

AT A GLANCE



Target Participants

Migrant women and their children and families.



Aim

To provide family and social support to women and children during COVID-19.



Organisations Involved

Ishar, The Smith Family
Department of Home
Affairs, Mirrabooka
Square Shopping Centre,
Neami National
Foundation, Minderoo
Foundation, Second Bite,
St Vincent de Pauls
Society, City of Stirling,
No Limits



Location

Perth, WA.



CASE STUDY

Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Services

During COVID-19, Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Services remained connected with the women and families by developing a "Posted Home Packs" and through regular phone check-ins.

About the program

During COVID-19, Ishar developed a "Posted Home Packs" initiative to provide social support to women throughout social distancing.

Using existing funds from other programs that could no longer run, Ishar developed a twelve week postal and phone support project, commencing in April 2020. Alongside regular phone calls, they sent out packages to the women and families they support.

The activities and items contained in the packs included:

- Printed material with activities – physical, craft, indoor and outdoor activities.
- Recipes – both healthy and comforting options, cultural and traditional recipes
- English lesson exercises
- Colouring in pages for children and mums
- Books
- Information on hygiene, education services, food security options
- A special Mother's Day pack

Support for funds and goods was provided by The Smith Family, Department of Home Affairs, Mirrabooka Square Shopping Centre, Neami National Foundation, Minderoo Foundation, Second Bite, St Vincent de Pauls Society, City of Stirling and No Limits.

Ishar also remained connected with women and their families through regular welfare calls, reaching approximately 250 women. Ishar also reached out to women, to survey how they were coping with COVID-19 restrictions. They targeted participants from a range of their programs, including the Neighbourhood Mothers, SETS, Domestic Violence Support, Carers, Mums and Bubs, exercise, yoga and Latin dance classes.



The phone check-ins, survey and Posted Home Packs resulted in:

- 810 information packages sent in 22 metropolitan suburbs
- 720 phone calls made by 5 support workers
- 10% referrals made to Ishar social worker for further assistance
- 250 phone surveys completed

Challenges

1. Changing group programs in a short period of time to deliver information and provide support during the lockdown period
2. Asking staff to diversify and learn new skills in a short time
3. Challenges with clients adapting to and using technology

These challenges were overcome by finding alternative ways of working, and clear and regular communication.

Outcomes

During Ishar's regular phone support calls positive feedback was received from participants. They said they enjoyed engaging with the printed material and reading together with their children. Women felt empowered, as for some it was the first time they had received something addressed to them, and they felt supported knowing Ishar was there for them.

Key Learnings

This experience has generated the following key learnings for Ishar

1. Connecting with women over the phone during this time helps build capacity, improve mental health, and develop resilience in women
2. It is important to continue providing information so that people can access assistance

More information

For more information, please visit: <https://www.ishar.org.au/>

