

Settlement Council of Australia

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## Consultation on Implementation Plans for the Combined National Blood Borne Virus and Sexually Transmitted Infections Strategies

The Settlement Council of Australia (SCoA) is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the Implementation Plans for the Combined National Blood Borne Virus (BBV) and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) Strategies.

SCoA represents over 100 agencies in the settlement sector across Australia, which comprise the vast majority of agencies providing settlement support to recently arrived migrants, including those from a refugee background. Our members work directly with a wide range of new arrivals from diverse backgrounds, as well as the mainstream Australian community and various stakeholders.

SCoA commends the work that has been undertaken on the five Implementation Plans and endorses their relevance and usefulness for the work of the settlement sector.

The priorities and information within each of the five Implementation Plans are, however, largely beyond the scope of SCoA's work and we therefore do not propose to comment on each individually. SCoA will instead make several general endorsements and recommendations regarding elements of the Implementation Plans that directly impact our members and their clients.

SCoA would like to emphasise and commend the identification of the unique risk factors for BBV and STI within CALD communities, particularly those who have recently arrived in Australia. It also supports the recognition of the unique needs of CALD communities across all five Implementation Plans.

In particular, we stress the significance of the following across all Implementation Plans:

- Implementing targeted, age and culturally appropriate prevention education initiatives for CALD communities. These should be done in language if possible, or with translation if this is not possible.

- Engaging settlement service providers with education initiatives.
- Increasing the capacity of culturally appropriate health services, including multicultural and multilingual health professionals and educator

### National Settlement Services Outcomes Standards

SCoA launched its National Settlement Services Outcomes Standards (NSSOS) in May 2016. 'Health and Wellbeing' is one of 9 key areas across which settlement outcomes can be measured. Our standards are not intended to be an exhaustive or mandatory list of services, but rather, are designed to highlight what constitutes best practice in this crucial area.

Regarding Health and Wellbeing, the NSSOS provide:

Settlement services clients are engaged through effective and responsive primary prevention and early intervention initiatives that encourage health and wellbeing. This outcome standard builds the capability of settlement service providers to embed health and wellbeing as an underpinning feature across service system level and practice delivery. The standard reflects recognition that settlement services clients have been exposed to factors that present high risk around health and wellbeing.

Many of SCoA's members often work with people affected by BBV and STI. Effective implementation of the National BBV and STI Strategies will be valuable for our members work in health and wellbeing, and importantly, their clients. In this light, we view the Implementation Plans as providing a clear and useful tool for our members working to achieve the NSSOS.

### Conclusion

SCoA emphasises the capacity of effective Implementation Plans to contribute to Health and Wellbeing outcomes for newly arrived migrants and refugees, and CALD communities. We stress the importance of recognising and responding to the unique needs of these communities in achieving this.

If you wish to further discuss the contents of this submission, or any other matter of relevance, please do not hesitate to contact our National Office on 02 6282 8515.

Sincerely,



Nick Tebbey  
CEO