

# Bilingual Health Education: Not just about language

Leila Zandi  
Health Promotion Coordinator  
M.S. Public Health  
D.D.S (overseas)



Multicultural Women's  
Health Services



Ishar acknowledges the Wadjuk Noongar people as the traditional owners of the land on which we provide our services.

We continue to recognise and celebrate the spiritual connection that Noongar people have to country and waters and pay tribute to Noongar elders past, present and emerging.



## Women's Health Clinic

Female GPs  
Midwives

- Free with Medicare
- Sexual and reproductive health
- Contraception
- Pregnancy and choices
- Cervical screening
- Iron infusion referral

## Health Checks

Practice Nurses

- Free
- Blood pressure check
- Weight advice
- Lifestyle advice

## Domestic Violence Support

Social Workers and  
Counsellors

- Free
- Triage and assessment
- Screening
- Case management
- Advocacy
- Referrals
- Safety planning

## Psychologist

Clinical and Registered Psychologists

- Free with Medicare and GP referral

## Counsellor

- Free



## Youth Support

Youth Education Officer  
Youth Social Worker

- Free
- Individual support
- Group sessions
- School and community education
- Soft referrals

## Mother Baby Support

Social Workers  
Midwives  
Counsellor

- Free
- Individual client support
- Group sessions
- Mental health support

## Women's Support

Social Workers

- Free
- Carer's individual and group sessions
- Women of Many Nations social group
- Parenting, health, welfare information and socialising group sessions.
- Bilingual staff, creche workers, education facilitators, and interpreters provided.

## Settlement Support

Social Workers

- Free
- Less than 5 years in Australia (10 years for special conditions only)
- Individual client support
- Group sessions

