

[MEDIA RELEASE – Tuesday 11 May, 2021](#)

Embrace Project welcomes funding for multicultural mental health

Mental Health Australia and Alliance partners the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA), and the National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) are pleased to welcome the extension of funding announced in tonight's Federal Budget for mental health in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

For the last three years the Commonwealth Department of Health has funded the Embrace Multicultural Mental Health Project to provide a national focus on mental health and suicide prevention for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

The extension of this funding for a further four years will ensure the gains made to date through the Embrace Project continue towards an equitable mental health system which reflects and responds well to the needs of all Australians including the multicultural population.

Mental Health Australia CEO Dr Leanne Beagley said the funding announcement will ensure we continue to deliver and improve on the Embrace Multicultural Mental Health Project's many strengths.

"The Embrace Multicultural Mental Health Project has worked extremely hard over the last three years to increase mental health literacy in CALD communities, as well as work with hundreds of mainstream service providers nationally to improve their cultural competency," said Dr Beagley.

"It will be wonderful to see this Project progress for another four years, and hopefully more, and to build on the work that has already gone into it. It will enable us to encourage help-seeking, reduce stigma and improve how services respond to and work with people from CALD communities."

Alliance Partner and FECCA CEO Mohammad Al-Khafaji said the funding announcement will allow the three organisations to continue to work together at such a crucial time.

"COVID-19 has only increased the stress and anxiety amongst multicultural communities and even before the pandemic we knew there were significant barriers for people from CALD backgrounds accessing support from mental health services," said Mr Al Khafaji.

"The Embrace Project is a key component in improving this and reducing stigma amongst our multicultural communities, and we're very proud to be a part of such an important initiative."

NEDA CEO Dwayne Cranfield echoed these sentiments when he said:

“We already know from the Embrace Project that cultural beliefs about what constitutes mental illness and how to respond to it affect people from migrant and refugee backgrounds in differing ways. As well as working with communities to help address this we need to work with service providers to gain the data and insights to improve service provision for all,” said Mr Cranfield.

“Having more and more services that are culturally aware at a national level means more and more people will feel supported and get the help they need, especially at this time of uncertainty and increased anxiety for many.”

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[Embrace Multicultural Mental Health](#) (the Embrace Project) is run by Mental Health Australia and provides a national focus on mental health and suicide prevention for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

It provides a national platform for Australian mental health services and multicultural communities to access resources, services and information in a culturally accessible format.

The Embrace Project builds on the important work of previous national multicultural mental health projects — including the MHiMA and the Multicultural Mental Health Australia project — and works towards an equitable mental health system which reflects and responds well to the needs of Australia's multicultural population.

The key objectives of the project are to:

- Increase participation of consumers and carers from CALD backgrounds in mental health services,
- Improve outcomes for CALD mental health consumers, carers and their families,
- Increase mental health awareness, knowledge and capacity in CALD communities, and
- Improve cultural responsiveness and diversity of the mental health workforce.

Find out more at www.embracementalhealth.org.au