

CASE STUDY

Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania – Phoenix Centre

Diverse Ability is a strengths-based, individual capacity building program for people with psychosocial or physical disabilities from a CALD background. Activities focus on the delivery of individual mentoring support, skills building and capacity building to enable people to self-manage, build independence, speak up and advocate for themselves.

About the program

Diverse Ability is a strengths-based, individual capacity building program, available in both the north and south of Tasmania, for people with psychosocial or physical disabilities from a CALD background.

Diverse Ability delivers individual mentoring support, skills building and capacity building to enable people to self-manage, build independence, speak up and advocate for themselves. All activities aim to support people from CALD backgrounds with disability, to develop the skills and confidence to participate and contribute to the community (both their CALD communities and the broader Tasmanian community) and to safeguard their rights. These activities are supported by associated case work, group support and connection.

Diverse Ability is unique in the current service system, in that it works alongside people from a CALD background with a psychosocial disability to learn and build confidence in asserting their rights. Understanding and utilising NDIS care packages successfully involves navigating a system that can be overwhelming to our clients. The project focuses on developing participants' capacity to better understand how to navigate for their own needs. The program starts with a psychosocial assessment to discover client strengths as well as areas where they want to further develop.

Once the participants have identified individual goals, a plan is developed together to reach these goals. The goals are generally met through a combination of individual mentoring work to build capacity and linking participants to external services as needed.

AT A GLANCE



Target Participants

People from a CALD background in Tasmania with a psychosocial disability.



Aim

To build the skills, knowledge and capacity of individuals and their carers to lead more fulfilling and meaningful lives.



Organisations Involved

MRC Tasmania Phoenix Centre and other support services (as needed)



Location

Hobart and Launceston, Tasmania.



Funding

National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) Information Linkage and Capacity Building (ILC).



The individual support sessions are highly effective and are complimented by social connection and shared learning through group work activity and recreational experiences. The project is giving some of our participants the opportunity to feel comfortable and be able to express their needs confidently.

Challenges

Linking participants to services is a challenge, as many services do not use an interpreting service and sometimes appear reluctant to do so. The Phoenix Centre has also noted a low level of cultural awareness in a variety of services within Tasmania.

Key Learnings

This experience has generated 3 key learnings for MRC Tasmania – Phoenix Centre:

- 1.** Opportunities for socialising, sharing, joy and laughter are hugely beneficial to people who are often socially isolated and marginalised from their own community and broader community.
- 2.** People from CALD backgrounds who have psychosocial disabilities require targeted support and education that is delivered by a person who has the cultural understanding to support their learning.
- 3.** There is a need for stronger referral pathways for the many issues that arise which are not specifically ILC program related, but nevertheless important and impactful on the individual

More information

Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania – Phoenix Centre <https://mrctas.org.au/>

