

November 2024

Queensland Multicultural Policy ‘Our story, our future’

Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2022-24



Queensland
Mental Health
Commission

Annual Reporting 2023-24

Queensland Mental Health Commission

Background

‘Our story, our future’ is the Queensland Government’s Multicultural Policy (the Policy) promoting an inclusive, harmonious and united community for Queensland. The Policy focuses Queensland Government responses on three policy priorities for culturally diverse communities and Queensland as a whole:

- achieving culturally responsive government,
- supporting inclusive, harmonious and united communities, and
- improving economic opportunities.

The Policy is being implemented through Queensland Multicultural Action Plans. The third Queensland Multicultural Action Plan spans across 2022–23 to 2023–24 and builds on outcomes achieved under the first and second Multicultural Action Plans.

Annual Report for 2023–24 focuses on six key action areas which the Queensland Mental Health Commission committed to action:

- (1) Economic participation
- (2) Recruitment and workplace culture
- (3) Culturally responsive services
- (4) Cultural diversity data
- (5) Interpreters and communication strategies, and
- (6) Address racism and discrimination and promote inclusion.

The Policy and Action Plan are a requirement of the Multicultural Recognition Act 2016 (the Act). Section 24 of the Act requires entities with actions in the Action Plan to report publicly on an annual basis. The report below fulfils this requirement for 2023–24 for the Queensland Mental Health Commission.

● **KEY ACTION 1: Economic participation**

The Queensland Government will facilitate **economic participation** opportunities for people from culturally diverse backgrounds. As per the Queensland Multicultural Policy, activities in this section should link to one or more of the following outcomes:

- *Queensland gets the most benefit from our diversity and global connections.*
- *Individuals are supported to participate in the economy.*

Agency activities supporting Key Action 1	Progress status for 2023-24	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Promote awareness of the Social Traders Portal to staff to maximise social and commercial outcomes through procurement.	Delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Department of Energy and Climate has supported the QMHC since 2023 in developing a Social Procurement Strategy. A key action in this strategy is for staff to utilise the Social Traders Portal to identify social enterprise for procurement processes, aiming to enhance equitable and sustainable employment participation. The draft Social Procurement Strategy is scheduled for review in 2024. - The QMHC has reviewed its procurement processes and provided all staff with quick access to Social Traders Portal through the QMHC internal network.
Review agency grants processes to ensure they are accessible to applicants from new and emerging communities by using clear language, translating information where relevant, and providing constructive feedback on unsuccessful applications submitted by community organisations.	Delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The QMHC transferred its previous grant process onto an online portal named SmartyGrants. This online portal is a streamlined service which assists QMHC in its development and assessment of grant opportunities. Our grant programs are developed in SmartyGrants using simple clear language and providing additional information at every opportunity by providing realistic hints and examples for applicants that are lodging an application. Each field that is built into an application form has the possibility of a 'Hint' being included which QMHC uses to provide a more simplistic description of a selection criteria, or in some cases provide an example of a response to a question. - The QMHC has released a 3-year, \$9 million Mental Health and Wellbeing Grants program in 2024, which prioritises individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds, including refugees and asylum seekers, as one of the key groups for applicants to consider when developing initiatives for the up to \$150,000 funding opportunity. - QMHC completed an invitation to offer (ITO) to procure a provider to deliver an initiative for prevention, awareness and harm reduction of alcohol and other drugs (AOD) in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. To ensure the inclusivity of the procurement process, QMHC worked with key CALD community organisations and agencies to promote the ITO and conducted face-to-face interviews for shortlisting applicants. Additionally, the evaluation panel members included CALD representation.

● **KEY ACTION 2: Recruitment and workplace culture**

Barriers to participation facing culturally and linguistically diverse communities will be removed so they can join the Public Sector and Queensland Government boards, through **culturally inclusive recruitment practices and workplace cultures**. As per the Queensland Multicultural Policy, activities in this section should link to one or more of the following high-level outcomes:

- *Queensland gets the most benefit from our diversity and global connections.*
- *Individuals are supported to participate in the economy.*
- *Recognition and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and culture.*
- *Queenslanders celebrate our multicultural identity.*
- *Connected and resilient communities.*
- *A respectful and inclusive narrative about diversity.*

