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## **Budget initiatives for western Sydney & CALD communities welcomed, but more help needed to address regional concerns**

SydWest Multicultural Services has welcomed the NSW Government 2023-2024 Budget, with its strong focus on western Sydney, and measures that bolster diversity and address cost of living concerns.

CEO Elfa Moraitakis said the organisation was pleased to see an allocation of funds for increased affordable and social housing, expanded temporary accommodation to combat rising homelessness and a rental reform package aimed at safeguarding renters from unjust evictions.

‘We support the allocation of \$39 million to prevent domestic, family and sexual violence and to support victim safety,’ Ms Moraitakis said.

“We particularly applaud the establishment of a specialist multicultural domestic and family violence centre for south-western Sydney, which recognises that women from different cultural backgrounds face significant barriers accessing mainstream services.

“However, we hope the model can be quickly expanded to other parts of western Sydney including the Blacktown local government area, which has some of the highest rates of domestic violence in NSW.”

Ms Moraitakis said additional money for the NDIS scheme would be welcomed by many of the organisation’s clients throughout western Sydney and the inner west, and that bill relief measures through programs including the Family Energy Rebate and the Low-Income Household Rebate would be appreciated by local families.

‘We believe an awareness campaign in other languages would help CALD communities better access all of current rebates provided by government and we would be happy to collaborate with government on this to help ensure everyone who is eligible has access.’”

The creation of a Multicultural Youth Network to advise government about matters affecting young people from CALD backgrounds was an excellent idea, Ms Moraitakis said, with SydWest ready and willing to nominate outstanding local youth to the role.



“While there is always more to be done, we look forward to working with the Minns government to support people to live a better life in western Sydney and other parts of Sydney that we serve.”

ENDS.

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Established nearly 40 years ago, SydWest Multicultural Services is a leading organisation for all cultural diversity issues responding to community needs and opportunities across Greater Western Sydney. SydWest provides a range of services to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities to assist with settling and living productive and independent lives in the community. We offer flexible and integrated service models across the life course of refugees and migrants, supporting the self-determination and empowerment of our diverse communities. SydWest is an innovative employer of choice, with passionate, qualified and experienced bilingual and bicultural staff who are sensitive to the languages and cultures of the communities we represent.