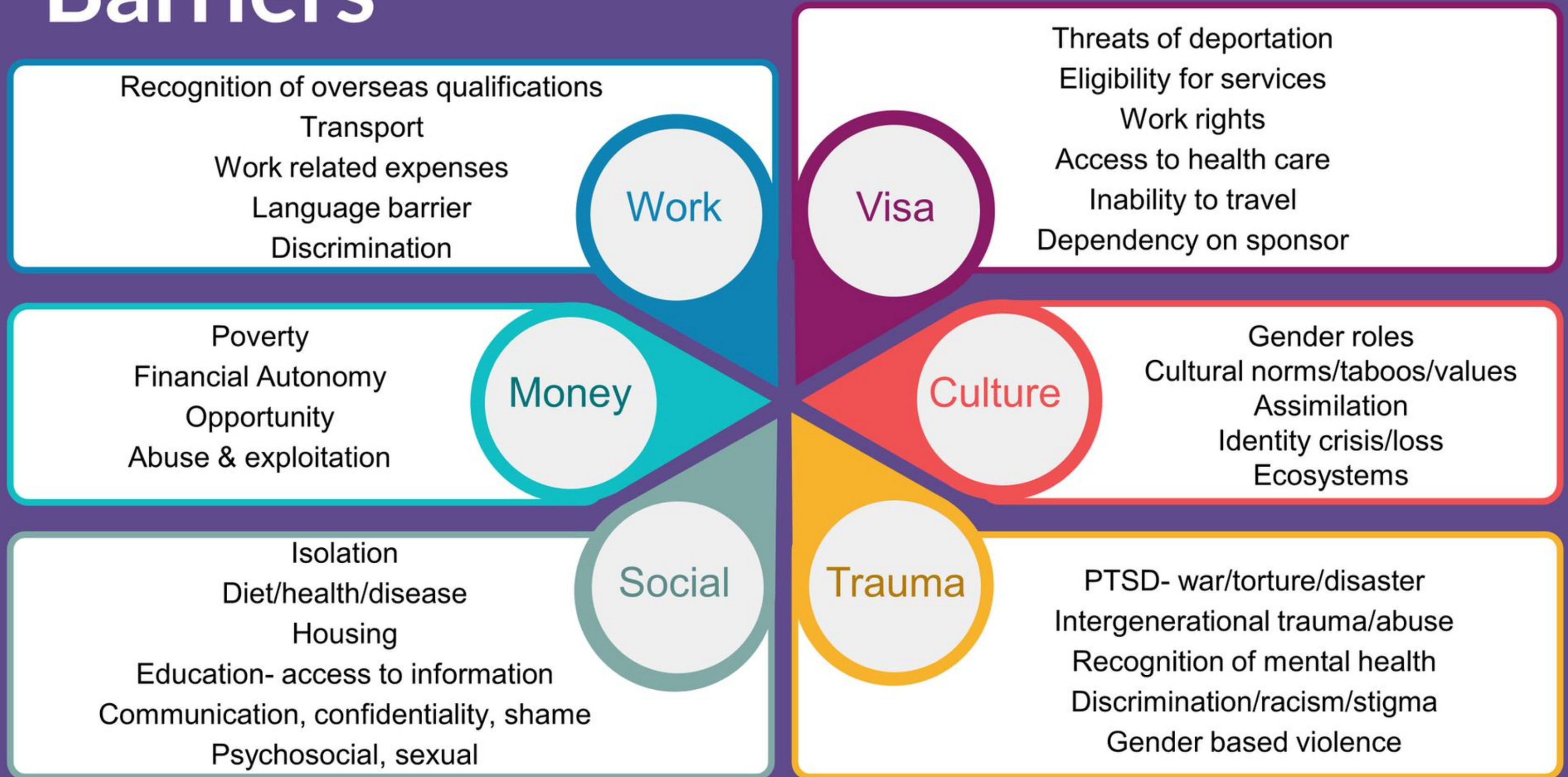
## Health Promotion

Health Education Officers

- Free
- Education on women's health topics (e.g. sexual and reproductive health, menopause, contraception, relationships, mental wellness, cancer screening and more)
- Exercise classes



# Barriers



# Impact of language barriers on healthcare outcomes

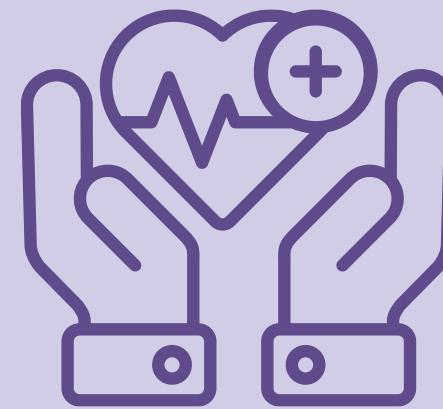
Health disparities



Lower quality of care



Reduced preventative care



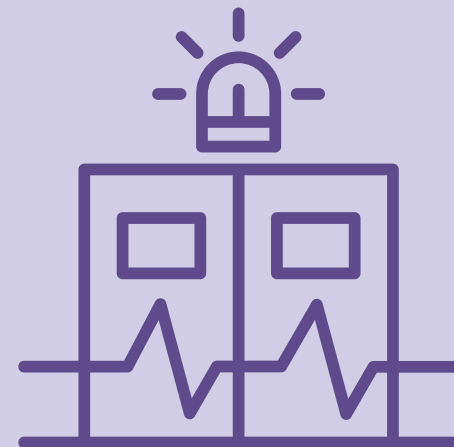
Disruption to service provision



Higher hospitalisation rates



Emergency room over-utilisation



Limited health literacy



Limited access to health information





## Interpreter VS. Bilingual Health Educator

“Bilingual health educators are not just like interpreters. They are skilled professionals who draw on their own experiences living within a culture and require on-going health training.”

