

PROUD MEMBER



NATIONAL  
Multicultural Mental Health  
MONTH 2025



# THE **7<sup>TH</sup>** NATIONAL **MULTICULTURAL** **MENTAL HEALTH** **MONTH 2025**

## REPORT

Lived Experience Leads The Way




# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

**The Mental Health Foundation Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Land on which our head office is based, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and we extend our respect to all Elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.**



**LIVED  
EXPERIENCE  
LEADS  
THE WAY**

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**12 December 2025**

The Hon Mark Butler MP  
Minister for Health and Ageing, Minister for Disability and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)  
Parliament House, Canberra

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the Board of the Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA), I am pleased to present our report on the 7th National Multicultural Mental Health Month Awareness Campaign 2025.

As one of the oldest community-based mental health organisations in Australia, established in 1930, MHFA has a long-standing commitment to promoting mental health awareness and support across diverse communities. Since launching Victorian Mental Health Month in October 2018, our campaign has grown significantly, with 21 local governments participating in its inaugural year. These events addressed a broad spectrum of topics, including youth and seniors' mental health, and the connection between food and wellbeing.

As you are aware, while many mental health organisations support vulnerable Australians, there remains a significant gap in mental health awareness and education within multicultural communities. According to the 2021 Census, 31.5% of Australia's population was born overseas, and over half (51.5%) were either born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas. This demographic reality underscores the importance of culturally responsive mental health initiatives.

Recognising this need, MHFA has worked with over 90 multicultural communities nationwide. Our former and current Multicultural Ambassadors and Attaches have played a vital role in engaging community leaders and members, helping to deliver impactful awareness programs. We have also leveraged digital platforms, including websites, social media, and resources in over 110 languages, to broaden our reach and provide accessible mental health education.

In March 2021, we established the Integrated Mental Health Hub in South Yarra, offering over 2,400 counselling sessions annually at an affordable rate of \$30 per 50-minute session, or free for those in financial hardship. Since July 2025, we have extended our services to schools and international colleges, providing on-site counselling for students and families. For instance, St Kilda Primary School now hosts two counsellors during school hours, with parents contributing \$30 per session. In international colleges, the administration co-funds sessions to support student well-being.

MHFA also operates 35 mental health support groups, which have been running for over 37 years, offering consistent, community-based support to mental health consumers.

Despite the breadth and impact of our work, MHFA receives only \$98,000 annually from the Victorian Government. This funding is insufficient to meet the growing demand for our services, and we continue to face financial challenges in sustaining our programs. We respectfully urge both Federal and State Governments to consider increased and ongoing support to enable us to continue our vital work in mental health education and support for multicultural Australians.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to your continued support and collaboration.

Yours sincerely,



Vasanth Srinivasan  
Chief Executive Officer  
**Mental Health Foundation Australia**



**12 December 2025**

The Hon. Jacinta Allan  
Premier of Victoria

The Hon. Ingrid Stitt  
Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Dear Premier and Minister,

On behalf of the Board of the Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA), I am pleased to present the report on our 7th National Multicultural Mental Health Month Awareness Campaign 2025, and to highlight the ongoing and pressing need for increased support to sustain and expand our vital work across Victoria.

As one of Australia's oldest community-based mental health organisations—established in 1930—the Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA) remains steadfast in its commitment to fostering mental health awareness, promoting early intervention, and delivering culturally responsive support across Victoria's diverse communities. Since the launch of Victorian Mental Health Month in October 2018, our reach has expanded dramatically: from 21 local government partners in our inaugural year to now engaging hundreds of community groups, culturally diverse organisations, schools, universities, and faith-based institutions across the state.

Our past and present government partners have been pivotal to this success. Former Minister the Hon. Martin Foley championed our early efforts and attended the majority of campaign launches across Victoria, including the 2019 Mental Health Wellbeing Walk at Albert Park Lake, which drew more than 14,000 Victorians, including large numbers of mental health consumers and multicultural community leaders.

During the COVID-19 lockdowns, MHFA stepped in to address a critical and urgent need: access to culturally appropriate food for vulnerable residents. In coordination with 90 multicultural community leaders and partners, including the Salvation Army, My Centre Broadmeadows, and international student accommodation providers, MHFA organised and delivered 165,000 freshly cooked vegetarian meals over 200 days. This program ensured that isolated, vulnerable Victorians, as well as international students, received safe, appropriate support during a time of immense hardship.

Our strong multicultural networks—now spanning over 90 communities nationwide—continue to amplify our ability to deliver mental health education in culturally relevant ways. Through digital platforms, multilingual volunteers, and translated resources available in more than 110 languages, we reach communities that often remain underserved by mainstream mental health services.

In March 2021, the Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA) established the Integrated Mental Health Hub in South Yarra, which now delivers over 2,400 counselling sessions annually at a highly subsidised rate of \$30 per session or free of charge for individuals experiencing financial hardship. Building on this success, MHFA expanded its services in July 2025 to include Victorian schools and international colleges. For instance, St Kilda Primary School now hosts two on-site counsellors, providing accessible mental health support to children and families, while international colleges co-fund counselling services to promote student wellbeing.

In addition, the Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA) continues to operate 35 long-standing mental health support groups, which have run continuously for over 37 years. These groups remain a vital source of community-based support for individuals experiencing mental health challenges and their families.

Despite the scale, impact, and growing demand for these essential programs, MHFA receives just \$98,000 annually from the Victorian Government. This level of funding is no longer sustainable, particularly given the rising needs across multicultural communities, educational institutions, ageing populations, and other vulnerable groups.

## Our Request

Each year, one in five Victorians will experience a mental health condition, and nearly half, 45 per cent, will face one at some point in their lives. These figures underscore the urgent and ongoing need for accessible, culturally responsive mental health support across our state.

To ensure MHFA can continue delivering high-impact services that meet this growing demand, we respectfully seek a significant increase in annual funding. An uplift to \$500,000 per year or an amount your government deems appropriate upon review would enable us to:

- Sustain and expand the Integrated Mental Health Hub
- Broaden the reach of school and tertiary counselling programs
- Deepen engagement with multicultural communities
- Enhance volunteer coordination and translate multilingual resources
- Maintain our 35 active mental health support groups
- Continue statewide awareness campaigns that promote early help-seeking

With increased and sustained support, MHFA is well-positioned to remain a vital partner in advancing the Victorian Government's mental health agenda, reducing stigma, and ensuring equitable access to care for all communities.

We are grateful for your ongoing commitment to the mental health and well-being of all Victorians. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal further and explore how, together, we can strengthen the mental health landscape for multicultural communities across the state.

Warm regards,



Vasan Srinivasan  
Chief Executive Officer  
**Mental Health Foundation Australia**

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



As we conclude the 7th National Multicultural Mental Health Month, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who participated, supported, and shared in our collective journey of awareness and healing.

This year, as you've heard, our national theme, "Lived Experience Leads the Way", served as a powerful reminder that those who've walked the path of mental health challenges are best placed to guide us forward. Throughout this month, we planned 31 days of engaging events, both online and in person, all with the hope of fostering awareness, connection, and healing.

I am especially grateful to our Patrons and Board of Directors, CEO Vasan Srinivasan, wonderful staff Aisha Usman, Jotpreet Kaur, Nithya Viswanathan, Amanda Cops, Vy Nguyen and volunteers, whose dedication and hard work made this year's Mental Health Month a meaningful and successful one. Your leadership, creativity, and commitment brought our programs to life and ensured that every event reflected our shared values of empathy, inclusion, and hope.

I'm deeply inspired by the openness, compassion, and collaboration that shone through our community during this time. Whether through social media initiatives or in-person events, your participation helped turn our theme into action and reminded us that mental health is everyone's concern.

