

Examples of Best Practice

Arabic Mental Health Promotion Program – New South Wales

The Arabic Mental Health Promotion Program targets newly arrived Arabic speaking refugees who are attending Adult Migrant English Programs (AMEP) or other resettlement programs. The program seeks to improve participants' mental health literacy and focuses on improving awareness and understanding of the key components of mental health through three-hour interactive educational sessions delivered across four weeks to people attending resettlement programs.

The pilot program was delivered by bilingual health educators and mental health clinicians from South Western Sydney Local Health District between October 2018 and March 2019.

Why is this best practice?

- The sessions were delivered in Arabic, facilitated by bilingual health promotion officers.

Refugee and Asylum Seeker Mental Health Pilot – Brisbane

Brisbane South PHN collaborated with the Mater Refugee Complex Care Clinic (MRCCC), Mater Emotional Health Unit and QLD Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT) to trial a Refugee and Asylum Seeker Mental Health pilot. The pilot aimed to facilitate access for people from a refugee and asylum seeker background to psychiatric services and build capacity in primary care to support mental health presentations.

The 11-month pilot was based in MRCCC and was funded for one session (4 hours) per week of psychiatric assessment and review time and one session (4 hours) of capacity building activities with referrers and primary care.

Why is this best practice?

- It embedded itself into existing services and created a partnership between services.
- An interpreter was used in 30 of the 36 appointments attended.
- It was a small pilot but had long lasting effects and patients from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds now have a specialised psychiatric service at MRCCC.

If you would like further details on this program contact MRCCC on (07) 3163 2880.

South Sudanese Project – Melbourne

South Sudanese-Australian communities in Western metropolitan Melbourne developed and are currently delivering community-led interventions to help improve the mental health of young people. Together with TACSI these initiatives were supported by cohealth and the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Ten ideas were developed to improve wellbeing, with three of these then delivered and evaluated by community members. The three ventures have now been implemented for five months and are ready to continue delivery. All three are cost effective, and primed to continue operating online or with an in-person adaptation. In addition, they're endorsed by South Sudanese Australians and have young people ready and able to lead them.

Why is this best practice?

- It is action oriented: this project looked at already well-researched and known issues. Broadly, that mental health is taboo topic for South Sudanese Australians and that the community has felt increased scrutiny and racism.
- The ideas were put together by community, not put to community for comment.
- The ideas were then evaluated by community — not by the project funders, stakeholders or managers.
- The ideas were led and delivered by the community.
- It offered paid employment for community members.
- It is low cost and simple — the activities can be easily recreated.

More information available at <https://www.tacsi.org.au/work/ssa-mental-health/>

How's your Haal – Western Australia

From February 2020 to March 2020, the How's Your Haal? project hosted three community conversations and various online engagements with over 90 young people. It made 600 new social media connections from people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds on the subject of mental health.

The HYH Project is the WA chapter of a national youth leadership program administered by the Australian Multicultural Foundation (AMF) and is funded by the federal Department of Social Services. The purpose of this program was to bring young people together to develop an intervention strategy to address an issue of concern within their collective context.

The heart of this project was about creating "brave spaces" for conversation around important issues.

The result is the How's your Haal report which outlines reoccurring themes, recommendations and suggestions on how to improve the mental health outcomes for youth from CaLD backgrounds going forward.

Into the Light – New South Wales

Into the Light is an Arabic psychological health resource in the form of a collection of videos. These videos aim to raise awareness both of the rate and commonality of mental illness within the community and of available resources and treatments. To launch this resource BEING held an Arabic language panel on psychological health in Rockdale. The panel featured five speakers.... and was run entirely in Arabic.

Why is this best practice?

- It addressed the needs of emerging groups.

More information available at <https://wayahead.org.au/into-the-light/>

Mental Health First Aid – Important Considerations When Providing Mental Health First Aid to Iraqi Refugees – National/Online

These guidelines include information on how first aiders can be respectful of cultural differences when assisting Iraqis. It takes into consideration circumstances that may be unique such as the historical context of war and conflict in Iraq, religious and cultural considerations in providing mental health care, stigma, and other factors that the mental health first aider must be aware of.

Why is this best practice?

- Having this factsheet available and part of the mental health first aid tool kit acknowledges the cultural differences in Australia.

View the guidelines at <https://mhfa.com.au/sites/default/files/Iraqi-refugees-guidelinesA4-FINAL.pdf>