young families



Vaneeta, from Glenwood (pictured left), attends the Castle Hill Multicultural Women's Support Group for the friendships and connections.

"I like coming here to chat with others and learn about their different cultures. It's nice to get out and meet other people and learn new things, like yoga and beading and information on different topics. We discuss so many things and we support each other when it comes to family and parenting issues," Vaneeta says.

Anju from Kellyville (pictured right) agrees that the Support Group is a great way to connect with others.

"There are so many people suffering these days, it's good to come together and share and get things out. I'm also learning new things like yoga and drumming. Our group even performed at a community event in the Hills. It was a very proud moment for us," Anju says.

Our **Supported Playgroups** are held during school term for children up to five years and their parents, grandparents and carers. Parents are encouraged to join in and bond with their kids in a range of fun and educational activities.

We have three supported playgroups that run during school terms:

- Blacktown Multicultural Playgroup
- Mt Druitt Playgroup
- Seven Hills Playgroup

Kuinita from Lalor Park has been bringing her 18-month old daughter to the Seven Hills Playgroup for the past six months.



"It's good for my daughter to be with other children and learn to play games. As soon as she sees the gate, she knows she is coming to the playgroup and wants to come in. As for me, it's good to get to know people as I only moved here from New Zealand two years ago," Kuinita says.



Bianca from Quakers Hills has been coming to SydWest's Playgroup for two years.

"I started by bringing my older daughter here and now I am bringing my son. I get to socialise with the other mums and talk with them about our kids and he gets to play," Bianca says.



Milani from Blacktown has been bringing her children to the Playgroup for the past five years and also plays the piano for the group.

"I'm happy because my kids are happy coming here. They learn to socialise and play with other children, which is good. I also get to socialise with the other mums and meet new people. Nada is a great person and makes us all feel very welcome," Milani says.

Empowering women to build employment and career opportunities

SydWest has provided volunteer work placements to some of our clients, referred others to jobs and connected many to pathway courses as a way of encouraging and empowering women to build their employment and job opportunities.

Two mums from the Mt Druitt Playgroup have started **studying Children's Services** at TAFE while another has successfully **opened her own family day care** at home, and another has **secured a job** in after school care.

Two mothers from the Seven Hills Playgroup have stayed on as **playgroup volunteers** now that their children have started school, and others have **become facilitators** sharing their artistic skills with the groups. Some women from the Blacktown Indian Women's group are preparing to do **volunteer work with SydWest** so that they can conduct home visits with new and expectant mothers.

12

women from the Blacktown African Women's Group completed their **Food Handling course** with TAFE Outreach, while **four** women from the Glenwood Indian Group enrolled into a **Barista course** at TAFE Outreach, with **two** securing **casual work** in hospitality.

Helping to connect our clients to the wider community by encouraging confidence and independence and greater social cohesion

Our Blacktown Multicultural Women's Group was part of consultations with the **Blacktown Mt Druitt Hospital Expansion project**, providing valuable input into the hospital's renovations, including the new maternity and children's wards. The Blacktown Indian Women's Group worked with Blacktown Hospital on a **cultural mosaic artwork** to be unveiled in the coming year, and our Glenwood Indian Women's Group teamed up with Blacktown Arts Centre to create a **community art project** at the new Glenwood Hub.

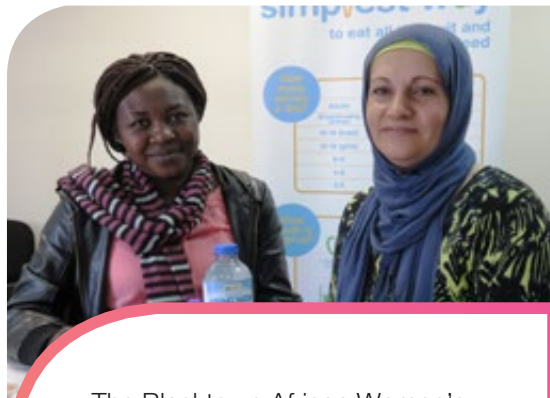
Members of the Blacktown Multicultural Playgroup shared their traditional nursery rhymes in a **multicultural rhymes mini concert**. All of our women's groups came together for an end of year **multicultural festival** celebration with stalls showcasing their diverse cultural foods, dress and traditions.