As we look ahead, I'm excited to share that the theme for the 2026 National Mental Health Month will be "Women's Mental Health", a vital focus area that deserves our collective attention and action.

Thank you once again for your commitment, empathy, and engagement. Let's carry the spirit of Mental Health Month forward, not just for a month, but throughout the year as we continue to build a more compassionate and understanding community for all.

Kind Regards,

**PROFESSOR MELISSA GREEN**

Chairperson, Mental Health Foundation Australia

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## MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER OF SUPPORT GROUPS & VICE-CHAIRPERSON

As we proudly mark 37 years since the establishment of MHFA Support Groups,

I am deeply moved by the enduring commitment and compassion that continue to define our community. What began as a small initiative to provide peer support has now grown into a global movement – with 34 active support groups offering hope, understanding, and connection to vulnerable individuals across Australia and beyond.

The Support Groups Program remains steadfast in its founding vision to ensure that every consumer can attend our groups free of charge, regardless of circumstance.

Despite receiving no state or federal government funding, our work thrives through the generosity of individuals and the heartfelt financial support of the Dawoodi Bohras community in Victoria, to whom we extend our sincere gratitude.

Together, we continue to build a compassionate network where no one faces mental health challenges alone. Our journey is one of resilience, humanity, and hope – and I am incredibly proud of all we have achieved together.

Kind Regards,

**JIM GOODIN**  
Vice-Chairperson, Mental Health Foundation Australia



**We sincerely thank  
Dawoodi Bohras for their support!**

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# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



**The 7th National Multicultural Mental Health Month has been an outstanding success! Our theme, “Lived Experience Leads the Way,” truly came to life as we opened up meaningful conversations not only with consumers but also with families, service providers, and community leaders.**

At Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA), we take great pride in connecting people with lived experience and creating real impact through our ongoing programs. Over our 37 years of dedicated service, our 35 support groups continue to provide vital connections and peer support to more than 3,000 consumers each year.

Our Wellness Hub in South Yarra remains one of the most unique community wellbeing initiatives in Victoria, offering psychological wellbeing sessions for just \$30. This accessible model has already supported over 10,000 clients, making a tangible difference to the mental health and wellbeing of multicultural communities across the state.

MHFA is extremely proud of our dedicated team members who have moved mountains with the incredible support of our wonderful interns, placement students, and volunteers who made it all possible.

However, meeting the growing needs of our communities remains a significant challenge. With only \$98,000 in funding from the Victorian Government, the majority of our programs are sustained through the generosity of our community members, volunteers, and small business supporters. Their commitment and belief in our mission keep us going strong.

As we look ahead to 2026, our 8th National Multicultural Mental Health Month will focus on a deeply important theme – “Women’s Mental Health.” We invite everyone to join us in this vital conversation, participate in our programs, and donate generously to help us continue supporting the most vulnerable members of our community. Together, we can make mental health a shared responsibility and a source of collective strength.

Kind Regards,

**VASAN SRINIVASAN**

CEO, Mental Health Foundation Australia

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# EVOLUTION OF THE MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

BY AISHA USMAN



## 2019

### Switching to a National Campaign

MHFA launched the first National Mental Health Month campaign on a national scale, running from October 1 to 31. This shift introduced three ambassador programs: the Australian Multicultural Ambassador, the Australian Youth Ambassador and the Australian Future Leader programs, which helped build a volunteer network focused on reducing stigma and encouraging open conversations across diverse communities.



**Inaugural Victoria  
Mental Health Month**  
7 October – 6 November 2018  
Theme: Better mental health for all

## 2018

### Transition to Victoria's First Mental Health Month

MHFA expanded the initiative into the Victorian Mental Health Month campaign, aiming to reach more communities, especially young people and multicultural groups. The first statewide campaign brought together 21 local government partners and marked the start of a more inclusive and far-reaching movement.

## 2020

### National Growth and Virtual Launch

The ambassador network had grown substantially and became central to delivering events nationwide. MHFA marked the year with a virtual national launch on World Mental Health Day, attended by parliamentarians and featuring the first Mental Health Awards. The Walk for Mental Health also expanded, with coordinated walks held across every state and territory.



## 1984 The 1<sup>st</sup> Mental Health Week

The very first launch of Mental Health Week in Victoria successfully engaged the public through a week of events focused on reducing stigma and promoting mental health awareness.

Mental Health Foundation Australia

**Mental Health  
Week** 8-14 October

Theme: Mental Health in the workplace



# 2021

## Mental Health in the Post-Pandemic Era

With the theme "Mental Health: Post-Pandemic Recovery Challenges and Resilience," the campaign addressed the mental health impacts of COVID-19 and promoted resilience and recovery across industries and community groups.



# 2022

## Resilience Through Hybrid Community Connections

MHFA adapted to ongoing pandemic conditions by offering hybrid events. With the theme "Building Resilience: Communities and Connections," the campaign featured multicultural symposiums and cultural celebrations that reinforced MHFA's commitment to inclusivity.



# 2023

## Expanding to Multicultural Mental Health Month

The initiative shifted to the National Multicultural Mental Health Month campaign, delivering tailored events for 20 cultural community groups. Co-designed with each community, these sessions continued to reduce stigma and encourage participation. Many events were held in languages other than English to enhance accessibility. The month also included forums for youth, seniors, Indigenous Australians and migrants, fostering greater understanding and empowerment across Australia.



# 2024

## Celebrating Diversity, Healing Together

Guided by the theme "Celebrating Diversity, Healing Together," MHFA created safe spaces for open conversations across multicultural communities. A multimedia campaign and diverse events helped amplify awareness, reinforced the mission to ignite, educate and engage Australians, reduce stigma, strengthen understanding within CALD communities and support advocacy for improved mental health funding.



# 2025

## Lived Experience Leads Way

This year's 2025 campaign highlighted the power of personal stories in driving change. MHFA partnered with mental health services, NGOs, local councils, libraries and educational institutions to deliver events nationwide. The campaign emphasised recovery and resilience, engaging communities across all sectors of society.



# LIVED EXPERIENCE

The 2025 7<sup>th</sup> National Multicultural Mental Health Month truly embodied the theme “Lived Experience Leads the Way.” The theme amplified conversations about the power of lived experience and what can be learned by the community through education, connection and understanding. Across all of the events and activities during the month, there was a strong sense of unity, shared humanity, and a commitment to elevating the voices of those with lived experience within the multicultural mental health space.

The highlights of the month for me on a personal level included those below that included lived experience, demonstrating the need to share freely and to be accepted along their mental health journeys.

Powerful videos shared by the Mental Health Foundation Australia support group facilitators and the provisional counsellors, psychologists, who helped set the tone for the month, with their passion for their career path shining through. Their dedication and personal motivation to support the lived experience community reflected the true meaning of the month’s theme.

The stories of the lived experienced community captured the strength, resilience, and authenticity of individuals who have walked the path of living with a mental health diagnosis. These visual narratives moved many, including myself, reminding everyone that lived experience is a long journey of self-advocacy, education and self-care.

The launch night was marked by an inspiring and heartfelt presentation by Dianne Simboro, our Trauma and PTSD and Coercive Control facilitator. Her words about the power of lived experience resonated deeply with the audience, as she highlighted how sharing her own story can break barriers, challenge stigma, and empower others to seek help and understanding.



# LEADS THE WAY

A personal highlight was the collaboration between academia, research, and lived experience leaders. The insights shared by Prof. Bruce Tonge emphasized the humanity of vulnerability, connection, and shared experience. This integration of knowledge and personal narrative demonstrated the richness of a collaborative approach to mental health.

