

June 2025

ECCWA.ORG.AU

NEWSLETTER



Ethnic Communities Council
of Western Australia Inc

June 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Ethnic Communities Council of WA acknowledges and pays tribute to the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation and their Elders past and present as the Traditional Custodians of the Country (Boodja) on which we work.

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Western Australia and recognise their continuing and cultural connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respect to them, their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

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President's Message

KAYA. WANJU.

Welcome to the Noongar season of 'Makuru' (June and July), which sees the coldest, wettest time of the year in Western Australia. Represented by the colour dark blue that symbolises rain and cold weather. The water these months bring are essential for all species which call WA home.

I would like to start with gratitude to staff & board members for a successful year and, gratitude to community organisations and individuals for the strong engagement with ECCWA at the Community Engagement event held last month. Details of the event are covered in this edition. The June newsletter shines the spotlight on another board member, Dr Divya Jyoti Sharma. Divya shares the reason she was attracted to ECCWA and what drives her to give back to the community.

Another update is about the recently established Risk Management and Financial Scrutiny Subcommittee. This subcommittee meets regularly because it is vital for organisational revival and long-term sustainability. If you know of anyone in your organisation who would like to volunteer with this subcommittee, please contact Eugene Low, Abhishek Puri, or me for further details. The past two months have also been busy with recruiting staff to essential positions across the executive team. Watch the next edition for further news.

You may have noticed that ECCWA and FECCA have been working closely over the past year, with a strong relationship now in place. Towards this, it will be great to see a strong WA presence and participation at the AMHC Health & Wellbeing Conference 2025. This conference will take place on 11-12 November in Melbourne. Abstract submissions are now open and close on Friday, 11 July 2025. More information is available here:

<https://www.multiculturalhealthconference.org.au>

Then there is the Winter edition of ECCWA Equity Newsletter, which is in the pipeline. It will focus on a subject close to my heart: Gender Equity. We will cover issues, policy implications, lived experiences and the power of advocacy. To quote Jacinda Ardern, "I never, ever grew up as a young woman believing that my gender would stand in the way of doing anything I wanted". Unfortunately, this is not the case for many women, including those from ethnic and migrant communities.

President's Message

CONTINUED

Lastly, ECCWA is a peak body with responsibility towards health inequalities and disparities experienced by CaLD communities in Australia. If you know of community organisations working in the CaLD space and interested in ECCWA membership, we would love to hear from them. If you would like to arrange a visit, collaborate with ECCWA or support us through our various events, initiatives and projects, you are welcome to email me on president@eccwa.org.au. Our staff are also available to connect and communicate.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition.



Dr Sadhana Bose MBBS MD MPH MFPHM FFPHM



CEO's Message

2024/2025 has been an exciting journey for ECCWA. Yes, we have had road bumps and mountains to climb, and we continue to strive forward in improving and securing the long-term future for ECCWA.

It has been my absolute pleasure and honour to have been the CEO for ECCWA for the past year, and it is with mixed feelings that I hand over the reins to ECCWA's new Executive Officer, who will join us in August allowing for a handover before my departure in September.

As you will know, I came to ECCWA with a clear remit to turn the organisation around financially and operationally. Although we still have a path to tread, the support that we have received, the commitment of our communities, and the dedication of a powerful and mighty team, have meant that our path has been aided along the way. ECCWA's future can be assured with the continued support of OMI and stakeholders.

I am excited to continue with further improvements before my departure which will see the revamping of our website, a new membership draft offering that we will go out to members and stakeholders for their opinion, ideas, and suggestions.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all of those community members and professionals who I have met throughout my journey at ECCWA. I have learnt an incredible amount about different cultures, faiths, beliefs, religion, and spiritualities. About cohesive communities and about inequities, all of which has enabled me to understand the work that ECCWA needs to continue to address.

As members know, we have a plan of evolution. Its aim is to solidify the work that we have done and put ECCWA in an even stronger position where it can concentrate on key items of systemic advocacy. Thank you, not only for your support but your generosity of spirit, knowledge, and wisdom.

As always,

Angelena Fixter



Board Spotlight



Dr Divya Sharma
Vice-president of ECCWA
MBBS | FANZCA | GAICD

At heart, Divya is person who is committed to working for our diverse communities to ensure that they can understand, access, and avail themselves of all the wonderful opportunities, services, and support by all levels of government, here in WA.

Divya moved to Australia when she was 2 years old. Brought up by migrant parents who also were committed to community work and taught her to always follow the righteous path and not the easiest path. Working hard to become a specialist anaesthetist and managing family responsibilities with a very supportive husband, Divya has always given meticulous attention to detail.