Agency activities supporting Key Action 2	Progress status for 2023-24	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Ensure targeted recruitment or career development initiatives are undertaken in partnership with community including, for example, where agencies are focusing on attracting applicants from specific cultural groups for positions.	Delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job applications: in 2023-24, a total of 543 people applied for positions at QMHC, with 403 applicants providing Equal Employment Opportunity data. Job applications have continued to reflect QMHC's strong commitment to inclusive and diverse recruitment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 154 people (38.21%) identified as being from a non-English speaking background. ○ 31 people (7.69%) identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. ○ 1 person (0.24%) identified as Australian South Sea Islander. - Governance and advisory groups within the QMHC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ QMHC continues to ensure appropriate representation of CALD individuals in all its governance and advisory groups; Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council, Suicide Prevention Lived Experience Advisory Group (since concluded), Achieving balance Strategic Implementation Group, and Alcohol and Other Drugs Lived Experience Leadership Group. All of these groups include representation from CALD people and recruitment practices sought to include people who are reflective of Queensland's diversity, including CALD members. ○ The QMHC has established two 5-member panels to assess applications for the 3-year, \$9 million Mental Health and Wellbeing Grants program. Following a targeted expression of interest process, 2 panel members from culturally diverse backgrounds were appointed to ensure selected initiatives will focus on improving mental health and wellbeing of people from culturally diverse communities.

Agency activities supporting Key Action 2	Progress status for 2023-24	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
<p>Provide mentoring, work placement or work experience opportunities for young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including from migrant and refugee backgrounds, who have not had previous experience working in government.</p>	<p>Delivered</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Young members of CALD backgrounds were included in the Suicide Prevention Lived Experience Advisory Group and are included in the Alcohol and Other Drugs Lived Experience Leadership Group, and the Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council. - Bursary applications provided to CALD members with lived and living experience provided an opportunity for their professional growth such as the National Suicide Prevention Conference, Winter School, and Leading Reform Summit. - CALD individuals are a priority group in the suicide prevention lived experienced workforce development project. - Commonwealth Peer Scholarship Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The QMHC funded the Queensland Alliance for Mental Health (QAMH) to deliver 178 Scholarship Packages across Queensland to develop the Lived-Lived Experience workforce between 2022-2025. o The course has an 80-hour placement component. o Scholarship packages included up to \$4000 for the course fee of Cert IV Mental Health Peer Work, \$1000 stipend to support study and materials, and access to group mentoring with peer workers. o Scholarships were awarded based on individual application and attendance to a group interview with a panel. The following measures were put in place by Queensland Alliance for Mental Health (QAMH) to support people from CALD backgrounds aged 17 or over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application forms using simple language. • The scholarship project team offered 1:1 support for anyone who needed support to make an application to the program. • Smaller group and 1:1 interview for people who identified English as an additional language if further support was requested or identified as being helpful. • QAMH worked with their state-wide member organisations to promote the opportunity – including targeting member orgs working with CALD communities such as World Wellness Group. • Shortlisting applications and awarding applications – priority was given to First Nations peoples, people living in rural remote locations and people from CALD Backgrounds, to ensure a diverse representation amongst participants awarded.

● **KEY ACTION 3: Culturally responsive services**

Over the next two years, Queensland Government agencies will improve their cultural responsiveness by undertaking an **audit of critical areas of service delivery** (funded or directly delivered). As per the Queensland Multicultural Policy, activities in this section should link to one or more of the following high-level outcomes:

- *Improved knowledge about customers' diversity.*
- *Culturally capable services and programs.*
- *A productive, culturally capable, and diverse workforce.*

Agency activities supporting Key Action 3	Progress status for 2023-24	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Engage, where appropriate, with culturally and linguistically diverse clients and communities, seeking their feedback on access to services and how they can be improved.	Delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The QMHC ensures culturally responsive service integration by collaborating with CALD communities to address specific needs. We respond to consumer inquiries in a culturally inclusive way, tailoring communication to improve access and ensure services are both inclusive and equitable for diverse populations. - In 2023, there were 529 events registered to participate in the Queensland Mental Health Week (QMHW) Community Events Grant Program. QMHC invested \$130,000 to support 157 Queensland Mental Health Week community and school events to enable organisations to undertake community awareness, engagement, education and understanding activities to improve the mental health and wellbeing of people within their community. - Grants were awarded to support a wide array of events that fostered inclusion of those living with mental illness, their families, carers, and support people. Consideration was given to the needs of groups disproportionately affected by poorer mental health and wellbeing, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from CALD backgrounds, people living in rural and remote Queensland, people who identify as LGBTIQ+ and other groups at risk of marginalisation. - Translated resources were also provided to improve the accessibility of the campaign for CALD communities. - QMHC has taken a proactive approach to engaging with CALD mental health organisations during periods of heightened stress, ensuring emerging mental health and wellbeing needs are addressed. This was particularly evident during the recent geopolitical conflict, which significantly impacted the mental health and wellbeing of certain cultural communities in Queensland. - QMHC has actively listened to feedback from CALD communities and advocated for the specific needs of all those affected, facilitating a collaborative response across the sector. As a result, mental health organisations, along with state and

