



NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION OF MULTICULTURAL COUNCILS INC.

Charities Services Registration Number CC36978

PO Box 1409, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

P: +64 4 916 9177

M: +64 27 342 9929

E: info@mnz.org.nz

www.multiculturalnz.org.nz

The Brentwood Declaration

We, the Seniors' Council of Multicultural New Zealand, convened a hui on 24 February 2024 to address the pressing challenges faced by seniors around the motu. We hereby present this declaration.

Recognising the importance of empowerment and support for our seniors, we collectively propose ten comprehensive recommendations. These recommendations focus on the crucial areas of creating safe spaces, improving health services, securing adequate housing, enhancing intergenerational communication, and addressing economic issues. Our commitment is to foster an environment where seniors are respected and can maintain dignity for contributing meaningfully to our society.

Our ten recommendations are as follow:

1. Elder Abuse Support:

A programme of work to be initiated toward the establishment of safe spaces for ethnic seniors experiencing abuse or neglect in their homes, akin to the safehouses provided by Women's Refuge.

2. Health Workshops:

Developing a series of practical workshops for ethnic seniors focused on the maintenance and improvement of physical, mental, and emotional health. This will be an ongoing initiative with a public/private partnership funding model.

3. Engagement with the Ministry of Health:

The Ministry of Health to be approached with the following proposals:

- Recruitment of more health practitioners with diverse language skills.
- Provision of mobile health clinics with a focus on the needs of ethnic seniors.
- Increased capacity for early intervention solutions for ethnic seniors.

4. Technology

The digital literacy and digital inclusion training initiatives for seniors already instituted by some Regional Multicultural Councils should be expanded and adopted Federation-wide.

5. Combatting Loneliness

Social gatherings, recreational activities, trips, and visits are to be encouraged and organised for ethnic seniors to ensure a greater feeling of connection to their communities.

6. Transportation and Mobility

Assistance is to be given to ethnic seniors in navigating drivers licence renewal processes, and Local/Regional Councils are to be lobbied for much needed improvements to public transport options, especially in rural areas.

7. English Language Support

It is acknowledged that English language competency issues underlie many other problems faced by seniors in ethnic communities, and action must be taken toward provision of translation services, interpreters, and English language classes.

8. Fostering Intergenerational Connection

Opportunities for our senior community members to interact with our youth are to be encouraged and actively organised. Mentoring relationships and shared activities developed to yield benefits in many areas including digital literacy, overcoming language barriers, and preventing feelings of isolation.

9. Economy and Finance

Economic stability in retirement is a huge issue of concern in ethnic communities.

10. Housing

The quality and availability of housing and accommodation in retirement is a huge issue of concern in ethnic communities.