

2006

Spring/Summer



AUSTRALIAN-POLISH COMMUNITY SERVICES INC (APCS)

Linking together, proudly serving

Welcome to the Spring/Summer edition of the APCS newsletter! In this edition find out more about health and the Polish community, photographic exhibitions, community events and more. Also, take the time to visit our website for more information and resources.

www.apcs.org.au



HEALTH PROMOTION PLAN FOR THE POLISH COMMUNITY IN VICTORIA

APCS is in the process of finalising the Health Promotion Plan and we look forward to implementing the actions with a range of organisations and the Polish community. The survey undertaken with the community as a component of the project has helped to identify some key health areas the community would like to see addressed. These include: Arthritis, vision impairment, mental health (with a particular focus on depression and loneliness), dental problems, blood pressure and cardiovascular related issues, weight problems, ageing and related health conditions such as dementia, diabetes and falls. The Plan will be launched in the coming months. If you would like any further information contact Wendy Bennett on 8371 2310 or via e-mail: spo@apcs.org.au

2006 AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

APCS is pleased to have been a finalist for the Aged & Community Services Australia (ACSA) Organisation Award — Residential Care for the partnership model between Ardeer House and APCS. The model highlights the benefits of an effective partnership between a residential aged care facility and an ethnic service provider to ensure the provision of culturally and linguistically responsive care to residents. The model includes social activities between Polish residents and members of the local community, Polish cuisine and staff in the facility learning Polish phrases to communicate more effectively with the residents.

DID YOU KNOW THAT....

The Polish community in Victoria and Australia has the second largest number of older persons (amongst the 75+ age group) from all ethnic communities.

To-date, the Polish community has the largest number of refugees that ever arrived in Australia from one ethnic group. This includes the almost 60,000 who arrived as Displaced Persons after WWII and 20,000 who arrived through the Special Humanitarian Program in the early 1980s (known as Solidarity wave).

At least once a month, in Australia, a person of Polish background commits suicide.

POLISH FESTIVAL @ FEDERATION SQUARE

Come and join the Polish extravaganza on 19th November. Polish culture will be flying in full colour, mostly white and red. If you would like to experience Polish traditional music and dance, try the wide variety of Polish cuisine and browse through a variety of over 30 stalls demonstrating Polish arts and activities join us at Federation Square from 10am —5pm. It's a great way to spend a relaxing Sunday.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

APCS has a range of resources available to increase knowledge about the Polish community and to support your activities. To find out more go to www.apcs.org.au and browse for info in English & Polish.

POLISH WOMEN'S FORUM

The inaugural Polish Women's Forum was held in Footscray on 29th July 2006 and attended by over 80 women from the Polish community. Speakers included those covering topics from a holistic approach to women's health to personal experiences of Polish women who settled in Australia. Information was also provided about domestic violence and mental health. Centrelink, Victorian Legal Aid and the Cancer Council had stalls and made information available to participants. APCS would like to thank the Victorian Multicultural Commission, Department for Victorian Communities and Women's Health West for their support for the forum.

There are 20,400 people of Polish background living in Victoria and 48,000 claim Polish ancestry.

HEALTH INITIATIVES

DEMENTIA PROJECT

APCS has received a grant from the Department of Health & Ageing under the Dementia Community Support Grants. The project will include the provision of information about prevention, intervention and living with dementia to members of the Polish community, including a series of advertisements on the Polish program on SBS radio, cultural awareness sessions for providers working with Polish people experiencing dementia (identifying some of the specific issues arising for the Polish community) and the development of relationships with dementia specific services. If you would like to know more about the project or to discuss a cultural awareness session contact Magda Wyrwicz, Project Officer, on 8371 2312 or via e-mail: magdaw@apcs.org.au

STANDING STRONG

The Standing Strong project, run by ISIS – Primary Care / Hobsons Bay City Council links health professionals and community workers with the community members who are at risk of falls. Falling is a major cause of injury for older people and is a major health problem that deprives older people of their health, vitality and independence. Given that falls have been identified as an area of concern under the Polish Health Promotion Plan, APCS is keen to participate in the project. At the moment we are looking for people to become involved in this project as Peer Educators. For further information contact Agnieszka Miller on 8371 2309 or via e-mail: agnieszkam@apcs.org.au

