



The Voice of Multicultural Victoria

Issue Number 138, Winter 2020 Edition,
July 2020

ECCV's online multicultural ageing and aged care magazine

Golden Years

COVID-19 responses by aged care providers and community associations



Diversitat client, Maria, gratefully accepting her individualized package of activity goodies at her home. Delivered by Social Support group staff who are reassured to see she is well and safe! This service received grant funding from the Australian Government.

GOLDEN YEARS is a free online magazine highlighting multicultural ageing and aged care issues produced by the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria, with support from the Victorian Government.

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Message from the Editor

Dear Golden Years Reader

Welcome to edition 138 of Golden Years.

I am pleased to inform you of how ECCV has been working with its members to support culturally and linguistically diverse seniors during COVID-19.

One of ECCV's first actions was to complete a mail out to 500 plus seniors groups with printed information on COVID-19 and preventative measures that seniors should take to stop the spread of coronavirus.

ECCV has worked closely with a broad range of key stakeholders across Victoria to understand the impacts and evolving challenges for older Victorians of culturally diverse background. This includes regular communication with multicultural aged care services provider CEOs and regional ethnic councils. We have also been liaising with other sector peaks, Victorian government departments and local councils on the needs of multicultural seniors to ensure that our communities are not forgotten during the pandemic.

ECCV staff have collated weekly policy advice on decisions that have the potential to impact on culturally diverse seniors. In addition to that, ECCV has been in contact with representatives from various seniors' groups to understand how their members have been coping with the pandemic and what support requirements are most necessary.

The 2020 winter edition of Golden Years features articles by aged care providers and community organisations and their unique responses to COVID-19. CALD Victorians and their organisations are to be commended for the way they have worked in a challenging environment to ensure that our most vulnerable community members remain safe and connected during these difficult days.

I thank the organisations and their representatives that have contributed to this edition of ECCV's Golden Years.

I hope you enjoy reading edition 138 and find it insightful.

Nikolaus Rittinghausen
Editor, Golden Years



COVID-19 support for culturally diverse communities

People are doing it tough during the COVID-19 pandemic. For many Victorians the anxiety caused by the virus and lockdown is exacerbated by job loss and financial strain, pushing some families to the edge.

While COVID-19 is taking its toll across Victoria, the toll is often heightened for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. CALD Victorians are more likely to find themselves struggling to afford the basics, including food.

Emergency Management Victoria is working hard, alongside relief agencies and the Victorian Government, to assist people in need.

Here are some options that might help Victorians needing food relief or other assistance during these difficult times:

- The Victorian Government is providing an emergency relief package of basic supplies to people self-quarantining due to COVID-19. The package includes essential food staples. For more information and to find out about eligibility phone the COVID-19 hotline on 1800 675 398.
- The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre is open between 10am and 5pm from Monday to Friday. People are asked to call 03 9326 6066 before visiting, or go to [this website](#) for more information. Language translations are available [here](#).
- [Ask Izzy](#) is a website that can help find the services people need. It's free and anonymous, and Victorians can search over 360,000 services including help accessing [food](#), as well as housing, healthcare, counselling, legal advice and addiction treatment.
- Local councils can direct people to services available in their area. Find local council information [here](#).

More information about COVID-19 and support options is also available from these sources:

- [AMES Australia COVID-19 updates](#)
- [Australian government COVID-19 translated resources](#)
- [Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria](#)
- [Migration Council Australia COVID-19 multilingual app](#)
- [SBS Radio COVID-19 information](#)
- [Victorian government COVID-19 translated resources](#)

All Victorians should be able to afford the basics. Emergency Management Victoria will keep working with relief organisations and the Victorian Government to ensure that COVID-19 doesn't leave vulnerable Victorians hungry or in need.



Keeping connected – Social Support groups in Gippsland

Gippsland Multicultural Services have been working with each of our clients through the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring both their health and wellbeing are cared for through this time.

Due to the cancellation of the Social Support groups, we have engaged other measures to stay in touch with our clients. Our team of devoted staff have been preparing and delivering weekly morning teas and activity packages to over 40 clients.

These face to face visits, done at an appropriate distance, provide an opportunity to ask how people are and if they need any assistance with shopping, medical appointments or other. This has proven to be very effective, where the client can have a conversation with a trusted carer, when they may not share how they are feeling over the phone.

