Settlement Council of Australia

SCOA

CASE STUDY

Australian Migrant Resource Centre COVID-19 measures

Background

The AMRC has supported communities during COVID-19 through its multilingual phone service and educational videos delivered in language. This has been an immense support to vulnerable clients during the COVID-19 pandemic lock down period.

How did AMRC adapt during COVID-19?

The AMRC implemented a Multilingual Telephone Service at the beginning of March 2020 in 16 most spoken languages including Burmese, Farsi/Persian, Arabic, Nepali, Swahili, Vietnamese, Pashto, Chinese, Karen and Dari/Hazaragi. The Multilingual Telephone Service was implemented to minimise the risk to vulnerable clients and to ensure that services were still provided to clients in metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia in their language of origin and by trained bilingual workers.

Coronavirus education was delivered through the Multilingual Telephone Service, as well as through health and wellbeing training sessions delivered to small groups of single participants and families from a diversity of backgrounds. Sessions empowered participants with Coronavirus knowledge including precautions and the importance of adhering to restrictions. Sessions also served as an avenue for mental health support for clients experiencing anxiety and isolation amid Coronavirus.

Education sessions on financial management were delivered to families to increase their financial literacy, especially budgeting family finances amid Coronavirus. These sessions assisted to identify referrals to the AMRC's Emergency Relief Program and to other services where required.

A cultural video project was produced by the AMRC, ACCSA and Manet Multimedia, which featured people speaking in different languages about the Multilingual Telephone Service and Coronavirus precautions. This helped to inform African clients, ethnic and community leaders, other services and community supports of the multilingual telephone service to ensure services and support amid Coronavirus. The video helped to developing production skills, social media use, public speaking and community capacity building in a format driven and organised by a number of the African communities.

The collaboration has received positive feedback and appreciation from communities, and the AMRC congratulates the organisers of the project.

The videos are available in a different languages, including

- Swahili: https://amrc.org.au/gallery/multilingual-telephone-service-in-the-swahili-language
- Igbo: https://amrc.org.au/gallery/multilingual-telephone-service
- Krio: https://amrc.org.au/gallery/multilingual-telephone-service-3
- English: https://amrc.org.au/gallery/multilingual-telephone-service-2

The project initially focused on African communities, but has since expanded to include other CALD communities.

Challenges

1. To ensure that the African information project was driven and produced by the communities that needed the messages
2. To ensure the messages were develop in a format in which they would be well received and accessible

Outcomes

Through this work, AMRC and their partners have ensured messages were delivered in a way so that communities could access and understand them. Participants also developed important production skills, public speaking, social media and community-capacity building skills.

Key Learnings

1. Empowering key community individuals to empower others in their communities in a culturally relevant and safe way is the best way to develop culturally appropriate and well received messages.
2. Telephone services remain an important way to reach communities in times of crisis.

More information

The AMRC's Coronavirus notice, and telephone and emergency services contacts translations are available on the AMRC website: https://amrc.org.au/events/amrc-coronavirus-notice-and-telephone-and-emergency-services-contacts

AMRC and ACCSA's videos can be viewed on the AMRC website: https://amrc.org.au/gallery/amrc-and-accsa

For more information contact the AMRC here: https://amrc.org.au/