The Let's Talk mental health forum evening in Carlton brought together a diverse range of professionals across the mental health sector to discuss the needs of multicultural communities. These discussions highlighted the importance of cultural understanding, community engagement, and inclusive services that respect diversity and empower individuals from all backgrounds. Being a part of the forum on the night was an honour and to be invited to join the panel with Prof. Malcolm Hopwood was a personal achievement.

Speaking at a multicultural event for the Indian community in Rowville, my speech's aim was to encourage conversations in the multicultural space, that addressed the challenges faced by those struggling with stigma, judgement, and fear surrounding mental health conditions. By openly discussing these issues, we hope to foster a sense of hope and reassurance that seeking support is a courageous and positive step forward.

Overall, the month's events positively demonstrated how lived experience, when amplified and respected, can help transform the mental health landscape. Through collaboration, understanding and cultural awareness, Lived Experience Leads the Way was not just a theme of the month but truly encompassed the month's mission for all involved.

Amanda Cops  
Support Groups Administrator




## MONTH AT GLANCE

October 2025 marked a pivotal moment in my professional journey at the Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA), as I proudly contributed to the 7th National Multicultural Mental Health Month. Embracing the theme “Lived Experience Leads the Way,” this month-long initiative celebrated the resilience, diversity, and cultural richness of Australia’s communities, honouring the insights of lived experience in shaping mental health advocacy and service delivery.

As a Community Development Officer, I coordinated the clinical operations for the MHFA Integrated Wellness Hub Psychology Clinic, a key service offering culturally responsive mental health care. In total, we facilitated 177 counselling sessions (80 in-person, 97 online), responded to over 40 new client inquiries, conducted 20+ initial assessments, and received more than 50 helpline calls. These numbers reflect not only our operational success but also the growing trust in MHFA’s inclusive care model and its capacity to meet diverse community needs.

The primary psychological concerns identified in client assessments included anxiety disorders (generalized anxiety, social anxiety, specific phobias), mood disorders (such as depression, grief, and burnout), trauma-related conditions (PTSD), ADHD, occupational stress, and family-related difficulties. These recurring concerns underscore the critical need for culturally sensitive, evidence-driven therapeutic strategies that can be personalized to meet each client’s unique needs.

In addition to clinical coordination, I selected and led the development of “In Conversation With” and “Let’s Talk”, a digital storytelling series in collaboration with provisional counsellors, social media teams, and production staff. This initiative gave emerging mental health professionals a platform to share their personal stories, breaking down stigma and encouraging help-seeking behaviour. It was inspiring to see provisional clinicians and mental health interns take the first step toward their well-being and spark broader conversations about mental health.



I also mentored social work interns, guiding their professional growth and fostering reflection on culturally responsive care. By creating learning opportunities such as community outreach and webinars, we helped these emerging professionals engage in the evolving narrative of mental health practice.

Aligned with MHFA's October programs, we successfully delivered two Mental Health First Aid courses, both online and in-person, to over 25 employees. These sessions covered recognizing mental health conditions, providing effective support, and offering first aid in a mental health crisis. During the Multicultural Mental Health Film Festival (MMHFF), I coordinated the Quiet Space alongside other mental health professionals. This safe space allowed individuals to process their emotions and reflect on powerful films exploring mental illness, resilience, trauma, and cultural identity.

Reflecting on this journey, I'm grateful to have contributed to initiatives that not only raise awareness but also empower individuals to take charge of their mental well-being. Looking ahead—especially with 2026 marking a focus on “Women's mental health”—I'm more committed than ever to creating spaces that promote inclusivity, resilience, and holistic care. It's about building a future where mental health is prioritized for everyone, and where each person—regardless of gender—feels heard, supported, and valued in their mental health journey.

Jotpreet Kaur  
Community Development Officer



# DRIVING DIGITAL CHANGE

Over the past several years, the Mental Health Foundation Australia has significantly advanced its technological expertise to strengthen mental health awareness, accessibility, and community engagement. I have had the privilege of contributing my technical expertise throughout this transformation.

Prior to 2020, the National Mental Health Month campaigns focused more on face-to-face engagement through community events, school programs, workplace initiatives, and multicultural ambassadors advocacy programs. These in-person activities built strong connections and local ownership of mental health initiatives.

The COVID-19 pandemic marked a turning point. With physical gatherings restricted, the organisation rapidly adopted a digital-first model. Online events, resources, guides, webinars, online support groups, and expanded social media outreach ensured continuity of services nationwide. Leveraging our AV and production experience, we established a studio setup within our office space to livestream events throughout National Multicultural Mental Health Month, enabling ongoing awareness and support during lockdowns.

In 2023, the Internship Program introduced new talent and perspectives across IT, Media, and Business disciplines. It was a great experience to support the professional journey of more than 70 students, whose contributions played a crucial role in modernising our campaigns and strengthening our digital capacity. Our organisational rebrand, including a redesigned logo, further enhanced our digital presence and alignment with our mission.

## Key Technological Initiatives

During this period, we delivered two major mental health technology initiatives:

- **Multilingual AI Chatbot** – A 24/7 digital tool providing location-based mental health information in multiple languages, improving accessibility for diverse communities.
- **Supportive Mind Mobile App** (developed with Infosys Australia, proudly sponsored by eNoah iSolution) – A self-help platform enabling users to track mood, explore coping strategies, and access mental health resources on demand.

In 2025, cybersecurity became a strategic priority. With the support of eNoah iSolution, we successfully achieved the ISO 27001 certification. This process deepened my understanding of secure infrastructure design, compliance requirements, and shared organisational responsibility in maintaining resilience.

The 7th National Multicultural Mental Health Month in 2025 represents a milestone in our evolution. The campaign now operates as a fully integrated digital-physical ecosystem, combining in-person engagements with online tools such as the Supportive Mind app.

New digital initiatives including online art competition, lived experience spotlights, and the multicultural mental health film festival—demonstrate the organisation's commitment to innovation, inclusion, and lived experience.

Nithya Viswanathan  
IT Systems Analyst

# SOCIAL MEDIA FOR AWARENESS



The 2025 7<sup>th</sup> National Multicultural Mental Health Month, themed “Lived Experience Leads the Way,” highlighted the power of personal stories in guiding younger generations and reminding us that mental health challenges affect people of all ages and backgrounds. By centring real voices and lived experience, the campaign encouraged understanding, empathy and healing.

Across the 31 days of October, we delivered a mix of online and in-person events, amplified by a strong social media presence. As our world becomes increasingly connected online, we embraced digital storytelling to ensure these conversations, which foster connection, education, and empathy, could reach people wherever they were. This approach allowed us to bring the Foundation closer to communities across Australia and even overseas, reinforcing that no matter where someone lives, their mental well-being will always be heard and matter to us.

Within just one month, our social media platforms reached more than 50,000 users. This achievement reflects the dedication of our exceptional social media interns, who tirelessly produced daily, in-depth content, designed event promotions, and delivered themed mini-series aligned with the Foundation’s mission and international awareness days. Their work kept our messaging timely, engaging and consistent across all channels throughout the incredibly important month.

These digital initiatives helped strengthen awareness, foster meaningful community connection and further our mission to destigmatise mental health and create safe, inclusive spaces where lived experience truly leads the way.