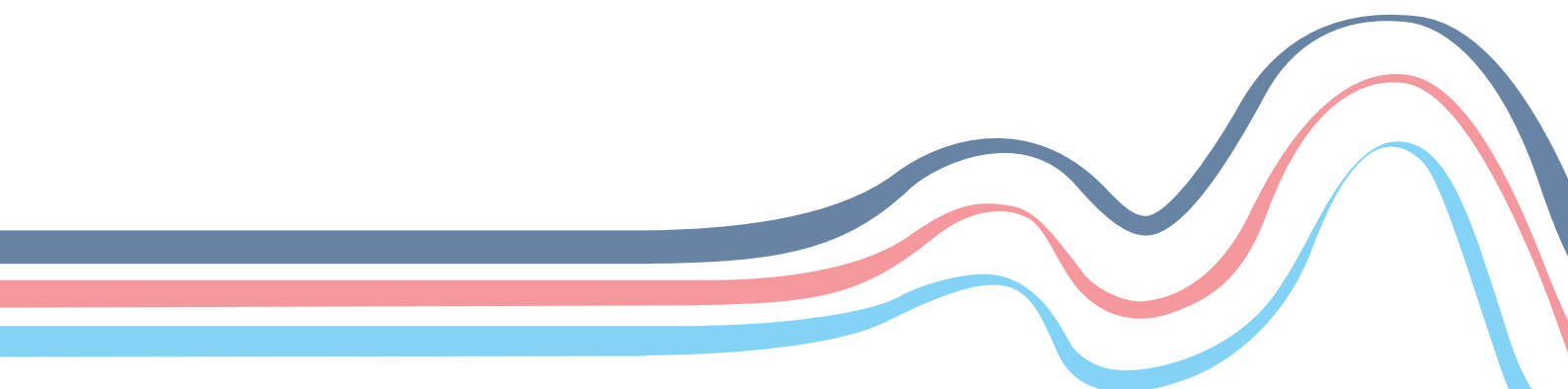
Initially weekly visits just consisted of the morning tea, this has been further enhanced by the introduction of a weekly newsletter containing “Virtual programs” and activity baskets that clients are invited to select activities from. This includes activities such as crosswords, colouring, International newspapers and knitting.

Additionally, there have been weekly competitions where clients have shared photos of their garden flowers or produce, creation of a dish from Around the World Cookbook and a wonderful collection of Fun Facts about you, where clients are sharing facts about themselves.

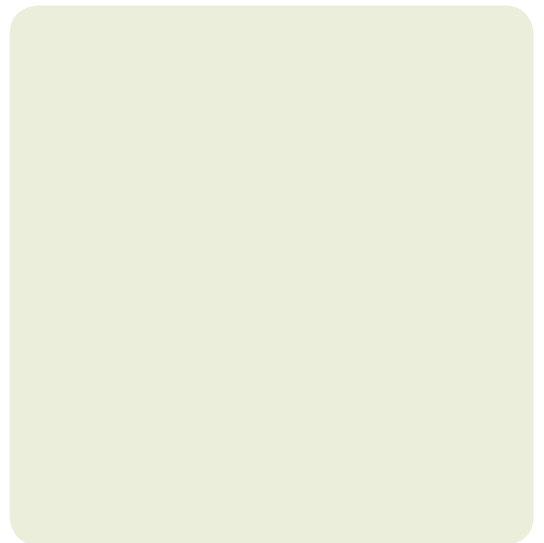
We are very pleased to adapt our services through this time to continue to connect with and support our clients, but we all are looking forward to coming back together soon!

Gina Symonds

Social Support Coordinator



Keeping connected – Social Support groups in Gippsland



Multicultural Tucker program

The Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council (BRMC) Multicultural Tucker (MCT) program has been serving the Ballarat CALD community for over 20 years. Multicultural Tucker is a true representation of multiculturalism with over 80 consumers from 26 different cultural backgrounds attending the monthly event. Consumers enjoy a three-course meal featuring a different cultural cuisine each month. With live entertainment, a birthday cake for all consumers celebrating a birthday during that month and much more, the program is vibrant and enjoyed by all who attend.

BRMC Senior Services held their last Multicultural Tucker in March 2020 before postponing the program due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

BRMC Senior Services quickly transitioned the Social Support group activity to Home Delivered Meals. 138 consumers are currently receiving fortnightly two-course meals along with Activity Packs. The Activity Packs contain items that assist consumers to stay active and engaged, including gardening and art and craft supplies. The packs also include a few light snacks and the occasional chocolate treat!

