



Multicultural Action Plan 2025-2028

Diverse Voices | Stronger Futures

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of our State and its waters. The Commission wishes to pay its respects to Elders both past and present and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples seeing this message.

Recognition of Lived Experience

We recognise the individual and collective expertise of those with living and lived experience of suicide or suicidal crisis, mental health, alcohol and other drug issues, including their families and carers. We truly value the lived experiences of individuals (including those from cultural backgrounds) as vital to shaping inclusive and effective services and systems. Diverse voices offer unique insights that strengthen systems, challenge assumptions, and foster culturally responsive care. We honour these contributions and commit to embedding them in our planning and decision-making to ensure services reflect and respect the communities they serve.

Contents

Scope of the Multicultural Action Plan	4
Message from the Commissioner	5
The Mental Health Commission	6
Commission Vision, Mission and Values	7
Our Vision for Multiculturalism: Diverse voices, stronger futures	8
Multiculturalism in Western Australia and at the Mental Health Commission	10
The Mental Health Commission's Multicultural Action Plan 2025 – 2028	12
Aim and Purpose of this Plan	13
Development of this Plan	14
Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework	15
Strategic Alignment	16
Governance, Implementation and Reporting	17
Multiculturalism in Action at the Commission	18
Overview of Priorities and Strategies	20
Policy Priority 1: Harmonious and inclusive communities	22
Policy priority 2: Culturally responsive policies, programs and services	28
Policy priority 3: Economic, social, cultural, civic and political participation	36
Glossary	42



Scope of the Multicultural Action Plan 2025-2028

Though there are multiple terms and definitions used to refer to multicultural groups, the Mental Health Commission (Commission) Multicultural Action Plan (Plan) aligns with the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) and uses the term Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD).



- CaLD is an umbrella term used to describe communities and individuals from diverse backgrounds. It encompasses people born overseas, those born in Australia with parents born overseas, and people who identify with a culture or language other than mainstream Australian culture. This term acknowledges the diversity of cultures, languages, and experiences within these communities.
- According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics the term CaLD is generally applied to groups and individuals who differ according to religion, language and ethnicity and whose ancestry is other than Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, Anglo Saxon or Anglo Celtic.
- The Commission acknowledges other terms are sometimes used to refer to culturally diverse groups (such as Ethnoculturally and Linguistically Diverse), however for the context of this Plan the term CaLD is used.

Underpinning this Plan is the principle of substantive equality, which aims for fair outcomes by acknowledging the diverse needs of different societal groups and the need for tailored approaches to achieve equality.

It is crucial to recognise while this Plan specifically focuses on people from CaLD or multicultural backgrounds, it is complemented by a range of action plans promoting diversity, equity and inclusion for other priority groups, including the Commission's *Disability Action and Inclusion Plan*, *Workforce Diversity Plan* and *Conciliation Action Plan*.

These plans reflect the Commission's commitment to respecting individuals and culture, striving for equity for everyone.

It is understood many people will identify with multiple groups or communities. This is referred to as intersectionality.

Intersectionality recognises the different aspects that make up a person's identity and the ways these interact with each other. For example, when a person from a CaLD background also has a disability or is part of the LGBTQIA+SB community. Policies, programs and services need to be informed by the diverse needs, strengths, and views of these groups and also consider life stage, gender, diversity, equity, cultural inclusivity, safety and security.

While this Plan concentrates on multicultural diversity, the Commission remains committed to understanding and addressing the complexities arising from the intersection of various identities through its broader suite of diversity and inclusion initiatives.

A glossary of key terms and definitions is available on page 42.

Message from the Commissioner

I am proud to present the Mental Health Commission's *Multicultural Action Plan 2025 - 2028 (Plan)*. This Plan represents the Commission's commitment to developing and maintaining a welcoming and responsive work culture that embraces cultural diversity, is harmonious and inclusive, and ensures our work contributes to building strong communities, recognising community identity, culture, and connections.

WA is rich with many cultures, languages, histories, and experiences. Our strength lies in our diversity, and it is through embracing this diversity we can build a system that is truly inclusive, safe, and responsive for all.

At the Commission, we recognise that culture shapes how individuals and communities experience mental health, wellbeing, and alcohol and other drug use. We also acknowledge that too many barriers continue to limit access and outcomes for people from CALD backgrounds ranging from language and stigma, to systemic inequities, to a lack of cultural understanding.

This Plan builds upon the foundations laid through our previous plans, during which we achieved 19.5 per cent CALD workforce representation at the Commission (December 2024 figures). But representation alone is not enough and there is a need to embed cultural responsiveness into every aspect of our agency.

This Plan has clear priorities focussing on:

- fostering harmonious and inclusive communities
- delivering culturally responsive policies, programs, and services
- supporting equitable participation in social, civic, and professional life.

Achieving these outcomes will take all of us working together, with a commitment to listening and learning. I encourage everyone to embrace our vision for multiculturalism set out in this Plan and to contribute actively to creating a culturally safe and thriving mental health, alcohol and other drug system for all Western Australians.

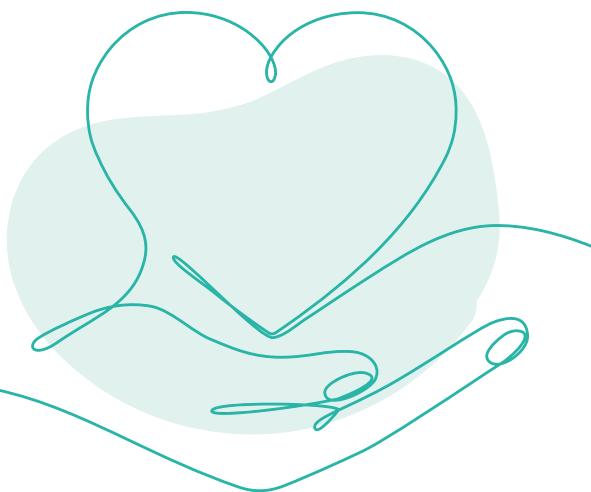
Together we can ensure every person, no matter their background, is supported on their journey to better mental health and wellbeing.

Maureen Lewis
Commissioner



The Mental Health Commission

The Commission is a WA Government agency facilitating the delivery of more than \$1.6 billion per annum of mental health, alcohol and other drug (AOD) services and suicide prevention programs, while leading the transformation required across the system to better meet the needs of the community into the future.



Commission Vision, Mission and Values



Our Vision

Western Australians lead healthy and fulfilling lives.



Our Mission

Leading and transforming mental health and alcohol and other drugs systems that empower people in health and wellbeing.

Our Values



Respecting individuals and culture

- We promote respect and strive for equality for everyone.
- We work to reduce the incidence and negative impacts of stigma.
- We encourage diversity.



Engaged and accountable

- We support engagement and participation at all levels.
- We take accountability for our commitments and actions and expect no less of others.
- We listen deeply, are reflective and open to feedback.



Leading with courage

- We communicate honestly and compassionately.
- We champion change to advance progress that is in the best interests of the community.
- We speak up, for ourselves and for others, when we see something that does not seem right.



Keeping integrity at our core

- We use evidence to inform our decisions which are fair and ethical.
- We continue to research, learn and grow to deliver best practice.
- We are open, honest and trustworthy.

Our Vision for Multiculturalism: Diverse voices, stronger futures

We envision a future where the voices of diverse cultures shape and enhance mental health, and AOD outcomes for all Western Australians.

The Commission envisions a culturally inclusive, safe and responsive system where every Western Australian, regardless of their background, can access culturally relevant and safe mental health and AOD services.

