

31 August 2020

## Media Release

From Western Sydney MRC and CORE Community Services

### Community connection is stronger than ever

Monday, 31 August 2020

CORE Community Services and Western Sydney MRC have been continuing to deliver on a promise they made to communities over 40 years ago. Both organisations are renowned in the community for offering a variety of services and supports to migrant and refugees in the Liverpool and Fairfield LGAs.

Since late March, when COVID-19 restrictions and impacts were just beginning to be felt, both organisations have had to review the way they connect and deliver their services.

In late July 2020, [Western Sydney MRC](#) and [CORE Community Services](#) partnered to hold their most attended Community\* webinar to date attended by the CEO of [Multicultural NSW](#) Joseph La Posta. Alongside Joseph La Posta, [MP Melanie Gibbons, Member for Holsworthy](#) and [Guy Zangari](#), Member for Fairfield). The online community forum proved yet again that opportunities to facilitate dialogue and information exchange between Government, community and grassroots organisations is a successful undertaking and valued greatly by all.

Many of the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Community leaders provided very clear feedback on the impacts of COVID-19. They highlighted the role they play and the task at hand within their communities. Community leaders and key members, alongside organisations, have filled critical roles in health messaging, updates and importantly community connection.

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*"We are reaching out and broadcasting twice a day to get the information out to our community. Meaning we have been receiving the information each day and each night,*

*translate in Khmer and broadcast in morning and evening during the first wave.”*

***Srey Kang from the Kymer Association.***

*“I look at COVID as a reminder of where our society is... it goes to underline that we are on the front line... marginalised communities are disproportionately exposed... in my community there are lots of students and I know the jobs they do. We have made it a point of duty to speak to every member of our community every fortnight.”*

***Silas Monieke, IGBO Community.***

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## Emerging themes

Several key themes emerged from the community leaders. A request for Government to match its COVID-19 response with initiatives that specifically meets the needs of many CALD communities including:

- training, financial support and tools
- individual literacy
- isolation in practice
- digital and online access

More importantly, improvement in the coordination of information, ensuring it is both timely and accurate, alongside reaching those most isolated. Community led video messaging was suggested leveraging the trusted relationships that already exists.

**[Key take outs and insights from the forum can be found here.](#)**

\*Seventy-seven (77) registrants included the following community representatives: Lebanese, African, Mandaean, Sabien Mandaean, Sudanese, Assyrian and Iraqi.

For more information on Western Sydney MRC or CORE Community Services, visit [wsmrc.org.au](http://wsmrc.org.au) or [corecs.org.au](http://corecs.org.au) or contact [nadia@wsmrc.org.au](mailto:nadia@wsmrc.org.au) or [msaliba@coresc.org.au](mailto:msaliba@coresc.org.au)