BRMC recently received additional funding from the federal government which will allow for weekly meal deliveries during the months of June and July.

The new service is enabling our CALD consumers to stay connected, informed and active. Feedback from our consumers has been excellent and their gratitude for the home service is overwhelming.

BRMC staff have shown strength, compassion and empathy during this challenging time. BRMC Staff are determined to ensure our most vulnerable cohort stay connected and feel safe. BRMC will continue to support our seniors in the safety of their homes until face-to-face activities can safely resume.

Teresa Azzopardi

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council



Multicultural Tucker program



Spanish Speaking Elders – Diversity within Diversity

Spanish speaking Victorians come from most of the 21 countries who speak Spanish and include Spain and Latin America.

Migrants from Spain, began arriving in Australia in the early 1960s, followed in the early 1970s by migrants and refugees mostly from Chile, Argentina and Uruguay. Central Americans, also refugees and migrants, mainly from El Salvador, followed during that country's civil war in the 1980s. Smaller groups of South and Central Americans also arrived in Australia during the above period.

These migrants and refugees constitute ageing communities, as documented by the 2016 Census. United – Spanish Latin American Welfare Centre (previously known as CELAS), established in 1977 to assist the settlement of Spanish speakers, is now offering a whole range of Aged Care Support Services and Programs, including Home Support, Friendly Visiting Scheme and Social Support.

The delivery of Friendly Visiting and Social Activities Groups, of which United has four in Melbourne's regions, has proven a challenge as well as an opportunity, during the COVID-19 social restrictions. The staff responded through regular contacts with group participants, as well as consultation and innovation in the kind of support that is being provided to the various groups and individuals.

For example, a Knitting Group was established, and the staff delivered the necessary materials and the creative juices began to produce interesting craft items and it's envisaged that, once the coronavirus restrictions are relaxed, the work will be publicly exhibited.

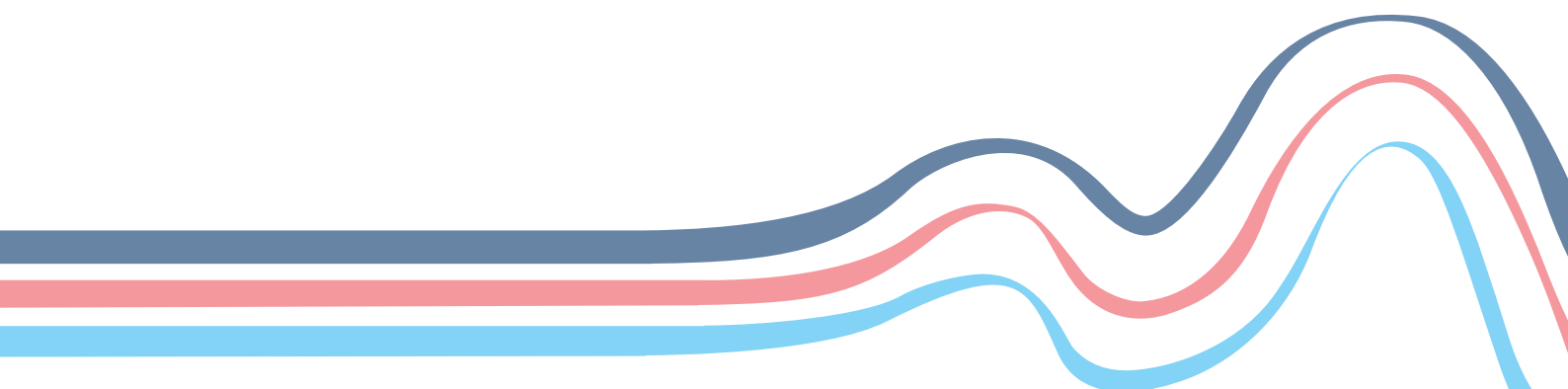
Another innovation was the creation of a Literary Group with an enthusiastic number of participants, who have chosen to write either poetry, personal experiences or fiction. It's also envisaged that the works will be published in book form as well as being placed on United's Facebook and website.

