



MEDIA RELEASE

Much More Than An Exercise Class

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A collaboration between Sunraysia Community Health Services and Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Community Council (SMECC) is proving to have many benefits and popular amongst Afghani men who recently arrived in Mildura as Refugees. Every Monday afternoon at SMECC, Community Health Allied Health team members and a SMECC worker team together to hold a gentle exercise class that not only improves people's level of daily activity, but also provides various emotional and social benefits (see attached picture 'class image').

"The class is great for meeting other people, keeping active and improving my English language skills" said Mohammad Reza, a Hazara gentleman who arrived in Mildura recently. The community health centre staff ensure the activity is always fun and a positive place to be" added Mohammad.

"People are more motivated to engage in physical activity in a friendly environment, when there are opportunities to socialise, and when the activity is enjoyable and personally rewarding", said Community Health Service Refugee Health Nurse Dale Thompson. " It is important to connect the social, cultural and environmental aspects of engaging in an activity that is designed to bring about subtle positive changes in peoples lives" added Dale.

The need for an activity such as this was first realized by Refugee Health Nurse Kate Maloney after consulting Hazara and Tamil clients attending the Community Health Service for health assessments. By teaming together with Allied Health and Counselling staff it was realized that a group such as this would have multi-faceted benefits.

The class operates every Monday afternoon at SMECC from 3:15pm and is free for refugee and asylum seeker men. For those feeling a little more energetic a more active Friday afternoon class is also being trialled to offer more options to a larger group of Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

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