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## **Launch of DVD for 'Fear and Shame': Using theatre to ease the stigma of mental illness in the Greek community**

Fear and Shame is a theatre based project working to improve mental health literacy and reduce stigma around mental illness within the Greek speaking community. As part of Mental Health Month, a DVD of this project has been launched.

The Fear and Shame DVD aims to encourage community members to discuss issues around mental illness to reduce the associated stigma and encourages help-seeking behaviour by individuals with a mental illness and their families. The DVD is designed for Greek speaking consumers, carers and relevant professionals.

At the heart of the project is the play 'Fear and Shame,' written by Dushan Ristevski. The play is a family drama that follows the experiences of a family when their youngest son develops a mental illness.

Klara Takas, Greek Bilingual Counsellor, St George Mental Health Service, said the use of theatre is a culturally appropriate way of generating discussion within the Greek community.

"It increases knowledge and awareness of mental illness and we hope it will enhance empathy and understanding in a less confrontational way, which would assist in decreasing stigma," Ms Takas said.

The Greek speaking community is one of the largest communities within the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District. Greek ranks in the top five languages spoken at home other than English in the District and people born in Greece make up the second largest population born in a non-English speaking country.

Lisa Woodland, Manager, Multicultural Health Service said it was a great privilege to launch such an important resource during Mental Health Month.

"This DVD builds upon the excellent work done by the St George Mental Health Service in reducing the stigma associated with mental illness in culturally diverse communities," Ms Woodland said.

Funding for this project was provided by the Multicultural Health Service, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, and a number of sponsors from the Greek community. Marrickville Council provided funding to create the DVD.

The DVD is a free resource for consumers, carers and service providers in the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District. For interested parties in other districts, the DVD may be purchased for a fee of \$5 plus an additional \$2 for shipping and handling fees. For more information email: [klara.takas@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:klara.takas@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au).

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**South Eastern Sydney Local Health District**

**Media contact: Maxine Brennan 02 9113 2601 or 0413 028 776**

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