As a SAG client reminded us:

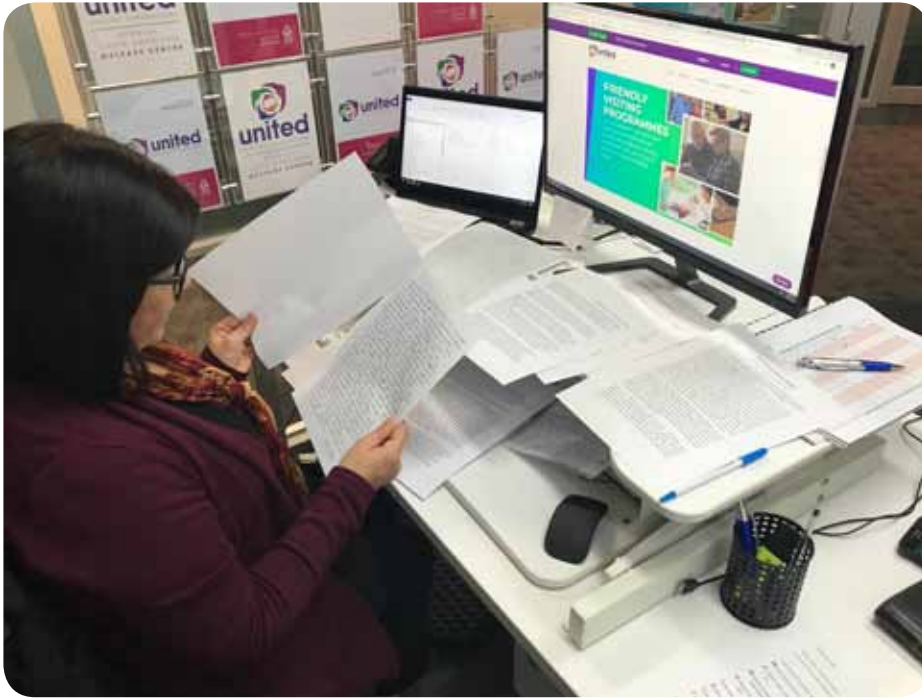
"When one door closes, another opens" Miguel de Cervantes.

Rafaela Lopez, OAM

Executive, UNITED's Management Committee



Spanish Speaking Elders – Diversity within Diversity



United 1: Staff member – Reading literary contributions of Social Activity Groups clients



United 2: Client Support Worker – Virtual Respite

COVID-19 and Tamil Seniors

The Tamil Senior Citizens Fellowship (VIC) Inc. has been in operation since 1987. The majority of our members are between 65 and 85 years of age and have existing medical conditions – the most vulnerable group to coronavirus infection. As soon as the COVID-19 restrictions were announced, we cancelled all of our in-person activities and focussed on alternate ways of ensuring connectivity.

Our Area Coordinators connect with each of our members on a monthly basis, and a separate Sub Committee focuses on those elderly members living alone. We work to confirm that our members have a supply of medicine, food and groceries, and a Sri Lankan grocery store has agreed to do home deliveries if needed.

We monitor COVID-19 updates from various sources on a daily basis, and distribute relevant information to our members by email in a timely fashion as well as by our monthly Newsletter and quarterly News Bulletin.

The next issue of our News Bulletin will be devoted to sharing the lock down experiences of our members. During this period the use of digital technology has improved significantly and members have organized small groups for effective communication and sharing of materials.

Despite the significant social and economic problems, the virus has created, it has made us take time to reflect on our lives. With firsthand experience of social isolation, we are realising the true value of our family members, relatives, friends, neighbours and broader community networks. We are reminded to appreciate the hygienic values of the practices that our ancestors have left with us and the services provided by the front-line staff in many sectors. Some members have even re discovered their cooking talents and writing skills.

Despite the challenges, COVID has tested our strength, resilience and compassion for the better as we move towards a “New COVID Safe Normal”.

P. Anandajayasekeram
President, TSCF (VIC) Inc



Serbian Social Services continuing to empower people in need of palliative care

The Empowering Serbian People in Need of Palliative Care project is funded by Palliative Care Victoria. It commenced in January 2019 with the aim of offering social support, referral and information to individuals with life limiting illness, their carers and families living in the South East Region of Melbourne.

Our volunteers have reported that regular visits are the key in seeing improvements in the client's life, as the consistency of the visits allows for a bond and a deep understanding and trust to be established. We have also received feedback from lifestyle coordinators from the aged care facilities who have told us about the positive impressions made on the clients and the noticeable improvements in happiness and satisfaction with such visits.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the palliative care patients have become even more vulnerable and socially isolated. Nonetheless, our volunteers were enthusiastic about keeping contact with people they were previously visiting.