Her interests include wellbeing of anaesthetists, mindfulness-based stress resilience, mindful communication, leadership development, and peer support. Divya is also a practitioner member on the WA Medical Board, and the first ever Indian born, Australian trained medical officer to do so.

Passionate about the wellbeing and procedural governance of all the communities within her sphere – professional and personal, and as head of the constitution review subcommittee of ECCWA, Divya has been proud to usher in a new set of rules with wide consultation and support from the Board and executive team. Pro bono legal support from <https://lawaccess.org.au/> has been the backbone of this change, (something all NFPs can use).

Volunteering for organisations such as Indian Society of WA and the Ethnic Communities Council of WA fills her cup and exposes her mind to an ever-widening range of people and their stories. When you work sincerely and set your mind towards a goal, you can achieve anything. Together, let's work to grow ECCWA as an organisation that can truly represent and advocate for our members' views, aspirations and challenges effectively.

ECCWA Updates

Take Flight Event

In May 2025, we held a free event at the Hillview Intercultural Community Centre in Bentley (suburb of South Perth). The evening was a terrific opportunity for networking, viewing presentations, hearing success stories, and enjoying performances. We have included a selection of photographs from the night on the next few pages.

A dark blue rectangular poster with yellow and white text and graphics. At the top right, there is a small illustration of a butterfly chrysalis hanging from a branch and a large, stylized butterfly with yellow and blue wings. The main title 'TAKE FLIGHT with ECCWA' is in large, bold, yellow capital letters. Below it, the text 'For a FREE evening of:' is in white. This is followed by two columns of bullet points: '• NETWORKING', '• PROJECT PRESENTATIONS' on the left, and '• SUCCESS STORIES', '• CULTURAL PERFORMANCES' on the right. A decorative horizontal line with diamond shapes in the center separates this from the next section. The next section is titled 'Inviting' in yellow, followed by 'Community Leaders & Connectors', 'Service Providers', 'Stakeholders', and 'Community Members' in white. At the bottom, a white line of text reads: 'Please join us together for collaborations & impactful contributions to our communities.'

ECCWA Updates

Please enjoy this selection of photos from our Take Flight with ECCWA event held in May 2025.



ECCWA Updates

Take Flight Event



ECCWA Updates

Take Flight Event



ECCWA Updates

Speak My Language Project – September 2024 till June 2025

This is a Nationwide disability project consisting of CALD communities talking about living well with a disability.

The project has 8 participants – 4 pairs in 4 languages (Tamil, Turkish, Burmese and Italian). We produced 4 videos – recordings of 2 storytellers speaking the same language sharing their life living well in their own languages. They shared their journey of resilience, inclusive services and opportunities which led to success stories.

The story tellers are:

Tamil language – Sarasvathi & Ponammal

Turkish language – Funda & Ayse

Italian language – Tiziana & Tony Sontero

Burmese language – Rosie & Naw Hnin

We are grateful and thank the 12 reviewers from the 4 language groups who had contributed for this project through their review process watching videos for its contents, impact stories, inclusiveness, insights and disability appropriate information about the services and opportunities to live well through the stories.



ECCWA Updates

Community Connectors

Community Connectors is a Collaboration with UWA – Perron Institute and ECCWA for Compassionate Communities project. Led by Professor Samar Aoun (UWA), which started in May 2025.

This project encourages ethnic communities to be supportive of each other during challenging times; especially as they are living far away from their extended family support. The project also encourages sensitive conversation about subjects such as death, loss, and grief, and at the same time provide information about death literacy in very safe, non-judgmental and warm ways.

This is a 3-year project where ECCWA is responsible for recruiting community representatives and providing training to connect them with their own communities in the most culturally appropriate ways and provide guidance. The trained (activated) connectors will then continue on with conversations in their communities in their languages.



Training for community representatives from language groups – Tamil, Vietnamese, Karen/Burmese, Arabic and Greek.

ECCWA Updates



Community Connectors training for Arabic speaking ladies group –
Delivered in bilingual by Anbumoly Kuppusamy in English (ECCWA) and
Sabah Suleiman in Arabic at Cloverdale – Ruth Faulkner library.

ECCWA Updates



Community Connectors Training

Join us to talk about caring for each other in our community, especially when we're living far away from our extended families.
Let's share ways to support one another in all times specially through hard times.

Any adults can attend!