WELL FOR LIFE IN REGIONAL VICTORIA

To further the work undertaken through the Well for Life Initiative funded by the Department of Human Services, APCS has received a grant from the ANZ Trustees Accommodation & Care for Older People in Victoria – Selwyn Henry Langston Estate to implement the model in Polish Senior Citizens Centres in regional Victoria. The objective of the project is to encourage physical activity and healthy eating to enhance independence and to support the clubs to establish relationships with relevant support organisations in their local areas.

OUR SECRET LIVES—CHALLENGING THE DISABILITY STIGMA

Is a recently completed collection of six life stories from Polish people who have a disability and/or are carers of someone with a disability. The stories capture their experiences of living with a disability, the stigmas and attitudes they have encountered, the barriers and overcoming them. The collection is bilingual and is available through the APCS office.

STAFFING AT APCS

APCS has undergone a few staff changes over the past few months. Magda Wyrwicz joined the CACPs Team as a Care Manager and Christine Taggart took up the administration position in our Geelong office with the departure of Sofia Kovac. Ania Sieracka has taken up the important CEGS Sectorial Project Officer position with the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria and this position has been filled internally. Tatiana Walker has decided to join the team at the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity & Health. Izabela Winczewski has joined APCS in the Service Access position.

CULTURAL AWARENESS PACKAGES

Do you work with Polish older people or Poles with mental health issues? Would you like to know more about the issues and attitudes towards health and services that impact on service provision? APCS currently has Cultural Awareness sessions available for staff and organisations working with the Polish elderly and those experiencing mental health issues. A small fee applies for the sessions. If you would like to know more about either package please call Wendy on 8371 2310 or via e-mail: spo@apcs.org.au

CELEBRATING OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a vital component of the services APCS delivers to the community. Without volunteers many older Poles living in the community and aged care facilities would be even further isolated. Like with many community organisations, APCS was established by volunteers with a commitment to ensuring the ageing Polish community had access to appropriate services and supports. In order to recognise and celebrate this highly valued contribution by the many volunteers with the service, APCS has prepared a photographic exhibition. The **Faces of Goodwill** is a collection of photographs of the APCS volunteers and their profile.

The exhibition was launched at Millennium House in Footscray on 4th May 2006 and has also been at the Polish Centre in Albion, in the foyer at the Department for Victorian Communities, Footscray Library, Braybrook Plaza during Seniors Week and at various forums.

The next display of the Exhibition will be at the Polish Festival in Federation Square on 19th November.

Guests at the launch of the Faces of Goodwill Exhibition viewing the photographs.



APCS Staff contact details

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POLISH NATIONAL DAY

On 11th November we will be celebrating Polish Independence Day. After 123 years of absence from the map of Europe, in 1918 Poland regained its independence. Jozef Pilsudski, the most esteemed politician of his times recreated the Polish state "from scratch".

POLISH VOLUNTEER TRANSPORT PROJECT

The Volunteer Transport Project has been a success with a number of new volunteers coming on board to assist isolated, older Polish people to access events and activities outside of the home. If you would like more information about the project or know someone who may benefit from it, contact Agnieszka Miller on 8371 2309.

Resources for the Polish Speaking Community

APCS has a range of novels, poetry, reference books and videos/DVDs in the Polish language which have been donated to the service. If you know of clients or residents who would like access to some Polish literature please feel welcome to contact us on 9689 9170. The books are available for free to people who would like to borrow them. NB. APCS cannot pay for postage costs.



APCS Locations & Outreach

Main office:

**77 Droop St
Footscray 3011**
Ph: 9689 9170

Fax: 9687 7446

Email: info@apcs.org.au

Geelong: - new address!!

**132 Yarra St.
Geelong 3220**
Ph: 5222 8056

Fax: 5222 8057

Dandenong:

**Migrant Resource Centre
South East (every 2nd Thursday)**
Level 1, 314 Thomas St

Dandenong

Ph: 9706 8933 or 8371 2304