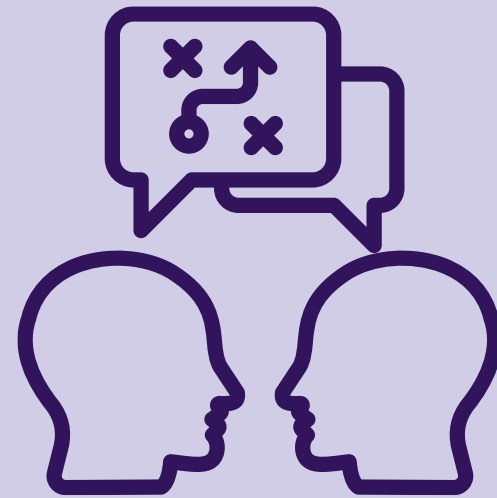
Multicultural Centre for Women's Health

# Bilingual Health Education VS Translated Health Information

Cultural Sensitivity



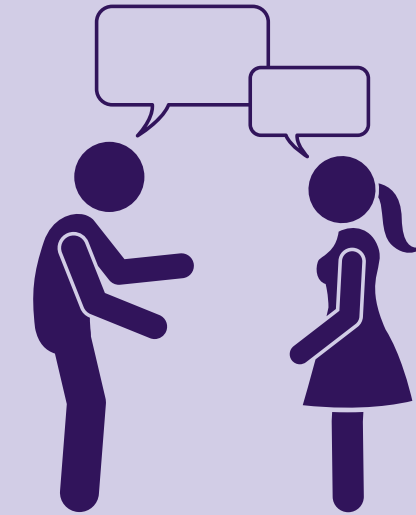
Interactive Communication



Behaviour Change



Contextualisation



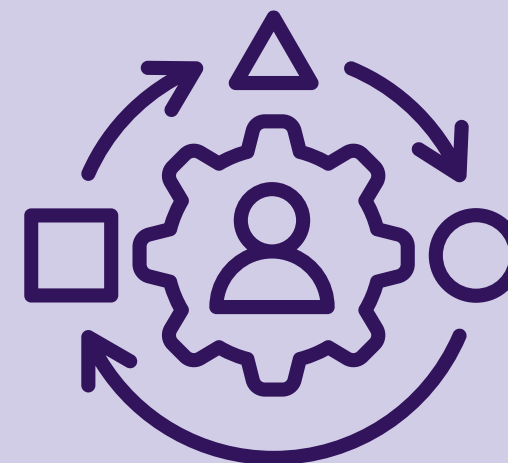
Trust



Language Complexity



Adaptation



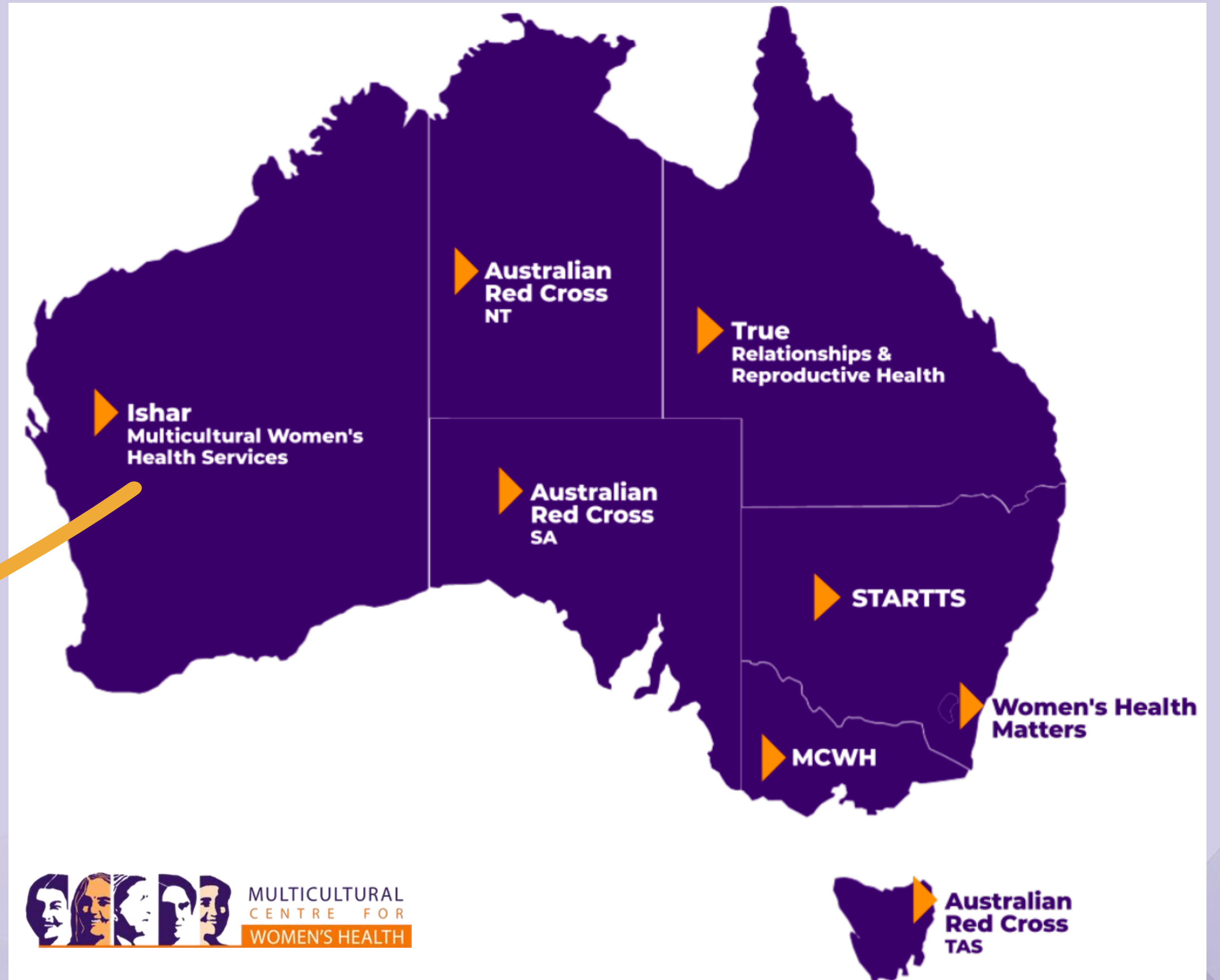
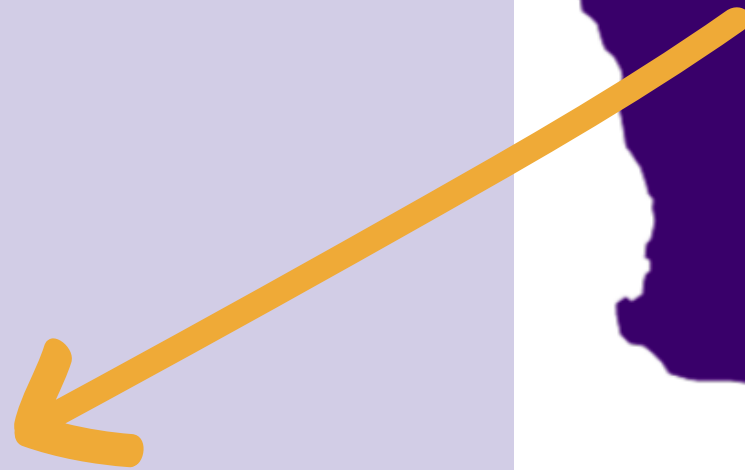
Continuity of Care



