



Background

The Nepalese Community Forum was held on Saturday 13 September 2025 at Burwood Library.

The Forum aimed to bring the Nepalese community and key stakeholders together to:

1. Discuss key issues affecting the Nepalese community, particularly around youth mental health and community safety.
2. Increase community awareness of support services, enhance connections and collaboration between community members, and share information with the wider community.

The need for the Forum was identified by the Consul General of Nepal to NSW in response to emerging incidents of sexual assault, youth mental health concerns, and suicides within the local Nepalese community and among international students.

The Forum was hosted and supported by Burwood Council in partnership with the Consulate of Nepal.

Who attended

A total of 52 participants attended, including representatives from:

- Nepalese community organisations (12)
- Community members (22)
- Government agencies (13)
- Service providers (2)
- Community media (5)

Key Challenges Facing the Nepalese Community in Sydney

- **Visa and migration stress** – contributing to increased mental health risks.
- **Youth mental health challenges** amongst second-generation Nepalese.
- **Social isolation and belonging** - international students and new arrivals often feel lonely and disconnected.
- **Limited access to services** – many international students are ineligible for key supports.
- **Cost of living pressures** – combined with work restrictions (24 hours per week) for international students.
- **Youth mental health and suicide** – high number of incidents within the community.

- **Cultural stigma and shame** - barriers to seeking help for mental health or family violence.
- **Family and domestic violence** - challenges in recognising coercive control despite new laws.
- **Sexual assault** - cultural norms and fears around reporting.
- **Intersectionality of law, order and cultural issues** - perceptions of police and cultural factors influence reporting of crime
- **Global events** – issues in Nepal and internationally impacting community wellbeing locally.
- **Language barriers** – compounding feelings of exclusion and isolation.
- **Lack of proper orientation information and support for new arrivals**

What can we do?

Key issues	What's needed/Ideas for action
Greater awareness of support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-departure booklet for students coming to Australia • New arrival packs and orientation for new students and migrants • Services should attend university open days to reach students early and increase awareness of supports available • Work with service providers to make student support clearer • Break down language barriers by offering translated resources
Mental health and isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train community leaders and peer educators in <i>Mental Health First Aid</i> • Train police in mental health and cultural awareness • Promote mental health awareness and encourage help-seeking • Organise networking events to welcome new arrivals, connect people with services, and build a sense of belonging • Develop strategies to identify issues early and prevent crises from escalating to police involvement
Gambling and mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early education/awareness about gambling including in primary and secondary schools • Educate about gambling risks
Domestic violence, coercive control and sexual assault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early education about respectful relationships in schools • Talk openly about coercive control and domestic violence • Education about new coercive control laws and reporting support
Work rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate employers and workers about what is fair work • Push for employer accountability and worker rights

What support is available

- Multicultural Navigator health service - providing Nepalese worker, referral and resources
- Mental health first aid training for community leaders/members
- New coercive control laws
- Alternative points/venues for reporting or access support that feels less intimidating such as:
 - New service starting at Ashfield police station providing a women and girls only space
 - Multicultural Community Liaison officer within the Police
 - Online reporting of sexual abuse (as well as reporting via counsellors, community workers and police)

See also service list over page

APPENDIX A: KEY SUPPORT SERVICES

Support type	Service	Contact/More info
Health, wellbeing and social services	Multicultural Health Navigator Services Eligibility: Limited English and between 18 to 65 years LGAs: Burwood, Strathfield, Inner West, Canterbury, St George, Ashfield and Canterbury, Kogarah, Hurstville, Rockdale	Ritu Vaidhya - Bilingual Health Navigator (Nepalese) (Tuesday, Thursday, Friday) (02) 9597 5455 rituv@advancediversity.org.au
	Transcultural Mental Health Line Eligibility: 18 years and over, CALD background, not currently receiving mental health services or carer/family member. Delivery via Telehealth (telephone or videoconferencing). NSW-wide	1800 648 911 Mon – Fri, 9am - 4:30pm
Mental health and counselling support	Australia Nepal Public Link offers 2 sessions mental health counselling (online) per week for Nepali speaking community	info@anpl.org.au 0433 933 155
	ACAP Psychology Clinic (counselling)	(02) 8236 8070
	University of Sydney Psychology Clinic - A low-cost teaching clinic run by postgraduate psychology students under supervision. Offers therapy and assessments for children, teens, adults, and families	(02) 9114 4343
	The Mary Aikenhead Clinic - Teaching psychology & counselling clinic run by Australian Catholic University in Strathfield. Provides psychological assessment, counselling, group/intervention programs, and outreach to schools, disability and aged-care providers	(02) 9701 4708 <i>(leave a message if call is unanswered)</i> maryaikenhead.clinic@acu.edu.au
	One Door Mental Health - Free psychological therapies for people having thoughts of suicide, or who have attempted suicide in South Western Sydney. International students/temporary residents are eligible	(02) 9199 6143 healthcare@onedoor.org.au
	Beyond Blue - Online chat and phone mental health support and counselling	1300224636 (Call a counsellor)
	GROW Australia - peer support for adults and for young people aged 18 - 25. Non-clinical group, led by peers with lived experience, and focuses on building resilience, confidence, and community. Free. No referral or diagnosis needed, just a warm welcome.	1800 558 268 Eastregion.admin@grow.org.au grow.org.au/find-a-group
	Gamble Aware - Phone, online chat or in-person gambling advice and support	1800 858 858

Support type	Service	Contact/More info
Domestic, family and sexual assault	Women and Girls Emergency Centre (WAGEC) - crisis support, safe housing, case management, and domestic and family violence support	Intake: (02) 9319 4088 (Mon - Fri, 9am - 4pm) After hours 1800 737 732
	1800RESPECT - Support if you, or someone you know, is experiencing sexual assault or domestic and family violence	1800 737 732 (1800RESPECT)
DV and Immigration, Legal issues	Redfern Legal Centre International Student Legal Service NSW (Sexual assault and sexual harassment, Domestic violence, Housing problems, Employment, Complaints about colleges or universities, Fines, Debts, Car accidents, Discrimination, Family law)	rlc.org.au/what-we-do/our-services/international-student-legal-service-nsw
	Immigration Advice and Rights Centre (IARC) - offers free immigration legal advice and assistance to people experiencing vulnerability and gives priority appointments to people subject to domestic and family violence	iarc.org.au/immigration-and-domestic-violence
Health Clinics	headspace (GP services) - International students can access support via private practitioners and claim a rebate via their Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) provider	(02) 9193 8000
Crisis Support	If someone is in danger and needs immediate help, call	Triple Zero (000) NSW Mental Health Access Line 1800 011 511
	Lifeline - Crisis service if someone is experiencing a personal crisis or distress or is thinking about suicide. Phone, text or online crises chat support. Online support toolkit	13 11 14
	Suicide Call Back Service - Phone and online chat/video chat counselling to people affected by suicide or thinking about suicide	1300 659 467

Top 4 online resources for International Students

1. **Study NSW Mental health and counselling support** for international students
www.study.nsw.gov.au/current-students/staying-healthy-and-safe/mental-health/
2. **Support for International Students**
<https://www.study.nsw.gov.au/current-students/>
3. **International Student Health Hub** - health resources across 50+ organisation
www.study.nsw.gov.au/current-students/staying-healthy-and-safe/health-hub/
4. **Redfern Legal Centre International Student Legal Service NSW**
rlc.org.au/what-we-do/our-services/international-student-legal-service-nsw