We are committed to creating an inclusive and culturally safe environment in which people of all cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds feel respected, understood, and empowered to access the care they need. Our workplace culture and services will reflect the diverse communities we serve, through genuine partnerships, cultural humility, and a deep understanding of how culture shapes experiences of mental health, wellbeing, and recovery.

Through leadership, collaboration, and innovation, we aim to set a new standard in culturally responsive practice, ensuring every individual, regardless of their background, can achieve their best possible mental health and wellbeing.





Multiculturalism in Western Australia and at the Mental Health Commission

Overview of WA's cultural diversity (updated 2021 Census figures)

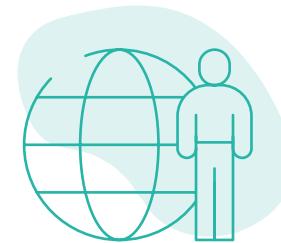
WA continues to be one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse states in Australia.

The 2021 Census revealed:



32.2% of Western Australians were born overseas (higher than the national average of **27.6%**).

55.6% of people in WA have at least one parent born overseas.



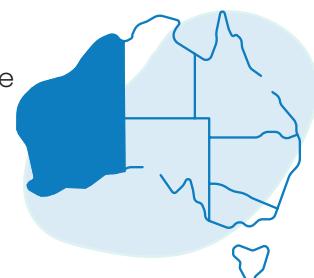
WA residents speak over **240** languages and follow over **100** religious' faiths.



The top non-Australian countries of birth include:

England • New Zealand • India
South Africa • Philippines • China
Malaysia • Scotland • Italy • Ireland

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people remain the Traditional Custodians of the land and contribute an essential foundation to WA's rich cultural identity.



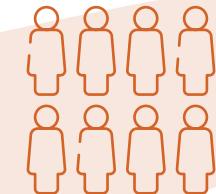
We recognise the intersectionality between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and CALD people who may identify as both categories.

Where does the Commission stand vs. the Public Sector target for CaLD employment?



The WA Public Sector aspirational target for CaLD Workforce representation is to reach **15.5%** by 2025.

As of December 2024, the Commission employs approximately **334 people** (headcount).



19.5% identify as CaLD, **4%** above the 2025 target.

At the Commission, we are proud of this achievement, and acknowledge the goal is to have meaningful engagement and a culturally safe and secure workforce environment.

This Plan's focus is to continue building cultural diversity across the Commission's workforce, services and programs through:



Leadership Development:

Implement programs to support the progression of CaLD staff into leadership and decision-making roles, ensuring diversity at all organisational levels.



Data-Driven Approaches:

Enhance data collection methods to better understand the experiences of CaLD staff, informing targeted initiatives and continuous improvement.



Inclusive Practices:

Continue to foster an inclusive workplace culture through regular training on cultural competency, unconscious bias, and inclusive leadership.



Community Engagement:

Strengthen partnerships with CaLD communities to ensure services are culturally responsive and meet the diverse needs of the population.

The Mental Health Commission's Multicultural Action Plan 2025 - 2028

This Plan outlines our commitment to fostering a culturally safe, inclusive, and responsive mental health and AOD system for all Western Australians. This Plan builds on the foundations of the 2022 - 2025 Plan, including achieving 19.5 percent workforce representation from CaLD backgrounds.

This Plan provides a renewed vision to drive deeper systemic change.

Recognising cultural and linguistic backgrounds profoundly shapes our experiences of mental health, wellbeing, stigma, and recovery, the Commission is committed to developing a workplace and promoting services that are accessible, welcoming, and effective for all.

A culturally diverse workforce is critical to achieving this goal by bringing collective knowledge, individual experience, and innovation - enhancing both service responsiveness and organisational effectiveness.

Over the next three years, the Commission will continue to build strong partnerships with CaLD communities, advocating for cultural responsiveness through its commissioning and service delivery models, and supporting the advancement of a diverse and inclusive workplace culture at the Commission. Through this Plan the Commission reaffirms its commitment to ensuring every employee, regardless of their background, has an equal opportunity to develop, and feel safe at the workplace and that every Western Australian can access high-quality, person-centred mental health and AOD services.



Aim and Purpose of this Plan

The purpose of this Plan is to embed cultural diversity, inclusion, and responsiveness at the heart of the Commission's work. This takes place through our people, services, systems, and partnerships.

This Plan aims to:

- **Create a culturally safe and welcoming environment** for all Commission staff, consumers, and carers by fostering an inclusive workplace culture that celebrates diversity.
- **Enhance service accessibility and effectiveness** by promoting mental health and AOD services and suicide prevention programs, that are responsive to the cultural, linguistic, and life experiences of diverse communities in Western Australia.
- **Build organisational capability** by strengthening the Commission's workforce diversity and equipping staff with the skills and cultural competencies needed to commission person-centred, culturally safe services.
- **Support equity and inclusion** by addressing systemic barriers, discrimination and service gaps experienced by CaLD communities.

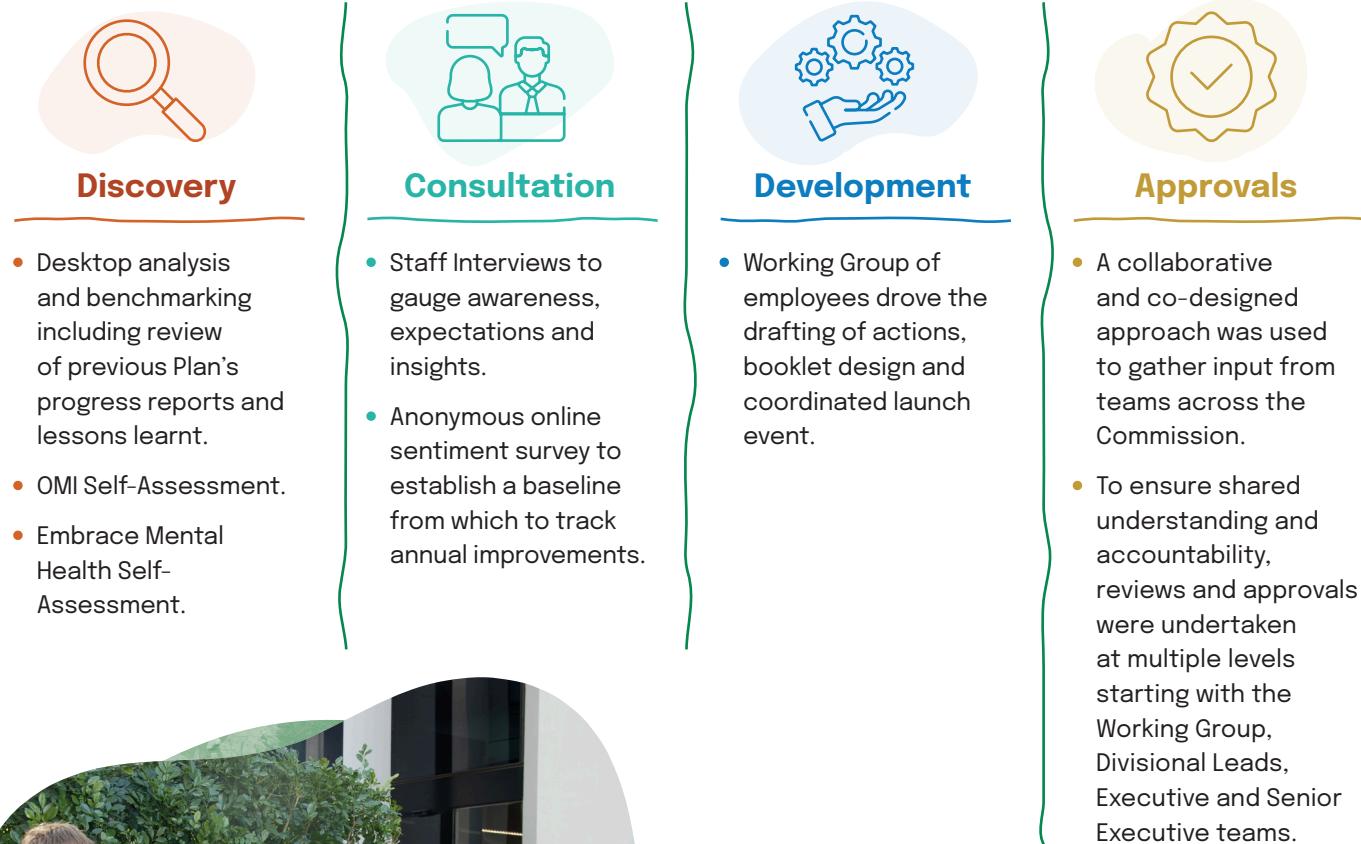
Ultimately, this Plan seeks to position the Commission as a leader advocating for culturally responsive mental health and AOD service delivery and suicide prevention programs, aligning with the needs of a diverse and dynamic Western Australian population.



