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Asian Mental Health Newsletter

Northern DHB Support Agency

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How to contact us:

This newsletter is the property of Northern DHB Support Agency (NDSA), a shared services agency jointly owned by Auckland, Counties Manukau, and Waitemata DHBs. NDSA also provides services to Northland DHB as a client.

View us at:
http://www.networknorth.org.nz/page/nn_37.php

Reach us by:
POST
P O Box 112147
Penrose
Auckland

PHONE
(09) 589 3939
(09) 589 3900

FAX
(09) 589 3901

EMAIL
Lucinda.li@ndsa.co.nz

The merger of the Regional Asian and Refugee Mental Health & Addictions Advisory Groups

The end of the year is generally a good time for review and strategic planning. After a year of operating separately, the Northern Region Asian Mental Health & Addictions Advisory Group and the Refugee Advisory Group have decided to consolidate into one.

The combined group will now provide strategic advice to the development of service responsiveness to the Asian as well as migrant and refugee communities. Furthermore, the Group will work under the leadership and chairmanship of the Regional Director, Mental Health & Addiction Services, Northern Region, Ian McKenzie. The new changes will enable the regional expertise in Asian, migrant, and refugee issues to be more effectively shared and supported.

Currently, the Group consists of representatives from the following organisations: Auckland DHB, Waitemata DHB, Counties Manukau DHB, Te Pou, Connect, Refugee Services, Refugees as Survivors NZ, Ethnic Voice of NZ, CADS, Problem Gambling Foundation, Tamaki PHO, East Health Services PHO, and also interpreter and community representatives.

With the festive season round the corner, the Advisory Group would like to wish you a very *Merry Christmas* and a *Happy and Healthy New Year!*

See you in 2009!



What's on in 2009

The International Centre for Cultural Studies USA Inc., in collaboration with World Congress of Ethnic Religions (Europe) and the National Council of Elders Mayas, Xinca and Garifuna of Guatemala, ICCS Nagpur, India and other organisations, is announcing the Third International Conference and Gathering of the Elders entitled *Renaissance of the Ancient Traditions and Cultures: Challenges and Solutions*, from 31/1/09 to 5/2/09 in Nagpur, India. For details, please visit www.iccsus.org

AUT University and the Refugee Council of New Zealand are organising the 2009 National Refugee Conference entitled *Looking Back and Moving Forward – Refugee Health and Wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand*, on 9-11 July 2009 in Auckland. For further information, please contact Ruth De Sousa via ruth.desousa@aut.ac.nz or www.aut-camhr.ac.nz

New Zealand Chinese Association is organising the next Banana event entitled *Rising Dragon, Soaring Bananas* in conjunction with the International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas to take place on 18-19 July 2009 in Auckland. Please visit website www.goingbananas.org.nz for further details.

Gamble Free Day Dining Discount Campaign A Win-win-Win Situation!

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New Zealand's gambling industry has been growing rapidly in the past decades and has caused considerable damage to individuals, families and our communities. In 2004, the first day of September was declared the "Gamble Free Day" as the national day of action against gambling harm. To take another step further, last year the Asian Services of Problem Gambling Foundation (PGF) launched the [Gamble Free Day Dining Discount Campaign](#) in [Auckland](#). On the day, the participating restaurants gave a 10% discount to customers who presented the Gamble Free Day dining discount vouchers. The idea was to promote healthy entertainment for individuals/ families/ friends instead of putting money into gambling.

The campaign was so successful that it has now been expanded to [Hamilton](#), [Wellington](#), [Christchurch](#) and [Dunedin](#). The annual event aims at encouraging people to spend their time and money on families and friends, enjoy life, and care for the community.

Win! A total of 137 restaurants participated in the event this year to help raise the awareness and minimise gambling harm in the Asian communities. Most of them have expressed their willingness to take part in the event again next year for the good reputation, respect, and business potential they gained from participating in the campaign. We sincerely thank the restaurant owners for their support and generosity especially at the downturn of the economy.

Win! From the feedback gathered, we are glad to know that more Chinese and Asian people learnt about the 'Gamble Free Day' and 'Problem Gambling Foundation Asian Services' through this dining discount campaign and not only just the 10% dining discount.

Win! We are particularly delighted to hear that 85% of the respondents said that this campaign has increased their awareness about the harm caused by problem gambling in NZ Asian communities, and it has also increased their confidence to seek help from or introduce their

friends to the Asian Services if necessary in the future.

For all its positive effects, we call this campaign **a win-win-win situation**. However, we could not have achieved our goals without the contribution and help from our 56 passionate volunteers. They devoted time to attend our training sessions and approached the restaurant owners one by one in person.

We would also like to acknowledge the contribution from the Asian community leaders, churches, schools, media and everyone who has supported 'Gamble Free Day'. Their support was crucial for the success of the campaign.

We thank all the help that we have received and we look forward to hearing more feedback and comments from you. For more information or to contact us, please call: **0800 862 342 Asian Hotline**.