



Points of Departure

## POD Project Bulletin Issue 1

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## New Advocacy Project at MCWH

### Introducing the Points of Departure (POD) Project

The Multicultural Centre for Women's Health is an immigrant and refugee women's organisation committed to improving the health and wellbeing of immigrant and refugee women in workplaces and community settings across Australia. The Points of Departure Project (POD) is a recently introduced special project which seeks to build knowledge and capacity of NGOs and individuals to advocate on key health issues affecting immigrant and refugee women. Women's lives are marked by constant change, and for immigrant and refugee women, their arrival in Australia is also a departure point for a new phase in their lives, hence the title of the project.

The POD project kicked off in September 2008 with my appointment to the position of National Project and Advocacy Officer. My main task is to ensure the smooth running of the project and that project goals are achieved. Several activities will be undertaken in order to address the project objectives. One of the initial tasks on this project is to establish an Expert Advisory Committee (EAC) which will guide the project. I will be working in consultation with the EAC, which will comprise of experts from different fields of relevance to women's health to ensure that the wide range of issues affecting immigrant and refugee women is adequately addressed.

### Planned project activities

The EAC will hold regular meetings with other stakeholders from across Australia via teleconferencing, to discuss key issues directly affecting immigrant and refugee women. In consultation with the EAC, I will develop a discussion paper mapping the main national issues for immigrant and refugee women. The paper will be circulated to stakeholders for comment.

A major outcome of the project will be the development of an Advocacy Toolkit, which will be launched and widely promoted and disseminated for use by NGOs and individuals involved in advocacy work. A national forum will be held in early 2009 to discuss the key issues raised in the discussion paper, and to decide on key issues that will be addressed in the Advocacy Toolkit. I will then develop a series of papers around the chosen issues.

I extend an invitation to all relevant and interested parties to express their interest in this exciting project. I have created a mailing list, and will be adding all interested individuals and NGOs to this list, which I will also update regularly. Signing up to this list will assist me in contacting interested persons for purposes of sharing project information; consultation on specific issues of interest to the project; invitation to conferences and meetings; and regular project progress update. Positive contributions to the successful completion of this project are most welcome.

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