Development of this Plan

Initial development of this Plan involved a preliminary discovery and consultation phase which included self-assessments provided by the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) and Embrace Mental Health, staff interviews and an online sentiment survey to identify key strengths and opportunities for improvement.

A Working Group of nominated employees led the development of the Plan including drafting the initial actions and designing the booklet. They championed multiculturalism and provided significant input, playing a crucial role in identifying appropriate actions to enhance the Commission's workplace culture and the commissioning of culturally responsive services. Approvals included continued consultation with teams to ensure shared understanding and accountability.



Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework

This Plan aligns with and meets the requirements of the *Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework* (WAMPF), ensuring public sector accountability, transparency, and best practice.

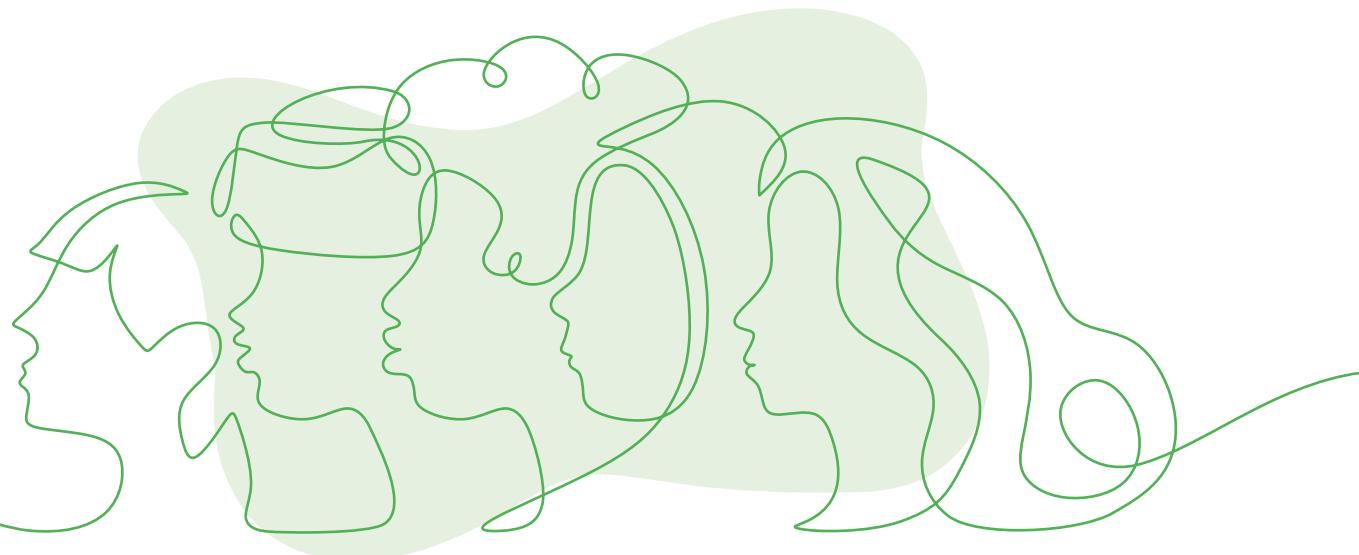
The WAMPF outlines three key multicultural policy priorities:

- 1. Harmonious and Inclusive Communities:** Promoting the benefits of diversity and addressing discrimination.
- 2. Culturally Responsive Policies, Programs, and Services:** Embedding multicultural responsiveness into all aspects of agency business.
- 3. Economic, Social, Cultural, Civic, and Political Participation:** Supporting workforce diversity and leadership representation.

Released in 2020, the WAMPF sets out the WA Government's commitment to ensuring that public sector agencies are responsive to the needs of WA's CaLD communities.

The WAMPF is built upon the four principles of the WA Charter of Multiculturalism:

- **Civic Values:** Respect, freedom, and dignity for all members of society.
- **Fairness:** Policies free from prejudice, discrimination, and exclusion.
- **Equality:** Equal opportunity for all individuals to achieve their potential.
- **Participation:** Full and equitable participation in the social, economic, and political life of the community.



Strategic Alignment

A substantial effort is currently underway to strengthen the Commission's cultural responsiveness and to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion across priority groups. Rather than introducing a separate strategy, this Plan complements existing initiatives by enhancing the organisation's ability to engage with cultural diversity.

This Plan aligns with WA state legislation and policies, as well as with existing plans at the Commission.

State Legislation and Policies informing this Plan



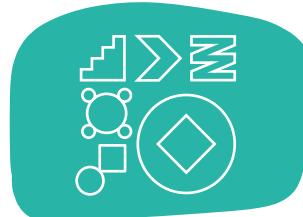
WA Multicultural Policy Framework



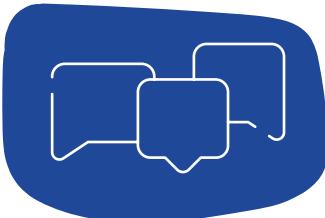
Equal Opportunity Act 1984



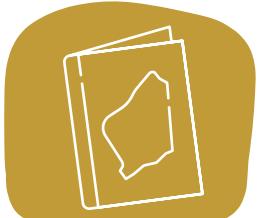
Policy Framework for Substantive Equality



Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for WA Public Sector Employment 2020–2025



WA Language Services Policy



WA Charter of Multiculturalism 2004



WA Carers Strategy



Internal Plans informing this Plan

- The Mental Health Commission's Strategic Plan 2025–2030
- The Mental Health Commission's Workforce and Diversity Plan 2025 – 2027
- The Mental Health Commission's Innovate Conciliation Action Plan 2025 – 2027
- The Mental Health Commission's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022 – 2026

Governance, Implementation and Reporting

The successful implementation of this Plan will see everyone at the Commission embedding multiculturalism and embracing diversity in their daily work and interactions with colleagues and commissioned services.



The Plan's governance structure below will be supported by a communications plan and reporting schedule which will ensure consistent efforts and accountability for implementing the Plan's actions.