Date: 23/07/2025
Time: 10am - 12.30pm
Venue: Hillview Intercultural Community Centre, Bentley. (Training Room)

Please Register!

Contact person:
Anbumoly | M: 0451963919

Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia | perron institute | THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA | SOUTH WEST COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITIES



Compassionate Cafe

Join us for a casual talk about caring for each other in our community, especially when we're living far away from our extended families.
Let's share ways to support one another in all times specially through the hard times.

Facilitator
Shane Bailey - UWA

Date: 17/07/2025
Time: 10am - 11.30am
Venue: Hillview Intercultural Community Centre, Bentley.

Contact:
Anbumoly - 0451963919

Coffee / Tea & Snacks provided!

Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia | perron institute | THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA | SOUTH WEST COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITIES

Upcoming trainings. Registration is encouraged.

ECCWA Updates

Refugee Week 2025

As part of Refugee Week, we proudly partnered with the City of Belmont to host a powerful and moving event centred on the theme Beyond the Borders: Finding Freedom through Resilience.

The event featured three inspiring speakers from refugee backgrounds, who shared personal stories of strength, perseverance, and the ways they are now contributing meaningfully to both Australia and their local communities.

A highlight of the event was an interactive theatre performance — three short, thought-provoking scenes portraying the hidden discrimination refugees often face. These were powerfully brought to life by passionate university student volunteers, whose performances sparked deep emotion and reflection.

The day created space for open and honest conversations among attendees, who shared their own experiences, thoughts, and newfound understanding of the refugee journey. It was a celebration of resilience, empathy, and the power of community connection.



The organiser (ECCWA-Anbumoly) and the funder (City of Belmont – Tegan & Marwa), the speakers (Sam Kugathas, Naba Rajeh and Semira Mohamed Adem) MC (Kuda Ndlovu), and the interactive theatre artists (Elilmathi, Ishika, Ruth and Mariam).

ECCWA Updates

Interactive Theatre Scenes.



ECCWA Updates

Child Health Services Survey

Child and Adolescent Community Health (CAHS)

Project – Facilitation of Engagement with CaLD Communities for Early Years Partnership Collaboration with Sarah Janali, (Janali & Co).

Engagement Purpose

The purpose of this engagement is to connect with culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities within the Armadale catchment area to better understand their awareness, experiences, and perceptions of the Child Health service. This engagement project is supported by the Early Years Partnership (EYP) for the Armadale West.

The engagement will also seek to identify the motivations behind accessing these services, as well as the barriers that may prevent families from engaging with the Child Health service. Insights gained will inform more culturally responsive and accessible service delivery for CaLD families in the region. This will contribute to following EYP outcome: To increase the number of children meeting developmental milestones and entering school developmentally ready

Multiple interview sessions were held – both individual and group sessions with mothers in the catchment areas including Nerrigen Brook Playgroup session, home visits and interviews at Seville Grove Library. We encompassed mothers speaking Tamil, Arabic, Karen, Indonesian, Malayalam, Hindi, Punjabi and few other languages.

This project will complete by the end of July.



ECCWA Updates

Individual and group sessions for Child Health Services survey.



ECCWA Updates

South Metro Health Services Project

Sub consultancy with Janali & Co

We are pleased to advise that the Ethnic Communities Council of WA is currently working with community development consultancy Janali & Co to develop a new Multicultural Action Plan (the Plan) for the South Metropolitan Health Service (SMHS).

SMHS offer a range of hospital and community based health services (see map below). The Plan will help to ensure services are welcoming, inclusive, and culturally safe .

To help us develop the Plan we are inviting feedback from people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who have accessed SMHS hospitals or community based health services. We would like to hear from patients and their families.

The feedback received via a survey, interviews, and focus groups, will directly inform the Plan, ensuring it is representative, actionable, and effective. We are seeking your support in sharing this participation opportunity with your community.