Vy Nguyen  
Social Media Coordinator



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Reach nearly

**56K**

people  
across all platforms



More than

**1.8K**

interactions (likes, shares and comments)



**Top -  
performing  
posts**

(by Engagement Rate)



About

**9.2K**



Views

Over

**1.4K**



Clicks

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# ABOUT



**The 7th National Multicultural Mental Health Month ran from 1-31 October, celebrating Australia's cultural diversity while promoting mental health awareness in multicultural communities. The theme "Lived Experience Leads the Way," highlighted the insight and resilience that lived experience brings to mental health, emphasising the importance of listening, learning, and creating safe, supportive environments for all.**



## CAMPAIGN GOALS

Create opportunities for individuals to share insight, contribute anonymously, or participate in events and programs that relates their perspectives.

Deliver clear, inclusive, strengths-based messages about mental health across sectors, ages, and cultural groups.

Encourage open conversations in workplaces, schools, and communities and improve accessibility of support services.

Use art, storytelling, film and digital platforms to promote mental wellbeing, empower conversations, and connect people through shared understanding.

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# 7th National Multicultural Mental Health Month

**OCTOBER 2025**  
National Multicultural Mental Health Month | 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> October

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 <b>National Multicultural Mental Health Month</b> Why it matters?	2 <b>Steps I've Taken</b> Andrew's Journey Navigating OCD	3 <b>Let's Talk</b> BPD Awareness and Seeking Support	4 <b>Official Launch</b> National Multicultural Mental Health Month 6:30pm – 10:00pm AICCT Hall, Rowville
5 <b>Let's Talk</b> Power of Support Groups with Prof. Bruce Tonge AO	6 <b>Let's Talk</b> Refugees Mental Health with Bwa They	7 <b>Let's Talk</b> Workplace Mental Health with Michelle Klemm OAM <b>Whittlesea Council</b> World Mental Health Day event	8 <b>In Conversation</b> with Kylie Nguyen <b>MHFA &amp; DET</b> Youth Workshop Event at Seymour College	9 <b>Steps I've Taken</b> Navigating Bipolar Disorder	10 <b>Let's Talk</b> Mental Health 6:00pm – 8:00pm Maltese Community Council of Vic, Carlton	11 <b>MHFA &amp; Tamil Pengal</b> Diwali event 4:00pm onwards AICCT Hall
12 <b>Dhaan Music School – Melody and Music event</b> 3:00pm onwards Chandler Community Centre	13 <b>In Conversation</b> with John Lavanya	14 <b>Let's Talk</b> Resilience with Late Gary Kellogg	15 <b>In Conversation</b> with Simranpreet Gill	16 <b>Steps I've Taken</b> Marriage and Bipolar Disorder	17 <b>In Conversation</b> with Hrishikesh Hariharan	18 <b>MHFA &amp; DET</b> Diwali event at Seymour College 11:00am – 4:00pm Seymour Community Arts Centre
19 <b>Wellness Hub</b> Client experiences	20 <b>Lunch &amp; Learn Webinar</b> with Prof. Ajeet Singh 12pm – 1pm (Melb time) Online via Zoom	21 <b>Let's Talk</b> Seniors Mental Health	22 <b>Mental Health</b> First Aid <b>Workplace Training</b> 10am – 2:30pm (Melb time) MHFA	23 <b>Steps I've Taken</b> "Why do I facilitate support groups" with Pats Rolfe	24 <b>In Conversation</b> with Asher Cameron	25 <b>Let's Talk</b> Finding Strength with Lucy Laurits
26 <b>Steps I've Taken</b> "Why do I facilitate support groups" with Dianne Simbora	27 <b>Lunch &amp; Learn Webinar</b> with Prof. Melissa Green 12pm – 1pm (Melb time) Online via Zoom	28 <b>In Conversation</b> with Annemarie Ryan	29 <b>Steps I've Taken</b> Why do I facilitate support groups	30 <b>Multicultural Mental Health Film Festival Day 1</b> Australian Films and Q&A 11:30am – 3:30pm Cinema 3, AICCT	31 <b>Multicultural Mental Health Film Festival Day 2</b> International Films & Awards 11:30am – 3:30pm Cinema 3, AICCT	

**SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER FOR EVENTS!**

**LIVED EXPERIENCE LEADS THE WAY**

1300 643 287 [www.mhfa.org.au](http://www.mhfa.org.au)

**Throughout October, we delivered a blend of online and in-person events supported by a strong digital presence.**

Our digital initiatives included the Steps I've Taken – Lived Experience Spotlight series, which helped reduce stigma and gently amplify lived voices, the In Conversation mini-documentaries that shared the personal journeys of provisional clinicians and interns, and the Let's Talk series, which highlighted CALD mental health experiences and fostered deeper community understanding and resilience.

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# STEPS I'VE TAKEN



*Steps I've Taken* is a series showcasing personal stories of individuals facing mental health challenges, highlighting their strength and resilience. These reflections cover growth, struggles, and insights that have shaped their journeys. Everyone's experience is valuable, whether they live with mental health issues or support others.

## *Andrew's Journey Navigating OCD*

Andrew's journey with the Mental Health Foundation Australia began in an OCD support group — his first step toward connection and understanding. Through lived-experience support, he discovered the power of shared journeys and the importance of community in recovery.

## *Navigating Bipolar Disorder*

Every mental health journey is unique, but no one should walk it alone. Our support groups create a safe space where experiences are heard, acknowledged, and valued — fostering connection and belonging. Through shared stories, participants find strength in one another and inspire positive change.

MHFA offers support groups for people living with Bipolar disorder, both in-person and online.

SUPP

GROWTH




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## Marriage and Bipolar Disorder



Facing mental health challenges in a relationship is never a journey taken alone. Support within marriage shines through care, patience, and understanding. In recognition of National Carers Week, this story honours the love and resilience partners share through life's ups and downs.



## "Why do I facilitate support groups?"

At MHFA, the Hearing Voices Support Group offers a safe, non-judgmental space for those navigating Schizophrenia. Facilitator Peta Rolfe draws on lived experience to show how connection, understanding, and shared strategies can foster resilience and hope.

- Peta Rolfe

Building a new 'normal' means leaving hardships behind and embracing growth. The MHFA's Trauma and PTSD & Coercive Control Support Group guides people toward resilience, self-compassion, and healing through lived experience.

-Dianne Simboro

Joining a support group doesn't need to feel daunting, and you are never alone. At MHFA, Bipolar Life offers a welcoming space to share, connect and support, reshaping mental health views and inspiring hope for the future.

-Anonymous

EMPOWER

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THE WAY



# LET'S TALK



Building on the success of last year's Let's Talk events, this year's series was reimagined as a dedicated online mini-series to bring the theme **"Lived Experience Leads the Way"** to the forefront. Each episode centred on the voices, wisdom, and real-life stories of individuals with lived experience, offering self-care practices, coping strategies and resilience-building approaches across diverse traditions and cultural backgrounds. Expert contributors and community leaders further enriched the conversations, ensuring the content remained authentic, relevant and deeply grounded in real life.

By delivering the series entirely on YouTube and social media, MHFA aimed to remove geographic barriers and ensure that our message reaches audiences far beyond Victoria, including national and international viewers. This approach not only broadened participation but also strengthened engagement, drawing in new followers and extending support to thousands who cannot attend an in-person event.

The impact of the series demonstrated the powerful role that lived experience can play in shaping understanding, inspiring hope and guiding Australia's mental health movement forward.

## *Key Topics*

- BPD Awareness and Seeking Support
- Power of Support Groups with Prof. Bruce Tonge AO
- Refugee Mental Health with Bwe Thay
- Workplace Mental Health with Michelle Kleinert OAM
- Let's Talk: Maltese Community (In-person)
- Resilience with Late Gary Keisoglu
- Seniors Mental Health
- Finding Strengths with Lucy Laurita



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### ***BPD Awareness and Seeking Support***

This episode explores BPD Awareness Week, acknowledges the strength of those living with BPD, and highlights MHFA's support group, which offers connection and understanding for those seeking support.



