



Media Release

Friday, 5 February 2010

DOCUMENTARY SHINES LIGHT ON DREAMS AND PASSIONS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Local residents and first time actors have shared a snapshot of their life, managing different degrees of abilities, in the documentary *You Can Do. I Can Do.* The film, that showcases Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre (MRC)'s innovative multicultural and disability care approach, will have its premiere screening at a launch next week by the Parliamentary Secretary for Disability, Bill Shorten.

The documentary was filmed over a period of 6 months and the script was developed in collaboration with the 'actors', **Meadow Heights** resident, **Mustapha Khan** (from Fijian/Indian background), **Thomastown** resident **Lisa Azzopardi** (Maltese) and **Lalor** resident **Snezana Pejcinovska** (Macedonian), as they interacted with their elderly carers and their Spectrum MRC support workers. Both state and federal governments funded the project to raise awareness of Spectrum's best practice, as well as increase utilisation of disability services amongst migrant communities.

"The documentary offers the rare opportunity of entering into the everyday life of people with disabilities. We witness their passion, humour, hopes, fears and frustrations when negotiating the small and big obstacles they encounter in life," said film producer and Spectrum MRC's Aged & Disability Special Project Coordinator, **Ms Nikki Marshall**.

While 25% of the Victorian population was born overseas, data collected by the Department of Human Services (DHS) shows that for the 2003-2004 period only 5% of the people accessing disability services in Victoria spoke a language other than English, and only 4% was born in non-English speaking country. This was further confirmed in the Productivity Commission's *Report on Government Services 2009*, which stated that, nationally, people from non-English speaking background with a disability are not using government-funded disability services.

"Families from a migrant background have a further level of difficulty when accessing services for people with a disability. This documentary shows how Spectrum MRC addresses the isolation experienced by people with disabilities and their carers from migrant backgrounds, by creating opportunities for social connection, developing trust with families and demonstrating that the services system can respond to their needs," explained Spectrum MRC's Aged & Disability Services Manager, **Ms Nirmala Abraham**.

Actor **Mustapha Khan**, commented on his emotions the first time he saw the documentary: "I felt great, I felt like I could reach people, I could communicate and improve our disability system. I felt I could change people's perception about people with disabilities, that we could be seen in a different light, that we could be seen like normal people, and that we are no different to anybody else," he said.

"For all of us at Intafusion Films, making this documentary was a privilege. It was an opportunity to craft a story that, at its heart, is about charity – that most precious of human interactions where those involved are at once givers and receivers. *You Can Do. I Can Do.* is a film of which I am immensely proud. In many respects, it exemplifies why I make films: to use my craft as a means for people to share their stories, to inspire, to explore what it is to be human," said **director, Mr John Cherry**.

This documentary was funded by the Victorian Department of Human Services and by the Federal Department of Families, Community Services, Housing and Indigenous Affairs (FACSHIA).

Media Kit (including 30 min documentary *You Can Do. I Can Do.*) can be couriered upon request.

Event Details & Photo Opportunity – Interviews available with the actors prior

EVENT:	Hon Bill Shorten MP to launch Spectrum's DVD <i>You Can Do. I Can Do.</i>
DATE & TIME:	Friday 12 th February 2010 – 11.00am
VENUE:	Preston Shire Hall, Crn High and Gower St, Preston
Media Contact:	Cristina Marras 0429 707 547 communications@spectrumvic.org.au – www.spectrumvic.org.au

Spectrum 1984-2009 - Celebrating 25 years of making a difference for migrants & refugees.