

# PATHWAYS INTO OUR SECTOR

Growing the domestic and family violence, sexual assault, women's health and wellbeing workforce.



Rana, Manager Multicultural Women's Office,  
Multicultural Families Organisation  
Diploma in Business, Diploma of Counselling

## Bringing lived experience to working with culturally and linguistically diverse families.

"Family tensions are often exacerbated by traumas experienced through migration or refugee experiences. Domestic and family violence is present in the lives of many women who access our services," Rana said.

Rana came to Australia as a nine year old when her family left war-torn Lebanon, and understands the experiences of living with dual cultures. Following high school, Rana completed a Diploma in Business with TAFE Queensland and then advanced her career in administrative roles in the Canberra public service over fifteen years.

Ten years ago, Rana moved to the Gold Coast to take a break and recharge her batteries.

"I volunteered with Multicultural Families Organisation. This led to part-time, then full-time employment and then two years

ago, my current management role," Rana said.

Rana completed a Diploma in Counselling and undertook extensive professional development training to build knowledge and skills in the domestic and family violence sector. She also recently completed a Diploma in Holistic Integrative Creative Arts Therapy.

"Traditional counselling, as practised in the Western world, may not be suitable for some individuals. Many of my clients are uncomfortable with talk therapy so I find alternative approaches such as movement, music or art. This enables them to express their feelings and needs more effectively," she said.

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"This work can put your mental health at risk if clear boundaries are not established. It's important to create a nurturing supportive environment in which to practise, and a work life balance."

New workers to the sector should practise self-care, develop strategies to wind down, and make effective use of professional supervision.

Rana hopes to study a degree in counselling to further develop skills and knowledge to ensure the needs of women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are met.

"Recently, a woman I was supporting told me that she felt a wave of safety and that after connecting with our service she finally had a family in Australia. This made me very happy. It was a great reward."

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