Highlights



The Seven Hills and Blacktown Multicultural Women's Groups took part in a **video production** called *Caring for children: Tips for raising children in Australia*, created by Settlement Services International.



The Blacktown African Women's group took part in the Cancer Council's **first Arabic workshop on healthy eating**. Three of our women's groups took part in a new **Parenting Program** called *Education on Human Values*, designed to instil positive and holistic parenting techniques and delivered by facilitators with a cultural perspective.



81

families took part in our Supported Playgroups.

70

families participated in our Parenting Program.



159

families took part in our Supported Women's Groups.

102

families benefited from our Community Capacity Building.

Over

1200

women and their families took part in our events including the Family Fun Day in Seven Hills, International Women's Day in Blacktown, the Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum in Mt Druitt and the Hills Cultural Festival in Castle Hill.



Farhina from Plumpton, a mum of four, attended the Mental Health and Wellbeing forum in August.

"I learnt a lot from the speakers and will use some of the calming techniques on my own kids. It was such a great day. I haven't had this much fun since primary school," Farhina says.



Our Events

Each year SydWest joins forces with other organisations to hold major events to connect people with others and celebrate the rich multicultural diversity and talent that exists within the community.



Over
4,500
people
attended our major
events throughout
the year.

End of Year Event

The multicultural diversity of our families was on display at our End of Year event, with stalls and performances showcasing the many diverse treasures of our cultural communities.



Blacktown Community Services Expo

200 local community service providers and established community organisations converged on Bowman Hall in October for an information-rich event that informed and connected the community with their service providers.



Father's Day/Family Fun Day

Held in September, our annual Multicultural Family Fun Day was packed with fun and educational activities for families with young children.



Fire Awareness Day

Organised in partnership with Fire and Rescue NSW, this event helped to raise fire safety awareness within the Blacktown community, particularly among non-English speaking communities.



International Women's Day

Celebrating the positive contribution of women in the community, our events at Mt Druitt and Blacktown involved women from our playgroups, women's groups and multicultural support groups and featured workshops, entertainment and information stalls.



Seniors' Week

SydWest's many multicultural seniors enjoyed a day of cultural performances, displays, music and dance, as well as health and well-being activities and information sessions.



Harmony Day

Our Harmony Day event in Blacktown showcased the many stories and contributions from individuals and groups - reinforcing the message of inclusiveness, respect and belonging.



Refugee Week

People of all ages and backgrounds shared stories and cultural dance at Bowman Hall, while members of the Simply Voices choir heard personal stories from some of our refugee clients during an afternoon tea - helping to increase understanding and break down barriers.



Seniors' Christmas Party

Held in honour of our seniors, including many of our frail aged clients, this annual celebration provides an afternoon of fun and celebration and helps to break social isolation.



Our Funding Bodies and Partners

SydWest Multicultural Services receives its core funding for programs from the Department of Social Services, Family and Community Services NSW (Community Services, and Ageing, Disability and Home Care) and Mission Australia. During the year, we also received grants from the Office of Environment and Heritage NSW, Migration Council Australia and the NSW Department of Education.

We work with partner organisations to build social cohesion and ensure individual and community needs are met.

We run the Blacktown Mt Druitt Migrant Interagency involving 200 service providers from the region.

SydWest thanks our partners in 2014-15:

