

## Arabic Speaking Communities Profile

**PLEASE NOTE:** This profile provides an overview of some of the cultural information relating to the diverse groups of Arabic speaking population who live in the Eastern Region of Melbourne. This description may not apply to all people as individual experiences may vary. However this profile can be used as a guide to some of the issues that may concern your clients.

### Introduction:

The Arabic Speaking population represents 1.2% (243,672 people) of the total Australian population (ABS Census 2006). The Arabic Speaking Communities in Australia are diverse and include people from 22 countries. The 'Arab World' is where Arabic is either an official language or it is spoken by a significant portion of the population (Victorian Arabic Social Services 2010).

### Countries that make up the Arab World:

Algeria	Jordan	Oman	Syria
Bahrain	Kuwait	Palestine	Tunisia
Comoros	Lebanon	Qatar	United Arab Emirates
Djibouti	Libya	Saudi Arabia	Yemen
Egypt	Mauritania	Somalia	
Iraq	Morocco	Sudan	

(Victorian Arabic Social Services 2010)

The Arabic speaking community in Australia comes from a number of different countries and is very diverse. The largest ageing Arabic speaking group in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne is Egyptian. For further information about the Egyptian community please refer to the Egyptian Community Profile.

### Migration:

- Many of the people from Arabic Speaking countries have migrated or come to Australia as refugees or displaced persons.
- The largest communities of Arabic Speaking people are from Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine (Alzheimer's Australia Vic 2008).

### Language:

- The speech form of Arabic may be specific to a locality, a dialect or a vocabulary, all of which mark a more specific identity (Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia 2009).
- Arabic has one of the largest proportions of Australian-born speakers, reflecting the fact that these languages were mainly brought to Australia now more than 20 years ago and have been maintained among the children of those migrants (ABS Census 2006).
- According to the ABS Census 2006, Arabic is included in the six most commonly spoken languages other than English in Victoria.

## Local Demographics: Arabic-Speaking residents in the Eastern Region

Local Government Area	Total Arabic-Speaking Population	50-59 years	60-69 years	70-79 years	80 years and over	Total number of Arabic-Speaking people aged 65 and over	People aged 65+ as a % of the Arabic-Speaking population
City of Boroondara	447	46	37	23	3	32	7%
City of Knox	1125	146	97	38	7	70	6%
City of Manningham	1721	241	124	91	23	169	10%
City of Maroondah	324	22	12	7	3	21	6%
City of Monash	1083	163	104	57	16	122	11%
City of Whitehorse	578	57	49	19	8	50	9%
Shire of Yarra Ranges	175	19	12	3	0	11	6%
Eastern Region	5453	694	435	238	60	475	9%

(ABS Census 2006 & MAV Data 2006)

### Religion:

- The majority of the Arabic Speaking population in Victoria are Muslim.
- Other religions include Catholic, Orthodox Christian, Chaldean, Coptic and Maronite.

### Greetings:

English Greeting	Arabic	Closest English Pronunciation
Hi	سلام	SALAM
Good Morning	صباح الخير	SABAH EL KHEER
Goodbye	مع السلامة	MA'A SALAAMA
Yes	نعم	NA'AM
No	لا	LAA
Thankyou	شكرا	SHOKRAN

## Local services useful for Arabic Speaking residents in the Eastern Region

### Settlement Services

Provide information, referral and casework for refugees and family migrants who arrived in the last five years.

Name	Address	Contact
Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)	Suite 2, Town Hall Hub, 27 Bank Street, Box Hill, 3128	Ph: 9285 4888
New Hope Migrant and Refugee Centre	18 Chester Street Oakleigh, 3166	Ph: 9563 4130

## **Aged Care & Disability Support Services**

### **Migrant Information Centre Aged Care & Disability Services**

Address: Suite 2, Town Hall Hub, 27 Bank Street, Box Hill, 3128

Ph: 9275 6905

The aged and disability team aims to increase access to aged care and disability services for CALD communities in the EMR through working with CALD communities to promote those services, providing information and referral, and supporting organisations to provide culturally appropriate care. The team also receives funding for specific projects in this area.

### **Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS) (Dandenong Sub-Office)**

Address: South East Region MRC, Level 1, 314 Thomas Street, (PO Box 1139), Dandenong, 3175

Ph: 9706 8933

The Victorian Arabic Social Services is dedicated to addressing the social, cultural and welfare needs of the Arabic speaking background communities in Victoria.

#### **References:**

Alzheimer's Australia Victoria, 2008, *Perceptions of Dementia in Ethnic Communities*, Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association of Victoria Inc ABN, Victoria, pp. 5-6.

Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006, *Census of Population and Housing*, viewed 1 March 2010, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/home/census>>.

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia, 2009, *Quality use of medicines issues amongst Arabic-speaking communities in Australia*, Broadmeadows, pp. 5 -10.

Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS), 2010, *Serving a Diverse Arabic Community: About Us*, viewed 4 June 2010, <<http://www.vass.org.au/about>>.