



“Speaking Engagements”

By the

Victorian CALD MH Consumer / Carer
Advisory Reference Group

Cultivating

Positive Change / Influence among the
many

Victorian Migrant Populations

By:- Evan Bichara

(Convenor / Founder of the group)

A Community Development / Engagement Project

..... Was carefully designed by our group to encompass.....



.....Many “Speaking Engagements” with.....

.....Many.....Ethnic Migrant Social Support
Groups scattered throughout Victoria.

Initially..... discussions with these groups....

Involved only.....



- Recovery Journeys' of a lived experience

To the many migrant groups.....however.....

- Discussions needed to be more than just expressions of one's lived experience.....
- It required meeting the audience's needs

In addressing the audience's needs.....

One would be required to ask.....

.....what are the group's.....

- Needs &
- Strengths

- Find Solutions to address those needs.....via their strengths

for the group.....and explore ways to act on the answers...empowering the group to take charge in becoming

.....active / positive change agents for their community.



Acting on needs, strengths / solutions

May require more than 1 visit to group as a Guest Speaker.....and may require drawing on other people to come into the project.....

It would require.....

- drawing on clinical / community workers to speak as well to group
- bridging / building trust among key stakeholders
- influencing group to lead towards a healthy lifestyle
- developing steps for group to address their MH concerns within their community
- Forming evaluative processes to monitor impact of these vital community conversations



Two fine examples of where this project impacted greatly in influencing the Community's MH

- The Vietnamese Elderly Citizens Group in Preston Darebin area of Melbourne
- The Italian Elderly Social Support group in Heidelberg



The Vietnamese Group.....

Session 1.....

- Sharing **Personal Experience**.....what does MH mean to me and the wider community.
- Discussing the **challenges**.....what were the factors that should be considered.

(From session 1....the group discussed their needs of wanting to know where services were & what services do.....& how they as a group could help)

Session 2.....

- Exploration of **how to respond**....what could be done to support our people with MI issues
- **Community solutions**.....what steps do we as a community group need to take?
- **Worker's Perspective**.....information about available services in local area and what is the worker's role in assisting their people with MH issues.

The Italian Group.....

Session 1.....

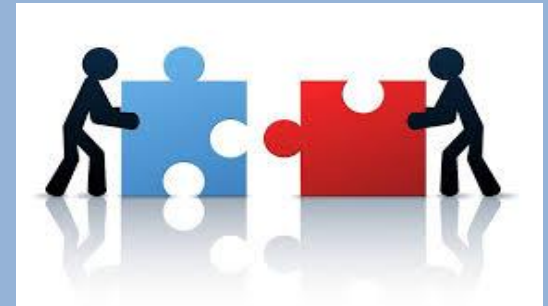
- Personal Stories
- Discussed challenges
- How they could respond
- Community solutions



Because this group was well resourced / well informed of what to doit was decided that a 2nd visit was not required.....however a follow up visit will be done later in time.

This community project...

- Encouraged migrant groups / their external counterparts to freely talk about.....
- MH – MI -/ Recovery.....
- generating important /vital knowledge on MH
- Breaking down their cultural misconceptions
- Promoting recovery / that it is possible....and....
- Having healthy communities within migrants



Leading to a healthy well contributing migrant community life within the wider Australian population.

Thank You.....

- Evan Bichara – CALD MH Consumer Advocate
- Email.....evan.bichara@svhm.org.au
- Mobile.....0411 054 882

