

Thursday, 7 September 2017

## **Award winning short films promote physical activity to multicultural communities**

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District's Multicultural Health Service is celebrating its success at the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Awards held on Monday as part of the launch of Multicultural Health Week. The team received an award in the audio-visual category for its new series of short films promoting healthy living to women.

Multicultural Health Service Manager, Leissa Pitts said the theme of this year's Multicultural Health Week - *Women's Health: Supporting Woman's Journey to Good Health* provides the perfect opportunity to promote the new resources, which feature real women telling real stories about physical activity.

"Each of the eight short films features a woman sharing her own, powerful story of hope and wellbeing to promote physical activity," Ms Pitts said.

"The *Healthy Women Active Women* films aim to encourage other culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women in the community to consider their own health and look at ways they can increase their participation in regular physical activity," she said.

Funding to develop the films was received through the Heart Foundation, NSW Office – Women and Heart Disease Community Grants.

National Heart Foundation NSW Office, Manager of Women and Heart Disease, Angela Hehir said in Australia, Heart Disease is responsible for three times more deaths among women than breast cancer.

"Women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities may experience a range of barriers to participating in regular physical activity contributing to their risk of poor cardiovascular health," Ms Hehir said.

The *Healthy Women Active Women* films are all under 2 minutes long, with four in Arabic and four in Italian – all with English subtitles.

"In developing the resources, we interviewed Arabic and Italian speaking women who have made beneficial physical activity an important part of their busy lives.

"Their stories cover a range of different backgrounds and experiences – from a mother focused on building her self-esteem and mental health after experiencing domestic violence through to an older refugee woman looking to reduce her socio-cultural isolation through group-based physical activity," Ms Pitts said.

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The *Healthy Women Active Women* films are all available to view on the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District [YouTube Channel](#).

Multicultural Health Week is being celebrated from 4-10 September. For more information about the Heart Foundation project visit: [www.heartfoundation.org.au/campaigns/making-the-invisible-visible](http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/campaigns/making-the-invisible-visible).

The annual NSW Multicultural Health Communication Awards recognise NSW Health organisations, NGOs and individuals that have produced outstanding resources targeting the health needs of CALD communities. Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District received the award for Government project over \$5000 in the audio-visual category. Additional information is available on the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service website: [www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au).

For further information on the Healthy Women Active Women short films please contact ISLHD Multicultural Health Officer, Estela Gimenez via email: [estela.gimenez@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:estela.gimenez@health.nsw.gov.au)