Mirah Vanheems-falovic

Mirah.vanheem@merrihealth.org.au

Facilitated by Liz Phillips

Koorie Community Engagement Officer

Creating a welcoming environment

Site Audit Report January, 2022

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Merri welcoming environments | Bell St (8) | | Brunswick (4) | | Fawkner (1) | | Glenroy (2) | | Merri Central (7) | | Wangaratta | | Moreland Rd (3) | | Chifley Drive  (5) | | Vic Place (6) | | Notes |
|  | **Y** | **N** | **Y** | **N** | **Y** | **N** | **Y** | **N** | **Y** | **N** | **Y** | **N** | **Y** | **N** | **Y** | **N** | **Y** | **N** |  |
| Is there an acknowledgement plaque on or in the building? | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  |  |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Fawkner acknowledgement located on council building – not directly in front of Merri entrance |
| Does the waiting area display Aboriginal symbols of welcome, posters and Aboriginal artwork? | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  |  |  |  | N | Y |  | Y |  |  |
| Is the art locally developed? | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  |  |  |  | N | Y |  | Y |  |  |
| Are the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags displayed? | Y |  |  | N | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  |  |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Moreland Rd need Torres Strait Islander flag too |
| Are there Aboriginal specific information pamphlets in waiting areas promoting other services for Aboriginal people? | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  |  | N |  |  |  |  | Y |  | Y |  |  |
| Is there reading material that is relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people? | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  |  | N |  |  |  | N | Y |  | Y |  |  |
| Do reception staff acknowledge every person’s presence on arrival? | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  |  |  |  |  | Y |  | Y |  |  |
| Do other areas (beside reception) accessible to clients display Aboriginal symbols of welcome, posters and Aboriginal artwork? | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  |  |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  |  |
| Do other areas (beside reception) accessible to clients have Aboriginal specific information pamphlets promoting Merri or other services? | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  | Y |  |  | N |  |  |  | N | Y |  | Y |  |  |
| Points tally | 9/9 |  | 8/9 |  | 9/9 |  | 9/9 |  | 6/9 |  |  |  | 3/9 |  | 9/9 |  | 9/9 |  |  |