As a result of coronavirus, the project converted face to face visits to a virtual platform which highlighted many challenges such as limited English skills and digital illiteracy amongst the clients and volunteers. This contributed to increase work pressure on residential aged care staff and resulted in a decrease in time to assist with virtual visits by volunteers.

In order to facilitate this change, the Volunteer Coordinator worked intensively to connect palliative care residents with volunteers. In a very short period of time, the volunteers were able to engage in telephone and video calls with the people they were previously visiting. In some cases, the phone and video calls were unavailable due to poor health of the residents. However, cards with personal messages were sent instead.

In this challenging time the project managed to swiftly implement new measures and to provide substitute services notwithstanding the challenges which CALD communities face as a result of the pandemic.

Marina Celebic

Manager | Serbian Community Association of Australia Inc.

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Palliative Care Volunteers



Milka Ivcic Volunteer with the resident



Palliative care volunteers at the residential aged care facility

Asking the COVID-19 screening questions in 25 languages

Bolton Clarke (formerly RDNS) At Home Support staff including nurses, personal care and allied health workers have continued to provide necessary care for people in their homes throughout the coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions.

This is not the first time our organisation has been at the forefront of providing needed assistance in times of crisis, with our district nurses providing care during the Spanish Flu pandemic over a century ago and during the early days of AIDS/HIV epidemic.

To protect our clients during this time we have implemented a range of enhanced protection measures and have regularly updated information in English and other languages available on our website at: <https://www.boltonclarke.com.au/news-resources/corporate-news/protecting-our-clients-and-residents/>

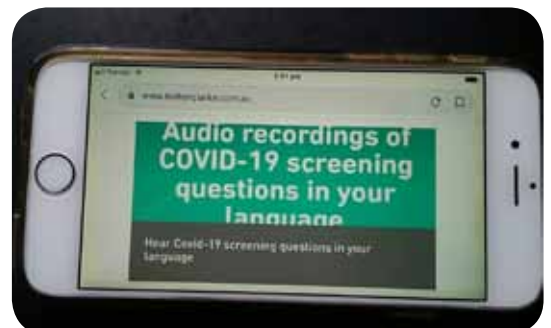
One of the safety processes our staff follow is to ask four COVID 19 screening questions before we enter a person's home. By doing this we can assess how best to safely support the client.

When the person we visit has a preferred language other than English we were using a telephone interpreter to ask these questions, but this was sometimes quite time consuming for all involved. We developed a more time efficient way of doing this by making audio recordings of the questions that we could access on our mobile phones. These are now available in 25 different languages via the website.

We welcome other health services and aged care providers using these audio recordings to support clients through the pandemic and work together to stop the spread of coronavirus.

To access these audio recordings of the four screening questions and find out how best to use these, go to:

<https://www.boltonclarke.com.au/news-resources/covid-19/>



Rosemarie Draper

Bolton Clarke



New short films to improve detection and responses to elder abuse in the context of dementia

In times of crisis such as the current COVID-19 pandemic, the likelihood of older people experiencing abuse is increased due to enforced isolation, increased control and financial pressures.

Elder abuse happens in all communities irrespective of culture, ethnicity or language, and while this type of abuse has gained some visibility in the community recently, it is still vastly under-reported and can be difficult to identify.

People living with dementia and other forms of cognitive impairment are uniquely vulnerable to experiencing abuse, particularly from their family members and carers. Often it is service providers working at the coalface of home care who are the first to take note of potential abuse, however, knowing how best to respond and balance the rights and needs of both the carer and person living with dementia can be challenging. To ensure that providers have the tools they need to respond appropriately, clear guidelines and training is pivotal.

The National Ageing Research Institute (NARI), funded by the State Trustees, have worked closely with service providers and older people to co-produce three short films exemplifying best practice responses to cases of elder abuse in the context of dementia. These films are specifically designed with frontline workers in mind and outline the appropriate steps to take if there is suspicion of abuse.

Specifically, the short films provide a guide to best practice responses to three common scenarios relating to elder abuse and dementia: financial abuse, physical abuse and neglect. The medium of film was chosen as it provides an engaging and accessible platform with which to provide educational materials about sensitive topics such as elder abuse.

