



cohealth's Bi-cultural Program

2020-2021 Evaluation Report

Project Objectives

1. Develop participant skills and confidence to act as bi-cultural workers
2. Support employment readiness through professional development, information sharing and networking
3. Provide opportunities for participants to self-determine or self-represent through delivery of community-led projects
4. Work in partnership with bi-cultural workers to;
 - Educate organisations and their staff about the role of bi-cultural workers, the benefits they bring and facilitate employment opportunities
 - Build sector capacity to employ bi-cultural workers in a culturally safe way

Evaluation methods

- Surveys
- Reflective questioning
- Focus groups
- Attendance sheets
- Facebook Data
- YouTube Data
- Zoom Polls

2017-2021 Project Summary

A total direct reach of 130,000+ people

- **120** bi-cultural workers engaged (30 continuing as casual staff)
- **129,000** community members engaged through bi-cultural led projects
- **1000+** staff from across the community sector engaged in capacity building, presentations and forums delivered by the project

Deliverables include:

- **79** capacity building workshops delivered to BCWs
- **43** community-led projects delivered
- **4,850** hours of paid employment for bi-cultural workers across different programs at cohealth
- **950** employment or capacity building opportunities shared with BCWs
- **75** professional references provided
- **21** employment opportunities facilitated for BCWs externally
- **32** professional development opportunities delivered to staff from community/health sector
- **10** BCWs engaged in Mentorship program

2020-2021 Project Outcomes

Total reach of 123,441 people

95 BCWs engaged (30 as cohealth staff)

150+ staff reached through capacity building

23,550 community members engaged through BCW/community-led projects (IHP funded)

99,646+ community members engaged through other BCW/community-led projects from other grants

- LDAT **98727**
- COVID Taskforce **500+**
- CCV **94**
- RAP **325**

Bi-cultural worker/Community led projects experienced incredible reach among target community groups - the shift to online delivery meant some projects reached community members from across Victoria, nationally and even across the world!!



2020-2021 Deliverables

- **23** capacity building workshops delivered to BCWs
- **350+** employment or capacity building opportunities shared
- **1500+** hours of paid employment for bi-cultural at cohealth
- **25+** professional references provided
- **5** employment opportunities facilitated for BCWs externally
- **10** bi-cultural/community led projects delivered through IHP funds
- **5** additional BCW/community-led projects delivered through additional grants
- **15** professional development opportunities delivered to staff from community/health sector
- **5** BCWs engaged in mentorship with cohealth staff
- **1** literature review + co-designed recommendations to address - *How organisations employing BCWs can better support them to navigate the complexity of living and working in their communities*

This year the Bi-cultural Program engaged BCWs from different organisations and sectors to build the 'Victorian BCWs Network' 65 BCWs expressed interest and 20 BCWs attended a co-design session to establish the network objectives.

Objective 1: Develop participants skills and confidence to act as bi-cultural workers

"I have gained better knowledge of the Australian health system and now know where I can access support for my community"

"I am more aware of how to successfully engage and build trust with the community"

"I have become more confident to handle the problems that my community is facing"

"Thank you for all the support and care. I feel more confident and equipped with the right skills to engage with my community"

A total of **23** capacity building workshops were delivered to bi-cultural workers participating in the project.

21 BCWs responded to an evaluation survey giving feedback about their experience of the program.

- **100%** increased their skills and confidence in Bi-cultural work and to deliver community based projects
- **100%** increased their skills and confidence to support health and wellbeing in their communities'
- **100%** increased their understanding and knowledge of the culture and/or lived experiences of other communities and people with a refugee-like experience

Objective 2: Support employment readiness through professional development, information sharing and networking

1500+ hours of paid employment for bi-cultural at cohealth

350+ employment or capacity building opportunities shared

30+ professional references provided for other employment

25+ professional references provided

10 BCWs engaged in mentorship with cohealth staff

5 employment opportunities facilitated for BCWs externally

75% of survey responders gained employment opportunities outside of cohealth as a result of engaging in the bi-cultural program

"I feel secure in my job, knowing that, even if I lose my job, I am sure I will have another opportunity because of cohealth"

"The bi-cultural program's ongoing support means a lot to me and has enabled me to continue building my career in Australia"

"As a result of engaging in the bicultural program I have gained more than 3 employment opportunities"

"I will highly recommend the bi-cultural program to anyone looking to go back to work after settling in Australia."

"The program helps participants reconsider and recognise their skills from back home and helps to reapply those skills in the Australian work force"

Objective 3: Provide opportunities for participants to self-determine

Community-led Projects

15x community led projects were delivered reaching **123,000** people from refugee communities. These projects were co-designed with bi-cultural workers and their communities' and directly responded to communities' self-identified needs.



