

MEDIA RELEASE

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ACL celebrates two years of assisting refugees settle

ACL's refugee settlement service based at Auburn recently celebrated its second anniversary of helping refugees settle in Australia.

Through a consortium of partners, ACL helps to settle newly-arrived humanitarian entrants in the country through the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS), a Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) funded program.

The ACL IHSS Consortium partners, Resolve FM, NSW STARTTS and Mission Australia, deliver the service across the Sydney Metropolitan Northern and Southern regions, which include Wollongong and Newcastle.

ACL Government Programs General Manager Jennifer Whitmarsh said ACL's IHSS Consortium helped humanitarian entrants to this country rebuild their lives in Australia by providing them with support to meet their initial settlement needs.

"Emphasis is placed on sensitivity to cultural differences and minimum intrusion into entrants' lives," Ms Whitmarsh said.

"The IHSS helps entrants gain access to mainstream services such as Centrelink, Medicare, banks, general and specialist health and medical services, education, training and employment, as well as links to the community.

"Since October 2005, ACL has settled more than 6,600 humanitarian entrants in Australia through the IHSS and assisted more than 2,800 humanitarian arrivals in transit to other states."

Ms Whitmarsh said all stakeholders in the IHSS program are committed to the ongoing delivery of quality settlement services.

"The flexibility of this program and the focus in client needs ensures that we are constantly learning from our clients how best to assist in their settlement process," Ms Whitmarsh said.

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