

SETS Community of Practice
Communique: Afghan Support Subgroup Meeting
Videoconference – 29 November 2022

On 29 November 2022, SETSCoP facilitated the final meeting of the Afghan Support subgroup for 2022. The focus of this group is to discuss Best Practice strategies used and trends and issues identified through the delivery of support to Afghan SETS clients. Attendees comprise SETCoP members from around Australia with an interest in supports for Afghan refugees.

Supports currently provided by SETS services

Some SETS providers are facilitating the Community Support Program (CSP) alongside their SETS work, which includes Afghan entrants in humanitarian need.

In regional Western Australia, SETS is implementing a domestic violence education programme which includes Hazara women in a rural town. The education programme is delivered in conjunction with other agencies and covers healthy relationships and rights. The programme also includes other information, including food, working towards obtaining driver licences, volunteer English classes, and citizenship. In South Australia, the SETS provider noted that domestic and family violence (DFV) is usually renamed and integrated under wider “healthy relationships” and “family safety” programming.

Other SETS providers around the country are also conducting educational classes on citizenship applications. One SETS provider noted they have had success with tandem facilitators of bicultural case managers with migration agents. SETS providers also noted that flexible timings are important given many people are working or at classes during the day.

In regional Victoria, SETS providers in different towns have had Afghans take part in a number of social programmes including women-only swimming lessons, family sports, and multicultural morning teas. The morning teas include food relief (where people will be provided with ingredients, cook at home and then share it with the wider group), and act as venues where SETS clients can bring settlement issues and administrative tasks. The activities foster social connections both between Afghans – especially women; as well people from other multicultural communities.

Organisations are providing driver license training in response to high demand from Afghan community members and other groups who often see driving as essential to accessing employment, accessing cultural facilities and shops, and connecting socially. The funding for these programmes is external to SETS, with many programmes funded through state driving departments and state governments. Organisations noted there is very high demand and limitations both on funding and on the number of volunteers necessary to meet the demand for the various hours needed across different states.

Identified Challenges

A major issue identified by SETS providers is housing. While it was recognised housing is an issue in wider society, SETS providers are seeing homelessness and the risk of homelessness affecting a wider range of refugee and vulnerable migrants from Afghanistan, including women and children. SETS

providers are seeing an increase in the number of SETS clients unable to meet rising rents and receiving notices to vacate. A SETS provider reported cases where DFV survivors were desiring to return to situations of DFV, in part because of the risks of homelessness.

Some SETS providers are finding that Afghan women clients are sometimes reluctant to enrol their children in kindergarten, with the perception that they can take care of their children at home. This is mixed however, with other SETS providers finding success by inviting kindergartens to come speak with clients at weekly multicultural breakfasts and Afghan women readily enrolling their children in preschool and kindergarten.

Shared Resources

All AACASS funded projects information can be found at:

<https://www.aacassgrants.org.au/funded-programs/>

Huma Media video clips:

Episode 4 – Refugee trauma and mental health <https://youtu.be/LpjZYQqTR5E>

Episode 5 – Post traumatic stress disorder https://youtu.be/5mo1YjrlA_U

Beach safety - <https://youtu.be/vNZeavPewuE>

<https://www.youtube.com/@HumaMedia>