Community	Project activity	Objectives	Reach	Outcomes
IHP funded Projects				
Ethiopian Community	Traditional music video sharing COVID public health messages	Share culturally appropriate public health messaging about social distancing, hand washing and staying at home when you are sick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19,000 Views • 233 Shares • 100 likes • 51 comments 	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jp3x3iaNv3w
Ethiopian Community	Q+A for the Ethiopian community to discuss COVID-19 and its impacts on health and wellbeing including spiritual and financial wellness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information to the Ethiopian community about COVID19 • Provide self-care strategies • Provide emotional support to the community through guidance from religious leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 live participants • 69 recording views 	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvgfOkgBxi0&feature=youtu.be "It was great to see community leaders leading this work!!" "So much expertise from our community leaders and professionals and thank you for the spiritual guidance from our church leaders, Great job!"
Afghan community	Deliver 6x workshops to the Afghan community providing them with information in language on topics of their choosing	Provide information to the Afghan community about; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family violence • Mental health • Parenting and intergenerational conflict • Australian Taxation • Australian citizenship • NDIS 	On average 10 participants attended workshops live Each workshop recording had between 50 to 500 views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66He24c7Zfs • https://www.facebook.com/hazarasolidarity/videos/362412474784252 • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbT8ez8kcSY&feature=share • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPqgllmeHik&feature=share • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQkhUDIdwFI • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfrR_1PTaEo

Syrian Community	Deliver 4x workshops to the Syrian community providing them with information in language on topics of their choosing	Provide information to the Syrian community about; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy eating and exercise • Mental health • Community organising 	On average 25-35 participants attended each workshop	97% of participants stated an increase in their understanding of; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy foods • Mental health • Community organising 98 % of the participants increased their confidence to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look after their mental health • Find support for their family's health and wellbeing
Chin Community (Falang)	Deliver a positive parenting program for Chin families across 3x workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information about child development • Provide information about positive parenting strategies to support Australian Chin families 	25 participants attended each workshop live Recording of workshops viewed by 400	90% Participants stated an increased level of confidence in parenting as a result of the program https://fb.watch/25jMnW5PYb/
Chin Community (Falang)	Mental Health Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information to the chin community about mental health and available supports • Provide an opportunity for young Chin mental health workers to build their community education skills 	20 Participants attended the workshop	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PGABw4-2UONOrzQ-7oUc0LmLrgQH-H8B/view?usp=sharing
Chin Community (Hakka)	Healthy Eating Video	Provide information to the Chin community about healthy food and eating	2000 viewers	https://fb.watch/4of2a5vqI8/

Tibetan Community	Tibetan Vaccine Information session	Provide accurate information about the COVID vaccine and Q+A in Tibetan language	12 participants	97% increased their understanding of Covid-19 Vaccine 97% felt confident in getting vaccinated.
Iraqi Community	Family violence Video	Increase Iraqi community living in Australia's understanding of Family violence and available support services	200 viewers	https://fb.watch/30QaXxV0cz/
Iraqi Community	Arabic Vaccine Information session	Provide accurate information about the COVID vaccine and Q+A in Arabic	35 Participants	90% of participants stated they learnt new information and felt confident to get vaccinated
RAP Funded Projects				
Iraqi Community	Citizenship Program Deliver 4 x information sessions to the Iraqi community about Australian Citizenship application and testing	Provide information in Arabic about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The citizenship application Required documents and fees. Eligibility and requirements Testing 	25 participants at each workshop	12 people responded to survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 83% Increased their understanding of the citizenship application and approval process. 83% Increased their understanding of the citizenship test and documentation requirements 100% felt more confident to do the test
Karen Community	Diabetes Education Video	Provide Diabetes Education in Karen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 300 views 39 likes 16 shares 	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ag8aUoAiMnA

Ethiopian community	Food Security Program for Ethiopian Community	Engage Ethiopian restaurants, small businesses and delivery drivers to provide food boxes and cooked meals to vulnerable Ethiopian community members living in Melbourne's North/West negatively affected by COVID19	13 restaurants and businesses engaged 46 community volunteers 500+ individuals received food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 84 food boxes delivered 377 cooked meals provided
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Alcohol and Drug Foundation LDAT funded project

