

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety

Queensland Multicultural Policy and Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2024–25 to 2026–27

2024–25 Annual Reporting

Focus Area 1: Deliver Culturally Responsive Services

The Queensland Government remains committed to ensuring all government initiatives and services, including funded services, are culturally responsive, accessible and inclusive of all people across Queensland.

Agency actions supporting Focus Area 1	Progress/ status for 2024–25	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
<i>Review child and family services across 2–3 locations to test service system responsiveness to the needs of children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The review process is an opportunity to take stock of how well services are meeting the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities and identify opportunities for enhancements as part of a continuous improvement approach.</i>	Not delivered	• This action has been superseded. On May 18 2025, the Queensland Government launched an independent Commission of Inquiry into the Child Safety System. • The Terms of Reference of the Inquiry are broad and relate to: ◦ Reforming the Residential Care System: investigate models of care and the factors contributing to the growth and reliance on a billion-dollar residential care sector. ◦ Repairing a broken system: reviewing the effectiveness of Queensland's child safety system to keep children safe. ◦ Safer Children: failures both systemic and policy that have impeded the ability of the Department responsible for the Child Safety portfolio (the Department) to provide support to families and protection to children at risk of harm in Queensland. ◦ Safer Communities: evaluate the effectiveness of the Department as a corporate parent and whether it can meet community expectations around parenting. ◦ Reviewing Queensland legislation regarding the protection of children, including the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> and <i>Adoption Act 2009</i>. • The Final report, including recommendations, will be provided to Government by 30 November 2026. • System and service reviews, including responsiveness to the needs of children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds will be considered in the context of recommendations of the Child Safety Commission of Inquiry. • Processes and resources in the Child Safety Practice Manual continue to be regularly reviewed and updated, remain contemporary and continue to reflect the distinct needs of children, young people, and their families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

<i>Explore opportunities to engage with people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds on disability reforms in Queensland, including in relation to the Independent Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.</i>	Delivered	• The Queensland Disability Stakeholder Engagement and Codesign Strategy (SEC Strategy), establishes mechanisms to ensure people with lived experience of disability are actively involved in the design and implementation of disability reforms under the Queensland Disability Reform Framework (QDRF), including government responses to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People and the Independent Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). • The SEC Strategy is focused on bringing diverse voices to the table through targeted engagement strategies for people with disability from a range of diverse communities, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. • Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) is funded to lead implementation of the SEC Strategy in partnership with government. • In 2024–25, QDN and the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety are focused on establishing governance and operational arrangements to ensure disability stakeholders will be involved in designing, testing, and implementing disability reforms through a partnership and codesign approach. • The Disability Reform Implementation Stakeholder Committee (DRISC) oversees implementation of the SEC Strategy and provides advice to government on disability reforms. DRISC membership includes people with lived experience, disability providers, disability advocates, disability researchers, and government representatives. • DRISC responsibilities include ensuring targeted outreach and in-reach engagement strategies support the inclusion and participation of diverse communities, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. • The SEC Strategy focuses on working partnerships with funded peaks to draw on expertise and experience across the sector. In particular, QDN is partnering with key organisations for their expertise in stakeholder engagement across diverse communities. This includes Amparo Advocacy, Queensland's peak body for people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, their family members and carers.
<i>Engage with older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to design culturally responsive elder abuse prevention initiatives and service responses.</i>	Delivered	• The Queensland Government funds the Elder Abuse Prevention Unity (EAPU), a free statewide telephone helpline providing information, support and referral service for anyone experiencing abuse or witnessing the abuse of an older person. This service provides translation services for individuals who do not speak English and need assistance with their services. The EAPU website also provides brochures in 19 languages.

- Between 1 July 2024 and 31 March 2025, 693 (18.7%) people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds sought information, advice and referral from the EAPU.
- The Seniors Legal and Support Service (SLASS) and the Seniors Financial Protection Service (SFPS) in Queensland provides free legal and social work support to older people experiencing elder abuse, mistreatment, or financial exploitation.
- Between 1 July 2024 and 31 March 2025, 2008 older Queenslanders from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds received support from SLASS or SFPS.

Parliamentary Inquiry into Elder Abuse

- On 10 December 2024, Parliament established an inquiry into elder abuse in Queensland (Inquiry).
- Culturally and linguistically diverse communities may face unique challenges in recognising, reporting, and responding to elder abuse, including language barriers, stigma, and fear of family repercussions.
- The Inquiry provides an opportunity to hear the voices of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds either by registering to attend a hearing or by making a submission.
- The Committee is due to table its report on 12 December 2025.

