

Multicultural Speakers Development Project: Reimagining a HIV Positive Speakers program into the 2030s

Authors:

David O'Keeffe¹

¹Living Positive Victoria

Background/Purpose:

The Positive Speakers Bureau (PSB) of Living Positive Victoria has acted to achieve a significant change in the cultural diversity of its membership. The proportion of speakers who identify as being from a multicultural background has increased from 10% in 2019 to 40% in 2026. This provided the program with an opportunity to review and adapt the program to more effectively embed views and experiences of PLHIV from multicultural backgrounds.

Approach:

In collaboration with nine PLHIV from multicultural backgrounds, the program undertook a systematic process to:

- Review, redesign and implement changes to the PSB that centre the needs and experiences of multicultural people living with HIV.
- Develop and implement a sector engagement strategy to promote the team of speakers and advocates from multicultural communities.

Outcomes/Impact:

The review resulted in significant changes throughout the program, including training and development, website resources, recruitment of speakers, resulting in reforms beyond what was originally expected.

The review maintained strong engagement across the culturally diverse PLHIV working group, with members reporting a supportive environment in which their shared insights and experiences contributed meaningfully to the redevelopment of the program.

Evaluation feedback indicates:

- improved engagement by new and current speakers with the program,
- training and mentoring that is responsive to the needs of multicultural community members,

Innovation and Significance:

This novel project resulted in changes to the program beyond what had been expected. This project demonstrates the benefits of collaboratively and meaningfully reviewing program policies and practices through the lens of a multicultural perspective. The lesson from this approach is that this is important in the response and adaptation to the needs of the HIV response for PLHIV from multicultural backgrounds.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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