Governance Role	Description
Executive Sponsor	Senior Executive Group Member
Governance Committee	Executive Leadership Group <i>Leads implementation of the Plan's goals, monitors progress, and reports to Senior Executive Group.</i>
Multicultural Committee	Divisional Members and Volunteers <i>Champions the Plan, oversees implementation, reviews reports, and makes recommendations.</i>
Project Team	Governance and Corporate Services, Corporate Governance and Improvement Team <i>Central oversight of the Plan, committee support, coordinates reporting and communications plan.</i>
Responsible Area	The functional area/manager (as outlined in the actions) <i>Central coordination and point of contact of allocated action, champions the Plan in relevant forums and initiatives.</i>
All Commission Staff	<i>Shared responsibility for implementing and embedding actions in everyday work and creating a respectful and inclusive culture.</i>

Multiculturalism in Action at the Commission

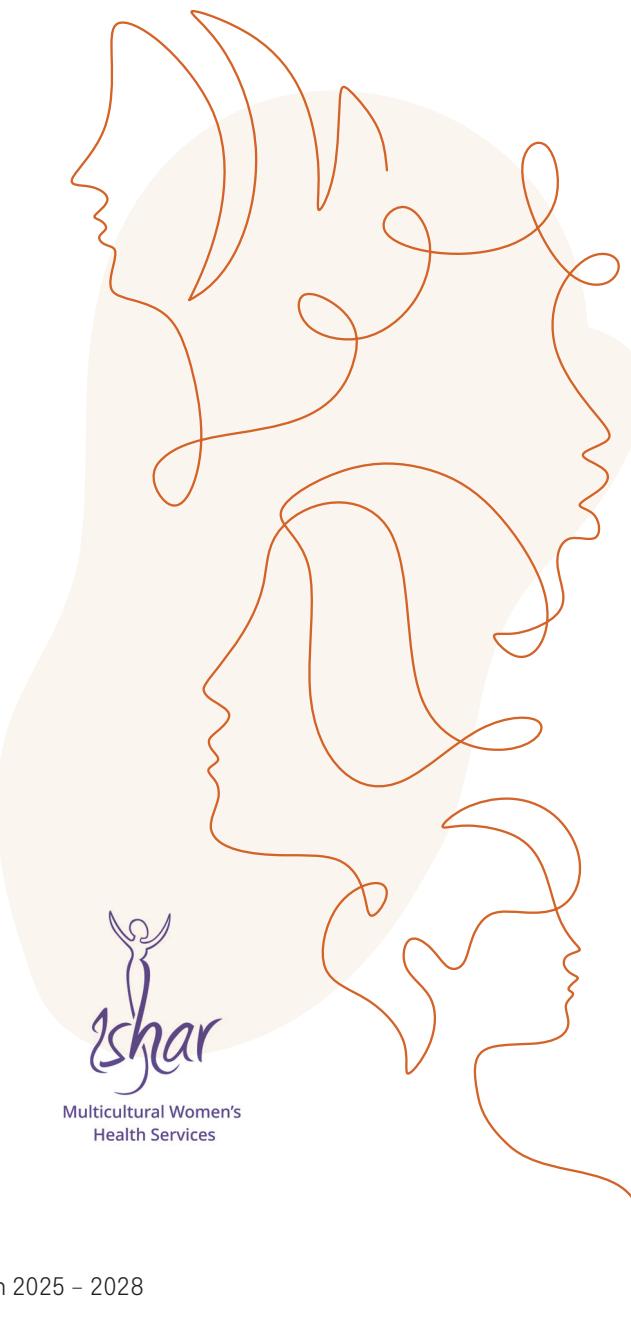
Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Centre Inc

The Commission funds and supports services that address the unique needs of individuals from CaLD backgrounds. One such service is Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Centre Inc (Ishar), which provides tailored, culturally sensitive mental health and wellbeing support for women and their families.

Ishar offers a range of services, including parenting programs for families with children who have developmental concerns, disabilities, or autism. These programs are available both online and in person and include interpreting support to ensure full participation. Through these programs, carers from CaLD backgrounds are able to access reliable information, build parenting skills, and connect with others in similar circumstances—reducing isolation and improving mental wellbeing.

In addition to group support, Ishar conducts individual assessments to understand each carer's personal and family needs, enabling referrals to relevant services such as counselling, women's health, and social support. The centre also encourages the involvement of family members in the caring role, helping to foster shared responsibility and improve overall family wellbeing.

Through initiatives like those delivered by Ishar, the Commission supports a holistic and inclusive approach to mental health—ensuring that all members of the community, regardless of cultural background, have access to the support they need.



Alcohol Drug and Mental Health Support Service

The Commission funds and supports the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Support Service (ADMHSS), which provides integrated and culturally responsive support to individuals experiencing mental health challenges and AOD issues.

The service is delivered by a diverse workforce that includes bilingual and bicultural staff, reflecting the communities it serves. This diversity helps create a supportive environment where clients feel heard, respected, and understood. Interpreter services are also available, helping to reduce communication barriers and improve access to care.

Support is person-centred and responsive to individual needs, including consideration of cultural background, language preferences, and personal experiences. Clients can access a range of services such as counselling, interim support, system navigation, and referrals to other health and community services. Support also extends to families, recognising their important role in recovery and wellbeing.

By offering inclusive and culturally aware care, the ADMHSS helps make support more accessible and effective for people from a wide range of backgrounds. The Commission's investment in this service reflects its ongoing commitment to equitable, high-quality care for all Western Australians.



Celebrating Cultural Diversity at the Commission

The Commission is committed to fostering an inclusive and culturally respectful workplace, and actively celebrates the diversity of its staff and the communities it serves. Events such as Harmony Day are an important part of this commitment, providing opportunities for staff to come together, share cultural traditions, and reflect on the value of inclusivity and mutual respect.

These celebrations are more than symbolic – they play a meaningful role in embedding cultural awareness into the day-to-day work of the Commission.

By recognising and honouring cultural diversity, staff develop a deeper understanding of the different perspectives and experiences that shape people's interactions with mental health and AOD services.

This ongoing focus on cultural inclusivity supports the Commission's efforts to deliver services that are not only equitable and accessible, but also culturally responsive. It reinforces the importance of empathy, curiosity, and respect in every aspect of service planning, policy development, and frontline delivery – ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their cultural background, feel understood and supported.



Overview of Priorities, Outcomes and Strategies

This Plan abides by the Office of Multicultural Interest's (OMI) three policy priorities, outcomes, and associated strategies outlined below.

Policy Priorities		
1. Harmonious and inclusive communities	2. Culturally responsive policies, programs and services	3. Economic, social, cultural, civic and political participation
Outcomes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every Western Australian values cultural, linguistic and religious diversity and feels that they belong. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Western Australians are informed and have equitable access to government services. Programs and services are culturally appropriate to the needs of all Western Australians. Customised CaLD specific services are provided for those who need them. A workforce that is culturally competent and representative of its community, and business and client needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Western Australians from CaLD backgrounds are equitably represented in employment and on boards, committees and other decision-making bodies. Western Australia's CaLD community is harnessed to grow economic, social, cultural, civic, and political development.
Strategies		
1.1 Promote the benefits of cultural and linguistic diversity and celebrate the achievements of people from CaLD backgrounds.	2.1 Integrate multicultural policy goals into strategic and corporate planning, procurement and review processes.	3.1 Implement recruitment and career development processes that support employment and progression of staff from CaLD backgrounds.
1.2 Address racism and discrimination at both an individual and systemic level, including implementing the <i>Policy Framework for Substantive Equality</i> .	2.2 Identify inequities in service access and outcomes for Western Australians from CaLD backgrounds and develop strategies to address them.	3.2 Achieve equitable representation of people from CaLD backgrounds at all levels and in decision-making roles.
1.3 Develop workplace cultures that are welcoming and inclusive of all Western Australians.	2.3 Provide language services to ensure language is not a barrier to equitable access to information and services, including complaints processes.	3.3 Identify, develop and promote initiatives that support the development of businesses and the entrepreneurial potential of Western Australia's CaLD community.
1.4 Initiate and support events and projects that build mutual understanding and respect between cultures.	2.4 Collect and analyse cultural and linguistic data to contribute to the identification of client needs, the development of policies and programs, and evaluation of outcomes.	3.4 Identify, develop and implement initiatives that encourage social, cultural, civic and political participation by members of Western Australia's CaLD community.
	2.5 Enable culturally diverse communities to have meaningful input into policies, programs and systems through co-design and planning, co-delivery and implementation, and evaluation processes.	3.5 Develop and strengthen global connections through partnerships with Western Australia's CaLD communities and businesses.
	2.6 Implement recruitment and selection processes that facilitate workforce diversity, and provide opportunities for the development of cultural competencies across the workforce.	

