

**Queensland Strategic Settlement Committee (QSSC)**

**Meeting Communique #3**

**01 March 2023**

The Queensland Strategic Settlement Committee (QSSC) met on Wednesday, 01 March 2023.

***Members in attendance:***

- Craig Shield (DCYJMA)
- Vicky Jacobson (Refugee Health Network Queensland)
- Melanie Nicholls (QLD Health)
- Madina Mohmood (Qld Afghan Community Association)
- Desmond Tan (DHA)
- Scott Brown (QCOSS)
- Monique Haider (DHA)
- Nicola Di Campli (DHA)
- Stephanie Naunton (TMSG)
- Liz Gordon (QPASTT)
- Gail Ker (Social Policy Group)
- Anita Veivers (Centacare FNQ)
- Christine Castley (Multicultural Australia)
- Rose Dash (Multicultural Australia)
- Ngoy Katona Joseph (Congolese community member)
- Rojin Rash (Syrian, Ezidi community member)
- Armaghan Jazayeri (Irian community member)
- Amanollah Ataey (Afghan community member)

***Summary of Outcomes from the QSSC Meeting – 01 March 2023***

**Stories from the Ground:** With an ongoing commitment to engage community in strategic settlement discussions, QSSC members heard 'Stories from the Ground'. These were experiences shared by members of established and emerging communities settled in Queensland and Cultural Support Workers - working with new arrivals to Qld. They shared their concerns and issues affecting new arrivals - and offered important cultural advice in supporting and welcoming humanitarian arrivals. We heard:

- Some key concerns for clients in early settlement (e.g., access barriers to key services like disability services; housing issues, support needs of LGBTIQ+ clients, etc.)
- The need for the consideration of a new settlement strategy for clients with significant additional needs; and

- The importance of a cultural guide or advisor to support new arrivals with transition to a new country.

**Key themes discussed at the meeting:**

- **Cultural advice from community representatives:** ensuring the inclusion of community voice in settlement planning and service delivery; prioritising the encouragement of participation in ongoing learning for clients throughout their settlement journey and ensuring an understanding of rights for all – especially women and children (ensuring independence and addressing any inter-generational issues).
- **Settlement Planning:** DHA presented on broader settlement planning and the process around potential arrivals with identified local links when planning for settlement locations. Insight shared around impacts to potential arrivals that are outside the control of the Department -flight availability and exit permits for clients to depart, COVID controls.
- **QSSC watching brief:** watching brief maintained on housing and health issues for CALD communities previously noted throughout the QSSC. Melanie Nicholls (Manager, Multicultural Health Team, QLD Health) and Vicky Jacobson (Coordinator, Refugee Health Network Queensland) presented on the updated Qld Refugee Health and Wellbeing Policy and Action Plan 2022-27. QSSC will retain a watching brief on Housing issues and potential for advocacy for CALD communities. QSSC particularly flagged concerns on social cohesion impacts flowing from the current housing crisis.
- **QSSC consideration and action for 2023:** QSSC members keen to reflect and consider the following:
  - Employment and the Workforce Australia model, Social Cohesion and navigating systems inclusive of access to interpreter and translator services,
  - Pro-active role around education within communities to inform messaging around behaviors pending the Serious Vilification and hate Crimes and Coercive Control legislation.