Seniors Expos

- The Queensland Government delivers a Seniors Expos program to support older Queenslanders to age well in their communities.
- These events provide information to older people about issues that matter to them, such as staying safe at home and in the community, identifying frauds and scams, and planning to articulate their health and care choices.
- The Expos also provide older people with connections to government and non-government services in their community, and an opportunity to connect with each other to mitigate the risk of social isolation.
- Seniors Expos are held across Queensland and attract a diverse audience. The department has hosted Expos and Seniors Savings pop-up events in communities with strong CALD communities, including Runcorn, Sunnybank, Mackay and Proserpine.
- Seniors Expos are complemented by Seniors Savings pop-ups that provide an opportunity for older people to meet face-to-face with a Queensland Government representative to seek information on Seniors Cards, concessions and rebates for cost-of-living support.

		- In 2024–25 the Queensland Government delivered 14 Seniors Expos and 11 Seniors Savings pop-ups across Queensland directly engaging with more than 7400 older people. <u>Ageing Well Survey</u> - In 2025, the department launched the Ageing Well Survey, a research collaboration by the Australian Catholic University (ACU), the Council on the Ageing Queensland, and the Queensland Government to improve how Queenslanders age. To date more than 10 per cent of respondent have self-identified as culturally and linguistically diverse.
<i>Co-design accessible and culturally responsive resources on coercive control in partnership with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.</i>	Not delivered	- Coercive control information resources have been co-designed with community members to explain the nature and impacts of coercive control and changes to the law in Queensland. - Twenty co-design sessions were held across Queensland in June–July 2024. The suite of resources provides tailored, accessible and translated information for diverse audience groups. The resources are in the final stages of production.

Focus Area 2: Drive Diversity and Inclusion across the Public Sector

A diverse and inclusive workforce that is representative of the community we serve is essential to ensuring we are a culturally responsive government.

Agency actions supporting Focus Area 2	Progress/ status for 2024–25	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
All Agencies Action – Monitor data related to culturally and linguistically diverse employee representation and deliver strategies to achieve the whole-of-government target of 12 per cent for employees who speak a language other than English at home.	Delivered	- The department actively monitors workforce data to inform strategies that contribute to its progression towards the Queensland Public Sector target of 12 per cent for employees who speak a language other than English at home. - The 2024 Working for Queensland Survey showed that 15% of the department's 4314 staff who completed the survey speak a language other than English at home and 23% were not born in Australia. - Data relating to culturally and linguistically diverse employee representation is reviewed annually as a part of the Equity and Diversity Audit, outcomes of which informs the actions in the department's Equity and Diversity Plan. - The department will continue to support its culturally and linguistically diverse workforce in line with its Inclusion Strategy and Equity and Diversity Plan.
All Agencies Action – Monitor Working for Queensland survey results relevant to cultural diversity and inclusion and deliver strategies to improve inclusion for culturally and linguistically diverse employees, including Australian South Sea Islander peoples.	Delivered	- The 2024 Working for Queensland Survey highlights the department's cultural and linguistic diversity. - The department is working to improve inclusion for culturally and linguistically diverse employees, including Australian South Sea Islander peoples. An employee resource group was established for culturally and linguistically diverse staff. The group meets monthly and provides a safe platform to share achievements, challenges and ideas to help the department achieve enhanced workforce diversity outcomes. - Additionally, the department celebrated workplace cultural diversity and inclusion through: - Harmony Week/International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination events: work areas hosted local morning/afternoon teas during Harmony Week and continued to grow the Taste of Harmony recipe book contributed by staff. - Promoted training and information sessions to staff, including those hosted by Diversity Council Australia with which the department holds membership. - Monthly all-staff messages from the Executive Inclusion and Diversity Champion promoting key inclusion dates and events.

Agency actions supporting Focus Area 2	Progress/ status for 2024–25	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
		- o A calendar of key inclusion dates and events on the front page of the departmental intranet. - o Establishment of a regional inclusion and diversity champions network that gathers to share resources and ideas on ways the regions can implement initiatives that enhances and supports a safe and diverse workforce. - o Inclusion and diversity embedded as a focused topic in leadership development programs.
All Agencies Action – Using the Diversity and Inclusion on Boards Toolkit, implement targeted actions to increase the cultural and linguistic diversity of representation on Queensland Government boards.	Delivered	• The Queensland Carers Advisory Council (QCAC) is established by the <i>Carers (Recognition) Act 2008 (Qld)</i> (the Act) to provide strategic advice and advance the interests of unpaid carers in Queensland. • QCAC comprises 12 members. When recruiting members to QCAC, the department seeks to ensure appropriate cultural and linguistic diversity. The opportunity to nominate is promoted across different channels and networks, including relevant government agencies and peak bodies. • The QCAC nomination form also invites prospective members to identify if they are from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds to assist in ensuring diversity among QCAC members. • Ensuring cultural and linguistic diversity on QCAC provides a deeper understanding of the nature and perceptions of caring roles that exist amongst different cultural groups to better inform government policy and program design.
All Agencies Action – Agencies will provide DPC with data on the cultural and linguistic diversity of Queensland Government boards to enable Government to monitor and report on the diversity of Queensland Government bodies.	Delivered	• Diversity on the Queensland Carers Advisory Council is reported to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet as new appointments are recommended and through regular reporting processes.