Policy Priority 1: Harmonious and inclusive communities

Policy outcome: Every Western Australian values cultural, linguistic and religious diversity and feels that they belong.

Strategy 1.1 Promote the benefits of cultural and linguistic diversity and celebrate the achievements of people from culturally diverse backgrounds

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
1.1.1 Promote, implement and monitor the Plan across the Commission.	Q4 2025 and then annually	Governance and Corporate Services (Corporate Governance and Improvement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop implementation and communication plans that clearly align with Commission values of: respecting individuals and culture, encouraging diversity, striving for equality and reducing stigma. To be reviewed annually. Establish an internal governance structure to oversee the Plan implementation, monitoring, and reporting. Establish an Implementation Group that has a nominated Executive Sponsor. Develop a central resource hub to include information about Plan activities.
1.1.2 Promote the benefits of cultural and linguistic diversity through acknowledgement of significant cultural events and celebrations.	Annually	Governance and Corporate Services (Corporate Governance and Improvement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish and promote an overarching Calendar of Multicultural Dates of Significance Promote celebration of key cultural events, overseen by the Plan's Implementation Group. Share and promote OMI and Equal Opportunity Commission events and news with Commission staff and, where relevant, with external stakeholders.
1.1.3 Promote and celebrate the benefits of the Commission's CaLD workforce.	Annually	Office of the Commissioner (Strategic Communications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight diversity and inclusion efforts in relevant communications. Where appropriate, share stories of employees from diverse backgrounds as part of Commission-wide events. Publish a minimum of 4 posts per year related directly to the Commission's multicultural activities or funded services. Track the engagement metrics on diversity-related content on the Commission's social media platforms (likes, shares, comments).
1.1.4 Demonstrate senior leadership championing cultural diversity both internally and externally.	Annually	Office of the Commissioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominate an Executive Sponsor to champion and drive Plan awareness and implementation. Communicate the benefits of cultural diversity internally by senior management through relevant Commission wide webinars and communications. Promote senior management representation at relevant OMI and/or multicultural events and share with Commission staff. Include employee diversity data as part of executive dashboards for regular monitoring.
Desired Impact			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior leadership setting the tone from the top to support and prioritise Plan goals. Demonstrate visible leadership commitment to the continued governance and implementation of the Plan. Raise awareness of the Plan through internal communications and initiatives. Increase Commission staff's cultural awareness, knowledge, and appreciation for cultural diversity. Promote increasing feelings of cultural safety and inclusivity for CaLD staff members. Celebrate the achievements of people from CaLD backgrounds to promote the benefits of cultural and linguistic diversity at the Commission. Raise awareness on the importance of the Plan and cultural responsiveness through senior management as role models for staff.

Strategy 1.2 Address racism and discrimination at both an individual and institutional/systemic level, including implementing the *Policy Framework for Substantive Equality*

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
1.2.1 Review and update the <i>Elimination of Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace Policy</i> to ensure alignment with the <i>WA State Government Policy Framework for Substantive Equality</i> .	Annually	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct regular reviews of the <i>Elimination of Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace Policy</i> and align with relevant government strategies, including the <i>Policy Framework for Substantive Equality</i>. Develop metrics to baseline and measure improvements in relation to policy awareness and implementation, including tracking of complaints. Ensure regular communication, education, monitoring and reporting of the Policy.
1.2.2 Develop communications to raise awareness about racism and discrimination.	Q4 2025 and then annually	Office of the Commissioner (Strategic Communications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and disseminate communications to raise awareness about racism and discrimination. Leverage from dates of significance to drive awareness messaging (e.g., Zero Discrimination Day).
1.2.3 Include <i>Elimination of Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace Policy</i> in training and activities for Commission employees at all levels.	Q2 2026 and then annually	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate cultural responsiveness training into Recruitment, Selection and Appointment training for panel members to include awareness of and strategies to prevent/address discrimination. Develop internal training for employees and managers to include ways of identifying, handling, and preventing discrimination. Increase percentage of employees who have completed this training. Participant feedback post completion reflects increased capability and confidence.

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
1.2.4 Establish mechanisms for ongoing monitoring and reporting to identify business improvement opportunities in the way the Commission prevents and responds to harassment and discrimination internally.	Annually	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect relevant, de-identified data and feedback to identify trends and opportunities to reduce instances of discrimination and improve handling of complaints. Develop strategies to effectively address feedback. Further promote free access to Employee Assistant Program to provide psychological support for staff. Continue to promote avenues for employees to raise concerns with managers or People and Culture. Explore alternative mechanisms for employees to raise concerns (e.g., Contact Officers).
1.2.5 Establish mechanisms for capturing, handling, and reporting on discrimination and/or business improvement opportunities external to the Commission.	Annually	Office of the Commissioner (Complaints Policy) Commissioning and Programs (Service Development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect relevant, de-identified data and feedback to identify trends and opportunities to reduce discrimination. Maintain a strong focus on meeting the needs of CaLD communities through the Commission's <i>Strategic Commissioning Framework</i>.
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Commission staff's awareness about the impact racism and/or discrimination have on health and wellbeing. Improve the Commission's tracking and response to incidents of racial harassment and discrimination both internally and externally. Raise awareness and promote a culturally safe Commission workplace culture free of discrimination. Equip staff to identify, prevent and effectively respond to racism and discrimination to achieve substantive equality by eliminating systemic racial discrimination both internal to Commission and through its commissioned services. 			

Strategy 1.3 Develop workplace cultures that are welcoming and inclusive of all Western Australians

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
1.3.1 Include cultural awareness, responsiveness, and competency in Professional Development Plan (PDP) discussions.	Q4 2027	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include section to PDP online tool to ensure managers and staff to discuss cultural awareness, responsiveness, and competency during PDP discussions and how employee can embed in their work. Explore methods for measuring and reporting on agreed CaLD related goals in PDPs.
1.3.2 Increase the cultural competency skills of staff members through delivery of relevant training programs that raise awareness about unconscious bias, discrimination, and harassment.	Annually	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the percentage of employees who have completed mandatory training on cultural competency (Diverse WA). Participant feedback post training completion reflects increased capability and confidence. Monitor and report to Executive on training attendance and awareness ratings. Review and update training packages to include a multicultural lens where relevant.
1.3.3 Improve manager's cultural awareness and empower them to be highly culturally responsive.	Q4 2027	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add and track diversity actions to the PDP for all employees occupying leadership roles. Ensure cultural awareness and responsiveness training for managers is included in leadership training. Promote information sharing mechanisms for Managers (e.g., Community of Practice).
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a culturally safe and responsive workplace culture where all staff feel welcome and valued. Align cultural diversity with Commission's strategic values, professional development and work priorities. Enhance workforce and management cultural awareness, responsiveness, and competency to provide safe, responsive and effective services. Increase knowledge sharing and access to resources to enable inter-agency capability in applying multiculturalism principles to delivery of government services. 			