Agency activities supporting Key Action 3	Progress status for 2023-24	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
		<p>government agencies, have come together to ensure that the necessary resources are mobilised and that the unique needs of all CALD communities affected are effectively met. This collective effort has strengthened support systems and enhanced service delivery during critical times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A series of consultation sessions was conducted to review the Shifting minds' evaluation framework and to develop the Trauma Strategy and Stigma Reduction campaign, ensuring the inclusion of people from culturally diverse backgrounds throughout the life of the strategic documents implementation and identified activities. - QMHC recently completed an ITO process and selected 2 initiatives aimed at improving AOD prevention, awareness and harm reduction in CALD communities. The 2 successful applicants are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Queensland Injectors Health Network (QuIHN) and Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland (ECCQ): This initiative will address barriers around CALD community engagement and access to AOD programs and services through development of training package, community engagement and collection of CALD Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) data. o World Wellness Group: This initiative will reduce stigma, increase awareness and facilitate early intervention by improving access to AOD and support services and increase capacity of AOD services to work more effectively with multicultural clients. - The QMHC released another ITO this year, inviting organisations to submit project proposals that aim to support community-based or community-led AOD primary prevention initiatives. Although the successful applicants were not CALD community organisations, the QMHC tailored the process to emphasise the importance of CALD communities as a priority population, throughout the procurement process. This included Alcohol and Drug Foundation (ADF) developing a guide to support organisations to develop evidence-based AOD prevention initiatives, which was released alongside the ITO and included advice for engaging CALD communities in a culturally safe way. - QMHC sponsored multiple mental health initiatives through its sponsorship program. Those initiatives had a focus on responding to needs and improving services for CALD clients. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Migrant Centre Organisation Inc. received a total of \$10,000 to strengthen awareness of mental health and wellbeing, build personal capacity and resilience for people experiencing mental ill-health, people who use alcohol and other drugs young people and people from CALD backgrounds. o NQ Ummah Care received a total of \$10,000 to deliver mental health education to CALD communities. NQ Ummah Care listens to the participants' knowledge on mental health from their cultural perspective and dispel myths as perceived by the community and empowering the participants to speak out and seek help. o Youth Flourish Outdoors received a total of \$ 9,090.91 to champion person-led, trauma-informed care, emphasizing the significance of individual choice and participation styles in outdoor adventure therapy. They professionally facilitating panel discussions, the summits aim is to forge meaningful connections between experienced delivery providers in preventative programs and representatives from the Government. - QMHC has maintained ongoing engagement with CALD mental health organisations and communities at all levels of the organisation. This has been achieved through regular meetings, active participation in community events, speaking at various engagements, and consistent liaison with key stakeholders. These efforts ensure that our relationships remain strong, our

Agency activities supporting Key Action 3	Progress status for 2023-24	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
		understanding of community needs remains current, and our commitment to cultural safety is upheld throughout the organisation.

● **KEY ACTION 4: Cultural diversity data**

The Queensland Government will collect, analyse, and use **cultural diversity data** to improve service delivery and better meet customer needs. As per the Queensland Multicultural Policy, activities in this section should link to one or more of the following high-level outcomes:

- *Improved knowledge about customers' diversity.*
- *Culturally capable services and programs.*
- *A productive, culturally capable, and diverse workforce.*

Agency activities supporting Key Action 4	Progress status for 2023-24	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Report on how diversity data has been utilised in whole of government planning (mental health, alcohol and other drugs and suicide).	Delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following the transition of the Queensland Suicide Register (QSR) and interim QSR (iQSR) to QMHC, a program of works has been undertaken to assess the quality and completeness of historical data. QMHC is currently in the first of a 3-year project plan to redesign and modernise the registers. The project is designed to improve data accessibility and reporting capabilities using contemporary visualisation tools. - The QMHC is restructuring available data in the QSR and iQSR, related to CALD communities, to better inform suicide prevention policy. This initiative will significantly improve data accessibility for CALD related data.