In the wake of the 'new normal' of COVID-19 which limits the opportunity to engage in face-to-face training, the videos further offer providers an opportunity to enhance their skills online. The films were launched in March 2020 and are now freely available via the NARI website <https://www.nari.net.au/elder-abuse-films>.

The research team is also collecting feedback about the films which can be provided via a short survey linked to each of the three films.

Associate Professor Bianca Brijnath, NARI

Dr Josefine Antoniadou, NARI

Dr Kate O'Halloran, NARI

Contact: Dr Josefine Antoniadou j.antoniadou@nari.edu.au



Isolated no more thanks to Be Connected Digital Literacy Program

The Australian-Filipino Community Services (AFCS) is a Statewide Digital Ambassador in Victoria and a mentor to many CALD communities. The positive impacts of the Be Connected Digital Literacy initiative through the Australian Government and Good Things Foundation are now being realised by many seniors in the community.

For Filipino seniors, the COVID-19 pandemic has given them an opportunity to put into practice their newly acquired digital skills and reduce the negative impacts of isolation. Here is what members of AFCS have been doing:

Online prayer to conquer fear of the unknown

Seniors meet online everyday to do prayers that are led by the AFCS Chaplain.

Crafts online

The colouring and recycling of papers which are made into handbags and crafts ideas on Wednesdays have become the new normal.

Sharing of lockdown activities and snapshots

This is an online activity via messenger where participants share their photos.

Love in any language

Another great lockdown activity our seniors participated in is the Singing Project: Love in any language to share a message of hope, love and unity during this very difficult time in our life.



Nanay Baby, a happy 87 year old participant shared these words with us: "Social distancing YES – Isolated, NO MORE."

Norminda Forteza

Chaplain | Australian-Filipino Community Services

Diversitat Aged Support initiatives underway to support clients during COVID-19

Diversitat Aged Support has commenced new services to help clients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A meal delivery service, weekly phone welfare checks, unaccompanied shopping trips and activity packs are among some of the new initiatives Diversitat are currently rolling out in order to support clients with the new challenges they now face.

Aged Support Manager Robyn Martinez said that the current COVID-19 situation was adding more pressure on elderly citizens.

“Social distancing is adding to the already difficult situation many older people face – particularly those living alone or dependent on others for care and support. Many are socially isolated with limited contact to others.”

Ms. Martinez said phone welfare checks were vital in ensuring clients were receiving the social support they were accustomed to.

The distribution of a newsletter to keep up to date with the latest news and personalised activity packs were also helping to lift spirits and keep clients engaged.

Kata Gnjec from the Geelong Active Diverse Seniors Group at Diversitat said that she was delighted to receive the activity pack from a worker.

“I was very happy to see familiar photos of the group” she said.

A meal delivery service is also catering to the many clients that had previously enjoyed chef-made meals whilst attending groups at the centre – some up to five days a week.

Ms. Martinez said now that clients were unable to attend programs many were having to shop for and prepare every meal themselves which was becoming increasingly difficult both physically and financially.

“The meal delivery service is ensuring every one of our clients has access to nutritious, quality food,” she said.

For more information about Diversitat’s meal delivery service visit: <https://diversitat.org.au/services/aged-support/diversitat-meal-delivery-service/>

Robyn Martinez

General Manager | Diversitat Aged Support

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T 0419 350 958



Diversitat Aged Support initiatives underway to support clients during COVID-19



Meal delivery time – activity worker Helen Polyzos getting ready to deliver meals to clients



Activity worker Baw Mu Daw “Mu Mu” Ghay loading up client meal packages.

Serving the Maltese elderly during COVID 19


The Maltese Community Council of Victoria Inc (MCCV) closed our centres due to COVID-19 on 17 March 2020. To ensure the continuation of service, support and socialisation to our most vulnerable clients, our staff have:


- Contacted clients by phone three times per week performing welfare checks, determining support needs, identifying the most isolated with no family or services to support them.
- Connected with clients to provide socialisation and respite to carers.
- Provided information for services such as BeyondBlue, COVID-19 Hotline, Foodbank and other relevant services.
- Conference calls providing up to four clients to chat together.
- Sending birthday cards to clients, followed by a phone call on their birthday.
- Delivery of Mother's Day flowers to clients
- Phone contact with carers of dementia clients to provide support, ensuring they are managing the caring role.
- Loaning iPads to clients for seven days. Staff provided clients with instruction booklets and an explanation of each application. Telephone support is also available.
- Weekly online activity schedule provided to clients
- Facetime morning tea sessions – staff synchronise a weekly visit and set up a Facetime session with up to six other clients. Morning tea is delivered to the client for enjoyment during their session.
- Window visits to clients and more recently, in home visits and shopping assistance.
- Fortnightly newsletters containing:
 - activities
 - Maltese recipes submitted by clients over the phone
 - prayers
 - photos of clients participating in activities
 - 'a day in the life' client interviews
 - information about staying safe
- Reminder calls to clients about Mass times and Maltese news broadcasts on TV and radio programs
- Clients providing recipes verbally during calls to contribute to newsletters which the MCCV wishes to develop a Maltese Recipe book called 'I did it my way' highlighting the different ways Maltese dishes can be prepared.



Please note that this information is correct as of 21st April 2020.
Please contact service directly to confirm they are still operating.

 Food	Vinnies Soup Van	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call our Box Hill Welfare line: 1800 305 330 (Mon–Fri 10am to 3pm) for assistance with food
	Salvos 614	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast and lunch will be served on a takeaway basis out the servery window. • Dinner will be served on a takeaway basis out the servery window.
	Sacred Heart Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering Dining Hall clients a combined breakfast and lunch takeaway. Meals service will occur between 10am–1pm, from the entrance of the SHM Grey Street op shop (87a Grey Street, St Kilda)
	VincentCare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are providing takeaway food parcels from takeaway service window between 10am–1pm Monday–Friday at the HRC (191 Flemington Rd, North Melbourne)
	St Mary's House of Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown paper bag brunch distributed from 10:30am – no other meals will be supplied
	St Mark's/St Peters Anglican Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Peter's Breakfast service – takeaways only, can access from 7:30am–9:00am • Emergency relief food parcels available at St Mark's can access Monday–Friday 11:30am–2:30pm. (One parcel per person each week)
	Father Bob	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOOD PARCELS, Mon, Tues, Weds & Thurs 10am–2pm, Fri 11am–2pm. Address: 204 Gladstone Street Sth Melbourne
	Christ Church Community Centre (St Kilda)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOOD PARCELS (reduced pantry availability) • Address: 14 Acland St, St Kilda.
	St Lukes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday community lunch – takeaway prepacked. • Address: 210 Dorcas Street, Sth Melb
	Southport Uniting (South Melbourne)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food pantry items available by appointment only on Wednesday and Thursday between 10am and 2pm. • Address 317 Dorcas St, Sth Melb
	Planetshakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOOD PARCELS Extended hours: Sundays 10:30am–3pm. • Address: 412 City Rd, Sth Melb
	Anglican Parish of the Parks, St Silas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday meal as usual – takeaway prepacked • Address: Saint Silas Anglican Church 99 Bridport St, Albert Park
	Christ Church Community Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOOD PARCELS (reduced pantry availability) • Address: 14 Acland St, St Kilda
	Hartley's Restaurant at Prahran mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing take away meals between 11am and 9:30pm and 2pm Monday to Thursday • Three free meals per month to Healthcare card holders - extra meals available \$4 for main course, \$1.50 for entrée (vegetarian soup) and \$2 desserts • Address: 211 Chapel St, Prahran

 Showering	Access Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showers operating at the Peanut Farm between 2pm–4pm Monday–Friday.
	Salvos 614	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showers will be available by request but only to those who cannot access a shower anywhere else
	Sacred Heart Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showers still accessible
	Travelers Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showers available from 7am–7pm daily
	St Mary's House of Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showers available between 9–10:30am only (strictly for homelessness community)

 Health	Salvos 614	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Vincent's Nurses continue to be onsite Monday–Thursday from 9am–1pm (no appointment required)
	Sacred Heart Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GP available Monday–Thursday 9am–1pm

 COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Screening Centers	St Vincent's Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8am–8pm 7 days a week
	The Alfred Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location: 55 Commercial Road, Melbourne in hospitals helipad carpark (next to the emergency department) 8am–6pm 7 days a week
	STAR Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location: Prahran Town Hall – 180 Greville St, enter off Chapel St and the Clinic is currently operating 7 days a week 9am–5pm. Call 9525 1300 to register and book



The Voice of Multicultural Victoria



United Social Activity Group

www.eccv.org.au