

Multicultural health and wellbeing



In Gippsland

12.4% of people were born overseas (Victoria 30.0%)



Over half (**53%**) were aged 60 years or older (Victoria 28%)

Top countries of birth for arrivals 2017 to 2021:



India (446)



Philippines (443)



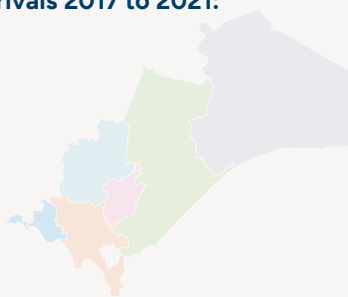
England (172)



New Zealand (134)



Taiwan (122)



5.3% spoke a language other than English at home (Victoria 28.1%)



138 languages other than English are spoken at home in Gippsland



12.2% of those who use another language reported that they spoke English either not well or not at all

52.0% of people believe multiculturalism makes life better (Victoria 63.5%)

New arrivals to Gippsland from other countries in 2024 by permanent migration stream (percent, and trend since 2023)



40 - refugee and humanitarian (3%, stable)



250 people - family stream (20%, down)



945 people - skilled stream (77%, up)

**Data does not include people on a temporary visa, bridging visa or without a valid visa.*

Long-term health conditions

Less common among recent, younger arrivals (14% of arrivals 2011-2020)

Top conditions among people who reported they don't speak English well:



Arthritis (11%)



Diabetes (9%)



Mental health condition (6%)



Heart disease (6%)



Asthma (4%)

"People of multicultural backgrounds" are those whose cultural identity varies from the main Anglo-Celtic or Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander groups. We recognise there is great diversity among people from multicultural backgrounds across cultures, faiths, languages, migration journeys and experiences.



Racism is a belief that one race is better than others. Racism occurs when this belief is accompanied by the power to harm, oppress or discriminate, either by individuals, organisations or systems.

Racism and health

16% of Australian adults report a personal experience of discrimination based on skin colour, ethnicity or religion compared to about a third of people from non-English speaking backgrounds



People experiencing racism are:

5 times more likely to have poor mental health

2.5 times more likely to have poor physical health

Community perspective

- New migrants need support with service navigation, including visa entitlements and learning what (and where) services are provided.
- Interpreter services are not always offered for those who don't speak English well.
- Welcoming and person-centred services make a big difference, including reception staff and clinicians.
- It is important to take the time to explain things clearly.

"...it can be very lonely in a new country and you have little time and energy left after doing all the necessary things."

- Multicultural community member

"No one explains to you how the system works, and people are left to find out for themselves."

- Multicultural community member

Victorian Multicultural Commission Regional Advisory Council identified priority issues for Gippsland

- Barriers accessing mental health care and suicide prevention services and support
- Racism
- Lack of culturally appropriate family violence services
- Lack of community spaces to meet and organise events
- High reliance on multicultural volunteers in community organisations
- Education and training

Multicultural health and wellbeing



Top 5 languages used in free interpreter sessions with healthcare providers* in 2023-24:

- Vietnamese (71)
- Myanmar language (alt Burmese) (55)
- Thai (55)
- Mandarin (49)
- Khmer (14)

*Allied health professional, general practitioner, medical clinic, nurse practitioner, pharmacy, specialists

There were a total of 395 free interpreter sessions with health professionals in Gippsland in 2023-24

- A 19% increase since 2022-23
- 72% were with a GP

Health systems around the world have evolved to respond to the dominant cultural or ethnic groups' needs. Structural racism in a health system results in a lack of inclusivity, maintains inequities, and impacts health care access.

Professional perspective

There is limited knowledge about the challenges multicultural people face, and available services and supports

Homelessness among the multicultural community is a hidden problem

People working in the health system often assume people know how the system works

Regional areas may have more problems with racism than metro areas

Lack of knowledge about interpreter services, and low interpreter availability

Reliance on family, friends and Google translate due to difficulty accessing professional interpreter services

Mental health stigma in some cultures. Sometimes this looks like worrying about spreading family business or not viewing mental health as a health issue

"I think we need to be open to adapting our practices to cater well for all ethnic groups."

- General Practitioner

"... more education needs to be provided to our communities on how to accept people with a multicultural background. Especially in the regional and rural areas. There are still a lot of cultural inclusivity and safety issues ..."

- Professional

Gippsland PHN services and supports



Multicultural Health Needs Assessment



Urgent Care Clinics for conditions that require urgent care, but not an emergency response



Gippsland Pathways for primary care professionals, including Refugee health referrals and interpreter services



Training and Events for health professionals in Gippsland



Promote use of **interpreter services**



Improve **multicultural data collection**



Support for **early access to healthcare** for recent arrivals

Guidance for an improved system



Victoria's Department of Health multicultural health action plan 2023-27



Embrace Multicultural Mental Health Framework



The PHN Multicultural Health Framework

Consider multicultural groups facing added barriers, including:

- Women dependent on partners
- Victims of violence, including sexual violence
- Children and young people
- People with disability
- People on temporary or bridging visas, or without a valid visa
- Older adults

Services and supports

Migrants, refugees and humanitarian entrants generally have access to health care under Medicare, depending on their visa. Other temporary migrants may have to hold private health insurance.

For more information about access to healthcare in Victoria, see:



Latrobe Community Health Services Multicultural Services Team 1800 242 696



Centre for Multicultural Youth, Gippsland (CMY)



Gippsland Multicultural Services assists migrants and refugees



Victorian Refugee Health Network



Victoria Department of Health: Refugee and asylum seeker health and wellbeing information



Free Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)



Health Translations free library of translated health and wellbeing resources



Centre for Culture, Ethnicity & Health provides training and resources



SBS Cultural Atlas

Access more Gippsland PHN publications here