### ***Power of Support Groups with Prof. Bruce Tonge AO***

This episode explores the power of support groups with Emeritus Prof. Bruce Tonge AO and highlights how MHFA's peer-led groups create safe spaces for connection, shared experience and hope.



### ***Refugee Mental Health with Bwe Thay***

This episode features Bwe Thay as he shares his migration journey, reflecting on the challenges, hope and resilience that shape the refugee experience, and how open conversations help create community and belonging.

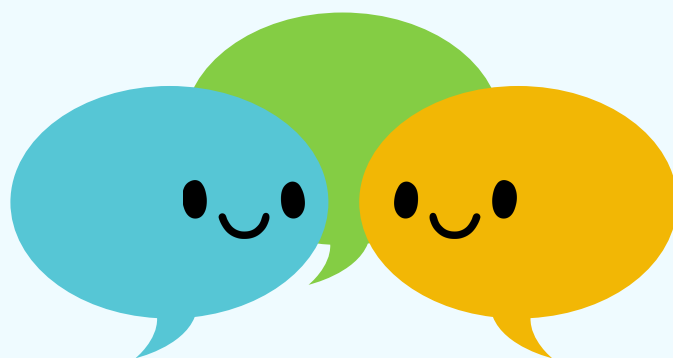


### ***Workplace Mental Health with Michelle Kleinert OAM***

This episode explores workplace mental health with Michelle Kleinert OAM, showing how MHFA training fosters practical skills, empathy and supportive workplace communities.

### ***Resilience with Late Gary Keisoglu***

This episode explores resilience with the late Gary Keisoglu, reflecting on how learning from challenge, chaos and loss can build mental strength and support emotional well-being.



## **LET'S TALK About Mental Health**



### ***Seniors Mental Health (Prof. Sunil Bhar)***

This episode highlights the power of gentle, compassionate and genuine conversations in supporting seniors' mental health and fostering trust, connection and understanding.

### ***Finding Strengths with Lucy Laurita***

This episode features Lucy Laurita who shares her parents' migration journey and how their resilience, determination and hope continue to inspire her work in supporting multicultural communities.



### ***Seniors Mental Health (Cr Richard Lim OAM)***

This episode also explores how the mental health challenges faced by senior communities are often overlooked, even though they are just as real and significant as those experienced by younger generations.



### ***Let's Talk: Maltese Community (In-person)***

This Let's Talk session with the Maltese community on World Mental Health Day highlights how caring for our mental health starts with small daily acts of self-care, compassion and connection.



# IN CONVERSATION WITH...

## Mini-Documentary Series



Hi, my name is Kylie, and I was a Social Work intern at MHFA. Throughout my placement, I learned so much from hands-on research to clinic outreach and working with different teams across the Foundation, which has helped me grow and really strengthened my passion for social work and mental health advocacy.

There were, of course, challenging moments, but the times spent connecting with the community and supporting people with lived experience were incredibly meaningful. Those experiences really touched me and helped shape the kind of social worker I hope to become.

**-Kylie Nguyen**

*"The MHFA aligned with my own values and missions, that we value mental health and wellbeing and also are inclusive culturally"*

*"Working in a mental health space like this has really built my confidence as a professional, for which I'm really grateful."*

Hi, my name is John, and I was a provisional counsellor at the MHFA Wellness Hub Psychology Clinic. Being here has allowed me to bring my lived experience, insight and compassion into every session, and I've grown so much through the people I've supported.

Seeking help was one of the best decisions I ever made, and that journey inspired me to change careers and give back to the community. The connections I've built here, and the trust clients place in me, have deeply shaped the counsellor I'm becoming.

**-John Lavanya**



*"The placement transformed my confidence and strengthened my skills in communication and mental health advocacy."*



Hi, my name is Simranpreet, and I chose to complete my Social Work placement at MHFA because I'm passionate about breaking cultural stigma and creating spaces where people feel safe to talk about mental health. My time here has helped me grow so much, and I'm excited to keep learning and to make a difference wherever I can.

**-Simranpreet Gill**

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Hi, my name is Hariharan, and I'm Hrishikesh's dad. Supporting him through work, volunteering, hobbies, and even caring for his dog Pluto has taught me so much about resilience and the importance of standing beside someone you love. We navigate challenges as a team, and every small moment of progress feels meaningful.

Our story is really about connection, and I hope it reminds others that caring is not just a responsibility but a journey filled with understanding, growth and unconditional love.

**-Hariharan Viswanathan, father of Hrishikesh Hariharan**



Hi, my name is Asher, and I was a provisional counsellor at the MHFA Wellness Hub Psychology Clinic. One of the biggest lessons I've learned is that supporting others helps us grow, too. This role has taught me to offer genuine, compassionate care in a space that feels safe and non-judgmental.

I've grown from feeling nervous to feeling confident in the support I give, and I understand how hard it can be to take that first step. So, if you're unsure, I encourage you to reach out. Whatever you're carrying, big or small, there's always room for it to be shared when you're ready.

**-Asher Cameron**

*"I like to approach clients like an empty notebook. Allowing them to fill the pages with their experience."*

Hi, my name is Annemarie, and I was a provisional counsellor at the MHFA Wellness Hub Psychology Clinic. I like to think of our worries as a suitcase we all carry, and my role is to help people feel safe enough to start unpacking it, piece by piece, at their own pace.

My time here has been guided by compassion, empathy and a person-centred approach. Supporting those who walk through our doors has been incredibly meaningful, and I encourage anyone who is struggling to take that first step. You never have to carry your suitcase alone.

**-Annemarie Ryan**



*"It takes courage to take the first step and commitment to continue, but you don't have to do it alone."*



# 4<sup>th</sup> October

On Saturday, the MHFA's 7th National Multicultural Mental Health Month Launch brought together dignitaries, supporters, and volunteers from over 40 nationalities to celebrate diversity and unity in mental health awareness.

The event, held in Melbourne, centred around the inspiring theme “Lived Experience Leads the Way.” This message was powerfully echoed by our Chairperson Professor Melissa Green, The Hon. Mary Doyle MP(Federal Member for Aston), local Mayors and Councillors, and Lived Experience Speaker and MHFA Support Group Facilitator Dianne Simboro and Richard Lim OAM - Medical Advisory Member & Mental Health Advocate of the Year 2024, who all shared heartfelt reflections that reinforced this year’s theme.

Highlights of the evening included the presentation of the Mental Health Awards - Sian Palmieri, Australian Mental Health Advocate of the Year, Suzette Buchanan, International Mental Health Advocate of the Year, SchoolTV, Mental Health Organisation of the Year, Murali Kumar, Mental Health Musician of the Year, Toby Warwick, Mental Health Youth of the Year, Hrishikesh Hariharan, Mental Health Volunteer of the Year and the Consumers Art Competition Awards - Tree “A symbol of reflection psychology conscious and unconscious mind” by David Bryant, Peaceful by Bridget Sun, and Medals by Adelaide Worcester recognising exceptional contributions and creativity in promoting mental health and wellbeing.

A special thanks to Mr Jianming Chen and his talented ANIBT team for sponsoring and preparing a delicious three-course multicultural cuisine enjoyed by all attendees.