Ability Links NSW	Blacktown and Mt Druitt Hospital Expansion Project	Diverse Care	Migration Council Australia	NSW Sports and Recreation	The Hills Community Health Centre
Ability Options	Blacktown Community Transport	Domain Principal Group	Mission Australia	Office of Environment and Heritage NSW	The University of Sydney
African Islamic Association	Blacktown Hospital	Drum 4 Fun	Mitchell High School	PCYC, Blacktown and Mt Druitt	Tracy Roberts Real Estate
Aged Care Assessment Team (Auburn, Blacktown, Parramatta)	Blacktown Library	Evans High School	Mt Druitt Centrelink	Penrith City Council	Transcultural Health
Alzheimer's NSW	Brahma Kumaris Australia (Yoga)	EWON	Mt Druitt Community Health Centre	Penrith Women's Health Centre	United Way
Anglicare Mt Druitt	Break Thru People Solutions	Family Referral Services	Mt Druitt Family Violence Services	Prudential Homes	Uniting Care Burnside/ Cabramatta office
Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW	BREED	Fire and Rescue NSW	Mt Druitt Hospital	REACH for Training	Uniting Care Mental Health
Aquatic Safety Training Academy, Royal Life Saving NSW Branch	Bright Employment	Fitted for Work	Mt Druitt Hub	Relationships Australia	Vital Call
Auburn Diversity Services	Brighter Futures	Football United	Mt Druitt Primary School	Ryde Hospital	Vocational Training Tribunal/ Apprenticeship and Traineeship
Auburn Hospital	Cancer Council NSW	Future 2 Foundation	MTA Apprenticeship Plus	Salvation Army Employment Plus	WASH House
Australia Sports Commission	Care Connect	Glenwood Community Hub	Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service	Sathya Sai International Organisation of Australia & PNG NSW Regions East & West	WentWest
Australian Catholic University	CASS Care Ltd	Hammond Care	My Home Living Care	Settlement Services International	Wesley Mission
Australian Tax Office	Catholic Care Social Services	HARDA	MYAN	Seven Hills West Public School	Western Sydney Area Health
Bert Oldfield Primary School	Children First	Hillsong Citycare	Myer Family Philanthropy	Seventh Day Adventist Church	Western Sydney Community Forum
Beyond Blue	Com4Unity	Hornsby Hospital	Nasudhara Foundation	Sing & Grow	Western Sydney Family Referral Services (Mt Druitt)
Blacktown and Mt Druitt Centrelink	Community Migrant Resource Centre	Infinity Creations	NOVA Employment	St Johns Ambulance	Western Sydney Local Health District – Centre for Population Health, Multicultural Health
Blacktown and Mt Druitt Community Service Centre	Community Relations Commission	Initiative of Change	NRMA	St Joseph's Hospital	Western Sydney University
Blacktown and Mt Druitt Local Area Commands	Community Resource Network	Job Quest	NSW Department of Education	STARRTS	Western Sydney Wanderers
Blacktown Area Community Centres	Cultural Arts Collective	Junaya Family Development	NSW Department of Family and Community Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care	Swinson Cottages	Westmead Hospital
Blacktown Arts Centre	Cumberland Hospital, Multicultural Unit	Juvenile Justice Blacktown	NSW Department of Family and Community Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care	Sydney Western Area Health Service	William Stimson Public School
Blacktown City Council	Department of Human Services	Kingswood Neighbourhood Centre	NSW Department of Housing	TAFE NSW, Nirimba, Richmond, Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Castle Hill and Blue Mountains	Youth off the Streets
Blacktown Community Health Centre	Department of Immigration and Border Protection	Lalor Park Primary School	NSW Fair Trading	Tedd Noffs Foundation – Street Uni	Youthsafe
	Department of Social Services	Learning Sphere	NSW Health (Sexual Health and Harm Reduction Team) Lemongrove Unit	The Blacktown Advocate	
	Dharma Karma	Legal Aid NSW			
		Macquarie Community College			
		Marist Youth Care			
		Max Employment			
		MECA			

SydWest Multicultural Services

Blacktown Office

PO Box 869
Blacktown NSW 2148
Level 2, 125 Main Street
Blacktown NSW 2148
Phone: 02 9621 6633
Fax: 02 9831 5625

Mt Druitt Outreach Office

Shop 9
6-10 Mount St
Mt Druitt NSW 2770
Phone: 02 9625 0455
Fax: 02 9625 0322

Penrith Outreach Office

Suite 113
Community Connection Building
114-116 Henry Street
Penrith NSW 2750
Phone: 02 9621 6633

info@sydwestms.org.au

www.sydwestms.org.au

SydWest 
Multicultural Services
Connecting cultures. Building community.