

Media Release

15 December 2020

SydWest Multicultural Services welcomes discussion on benefits of multiculturalism

SydWest Multicultural Services has welcomed the recent release of [Labor's Multicultural Statement](#)

The organisation is a leader on cultural diversity issues in NSW, and assists thousands of newly arrived refugees, humanitarian entrants and people from non-English speaking backgrounds become valued members of Australian society.

SydWest Multicultural Services CEO Elfa Moraitakis said it was important to voice, support and reinforce the benefits migrants and refugees bring to our nation.

'The Statement celebrates our multiculturalism but at the same time warns us not to be complacent about racism,' she said.

'While there is still a lot to be addressed, we hope the release of this public document will lead to broader public discussion around the benefits and support required for a truly diverse society that lives in harmony.'

Ms Moraitakis said there were two key areas her organisation believed must also be addressed.

Greater support to address domestic violence

'We would like to see greater support and funding for this critical societal issue that devastates so many families in our community and has far-reaching financial, social, health and psychological consequences,' Ms Moraitakis said.

'Unfortunately, the Blacktown Local Government Area has the highest domestic and family violence rates in the state.'

'For us to be able to effectively address this issue we need to provide support that is culturally and linguistically appropriate, as a high proportion of residents in this area are born overseas. We also advocate a strong case management approach.'

'This will continue to be a key area of focus for us in our work with community.'

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An extension of migrant services

'We believe that newly arrived individuals and families often require support so they can fully participate in society,' Ms Moraitakis said.

'Organisations such as ours help out by connecting people to a range of services that might include help with job applications and interviews, or how to support their children at school.'

'This help is currently capped at five years, and we believe that the period of time should be extended due to the cultural and language barriers many face in order to settle well into our country.'

Ms Moraitakis said that day after day, she sees first-hand the myriad ways migrants and refugees enrich our communities.

'We look forward to talking to elected representatives from all sides of politics about how together we can make Australia an even greater, fairer and more inclusive place for all to live a life free of racism and discrimination.'

STATEMENT ENDS /

For further information or to arrange interviews, contact Vikki Hine, Public Affairs & Communications, SydWest Multicultural Services on vikki.hine@sydneywestms.org.au or ceo@sydneywestms.org.au or 9621 6633.

SydWest Multicultural Services is a leading organisation for all cultural diversity issues responding to community needs and opportunities. Established more than 35 years ago, SydWest provides a range of services to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) individuals and communities services to assist with settling and living productive and independent lives in the community. We offer flexible and integrated service models across the life course of refugees and migrants, supporting the self-determination and empowerment of our diverse communities. SydWest is an innovative employer of choice, with passionate, qualified and experienced bilingual and bicultural staff who are sensitive to the languages and cultures of the communities we represent. With locations in Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Penrith and Rouse Hill, we cover all matters of cultural diversity in the region.

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