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# Official Launch of the 7<sup>th</sup> National Multicultural Mental Health Month 2025

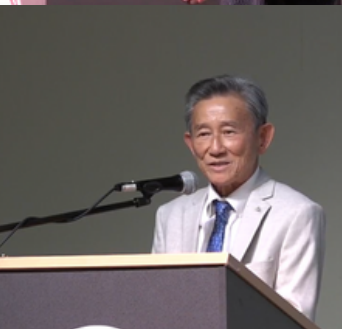
Australian Indian Charitable Trust for sponsoring the venue for this successful event. The MHFA also sincerely appreciates the generous support from: Tandoori Junction Caterers for the entrees, Indo Ceylon Spices for the sweets, OMED Fresh Market for the fresh vegetables, Stockman Wines, proudly sponsored by YPA Diamond Creek. Their contributions helped make the event a memorable success.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the ABBS families for their tireless volunteering from setup to clean up after a long and joyous night.

The event was gracefully hosted by Aneka Srinivasan, MHFA Volunteer Supervisor and Senior Psychologist from Elysium Psychology.

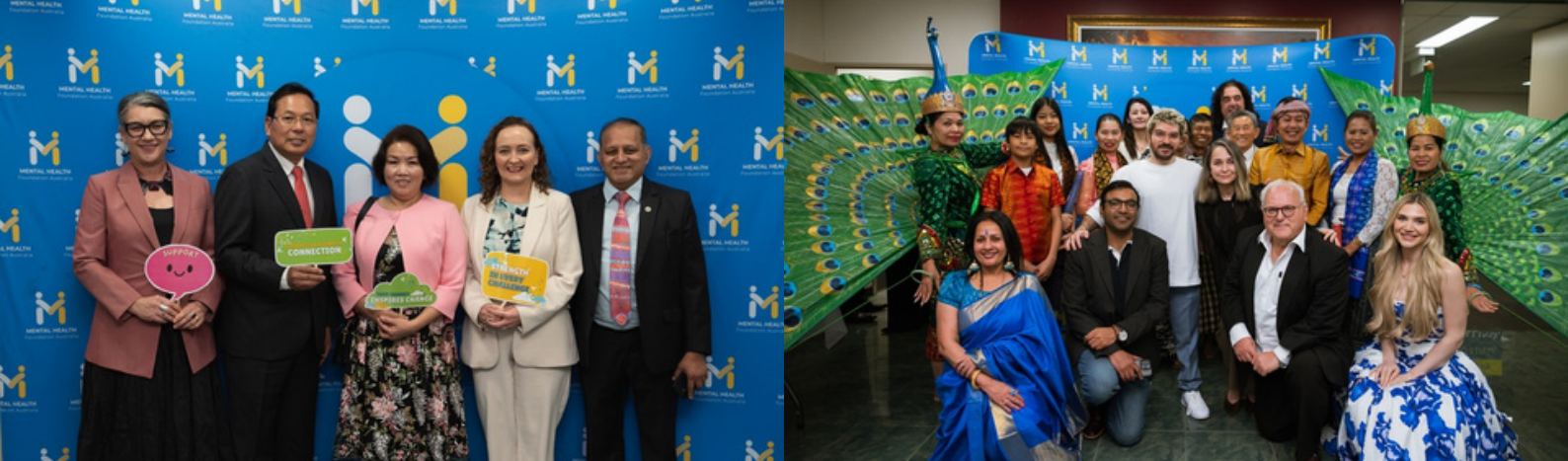
We thank Vasan Srinivasan, CEO for his leadership and dedication to make this event impactful, and all board members.

Finally, we acknowledge the dedication of our small but mighty staff team — Aisha Usman, Amanda Cops, Nithya Viswanathan, Jotpreet Kaur, Vy Nguyen, along with our wonderful interns and volunteers whose commitment and teamwork made this celebration!



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**7<sup>th</sup> October**

## **Whittlesea Council Event – World Mental Health Day Morning Tea**

The Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA) was honoured to be invited to join the City of Whittlesea's Business and Engagement Unit – Economic Development Team in celebrating World Mental Health Day on the 7<sup>th</sup> October.

The MHFA extends its sincere thanks to Wendy, George, and Lauren for their kind invitation and continued support in promoting the Foundation's mental health awareness initiatives, including the Integrated Wellness Hub and its network of 35 community-based support groups across Victoria.

The event provided an excellent opportunity for meaningful discussions with City of Whittlesea staff about current mental health challenges and the Foundation's ongoing efforts to assist vulnerable communities through advocacy, education, and accessible wellbeing programs.

The Foundation also expresses its gratitude to the City of Whittlesea for their warm hospitality and the delightful morning tea, featuring a generous spread of cakes, snacks, and fresh fruits enjoyed by all participants.



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# 10<sup>th</sup> October



## Let's Talk Mental Health World Mental Health Day



**Maltese Community Centre of Victoria**

A successful event was held in partnership with Channel 31 and the Maltese Community Council of Victoria for the 7th National Multicultural Mental Health Month.

Joseph Matina, Chair of CH31, opened the evening, which was moderated by psychologist Katy Dib. An exceptional panel shared personal journeys and tips for mental health, including:

- Professor Malcolm Hopwood
- Amanda Cops
- Dr. Diva Divakaran
- Jayne Parish
- Michael Sillekens
- Maryanne Tadic
- Nicky Chung
- Cynthia Jerotich Kipkemboi

The panel addressed audience questions with compassion and hope. Thanks were given to the Channel 31 team, MHFA staff, and sponsors for their contributions.

The event celebrated diversity, conversation, and community.

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# 11<sup>th</sup> October



## **Celebrating Diwali – Festival of Lights In collaboration with Tamil Pengal Australian Women's Health**



**Australian Indian Community Centre**

Last Saturday afternoon, the Mental Health Foundation Australia was invited to speak at the Tamil Pengal Australia Women's Health Event for Deepavali, also known as the Festival of Lights, at the AICCT in Rowville as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> National Multicultural Mental Health Month 2025.

Our Support Group Administrator and Lived Experienced Representative Amanda Cops, spoke about the importance of Women's mental health in Southern Indian communities. She spoke about respecting traditions, culture, faith and family in multicultural communities and their importance in preventing mental health concerns, such as depression. However, isolation, stigma and the lack of understanding of mental health conditions that may be seen as a weakness and vulnerability can also be seen as letting down family and a mother's responsibilities.

Amanda discussed cultural safe care and how that is represented in the community, which includes healing and connection. We encourage communities to talk openly about mental health and taking care of your mind and listen and respect people's mental health journeys.

We thank Tamil Pangal Australia and Pooja Premkumar for organizing this important event and inviting us to partner in this important event.

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# 12<sup>th</sup> October

## A Night of Melody and Music In Collaboration with Dhaan Music School



**Chandler Community Centre**

Sunday's celebration was filled with harmony and hope as Dhaan Music School hosted a Night of Melody and Music as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> National Multicultural Mental Health Month.

The Mental Health Foundation Australia applauds Guru Jenany Abarnasuthan and her team for championing positive mental health through their inspiring motto: "Anything is possible if you believe in yourself. Embark on your musical journey with us!"

The evening showcased an array of brilliant performances by Dhaan Music School's next generation of talented young musicians. Each performance reflected passion, discipline, and the healing power of music. Guru Jenany shared her heartfelt belief that anyone can learn music and that music itself is a pathway to positive mental wellbeing:

- Playing or learning music activates the brain's relaxation response — lowering stress and calming the mind.
- Familiar melodies soothe emotional tension and help express feelings that are hard to put into words.
- Making music together fosters empathy, teamwork, and joy.
- Regular practice builds patience, focus, and resilience — qualities that enhance everyday life.
- Music connects us, heals us, and strengthens our communities — and Sunday's event was a beautiful reminder of that truth.

A big thank you to Guru Janany Abarnasuthan, the Dhaan Music School team, all students, families, and our wonderful volunteers for making this evening a memorable success as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> National Multicultural Mental Health Month.