# About The Program



Multicultural Women's Health Services



# Bilingual health education is successful because health information is provided in:

- Preferred language
- Chosen location and time
- Ways that respect women's experiences
- Delivered in an appropriate cultural context



# Topics We Offer:

## Cancer Screenings

- Cervical Screening
- Breast Cancer Screening
- Bowel Cancer Screening
- Lung Cancer Screening

## Sexual & Reproductive Health

- Safer Sex
- Menopause
- Contraception Choices
- Pregnancy Choices
- Hepatitis B & Syphilis

## Mental Health

- Mental Wellbeing (beginner)
- Let's talk Mental Health (intermediate)
- Navigating the Mental Health System

## General Topics

- Iron Deficiency
- Healthy Bones
- Menstrual Cycle
- Healthy Relationships
- Sun Safety
- Oral Health



**“I didn't know that Coca-Cola was so bad. Back home, it was a luxury, and we never got to drink it, so we drink it a lot here in Australia because it is so cheap.”**

Participant in nutrition education session



“I received information in the mail about cervical screening, but never really understood the need, so I ignored it.”

Participant in a Cervical Cancer Awareness education session









“I now realise that certain behaviours are not OK in a relationship, even though culturally it is accepted, and now feel confident identifying signs of an unhealthy relationship.”

Participant in Healthy Relationships education session

# FY 2024-2025

## 285

Health education sessions delivered

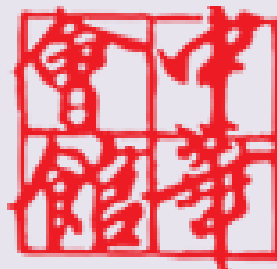
## 3046

Participants





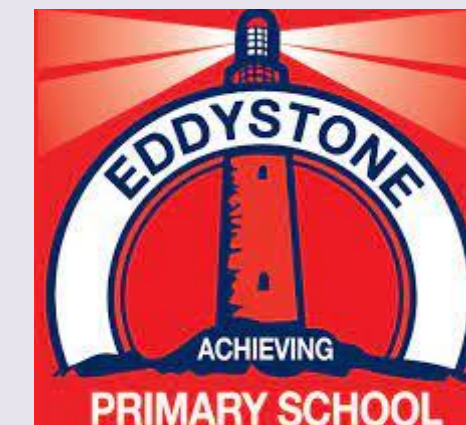
STATUS



Chung Wah Association



ETHNIC COMMUNITIES COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



54 reasons

MWSC

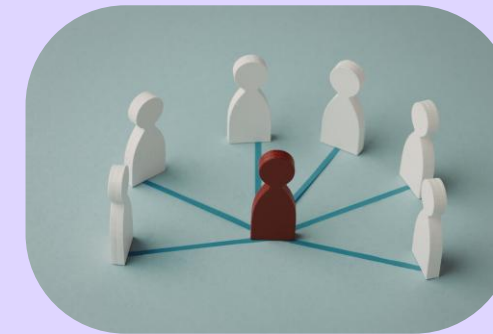


# Hiring a Bilingual Educator - Key Traits

Language  
Proficiency



Community  
Connections



Cultural  
Competence



Facilitation  
Skills



Education &  
Qualifications



# Thank you!

## CANNINGTON

6156 8756  
31 Manning Road,  
Cannington WA 6107

## MIRRABOOKA

9345 5335  
21 Sudbury Road,  
Mirrabooka WA 6061

[ishar.org.au](http://ishar.org.au)

