



Good practice for working with women on temporary visas in refuge accommodation

This resource, for refuge practitioners, is part of a series on best practice when working with women from migrant and refugee backgrounds who are victim-survivors of family violence. It contains examples of good practice to implement within refuge accommodation to provide a more equitable service to women on temporary visas.

- ✓ Be honest with clients about not being able to provide an equitable outcome compared to others in the refuge, admit it's an unjust system, be transparent about what can and can't be provided, ensure clients understand why, and walk alongside clients for that journey.
- ✓ Ask clients about their food preferences, any specific cultural food they require, and provide clients with the option of vouchers and debit/credit cards for the purchase of food and personal items.
- ✓ Create an account with local halal butchers so halal food can be provided upon arrival.
- ✓ Ask clients about their religious needs and provide any religious items they require, respect prayer times and religious and cultural rituals.
- ✓ Provide 'cultural packs' containing cultural items a client may require to practice their religion or other culturally specific activities.
- ✓ Organise a 'quality of service meeting' with clients from migrant and refugee backgrounds to gain feedback from them about how the service could be improved.
- ✓ Hold weekly meetings including all clients and staff to openly raise and resolve issues, ensuring everyone is aware of and can accommodate the needs of others.
- ✓ Hold each other to account – organise opportunities for reflective practice, review and reflect when you haven't done well and what you can do differently. Note what worked and could be replicated with other clients.
- ✓ Connect clients with local community groups, religious places of worship, mother's groups, family violence recovery groups and multicultural organisations.
- ✓ Connect clients with local services and programs such as English classes, workforce readiness programs, driving lessons and health providers who can facilitate low or no cost services.
- ✓ Create a list of in-language GPs and other health professionals in the local area.
- ✓ Celebrate cultural events within the refuge, such as religious festivals and days. Ask clients how they would like to celebrate and support them to attend community celebrations outside the refuge.
- ✓ Celebrate clients' birthdays and provide support for birthday presents.
- ✓ Provide support for social activities such as tickets to the zoo, cinema and local events and entertainment, as well as organising group activities in the refuge, such as cooking together.
- ✓ Provide public transport training, Myki credit and taxi vouchers.
- ✓ Make arrangements with female Shebah, Uber and taxi drivers.
- ✓ Think outside the box and beyond our biases!