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## A renewed national focus: Bringing together the mental health and multicultural sectors

Mental Health Australia, the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) and the National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) have formed an alliance to deliver a new national project announced by Minister for Health The Hon Greg Hunt MP and funded by Australian Government.

The project will work with multicultural mental health consumers and carers to provide a renewed and much needed national focus on mental health and suicide prevention for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Mental Health Australia CEO Frank Quinlan says it's an honour to be working alongside such well respected organisations and colleagues in the multicultural community.

"We all have a lot to learn from each other and to unite the mental health and multicultural sectors together, to work closely with CALD consumers, carers, and communities, will make a real difference to service delivery and provision," said Mr Quinlan.

FECCA Chair Mary Patetsos outlined the importance of understanding cultural sensitivities and complexities in ensuring the new project is a success.

"We know people from CALD backgrounds can experience a number of unique challenges when accessing the mental health system," said Ms Patetsos.

"These challenges are complex and include issues such as stigma and discrimination, services that are not well equipped to respond to CALD communities' needs, language barriers, limited awareness of the supports available and trauma experiences.

"That's why it's important that experts from across the mental health, multicultural and disability sectors come together with CALD consumers and carers to tackle these significant issues."

NEDA CEO Dwayne Cranfield said, "The advent of Primary Health Networks and the NDIS mean this project comes at a vital time.

"A national focus on multicultural mental health will help to ensure people from CALD backgrounds are not forgotten in reform efforts, and that mental health services are working with CALD communities in an equitable way," said Mr Cranfield.

The project will build on the existing Framework for Mental Health in Multicultural Australia (the Framework). It will establish advisory groups comprising multicultural mental health consumers and carers, and state and territory bodies and other stakeholders, in order to ensure better mental health for people from CALD backgrounds.



## Media Contacts:

Lach Searle, Director External Relations, Mental Health Australia - 0488 076 088

Emma Campbell, CEO, FECCA - 0424 910 617

Dwayne Cranfield, CEO, NEDA - 0407 878 933

**Mental Health  
Australia**



**FECCA**  
Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia



**N E D A**

National Ethnic Disability Alliance

Mental Health Australia is the peak independent, national representative body of the mental health sector in Australia.

P 02 6285 3100  
AU Mental Health

E [communications@mhaustralia.org](mailto:communications@mhaustralia.org)  
W [mhaustralia.org](http://mhaustralia.org)