Chin Community (Hakka)	<p>Deliver 4 x workshops to the Chin community about</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Family relationships Mental health AOD Spirituality 	Provide information to the Chin community to increase their awareness of available supports during COVID19 across all topic areas	<p>580 Participants attended workshops</p> <p>98,147 viewers of recorded workshops</p>	<p>"This is really good. Thank you so much for organising this workshop about family relationship. This is what we need."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 participants said they increased their confidence to look after their own wellbeing during COVID-19 24 people stated they increased their knowledge of available supports for people experiencing the harmful effects of drug and alcohol use. 45 people stated they felt spiritually supported and encouraged by the workshops.
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Cancer Council Victoria Funded Project

Arabic Speaking Community	Deliver 4 x workshops to the Arabic community about Bowel Screening	<p>Increase Arabic communities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of Bowel cancer and screening Increase participants confidence to get tested 	94 people attended workshops	<p>81 people responded to a survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% said they increased their understanding of Bowel cancer and screening 95% said they increased their confidence to get tested
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21 BCWs responded to an evaluation survey

95% stated that they were able represent their community in positive and meaningful ways

100% felt that their lived experience and cultural perspectives were valued and listened to respectfully at cohealth

100% believe the bi-cultural program wants bi-cultural workers to take the lead in delivering projects to their communities in ways that are culturally appropriate and meaningful for them

100% understood that they can propose project ideas to the bi-cultural project lead and ask for funding to deliver projects at any time

Objective 4: Work in partnership with bi-cultural workers to:

- Educate services and agencies about the role of bi-cultural workers and the importance of their work
- Build organisational capacity to employ bi-cultural workers in a culturally safe way



15x capacity building sessions delivered to 150 staff from community, government and health sectors

51 people responded to the Survey

100% increased their understanding of bi-cultural workers roles and responsibilities

100% increased their understanding of the benefits of BCW

100% increased their understanding of the complexities of BCW

96% increased their confidence to implement more inclusive recruitment strategies

98% increased their confidence to create a culturally safe work environment for BCWs

96% increased their confidence to engage BCWs in future projects

96% would endeavour to implement at least one component of the professional standards

51% said they would aim to implement ALL aspects of the standards at their workplace

“This training was fantastically engaging - I learned something at every step of the way. I particularly appreciated learning from the bi-cultural workers that attended the training.”

“Fantastic training - I will be strongly advocating for organisations to complete the training and consider employing bi-cultural workers within their organisations.”

“Thank you for facilitating such an insightful conversation. Grateful to be able to hear from varied voices and have some practical strategies to address structural challenges in the workplace.”

“Very grateful for the work cohealth have done in this space and would be happy to partner in future to raise awareness and capacity to respectfully and ethically engage bi-cultural workers. “

Other outcomes

Literature Review

A literature review was conducted to explore: How organisations employing BCWs can better support them to navigate the complexity of living and working in their communities, specifically in relation to self-care, boundary setting and role creep

Co-design recommendations

A set of recommendations was developed in collaboration with 18x BCWs in response to the research question

Recommendations build on cohealth's professional standards for BCW and will be embedded in the associated training

Victorian BCWs Network

60 BCWs expressed an interest in joining the network

20 BCWs attended a co-design session

During 2021-22 the project will deliver bi-monthly engagement opportunities for BCWs through the network

Brimbank Local Partnership Collaboration

A training package was co-designed to support BCWs in delivering COVID vaccine education to their communities. The training helps BCWs to; identify key messages, draw boundaries, manage misinformation and negotiate their responsibilities with employers

Group Supervision

In consultation with cohealth BCWs group supervision has been established and an approach co-designed with participants – During 2021-22 BCWs will receive 4x paid supervision sessions.

Unexpected outcomes

Since COVID-19 BCWs have become much more visible. Government services and organisations experienced an increased need to communicate and engage with CALD communities, yet as the hard lock down conveyed the relationships and trust needed to do this effectively was not always there.

Based on these realities many turned to bi-cultural workers to help build bridges and facilitate effective engagement. New funding opportunities led to increased employment and for the first time ever bi-cultural workers are in high demand!

As mass recruitment of bi-cultural workers ensued new challenges arose however. Some organisations were not experienced in employing BCWs and did not necessarily understand the complexity of these roles. Additionally, some organisations did not have systems and processes in place to adequately support BCWs and their communities in culturally safe ways.

As a result of these realities cohealth experienced the following positive unexpected outcomes;

- Increased employment opportunities for cohealth BCWs
- Increased demand for the professional standards for BCW training
- Multiple requests to present at team meetings and working groups with local partnerships about the bi-cultural program
- Increased requests from BCWs for opportunities to network with each other and gain peer support
- Increased media attention and opportunities to showcase BCWs success with reputable outlets such as ABC, SBS and the Age.



For more information about the bi-cultural program
please visit our website:
<https://www.cohealth.org.au/bi-cultural-worker-hub/>