Focus Area 3: Strengthen Our Economy

The Queensland Government will take specific actions to identify and address the barriers that people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds face to participate in economic opportunities in line with their skills and ambitions.

Agency actions supporting Focus Area 3	Progress/ status for 2024–25	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
N/A – The Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety does not have any actions under Focus Area 3.		N/A – The Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety does not have any actions under Focus Area 3.

Focus Area 4: Promote Social Cohesion

All Queenslanders have a responsibility to foster social cohesion in our communities. The Queensland Government will take action to respect and celebrate the contributions of Queenslanders from diverse backgrounds.

Agency actions supporting Focus Area 4	Progress/ status for 2024–25	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
All Agencies Action – Take a strong stance against racism, and actively promote anti-racism messages to staff, clients and communities in line with each agency's unique context.	Delivered	- The department has zero tolerance for racism and is committed to preventing racism by pledging to undertake activities in support of the “Racism. It Stops With Me” campaign. - A variety of anti-racism resources are available via the intranet to support staff to respond to and prevent racism. - The SBS Inclusion Program series is available and promoted to all staff through the online learning platform. The series has been designed to improve understanding of inclusion and provide staff with the necessary tools to actively promote diversity. Course topics include Inclusive Recruitment, Appropriate Workplace Behaviour, Cultural Diversity, Multicultural Queensland Charter, First Nations, and Core Inclusion.
Improve social cohesion by delivering programs and initiatives targeted at promoting social inclusion and intergenerational connection for older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	Delivered	- Older migrants are reported to experience higher levels of social isolation due to post migration socioeconomic disadvantage, language barriers, discrimination, and separation from social networks in their country of origin. - In 2024, the department conducted an open grant round process to allocate an additional \$12.5 million from 1 October 2024 to 30 June 2029 to the Seniors Social Isolation Program (SSIP). There are now 66 services across the State. - All new contracts contain an additional commitment to include the delivery of SSI services specifically targeted at older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. - A total of 28 new organisations were awarded funding, and for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025, 6.2% of clients were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. - Between 1 July 2024 and 31 March 2025, 4866 Seniors from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds participated in a Seniors Social Isolation Program. - Three of the 28 services are specifically for older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Agency actions supporting Focus Area 4	Progress/ status for 2024–25	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
		- o <u>Multicultural Community Centre Ltd</u> received \$75,000 for the delivery of their Multicultural Community service in the Logan LGA. For the period of 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025, 262 clients were from culturally and linguistically diverse background. - o <u>The Migrant Centre organisation Inc</u> received \$75,000 for delivery of their Ageing Gracefully service in the Gold Coast LGA. For the period of 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025, 362 clients were from culturally and linguistically diverse background. - o <u>World Wellness Group Ltd</u> received one-off funding of \$190,000 to extend the trial and evaluation of their Multicultural Seniors Social Isolation program to address social isolation among older migrants and refugees within the Brisbane LGA.
<i>Deliver targeted grants to address social isolation and loneliness experienced by people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.</i>	Delivered	<u>Communities Innovation Fund</u> • Through the Communities Innovation Fund, the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (DFS DSCS) provided \$235,000 in grant funding to five organisations in 2024–25 to address social isolation and loneliness among culturally and linguistically diverse people. The investment aimed to address the unique experiences of people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, asylum seekers, and Australian South Sea Islander people, which may increase their risk of social isolation and loneliness. • One such initiative was You Belong Australia's 'Good Neighbours' program, which aimed to address social isolation and loneliness among families. The program was developed in response to the unique challenges that newly arrived families primarily from Iraq and Syria, with a significant number of Yazidi families, face when settling in Australia. The initiative involved home visits and community events to build connection and community familiarity. Over 89 families were recorded through the outreach system, and over 100 welcome bags were distributed in December 2024 alone. The initiative has made a significant impact on reducing social isolation among newly arrived refugee families in Toowoomba, by prioritising language-matched visits and inclusive community events. • The program's approach demonstrates that belonging begins with connection, and that simple, culturally aware outreach can be transformative for families navigating a new home. <u>THRIVING Local</u>

