

## **NSW Election 2007**



**Key issues for people  
from non-English speaking  
backgrounds (NESB) with  
disability and their families**



5% of the NSW population (328,402 people)  
are people from NESB with disability

One in four people with disability living in  
NSW is a person from NESB



***Working for a NSW where the diversity of disability and culture is  
anticipated, supported and celebrated***

## Mental Health

***Anyone who needs a mental health service in NSW gets a good service***



## Issues

- ◆ People from NESB with disability don't use mental health services because the services are not designed for them
- ◆ People only use mental health services when they are in crisis
- ◆ People don't have enough information about and can't get access to mental health services
- ◆ Mental health service staff are not trained to work effectively with people from NESB with disability
- ◆ A lot of mental health information is not accessible to people from NESB with disability
- ◆ Women from NESB have even more difficulties accessing mental health services

## Action Needed

The NSW Government needs to fund, implement and evaluate a state-wide multicultural mental health plan which includes:

- ✓ Developing new services and approaches for people from NESB with disability
- ✓ An information campaign targeting ethnic communities, especially about prevention and early intervention services
- ✓ Staff training and development to work better with people from NESB with disability
- ✓ An independent agency that represents consumer voices effectively



## Education

*Every kid gets a good education*

### Issues



- ◆ Kids from NESB with disability don't get the education they need
- ◆ Families from NESB can't make an informed choice from all the options because they don't know about them
- ◆ Many teachers don't have the skills to teach kids from NESB with disability effectively
- ◆ Girls from NESB with disability have a hard time staying at school until they are 18 years old

### Action Needed

The NSW Government needs to do better for kids from NESB with disability by:

- ✓ Building the capacity of teachers to support all students and to assist families from NESB in finding out what options are available
- ✓ Funding a skilled, experienced specialist teacher in every school to provide direct support to students with disability, including students from NESB
- ✓ Funding a pilot program to support girls with disability from NESB to stay at school until they are 18 years old
- ✓ Funding at least 100 new 'English as a second language' positions



## Accommodation & Housing

***Anyone who needs accommodation has access to affordable, accessible, secure housing in the community with the support they need***

### Issues

- ◆ People from NESB with disability in NSW don't have enough affordable, accessible, secure housing
- ◆ People from NESB with disability don't get the support they need to live in the community
- ◆ People from NESB with disability have a lower chance of getting into supported accommodation programs for people with disability and people with mental illness
- ◆ Many more people from NESB with disability will need supported accommodation in the next 10 years because their parents are getting too old
- ◆ It's too hard for people from NESB with disability to find out what's available and how to get it



### Action Needed

The NSW Government needs to:

- ✓ Close all institutions and relocate everyone who needs ongoing support into community-based supported accommodation
- ✓ Develop, implement and evaluate innovative housing and supported accommodation options that will work for people from NESB with disability
- ✓ Spend more money on housing that works for people from NESB with disability





## A Voter's Guide for people from NESB

### ◆ **Do I have to vote?**

Voting for State elections is compulsory in Australia for every Australian citizen who is 18 years of age or older. You have to 'enrol' (put your name on the list) to vote before the election.

### ◆ **How do I enrol to vote?**

Go to the Post Office and get an electoral enrolment form. Fill out the form and post it to the NSW Electoral Commission, who will put your name on the Electoral Roll.

### ◆ **Where do I go to vote?**

Your nearest public school in your suburb will usually be a 'polling place' (the place where you go to vote) on Election Day (Saturday). Ring toll free 1300 135 736 for information about polling places. You can vote between 8 am and 6 pm.

### ◆ **How do I find out if the polling place is wheelchair accessible?**

When the polling places are advertised in the newspaper there will be a small picture of a wheelchair next to the polling place to tell you it has wheelchair access. A picture of a hand + wheelchair next to the name of the polling place means there will be support provided to people with disability. For more information ring toll free 1300 135 736.

### ◆ **What support is available for people with disability?**

A voter with sight impairment, intellectual or physical disability can get assistance from one extra person to read the ballot papers if needed; and to number the ballot papers if needed.

### ◆ **What support is available for people from NESB?**

The Electoral Commission provides a multilingual Voter's Guide.

### ◆ **What is a 'postal vote'?**

If you can't get to a polling place on Election Day you can go to the Post Office and apply to vote by mail. This is called a 'postal vote'. You need to apply early so that ballot papers can be sent to you before Election Day. You need to vote (fill out the ballot papers) and post them back so they arrive at the NSW Electoral Commission by 6 pm on Wednesday 28 March at the latest.





## MDAA

The Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW (MDAA) is the peak body in NSW for people from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) with disability and their families and carers

MDAA aims to promote, protect and secure the rights and interests of people from NESB with disability and their families and carers in NSW

We have 210 individual members and 80 organisational members

## Our services

- **Individual advocacy:** we help people stand up for their rights, e.g. in housing, immigration, school, work or disability services
- **Advocacy development:** we work to increase awareness and change community attitudes about disability and cultural diversity
- **Systemic advocacy:** we work to change policies, procedures, practices and service delivery in government and non-government agencies
- **Industry development:** we work with communities, government and non-government agencies to increase knowledge and understanding of the experiences of people from NESB with disability
- **mdaa cultural abilities:** we provide training and education in cultural diversity and disability

In 2005-2006 we provided individual advocacy support for over 400 people from NESB with disability speaking over 40 languages.

The top 6 issues were accommodation, health, family/social support, immigration, education and subsidies/entitlements.

For more information: [www.mdaa.org.au](http://www.mdaa.org.au)