**\*** N/A – no waiting room/reception

**Creating a Welcoming Environment – Site Audit report 2022**

Site audits were conducted across 8 Merri Health metropolitan sites in January 2022. The Wangaratta site was not audited due to timing concerns, it will be assessed later in 2022. Chifley Dr level 1 and 2 in Preston were assessed as one site.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **%** | **No** | **%** |
| **Is there an acknowledgement plaque on or in the building?** | 8 | 100% | 0 | 0% |
| Does the waiting area display Aboriginal symbols of welcome, posters and Aboriginal artwork? | 7 | 87.5% | 1 | 12.5% |
| Is the artwork locally developed? | 7 | 87.5% | 1 | 0% |
| Are the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags displayed? | 7 | 100% | 1 | 0% |
| Are there Aboriginal specific information pamphlets in waiting areas promoting other services for Aboriginal people? | 7 | 87.5% | 1 | 12.5% |
| Is there reading material that is relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people? | 7 | 87.5% | 1 | 12.5% |
| Do reception staff acknowledge every person's presence on arrival? | 7 | 87.5% | 1 | 12.5% |
| Do other areas (beside reception) accessible to clients display Aboriginal symbols of welcome, posters and Aboriginal artwork? | 8 | 100% | 0 | 0% |
| Do other areas (besides reception) accessible to clients have Aboriginal specific information pamphlets promoting MCHS or other services? | 7 | 87.5% | 1 | 12.5% |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Site Notes** |  |
| Bell St | Bell St was well equipped Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reading material and information pamphlets. Glass artwork, purchased from Wathaurong Art & Glass, was displayed in the waiting areas and throughout the service areas. Wathaurong Art & Glass is owned by Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd, a Kulin Nation organisation.  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags were displayed at the front desk. Acknowledgement plaque was also displayed at the front entrance. |
| Brunswick | Plenty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pamphlets were displayed throughout the Brunswick site. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags were not visible from the main waiting room. Acknowledgment plaque was visible at the entrance. NAIDOC 2021 poster visible from the waiting area. |
| Fawkner | Acknowledgement plaque was also shared with the Moreland Council. Plenty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific support pamphlets were displayed in the waiting area as well as the halls on the way to clinicians’ rooms. Dixon Patten’s print was on the wall in the hallway. Both flags were clearly displayed with NAIDOC 2021 poster visible from the hallway leading into the waiting area. |
| Glenroy | Acknowledgement of country (again shared with the Moreland council) is located on the council building but not at the front of Merri entrance. NAIDOC 2021 poster was displayed as well as pamphlets with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation. Reception had flags displayed as well as Aboriginal artwork. |
| Merri Central | Merri Central office had both flags displayed in the waiting area. A consulting room in the reception area is named Womin Jeka (with permission granted from Wurundjeri Council). This room has two large Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags displayed. A print of the Community Conversations artwork but Dixon Patten was on display in the hallways (not visible to clients).  Note: Merri Central don’t have a lot of clients through except for occasional engagement meetings, however as a prominent leader in the sector, we host numerous meetings with many diverse partners. |
| Moreland Rd | Acknowledgement plaque at front door with no reception/waiting area. There are no Aboriginal artworks visible to clients in the main foyer. A small Aboriginal flag was displayed, relatively hidden in a corner. No Torres Strait Islander flag was displayed. A large Australian flag was displayed in one of the main meeting/activity rooms. No Aboriginal artwork was displayed. No Aboriginal pamphlets or readings were available to clients.  Moreland Rd staff expressed that there was a lack of space available to display both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and pamphlets. |
| Chifley drive | Chifley Drive was well equipped with Aboriginal pamphlets and readings. Both flags were visible from reception. A copy of the Koorie Mail was still available to read at a table near the reception desk. There was also a NAIDOC week box full of NAIDOC themed decorations. Aboriginal artwork was displayed in the reception area. Acknowledgement to country was visible on entrance and Aboriginal artwork was displayed. |
| Vic Place | Margaret McNally’s Peaceful Spring painting on the stairway can be visible from the entrance foyer. Aboriginal specific pamphlets were available in the waiting area. Both flags were clearly visible in the waiting area and a Welcome to Country plaque was situated at the entrance.  The Vic place co-house had a copy of the NAIDOC 2021 poster however no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork displayed. |

**A scoring tally out of 9 was applied to each site scored as follows:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Merri Health Site | Score |
| Bell St | 9 |
| Brunswick | 8 |
| Fawkner | 9 |
| Glenroy | 9 |
| Merri Central | 6 |
| Moreland Rd | 3 |
| Chifley drive | 9 |
| Vic place | 9 |
| Average score | 7.75 |

**Scoring categories**

**0-4** Your service is still a challenging one for Aboriginal people. Don’t despair; small steps can make a difference.

**4-6** Your intentions are good. Your service/site has made a start and shows potential to becoming a welcoming environment.

**6-8** The work on these issues is happening on several fronts now and starting to make a real difference. Coordinate and consolidate.   
**9** Your service/site has created a welcoming environment. Congratulations.

**Summary**

The average score across all sites was 7.75/9 with 6 sites scoring 8 or above. 5 of these were Merri sites with dedicated reception areas. They are also spaces frequented by clients.

The one Merri site that scored a 6, has very little client contact. It is important to note that this site holds occasional engagement meetings with diverse members partners and members of the community

The one Merri site that scored a 3 does not have a reception but do engage with clients in group situations and/or consultations with families.

**Suggestions**

* Laminate NAIDOC posters to lessen damage. Frame each year and distribute to areas within the site clients may use. Don’t apply a use-by test based on the date of the posters commemorating each NAIDOC – information is contained explaining the annual theme for each.
* Art activities incorporating Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander culture could possibly be incorporated in sessions with activity groups.
* A garden activity/art creation depicting Victorian Aboriginal symbols or animals. A picture of the flags could be posted on the wall in the entrance area or rooms frequented by activity or client groups.
* Send out window stickers of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags to locations that do not have display spaces
* Send out some updated pamphlets and readings to all sites
* Create a sign directing clients to the Acknowledgement of Country and attach it to the entrance of the Glenroy site