Agency actions supporting Focus Area 4	Progress/ status for 2024–25	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
		- One of the 14 recommendations from the Inquiry into Social Isolation and Loneliness was for the Queensland Government to fund a Cultural Diversity Trial. Queensland Government committed \$2.4M over four years to deliver the THRIVING Local initiative; connecting Logan's CALD communities and partners with a focus to better respond to social isolation and loneliness. In 2024–25, DFSDSCS funded \$826,666 to Thriving Local. - The initiative identifies and drives innovative solutions through building on existing community strengths and initiatives across four key areas: - Addressing social isolation and loneliness - Improving economic participation - Empowering local women - Building community capacity
<i>Explore opportunities to engage with and promote visibility and inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds within all the communities to which they belong in Queensland, recognising and celebrating intersectional identities.</i>	Delivered	<u>Pride in our Communities Action Plan 2024–2026</u> - This action maps to Action 13 of the <i>Pride in our Communities Action Plan 2024–2026</i>, a joint action between DFSDSCS (Communities, Seniors and Carers) and DWATSIPM (Multicultural Affairs Queensland/MAQ). - In 2024, DFSDSCS and DWATSIPM met to collaboratively identify appropriate opportunities to engage with and increase the inclusion and visibility of, LGBTQIA+ people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD), including at the FECCA Conference 2024 (see below). - In 2025, DFSDSCS engaged with MAQ to continue implementation of this action, particularly regarding platforming of LGBTQIA+ CALD communities during Multicultural Queensland Month to promote visibility and inclusion. DFSDSCS is currently awaiting advice from MAQ on this matter and future opportunities throughout the remainder of the year. <u>FECCA Conference 2024</u> - On 16–17 October 2024, DFSDSCS promoted the <i>Pride in our Communities Strategy 2024–2032</i> and <i>Action Plan 2024–2026</i> at the Queensland Government booth at the 94th annual Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils Australia (FECCA) conference, held in Brisbane and attended by more than 700 delegates from CALD communities all over Australia. As the conference is held in different locations around Australia each year, this was an excellent opportunity to showcase the new strategy and engage with CALD

Agency actions supporting Focus Area 4	Progress/ status for 2024–25	Outcomes achieved for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
		communities, including LGBTQIA+ individuals and allies. DFSDSCS staff engaged with delegates via the stall and distributed over 80 copies of the Action Plan and 40 copies of the Strategy.

Case studies or good news stories to highlight achievements relevant to Focus Area 4:

Case Study (De-identified)

You Belong (De-identified)

In early 2024, Maya, a Syrian mother of two, arrived in Toowoomba after fleeing the protracted conflict in her home country where her husband had been killed. She arrived in Australia with her two children, speaking limited English and with no existing social network.

Maya was visited in her home by a team of two trained volunteers, one of whom was Arabic-speaking.

During the visit, Maya expressed difficulty transporting her children to and from school, as she did not have a valid Australian driver's license. She also shared that she had no close social contacts in the area and struggled with everyday logistics and emotional wellbeing.

Maya was referred to You Belong's Learner Driver Mentor Program, where she was paired with a volunteer mentor and driving instructor. Through this support, she successfully obtained her Australian driver's license, significantly improving her independence and ability to care for her children. She was also enrolled in the Cook 2 Connect program, which brings together women from refugee backgrounds to share meals and conversation. There, she began forming friendships with other Arabic-speaking women and building confidence in a welcoming, culturally safe environment.

THRIVING Local (De-identified)

Rasha fled conflict in Syria in 2012, living in Lebanon until being granted a Humanitarian Visa in 2016 and arriving in Logan in 2017, supported by a faith-based community loan.

Rasha was a trained nurse in Syria with 6 years of experience in public health, before displacement. Upon arrival in Logan, she has been unable to re-enter nursing due to the cost of International English Language Testing System (IELTS) requirements and despite her previous qualifications.

THRIVING Local helped to connect Rasha with Metro South Health and support for resume development, job application and interview assistance. In collaboration with Logan Hospital, THRIVING Local also helped adapt the interview process to be more culturally safe and strengths-based, so rather than a traditional panel interview, a "tour of the wards" model was used, allowing Rasha to engage informally with staff and speak about her previous nursing experience in Syria in a more practical and relational setting. Both the interviewer and Rasha provided positive feedback on the experience and Rasha described feeling empowered and inspired by the welcoming staff and the respectful way her skills were acknowledged. Rasha has now been successful in securing employment as a step towards returning to nursing, and THRIVING Local is continuing to support hospital HR teams to strengthen inclusive recruitment practices across the health system.