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Thank you



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# 15<sup>th</sup> October



## **Celebrating Connection and Mental Health Awareness through the Joy of Performance, Culture, and Food.**



### **Puckapunyal Primary School**

A wonderful day at Puckapunyal Primary School celebrating Day 15 of the National Mental Health Awareness and Education Campaign!

On behalf of Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA) and the Federation of Indian Associations in Victoria (FIAV), I extend my sincere thanks to the Department of Education, especially Mr. Neil O'Sullivan, and the dedicated lead teacher, Mrs. Shanthi Antony, for their incredible efforts in connecting teachers, students, and staff through awareness of Indian culture, food, and mental health.

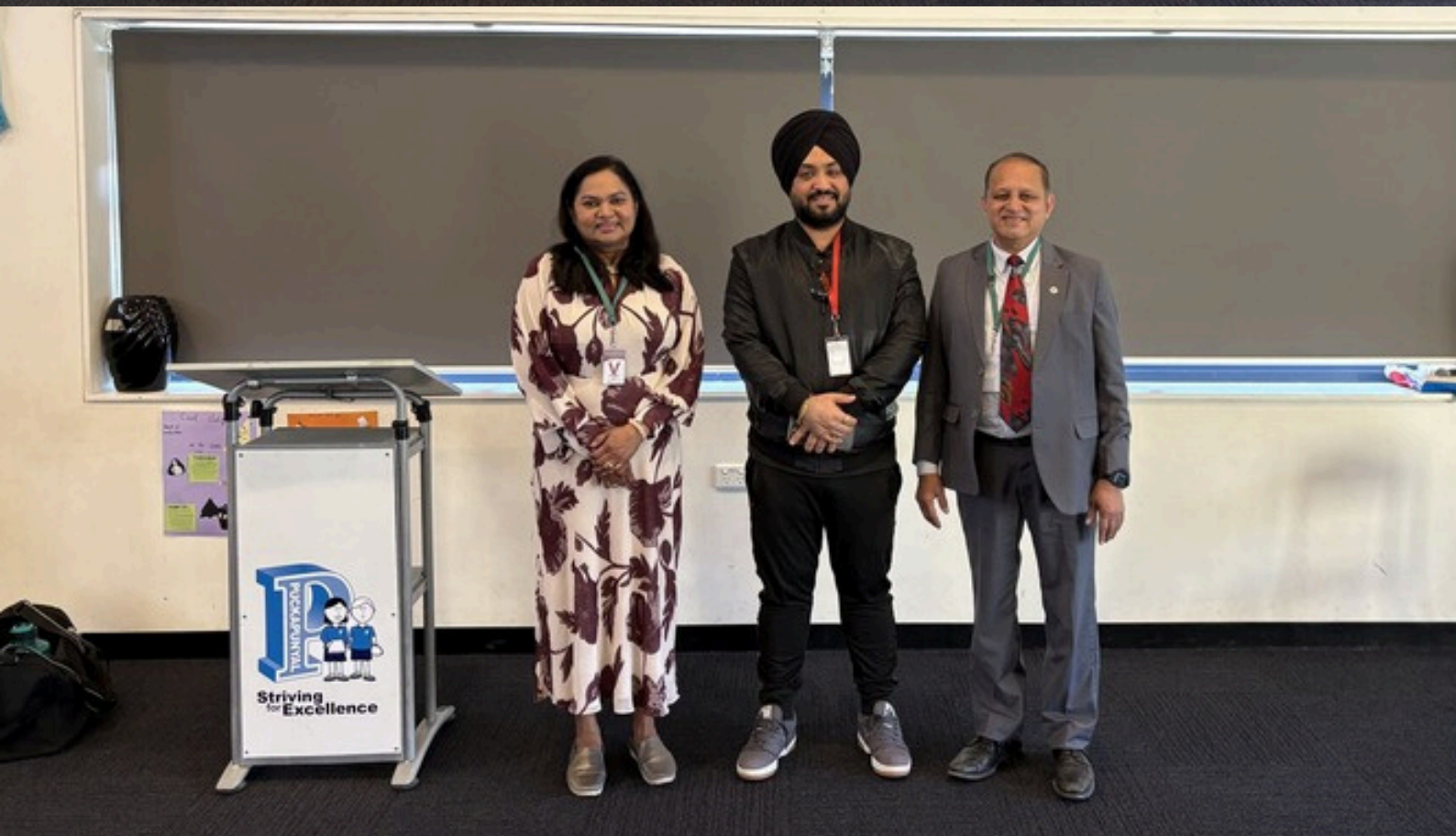
It was truly inspiring to see professional Bharatanatyam and Bhangra dance teachers from Preet Siyaan Entertainment and Shakthiswaraa School of Indian Dancing engaging students through interactive workshops — sharing their cultural knowledge while highlighting the link between creative expression and positive mental wellbeing. I was highly impressed by the students' artistic talents, reflected in the inspiring artwork that decorated every wall of the school.

The enthusiasm and joy of these young students — our future leaders — as they learned and performed was heartwarming and a reminder of the importance of fostering positive mental health from an early age. A special appreciation to Mrs. Shanthi Antony for her professionalism, passion, and coordination — from engaging the dance instructors and caterers to organising video and photography — ensuring the event's success.

To further celebrate the connection between food and mental wellbeing, Mrs. Antony also organised a delightful Indian meal for all teachers, staff, and guests as part of the National Multicultural Mental Health Awareness Month celebrations.

MHFA and FIAV look forward to supporting and participating in many more inspiring school events like this — nurturing awareness, inclusion, and wellbeing among our future generations.





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# 18<sup>th</sup> October

## Celebrating Connection and Mental Health Awareness through the Joy of Performance, Culture, and Food.

 **Seymour College**

In partnership with the Department of Education's "Connecting Schools with Indian Communities" initiative.

The Day 18 celebrations beautifully blended the spirit of Diwali with the message of mental health and wellbeing. The event hall, elegantly decorated by Shrathi Events, featured a vibrant photo booth that was a crowd favourite throughout the day.

Mr. Neil O'Sullivan, Network Chair of Mitchell & Murrindindi Shire Schools, delivered the Acknowledgement of Country and a warm welcome address, setting the perfect tone for the celebration.

The event was organised with remarkable passion and dedication by Mrs. Shanthi Antony, Leading Teacher, Mitchell Shire Cluster of Schools — whose commitment to community connection and wellbeing shone through every detail.

The audience was treated to a rich cultural showcase:

- Preet Siyaan Entertainment energised the stage with a powerful Bhangra performance.
- Rethika and Rachna from Sakthiswaraa School of Dance performed a graceful Bharathanatyam duet.
- Dr. Pradush Narayanan and his team from Ballarat mesmerised the crowd with a stunning Kerala Chenda Melam, leaving everyone in awe.
- Vidya and her children from Natyakshetra Vidhyalaya Australia presented another elegant Bharathanatyam performance.
- The talented artists from Sangathamizh Kalaiyagam showcased Tamil Nadu's vibrant traditional art forms — Mayilaatam, Kalayaatam, Parai, Thudumppu, Sangu, and Kombutharai — completing a colourful musical journey from Punjab to Tamil Nadu at Seymour College.

The evening concluded with warm hospitality and festive cheer as Sri Murugan Restaurant, led by Mr. Jayapal, generously treated all attendees to authentic Indian snacks and traditional sweets — a true celebration of Diwali spirit and multicultural togetherness.