Strategy 1.4 Initiate and support events and projects that build mutual understanding and respect between cultures

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
1.4.1 Celebrate the Commission's multicultural identity through events that increase opportunities to learn, share, and connect about different cultures and languages.	Annually	Office of the Commissioner (Strategic Communications - strategic oversight) Whole of Commission (specific events)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Commission's commitment to multicultural identity through external and internal communications. Hold key multicultural events and acknowledge their significance (e.g., Plan launch, Harmony Week). Include qualitative measures to assess staff feedback on increased knowledge, awareness post-events. Promote learning and sharing opportunities during relevant internal events (e.g., lunch and learn sessions, divisional meetings).
1.4.2 Monitor and evaluate the Commission's multicultural metrics annually (e.g., sentiment survey, staff cultural awareness and competency, training needs, CaLD staff experiences).	Annually	Governance and Corporate Services (Corporate Governance and Improvement, People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an annual multicultural sentiment assessment survey at the Commission and analyse/share the results to adapt initiatives and monitor progress. Increase employee participation and engagement with diversity information/ surveys (e.g., MyHR EEO survey).
1.4.3 Create a Multicultural Hub for staff with information about the Plan, multicultural initiatives and CaLD resources.	Q4 2025 and then annually	Governance and Corporate Services (Corporate Governance and Improvement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and regularly update a new Multicultural Hub on the Commission's intranet page with links to internal and external resources, including sharing CaLD focused initiatives. Promote multicultural spaces and resources, (e.g., multi-faith room).
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase CaLD staff's sense of inclusiveness and cultural safety. Increase non-CaLD staff's cultural awareness, responsiveness, and competency. Incremental improvements in organisational culture, celebrating positive outcomes. Continuous improvement by identifying areas of focus for further actions. 			

Policy Priority 2: Culturally responsive policies, programs and services

Policy outcomes:

- All Western Australians are informed and have equitable access to government services.
- Programs and services are culturally appropriate to the needs of all Western Australians.
- Customised CaLD specific services are provided for those who need them.
- A workforce that is culturally competent and representative of its community, and business and client needs.

Strategy 2.1 Integrate multicultural policy goals into strategic and corporate planning, procurement and review processes

Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
2.1.1 Incorporate a focus on diversity and inclusion into the Commission's Strategic Plan, <i>The Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategy 2025 to 2030</i> and its supporting Frameworks.	Q2 2026	Senior Executive Group Executive Leadership Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure commissioning frameworks and processes continue to consider the needs of diverse and priority populations and ensure services are equitable, trauma-informed, culturally safe, responsive and secure for all regardless of circumstances. Ensure policy outcomes of this Plan are embedded in the Aspirations, Strategic Pillars and Focus Areas of <i>The Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategy 2025-2030</i> and supporting frameworks.
2.1.2 Develop policy guidelines to ensure that the Commission's policies align with the Plan and other multicultural goals.	Q2 2026	Governance and Corporate Services (Corporate Governance and Improvement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the policy checklist to include CaLD goals and multicultural perspectives when creating and renewing relevant internal policies. Collate a list of references and resources for policy authors.
2.1.3 Use findings from the <i>Embrace Mental Health Framework Self-Assessment</i> to inform relevant commissioning, contract management, and initiatives.	Q2 2026	Commissioning and Programs (Service Development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update the Commission's <i>Commissioning Framework and Procurement Guidelines</i> to include multicultural diversity in service design stage of commissioning. Explore practical options for continued monitoring and reporting of multicultural aspects in contracted services (e.g., practical ways to support sharing information of CaLD supportive practices).
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support of multicultural diversity and inclusion of mental health and AOD services through Commissioning and Procurement practices. Ensure consistency and alignment of the plans to strategies, frameworks and guidelines to increase impact. Support more culturally responsive services to CaLD Communities by tailoring design, commissioning and evaluation of Mental Health and AOD services. 			

Strategy 2.2 Identify inequities in service access and outcomes for Western Australians from CaLD backgrounds and develop strategies to address them

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
2.2.1 Utilise Western Australian outcome data to identify systemic barriers and service gaps for CaLD communities.	Q2 2026 and then annually	System Development (Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage the Commission's <i>Outcomes Measurement Framework</i> to identify gaps and/or disparity of mental health and/or AOD outcomes for CaLD communities. Develop standardised definition of CaLD related data items. Enhance mechanisms for reporting on CaLD cohort including good practice initiatives and service/outcome inequities. Where data available, share information across relevant forums.
2.2.2 Improve promotion of Alcohol and Mental Health Support Service (ADMHSS) to CaLD communities and clients.	Annually	Commissioning and Programs (Alcohol, Drug, Mental Health Support Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and maintain promotional content about ADMHSS that is targeted to CaLD communities and available in multiple languages. Create metrics and monitor and continually evaluate resources.
2.2.3 Review and enhance ADMHSS services based on trends and feedback meet evolving needs in a culturally safe way and reduces associated stigmas.	Annually	Commissioning and Programs (Alcohol, Drug, Mental Health Support Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create metrics, monitor, and continually evaluate services (e.g., survey to ADMHSS clients). Ongoing training and development of ADMHSS staff to align with emerging trends in service use and sector.
2.2.4 Improve workforce capability to engage with CaLD community members.	Annually	System Development (Engagement) Commissioning and Programs (Strategic Workforce)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure CaLD communities are invited to participate in the review of the Working Together Mental Health and AOD Engagement Framework and toolkit, which will guide best practice community engagement practices for the Commission. Review and update existing Commission's training for sector workforce to embed multiculturalism and how mental health and AOD impacts the CaLD community. Advocate for relevant training and support for workforces across the mental health and AOD sector to increase cultural capability.
Desired Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce disparities in services and outcomes for CaLD individuals and communities. Improve public services that are culturally responsive and inclusive. Empower CaLD communities to have a voice in the design, delivery and evaluation of services that impact them. Enhance data use to identify gaps and improve CaLD communities' service access. Ensure inclusivity of CaLD communities in commissioned offered services. Improve workforce and Commission staff's capability in engaging with CaLD communities. 		

Strategy 2.3 Provide language services to ensure language is not a barrier to equitable access to information and services, including complaints processes

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
2.3.1 Promote and implement the <i>WA Language Services Policy 2020</i> .	Q2 2026 and then annually	Office of the Commissioner (Strategic Communications) Whole of Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise the Commission's <i>Terminology Guide</i> to include guidelines on communicating with CaLD communities. Ensure alignment to <i>WA Language Services Policy 2020</i> of Commissions' language related policies, resources and practices.
2.3.2 Develop resource hub to promote and share CaLD and language resources and tools.	Q2 2026 and then annually	Governance and Corporate Services (Corporate Governance and Improvement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include internal and external language resources in central intranet hub. Create a checklist to consider CaLD clients with low English language proficiency levels including translation or use of plain English/ easy read. Support exploring innovative multilingual initiatives that help reduce language barriers for CaLD or low English proficiency communities to understand information and access services.
2.3.3 Embed CaLD and multicultural lens in external facing websites managed by the Commission.	Q4 2026 then annually	Whole of Commission Office of the Commissioner (Strategic Communications - oversight of websites)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review website design and governance guidelines to include a CaLD relevant and language requirements, including use of the <i>Terminology Guide</i>.
2.3.4 Promote translation services for the ADMHSS contact centre.	Annually	Commissioning and Programs (Alcohol Drug and Mental Health Support Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate new CaLD and language requirements in the second phase of the ADMHSS website to avail translated resources and easy access to translation (e.g., creation of CaLD webpages/ resources in most common languages). Improve and promote more widely the availability of translated resources through communication materials and increased distribution (e.g., GP clinics). Promote the use of translators for use of services, including capturing metrics and reporting on impact on outcomes and customer satisfaction. Share benefits and good practice examples with Commission staff and stakeholders.
Desired Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build knowledge and capability of providing multi-lingual services. Improve reach, access and communication with CaLD communities in a methodological approach. Ensure equitable access of CaLD communities in the Commission's offered services. 		

