

FAMILY PLANNING NSW MULTICULTURALISM POLICY



POLICY STATEMENT

Australia is a demographically and culturally diverse society. Nearly half (49%) of Australians are migrants or the children of migrants. Thirty three per cent of Australians were born overseas, of those born overseas, nearly one in five (18%) had arrived since the start of 2012. There are more than 300 languages spoken in Australian homes and more than one-fifth (21%) of Australians speak a language other than English at home (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] 2017).

Multiculturalism is a policy that has been endorsed by Australian governments for managing a unified nation that is culturally diverse. It has replaced the previous policy of assimilation. Within a framework of loyalty to Australia, acceptance of the Australian system, and mutual respect, multiculturalism recognises the right of all Australians to enjoy their cultural heritage (including language and religion), and the right to equal treatment and opportunity regardless of background.

Family Planning NSW acknowledges its multicultural clients, communities and staff, and its responsibility to ensure that the reproductive and sexual health of all members of our community is appropriately and effectively addressed.

SCOPE

All staff

POLICY DETAILS

Family Planning NSW recognises that

- health status, including reproductive and sexual health status, is differentially distributed in the Australian community and that this distribution can be influenced by a range of factors, including language and cultural background;
- while Australian health services, including reproductive and sexual health services, have attempted to address the differential health status of Australians, these attempts are still limited where service provision is based on ethnocentric models;

- all Australians have the right to maximise their reproductive and sexual health through access to services and information that is suited to the needs of a multicultural Australia and responsive to different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This includes access to professional interpreter services and information in relevant languages;
- refugees may experience particular health and reproductive and sexual health challenges as a result of trauma and displacement;
- just as clients and communities served by the Australian health system come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, so do the staff, and this diversity enriches the system with a wealth of knowledge, skills and other resources.

Family Planning NSW believes

- reproductive and sexual health services should be offered to all groups in the community in a style, location and manner that ensures accessibility. This includes access to bilingual and bicultural staff, professional interpreter services, outreach programs, information in appropriate languages and culturally appropriate service provision;
- maximising reproductive and sexual health outcomes for all groups in a multicultural community requires a combination of mainstream services that are responsive to cultural diversity, and specially designated services that meet the needs of particular groups;
- reproductive and sexual health outcomes are enhanced by a primary health care approach that recognises the importance of a range of issues, including migration and settlement issues in the lives of clients and communities;
- maximising reproductive and sexual health outcomes in a multicultural society requires respect for human rights and an environment free from racism and discrimination;
- training of the reproductive and sexual health workforce should ensure a multicultural curriculum;

- more research is required to understand the reproductive and sexual health of different groups within multicultural Australia, and to develop or modify services and programs to enhance outcomes;
- effective service provision requires that issues of cultural diversity be systematically addressed in organisational management.

Family Planning NSW is committed to

- ensuring that our commitment to multiculturalism is reflected in our programs, services and activities;
- advocating for equal rights and freedom from discrimination in reproductive and sexual health issues;
- providing training for reproductive and sexual health workers on working effectively in a multicultural environment;
- managing our services to systematically address cultural diversity issues, specifically in the areas of planning, communication, recruitment, training, supervision, industrial relations, quality improvement, marketing and customer service;
- ensuring a culturally safe environment that is free from racial harassment for our staff, trainees and clients;
- ensuring that programs and services developed for particular groups are developed in partnership with those groups;
- working within a trauma informed framework and providing services to refugees that are informed by an understanding of the significance of pre- and post-migration factors in their reproductive and sexual health experience

REFERENCE

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2017). Census of Population and Housing: Reflecting Australia -Stories from the Census (Cat. no. 2071.0). Canberra, Australia: ABS.