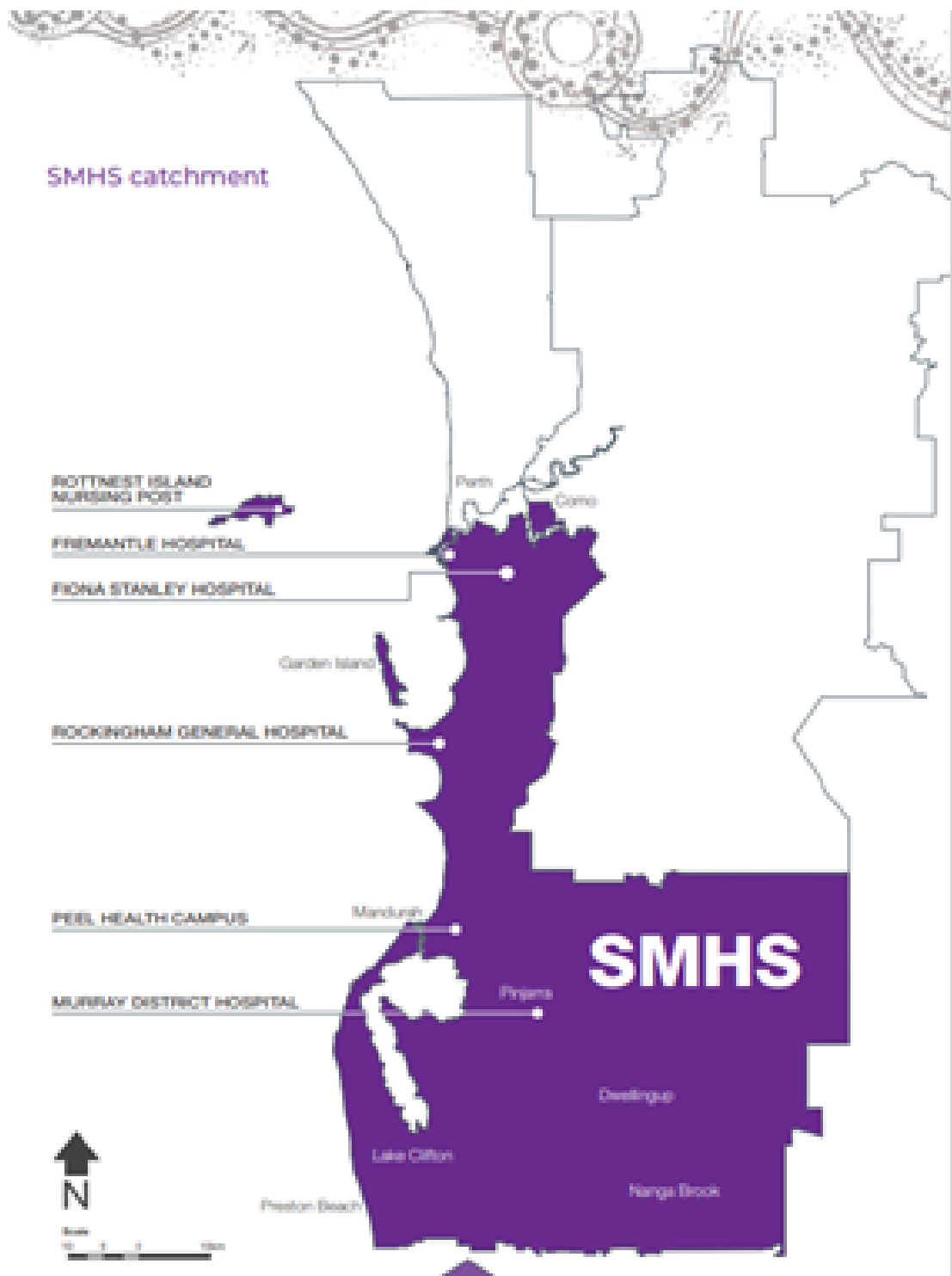
Please share the link below and encourage your community members to complete the survey. The survey can be completed in 15 different languages and will be open from July to mid August.

<https://pipsmhs.health.wa.gov.au/smhs-multicultural-action-plan>

We can also provide posters and flyers for your use. Please let ECCWA know via ea@eccwa.org.au if you would like us to send these to you for distribution. Should you have personally used one of the hospitals or centres in our service, we also encourage you to complete the survey.

ECCWA Updates

South Metro Health Services Catchment



ECCWA Updates

ECCWA Participated in The Welcoming Australia symposium 2025 – Perth Summit : National conversations, Local reflections

The Welcoming Australia Symposium brought together international, national and local practitioners, policy-makers, researchers, business innovators and civic leaders to share and discuss the challenges, benefits and opportunities of migration, settlement, cultural diversity and inclusion.

Date: 29 May 2025

Venue: Hillview Intercultural Community Centre, Bentley.



ECCWA Updates

OMI Training

Community Capacity Building Workshops 2025

Date: 24 May 2025

The workshop will focus on strategies to engage with diverse sections of your community, including young people and people with disability.



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Ethnic Communities Council
of Western Australia Inc



Department of
Local Government, Sport
and Cultural Industries



OFFICE OF
MULTICULTURAL INTERESTS