Strategy 2.4 Collect and analyse cultural and linguistic data to contribute to the identification of client needs, the development of policies and programs, and evaluation of outcomes

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
2.4.1 Integrate cultural and linguistic identifiers into Commission's data collection systems.	Annually	System Development (Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop cultural and linguistic identifiers in Commission led surveys, data collection projects and research. Develop metrics and mechanisms to report on CaLD cohorts. Identify data gaps for capturing, analysing and reporting on CaLD communities and advocate for better data collection.
2.4.2 Promote the use and sharing of CaLD data sources to inform service design and evaluation.	Annually	System Development (Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities for the use and sharing of CaLD data across the Commission and with relevant external stakeholders.
2.4.3 Assess and improve use of existing data sources representative of CaLD communities to inform and support Commission's work.	Annually	System Development (Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation) System Development (Prevention and Wellbeing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess existing data sources and advocate for including data items where gaps are identified. Review and update Commission led attitudinal surveys to include CaLD parameters ensuring adequate regional and CaLD representation. Share CaLD findings from attitudinal surveys within the Commission and with relevant stakeholders where appropriate.
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve organisational capability to effectively collect, manage, analyse and use data to achieve strategic goals and improve service design. Enhance data quality, accessibility, and usability to better understand CaLD client needs, experiences, expectations and preferences. More tailored and effective policies and programs with better metrics that drive improved accountability and transparency in service delivery. 			

Strategy 2.5 Enable culturally diverse communities to have meaningful input into policies, programs and systems through co-design and planning, co-delivery and implementation, and evaluation processes

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
2.5.1 Promote strategies to improve multicultural engagement in relevant Commission projects, policies, and initiatives.	Annually	System Development (Engagement) Commissioning and Programs (Strategic Commissioning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure CaLD communities are invited to participate in the review of the <i>Working Together Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Engagement Framework</i> (Engagement Framework) and toolkit, which will guide best practice community engagement practices for the Commission. Communicate, promote and educate staff about the Engagement Framework and toolkit. Finalise procurement of the online engagement platform.
2.5.2 Strengthen partnerships and relationships with multicultural organisations and professional networks.	Annually	Whole of Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and strengthen formal and informal partnerships and collaborations with multicultural organisations and networks to inform relevant initiatives or projects. Regularly share cross-agency good practice examples of CaLD partnerships. Explore creation of a central register of CaLD services, stakeholders, and networks that can be accessed for engagement purposes.
2.5.3 Support active involvement of CaLD community involvement in the design, delivery and evaluation of services.	Annually	Whole of Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review project management and service management practices to require appropriate level of CaLD community involvement. Commission staff to advocate for community involvement in relevant projects and initiatives across the sector.
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure culturally responsive ways of working with CaLD communities are embedded in resources. Improve and streamline the Commission's engagement with CaLD communities. Increase Commission's cultural responsiveness in its services and improve relationships with multicultural communities. Increase the level of engagement and diversification of reach across projects overall. 			

Strategy 2.6 Implement recruitment and selection processes that facilitate workforce diversity, and provide opportunities for the development of cultural competencies across the workforce

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
2.6.1 Provide training to selection panels to strengthen inclusive recruitment practices and support diverse talent recognition and equitable decision-making.	Q4 2027	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce training for recruiting managers on ensuring culturally responsive or diverse recruitment methods. Hold at least two training courses each year, to ensure that panel members understand best-practice selection processes and can recognise and mitigate the impact of bias when shortlisting and assessing applicants. All employees occupying long term supervisory roles complete the training within 12 months of commencement. Increased percentage of employees who have completed this training by 20 per cent. Work with Health Support Services to measure how many CaLD applicants move from application to hire.
2.6.2 Increase the skillset and capability of CaLD workforce to be part of selection panels and recruitment processes	Annually	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure the number of selection panels with CaLD expertise. Promote selection panel training in conjunction with communication of benefits of cultural diversity and inclusion. Encourage inclusion of selection panel training in PDP discussions (e.g., as an example of how to encourage Plan inclusion in PDP).
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in multiculturally diverse, innovative and dynamic workforce across the agency. Enhance cultural competency ensuring employees/managers are better equipped to collaborate across cultures and improve team dynamics. Enhance Commission employer branding as an employer of choice for multicultural applicants. Increase CaLD employee capability and representation across all employment levels at the Commission. 			



Policy Priority 3: Economic, social, cultural, civic and political participation

Policy outcomes:

- Western Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are equitably represented in employment and on boards, committees and other decision-making bodies.
- Western Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse community is harnessed to grow economic, social, cultural, civic and political development.

Strategy 3.1 Implement recruitment and career development processes that support employment and progression of staff from CaLD backgrounds

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
3.1.1 Review and update recruitment and onboarding processes to attract and support people from CaLD backgrounds.	Annually	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that job descriptions and advertisements are clear and concise and avoid unnecessary jargon that might discourage CaLD candidates from applying. Increase and measure externally advertised positions posted on culturally diverse jobs boards and/or employment providers and networks. Measure and analyse culturally diverse hiring and retention rates over time and have periodic reviews to discuss cultural diversity metrics and assess whether additional efforts are required.
3.1.2 Ensure career development initiatives incorporate support for CaLD staff.	Q2 2026 then annually	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage career development programs that foster diversity in leadership and decision-making roles. Promote the availability of external mentoring programs and measure the uptake from culturally diverse staff (e.g., OMI Leadership and Governance Training and Mentoring Program). Explore introduction of a shadowing/mentoring program with senior leaders in the Commission and measure the uptake from CaLD staff.
3.1.3 Establish and implement an employee value proposition to attract, engage and retain valuable employees, including people from CaLD backgrounds.	Q2 2026 then annually	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee value proposition is established and implemented across the employee life cycle which considers CaLD perspectives. Measure and analyse the number of CaLD applicants for external recruitment processes. Measure and analyse the number of CaLD employees choosing to leave during first 12 months of employment including reason why through exit surveys.
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase level of representation of people from CaLD background across all levels of the organisation, including leadership roles. An inclusive workplace culture that values and leverages cultural diversity, actively working to minimise discrimination. Improve performance driven by diverse and dynamic teams contributing to innovation, engagement, and better service outcomes. 			

Strategy 3.2 Achieve equitable representation of people from CaLD backgrounds at all levels and in decision-making roles

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
3.2.1 Include CaLD diversity criteria in governance committee structures.	Annually	Governance and Corporate Services (Corporate Governance and Improvement) System Development (sector governance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and measure inclusion of CaLD diversity for membership of internal governance committees and other relevant forums. Promote and measure CaLD membership of mental health and AOD system governance groups.
3.2.2 Collect and analyse staff cultural diversity data to understand the representation of CaLD staff at all levels of decision making in the Commission.	Q4 2027	Governance and Corporate Services (People and Culture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Commission staff to disclose cultural diversity/ background. Collect and analyse data of CaLD staff across all levels within the Commission with a focus on decision-making roles. Senior Executive to monitor at least annually and identify strategies for continuous improvement.
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve service delivery and outcomes through increased representation of people from CaLD background across in decision making roles. Improve data collection and analysis improvement CaLD representation over time. 			

