

Delivering Services for Diversity - Good Practice in EAPS

Innovation and good planning are the key to the provision of government services to a culturally diverse population. If an agency is able to define its client base, via demographic and client data and conduct research and consultations to identify priority needs, it can go a long way towards providing flexible and targeted programs and services to a culturally diverse community.

And there is no shortage of examples, in areas ranging from health and housing, through to public space issues, the environment and the arts. The Community Relations Report 2001 contains over 70 such initiatives, with some of the highlights being:

- Cabramatta residents can talk directly to local police, Fairfield City Council and government departments about issues affecting their community, under the City Watch project. This locality based partnership project is coordinated by the Community Relations Commission, and is a part of the Premier's Department Anti-Drug Strategy.
- Muslim children who require foster care will now receive more culturally appropriate care, under a project run by the Department of Community Services. The project, which was highly commended under the National Multicultural Marketing Awards 2001, increased the Muslim communities' awareness about foster care, and provided training to families which wanted to become foster carers.
- Public housing tenants who might normally never speak to each other, now work together side by side in the community gardens. There are now 24 community gardens on 14 public housing estates - the gardens help to beautify the environment, bring people of different backgrounds together, and build a sense of community in local areas. The Community Gardens in Public Housing Estates project is jointly run by the Department of Housing and the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust.
- Mabel Lee won the Premier's Award for Translation and Pen International Medal, for her translation of *Soul Mountain* by Nobel Prize winner, Gao Xingjian. Working without financial support, Ms Lee spent seven years translating the novel, because she believed in the writer and the value of the work. Her work has made the Nobel prize winner available to the entire English-speaking world, and has given Australian readers a glimpse into a culture that is geographically and politically important to the future of our country.
- A community based management plan has been developed for the century-old Wing Hing Long store in Tingha, northern NSW, under funding from the NSW Heritage Office and the Ministry for the Arts Movable Heritage project [click for more text]. The store and its contents provide remarkable evidence of the contribution of this Chinese business to a small rural town throughout the 20th century. The NSW Heritage Office has also carried out intensive work with the Italian, Chinese and Greek communities on their histories in Australia.
- NSW Health continues to provide extensive and targeted services and programs including:
 - interpreter services;

Community Relations Commission For a multicultural NSW (CRC)

- multicultural health workers;
- state-wide programs i.e. the Transcultural Mental Health Centre; Refugee Health Service;
- targeted mainstream health service provision to people of non-English speaking background e.g. multicultural aged health officers;
- specially funded projects e.g. the diabetes education program in South Western and Western Sydney Area Health Service.