

---

**Tuesday 16 June 2015**

## **Nafas Naqi: Supporting the Arabic community to quit smoking**

Nafas Naqi is a new project within the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) that aims to improve the health of Arabic speaking people in the St George area by providing support to stop smoking.

Tobacco smoking is one of the leading causes of premature illness and death, contributing to serious medical conditions including heart disease, stroke and cancer.

Arabic is the most widely spoken non English language in NSW (ABS, 2011) and the Arabic-speaking population in NSW has a higher smoking rate than the NSW average.

Myna Hua, Manager Health Promotion Service, SESLHD, said research has shown that more than a quarter of Arabic speakers are daily smokers.

“In South Eastern Sydney, almost 10% of Arabic-speaking women are smoking at prenatal visits raising the risk of miscarriage, premature birth and sudden infant death” Ms Hua said.

To support the Arabic speaking community, particularly women, reduce their rate of smoking, the SESLHD Health Promotion Service has received funding from the Cancer Institute NSW to establish Nafas Naqi, in partnership with the Multicultural Health Service, Al Zahra Muslim Women’s Association and the South Eastern Sydney Medicare Local.

Chief Cancer Officer and CEO of the Cancer Institute NSW Professor David Currow congratulated the SESLHD on the initiative.

“The Nafas Naqi project has great potential to support people in the Arabic-speaking community to focus on their needs in a way that is relevant to their community’s priorities,” Professor Currow said.

Ms Hua said the funding provided by the Cancer Institute NSW provides a valuable opportunity to improve the health and wellbeing of the Arabic speaking community in the St George area.

“We have been able to engage an Arabic speaking worker to promote the health and financial benefits of quitting tobacco, and assist smokers to quit for themselves and their families through making referrals to tobacco cessation services.”

“Women can receive up to 8 weeks of free nicotine replacement therapy.”

---

**South Eastern Sydney Local Health District**  
**Media contact: Elizabeth Grant 02 9382 8226 or 0428 628 722**

“We look forward to working with the community and local health service providers to build a sustainable system to support the community to quit smoking”.

If you want to quit smoking, or know someone who wants to quit, start a conversation with Nafas Naqi on 0412 252 797.