● **KEY ACTION 5: Interpreters and communication strategies**

Queensland Government agencies will ensure people who have difficulty communicating in English can access information and services at the right time and in the right manner, through **improved access to interpreters and implementing multilingual and multi-modal communication strategies**. As per the Queensland Multicultural Policy, activities in this section should link to one or more of the following high-level outcomes:

- *Improved knowledge about customers’ diversity.*
- *Culturally capable services and programs.*
- *A productive, culturally capable, and diverse workforce.*
- *Queensland gets the most benefit from our diversity and global connections.*
- *Individuals are supported to participate in the economy.*

Agency activities supporting Key Action 5	Progress status for 2023-24	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Encourage stakeholders from new and emerging communities to participate in community events, relevant to portfolio responsibilities, as a soft entry point to help them learn English and make connections with established community members.	Delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In line with our commitment to inclusivity, we ensure that consumers with limited English proficiency have access to interpreters and multilingual communication resources. This allows us to respond to inquiries in a timely and culturally appropriate manner, improving access to information and services. - The QMHC has funded Queensland Injectors Voice for Advocacy and Action (QuIVAA) to develop a range of AOD harm reduction resources. A key objective of this project is to improve access of substance use knowledge and harm reduction to CALD communities. The next phase of resource development will focus on cards with information about drugs translated in Mandarin. - The QMHC is working with Alcohol and Drug Support to develop an online platform for family, friends, and communities in Queensland. The project objectives ensure that people with lived-experience of AOD from CALD backgrounds are meaningfully involved and consulted in the development and review of the content and platform at various stages throughout the project. Translated materials are also accessible in many different languages through the platform.

● **KEY ACTION 6: Address racism, discrimination, and promote inclusion.**

Queensland Government agencies will ensure equitable and respectful opportunities and experiences for staff and customers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, through targeted initiatives to **address unconscious bias and racism and promote inclusion**. As per the Queensland Multicultural Policy, activities in this section should link to one or more of the following high-level outcomes:

- *Improved knowledge about customers' diversity.*
- *Culturally capable services and programs.*
- *A productive, culturally capable, and diverse workforce.*
- *Recognition and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and culture.*
- *Queenslanders celebrate our multicultural identity.*
- *Connected and resilient communities.*
- *A respectful and inclusive narrative about diversity.*

Agency activities supporting Key Action 6	Progress status for 2023-24	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Uplift the cultural capability of agency staff, to help them better understand their culturally and linguistically diverse colleagues and customers.	Delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QMHC continues to deliver its mandatory induction requirement to complete a cultural capabilities and skills building 4-module training, which include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o cultural differences and similarities o cross-cultural communication o cultural adaptation o population trends and their impact in Australia. - QMHC is in the process of considering and exploring a few options for an all staff upskilling on anti-racism for approval to deliver the training early next year.
Senior Executives provide clear messages affirming the agency's commitment to zero-tolerance to racism and discrimination and encouraging anti-racism initiatives in their agency.	Delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In March 2023, the Queensland Mental Health Commissioner hosted another Harmony Day morning tea for all QMHC staff and provided clear and positive messaging about the QMHC's commitment to diversity and inclusion within the agency. - The QMHC through leadership commitment to inclusivity have sent a clear message, translated into action, to uphold inclusivity and eliminate racism in the organisation. This takes place through recruitment, utilisation of expertise and inclusion of CALD priorities at all levels. - As noted above, QMHC is in the process of considering and exploring a few options for an all staff, including executive staff, upskilling on anti-racism for approval to deliver the training early next year.
Ensure agency media campaigns and good news stories leverage off opportunities to promote the benefits of cultural diversity.	Delivered	<p>Refugee Week LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:share:7209701370742861824/ / Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/NGAAA6ePU13U1RB7/ Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/p/C8fxnclxKD_/?img_index=1 / https://www.instagram.com/p/C8dr78jOuR3/</p> <p>Multicultural Celebrations grants LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:share:7203925276957757440/</p> <p>Safe and Diverse Communities Grants Program LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:share:7160439227271254016/ Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/EcdzXP2eRLLxPDe/</p> <p>Multicultural Queensland Month Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/aNNuJq7kF4T14U4X/ X: https://x.com/Qld_MHC/status/1688704326393352192</p>
Strengthening engagement with agency stakeholders to improve social cohesion and tackle	Delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After reviewing the draft <i>Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2024-2027</i> (the Action Plan) in May 2024, the QMHC jointly developed a Commissioners' Statement with the Queensland Human Rights Commission and Queensland Public Sector to acknowledge the work outlined in the Action Plan, reinforcing a vision which promotes equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity and support systems, regardless of cultural background, ethnicity, religion, race, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability or other attributes, to reduce the impact of racism and discrimination.

Agency activities supporting Key Action 6	Progress status for 2023-24	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
racism and discrimination at a local level.		