Strategy 3.3 Identify, develop and promote initiatives that support the development of businesses and the entrepreneurial potential of Western Australia's CaLD community

Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
3.3.1 Promote Office of Multicultural interest CaLD Communities' events and resources through internal and external communications.	Annually	Governance and Corporate Services (Corporate Governance and Improvement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend OMI's newsletters to Commission staff and Multicultural Action Plan Working Group for relevant events. Communicate on OMI's events through intranet to invite staff to attend. Commission to support and/or participate in relevant external events.
3.3.2 Encourage use of CaLD and multicultural suppliers as appropriate.	Annually	Governance and Corporate Services (Procurement and Asset Management)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create, regularly review, and facilitate access to a list of multicultural suppliers and organisations to be considered for relevant procurement needs.
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve information and resource sharing and networking opportunities. Improve information for multicultural organisations to access government opportunities. Greater participation from multicultural organisations in government procurement and contracting. More inclusive and relevant services that capitalise on multicultural diversity, entrepreneurial expertise and innovation. 			

Strategy 3.4 Identify, develop and implement initiatives that encourage social, cultural, civic and political participation by members of Western Australia's CaLD community

What are your actions?	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
3.4.1 Share and promote initiatives that encourage engagement and participation by CaLD community members.	Annually	Whole of Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share promotional, employment and engagement opportunities across relevant CaLD organisations and communities. Develop/monitor engagement metrics on selected diversity-related content on the Commission's website and social media platforms. Promote engagement opportunities through the new online engagement platform when developed.
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the diversification and level of engagement and participation of CaLD communities in the mental health and AOD landscape. 			

Strategy 3.5 Develop and strengthen global connections through partnerships with Western Australia's CaLD communities and businesses

What are your actions?	Timeframe	Responsibility	Outcome / measure
3.5.1 Build and strengthen existing relationships and participation with relevant community networks and stakeholders.	Annually	Whole of Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in inter-agency forums, advisory groups, and committees to identify emerging trends and issues that involve mental health, AOD and CaLD communities. Collaborate on addressing these issues.
Desired Impact			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build and leverage from global connections to inform and guide Commission's plans and increase collaboration, sharing and learning opportunities. 			



Glossary

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia: These are the First Peoples of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, including the Torres Strait Islands. They represent the oldest living cultures in the world, with a continuous connection to Country (land, sea, and sky) spanning tens of thousands of years.

CaLD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse): This is an umbrella term used to describe communities and individuals from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. It encompasses people born overseas, those born in Australia with parents born overseas, and individuals who identify with a culture or language other than mainstream Australian culture. This term acknowledges the diversity of cultures, languages, and experiences within these communities.

Culture: Relating to the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a society. It encompasses shared beliefs, values, norms, practices, and material objects that characterise a group of people. Culture is dynamic and can influence how individuals perceive the world, express themselves, understand health and wellbeing, and seek help.

Cultural awareness: The recognition and understanding that cultural differences exist and can influence values, behaviour, and communication. It involves being mindful of one's own cultural biases and assumptions and appreciating the diversity of cultural backgrounds in others. While awareness is a starting point, it does not necessarily imply action or change in practice.

Cultural competence: The ability of individuals and systems to interact effectively with people from diverse cultures. It goes beyond awareness and involves understanding, valuing, and adapting practices and policies to meet the unique cultural and linguistic needs of individuals and communities. This includes self-reflection, acquiring cultural knowledge, and developing skills to work respectfully and effectively across cultures.

Cultural inclusion: Refers to the active effort and practice of creating environments where individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued. It goes beyond simply having people from different cultures present; it involves ensuring their equitable participation, representation, and a sense of belonging in all aspects of an organisation, community, or society.

Cultural responsiveness: The capacity to acknowledge, respect, and integrate the cultural beliefs, values, practices, and communication styles of diverse populations into the delivery of services and programs. It involves actively adapting approaches to be relevant and appropriate for individuals and communities, ensuring services are accessible, acceptable, and effective.

Cultural safety: an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognises and strives to address power imbalances inherent in a system or service. It results in an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe when receiving a service.

Discrimination: Unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or other characteristics. In the context of mental health, alcohol and other drug services, discrimination can manifest in unequal access to care, culturally inappropriate treatment, negative stereotyping, and the denial of opportunities based on a person's background or identity. It can be direct (intentional) or indirect (unintentional but with discriminatory effects).

Diversity: The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization, or society. These include, but are not limited to, culture, ethnicity, language, nationality, race, gender, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, ability, and religious beliefs. Recognising and valuing diversity promotes inclusivity and equity.

Equity: Recognising that individuals and groups have different needs and providing tailored support and resources to ensure fair and just outcomes. Equity goes beyond equality (treating everyone the same) by acknowledging historical and systemic disadvantages and actively working to level the playing field. In the context of mental health, alcohol and other drug services, equity means understanding and addressing the specific needs and barriers faced by diverse populations to ensure everyone has a fair opportunity to achieve optimal wellbeing and access appropriate care. This often involves differential treatment and resource allocation to achieve substantive equality.

Ethnically and Linguistically Diverse: This term emphasises the distinct aspects of ethnicity (shared heritage, ancestry, and cultural traditions) and language as key dimensions of diversity. It highlights the importance of considering both cultural backgrounds and language proficiency in service delivery and planning.

Ethnicity: A social construct referring to a shared cultural heritage, ancestry, language, and often a sense of common identity. Ethnic groups may share traditions, customs, values, and historical experiences that shape their worldview and practices.

Inequities: These refer to unfair, unjust, and avoidable differences in opportunities, access, experiences, or outcomes between different groups of people. In the context of mental health, alcohol and other drug services, inequities can manifest as disparities in access to culturally appropriate care, quality of treatment, and health outcomes based on factors such as culture, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, geographic location, and other social determinants. Addressing inequities requires identifying and dismantling systemic barriers and biases to achieve substantive equality.

Intersectionality: A framework for understanding how multiple social identities (such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and disability) can overlap and create unique and compounding experiences of discrimination, disadvantage, or privilege. Recognising intersectionality is crucial for developing inclusive and equitable approaches that address the complex needs of individuals.

Multicultural: Characterised by the presence of multiple cultures within a society, organisation, or group. A multicultural environment values and respects the contributions of diverse cultural groups and aims to foster inclusivity and understanding between them.

Nationality: The legal relationship between an individual and a state. It is typically acquired through birth, descent, or naturalisation and confers rights and responsibilities within that nation. Nationality may or may not align with an individual's ethnicity or cultural identity.

NESB (Non-English Speaking Background): This term is often used to identify individuals who speak a language other than English as their first language or who come from countries where English is not the primary language. It is important to recognise that language proficiency is a spectrum and that individuals within this group have diverse levels of English fluency.

Race: A social construct that categorises people based on perceived physical differences, often associated with ancestry. It is important to acknowledge that race is not a biological reality but has significant social, political, and historical implications, often leading to systemic inequalities and discrimination.

Racism: Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalised. Racism can manifest at individual, interpersonal, systemic, and institutional levels. It involves the belief that one race is superior to others and can encompass discriminatory attitudes, practices, and structures that create and perpetuate racial inequality and injustice.

Substantive equality: Going beyond formal equality (equal treatment under the law) to address the underlying systemic inequalities and disadvantages that prevent certain groups from having equal opportunities and outcomes. It involves implementing targeted strategies and measures to achieve genuine and meaningful equality in practice, taking into account historical and ongoing disparities.

Unconscious bias: Also known as implicit bias, these are attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which can be favourable or unfavourable, are often rooted in societal norms and stereotypes and can influence how we perceive and interact with people from diverse backgrounds without our conscious awareness. Recognising and mitigating unconscious bias is essential for promoting equity and fairness.

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