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**30<sup>th</sup> October**

## **Multicultural Mental Health Film Festival Day 1: Australian Short Films and Q & A**



**ACMI, Cinema 2**

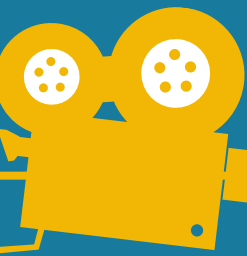
The 2025 Multicultural Mental Health Film Festival (MMHFF) wrapped on a high note at ACMI – Australia’s museum of screen culture, drawing 170 attendees across two vibrant nights celebrating cinema, culture, and mental health storytelling.

Alongside the ticketed sessions, the festival also hosted Crew Night — a free, non-ticketed networking and industry gathering that saw a huge turnout. Held in ACMI’s CAMEO event space, Crew Night brought together filmmakers, students, and creatives for an evening of connection and exchange. While not included in the official attendance figures, Crew Night also drew a large crowd, marking a significant success.

The event set a strong tone of community, connection, and collaboration, leading into the screenings.

Day 1 facilitated by the Mental Health Foundation Australia, as part of ACMI’s celebrated New Voices in Australian Cinema program, showcased six Australian short films, followed by a filmmaker Q&A moderated by Mojdeh Kashani, Master of Ceremonies.

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# Festival Impact Snapshot



**900K**  
global impressions



**520K**  
social media reach



**60,000**  
email marketing  
reachout



**13,000+**  
clicks and shares  
across platforms



**100+**  
attendees joined the  
film festival across  
2 days at ACMI



**99**  
short films from  
30 countries.



**12**  
selected films



**5**  
award winners

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# 31<sup>st</sup> October



## Multicultural Mental Health Film Festival Day 2: International Short Films and Q & A



**ACMI, Gandel Digital Lab**

The 2025 Multicultural Mental Health Film Festival wrapped at ACMI on a high note, and I couldn't be prouder of what this small, volunteer-led team achieved. Over two nights, we brought together filmmakers, audiences, and advocates to celebrate cinema, culture, and mental health storytelling.

First and foremost, I want to thank the staff and interns at the Mental Health Foundation Australia for their support in making this possible. To Vasanth Srinivasan, Jim Goodin, Nithya Viswanathan, Vy Nguyen, Wendy Lin, Nicolette Buick, Leo Nguyen, Jason Lim, Anh Bui, Travis Ma, Linh Nguyen, Jotpreet Kaur and Amanda Cops – thank you. And to my festival team – Festival Producer Ramin Iranfar, along with Mojdeh Kashani and Channel 31's Joseph Matina – your work, care, and dedication to this festival have been outstanding. To all our Australian and international judges, your time, insight, and belief in this project continue to add weight and credibility.

I also want to acknowledge AGBU Melbourne, our community and cultural partners, and our major partner Channel 31. Together, we're working on something special — a post-festival broadcast featuring a selection of this year's films, giving these stories a second life beyond the cinema. It's a genuine continuation of what this festival stands for: sharing diverse, meaningful stories with as many people as possible.

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And of course, to the ACMI team — Ella Cawthorn, Reece Goodwin, Anton De Ionno, Diamantino Li, Gavin Sommers, Britt Romstad, Seb Chan, and all my VX Supervisors, stage managers, security, Tech on Duty, cleaners, the Fresh Collective team, and my friends and colleagues across ACMI — thank you. The support, professionalism, and generosity from everyone involved are the reasons this festival could take place in a world-class venue and feel like home.

For me, cinema isn't just entertainment — it's a tool for empathy, connection, and understanding. The Multicultural Mental Health Film Festival is built on that idea. It exists to show that mental health is not a single narrative but a cultural one — shaped by language, heritage, and lived experience. The films we screened this year explored identity, care, displacement, trauma, grief, and belonging.

They reminded us that our differences are what make these stories powerful — and that sharing them is what makes us human.

Since it began in 2023, the festival has received 244 submissions, selected 43 films, and celebrated 16 award winners from over 35 countries. To think that something that started as a small idea has now become a global platform for multicultural mental health cinema is something I'll always carry with pride.

Looking ahead to 2026, we're planning to introduce new workshops for filmmakers and creatives, expand regional and community showcases, and continue our partnership with Channel 31 to share these stories more widely. The goal is to keep building something that not only celebrates diversity but continues to advocate for compassion, dialogue, and representation through film.

Matthew Keisoglu  
Festival Director

# 2025 Winners

## Australian Awards

### Best Australian Short Film

If This Conversation Isn't Over Yet – Rosey Feng

### Best Australian Documentary Short Film

GOLPES – Kevin Duran Du

## International Awards

### Best International Short Film

There Once Was – There Is No More – There Is  
Karina Paciorkowska & Łukasz Kamil Kamiński

### Best International Documentary Short Film

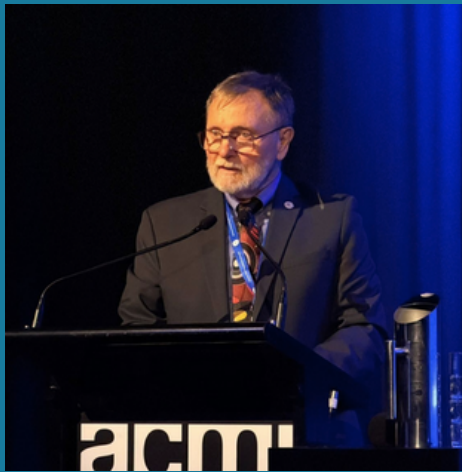
Adas Falasteen  
Samar Taher Lulu & Hamdi Khalil Elhusseini

## Gary Keisoglu Award

Fading Colours  
Bronte Rose Page

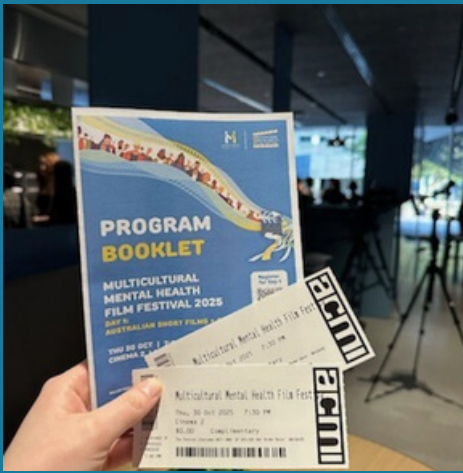






**CAPTURED BY  
ALI MASOMI**





**DAY 1 AND DAY 2**

3<sup>rd</sup> Multicultural Mental Health Film Festival

# How you can support our work?

Every person deserves access to mental health support, yet many face barriers in getting help. With your generosity, you can make a real, measurable difference.



\$30 provides one counselling session for someone in need.



\$150 funds three peer-support meetings, helping someone feel connected and understood in a caring community.



\$180 funds six counselling sessions, giving sustained support to help someone through difficult times.



\$328 covers a full Mental Health First Aid training for a individual equipping them to recognise, support, and respond to mental health challenges.



\$500 funds community engagement activities, including workshops and presentations that reduce stigma and raise awareness on positive mental health.



\$1000 supports counselling for primary school children, giving young people early support to develop resilience and confidence



**Your gift is more than a donation — it's a lifeline.**



Provides counselling and support for those who cannot afford it.



Trains community members to respond to mental health challenges.



Sustains free peer support groups where people feel heard and connected.



Reduces stigma and encourages open conversations about mental health.



Gives children early access to care and support for a brighter future.

**Donate now**

**You can be the reason someone feels supported today.**





PROUD MEMBER



NATIONAL  
Multicultural Mental Health  
MONTH 2025



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**Mental Health Foundation Australia**  
“Better Mental Health For All”

ACT | VIC | NSW | QLD | TAS | SA | WA | NT

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