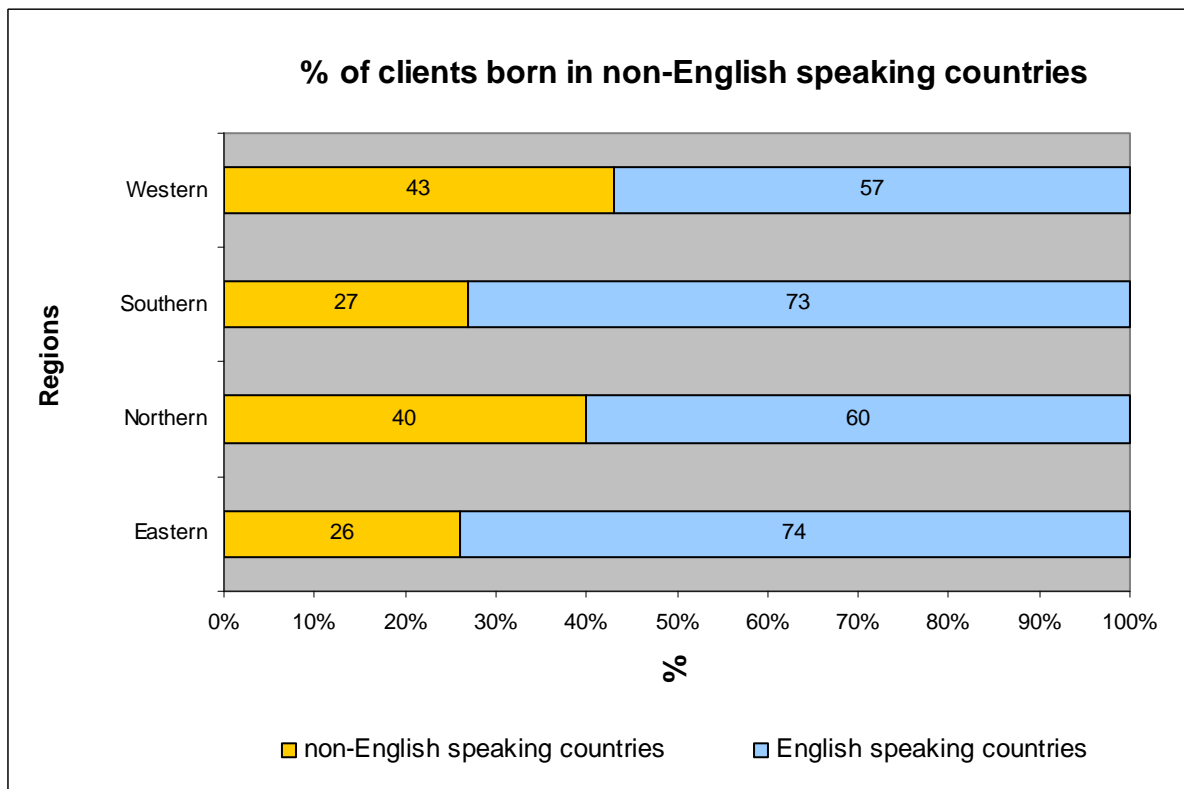


Cultural Diversity at RDNS

RDNS is committed to the Victorian Government's *Valuing Cultural Diversity* policy, which informs RDNS' policies to ensure Melburnians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds can enjoy access to RDNS' services equally, and are treated with respect and sensitivity.

During 2006/07, over 31% of RDNS clients were born in non-English speaking countries and 18% speak a language other than English at home. RDNS' clients originate from 145 countries and speak 102 different languages. Each of RDNS' 20 locations provide services to local CALD communities which vary markedly from centre to centre. Some centres have large population groups from specific CALD backgrounds; others have numerous groups of varying CALD backgrounds.

The table below provides a regional comparison of country of origin of clients:



In anticipation of the rapidly increasing CALD aged client population, RDNS has a range of products to enhance communication, in particular for the critical points of the RDNS service delivery system. Our staff can arrange professional on-site and telephone interpreters, they can distribute appropriate written translations of 'essential documents' and sometimes they can deliver a service speaking the primary language of the client. Clients can also now speak to RDNS and the nurse in their primary language through the RDNS Language Line – a dedicated telephone interpreter system.

To meet the communication and healthcare needs of CALD clients, RDNS introduced a practical strategy including research, education and internal and external communication, its *Cultural Diversity Management Model*. An important element of this model includes a network of multicultural resource nurses who administer and coordinate appropriate cultural diversity strategies in the districts surrounding our nursing centres. Their activities are monitored and supported by RDNS' Cultural Liaison Coordinator, Jaklina Michael, a professional educator.

The specially trained multidisciplinary team of nurses and allied health staff initiate and develop links with CALD communities and organisations, and actively reach out to groups who may be isolated from RDNS activities. They work within their district to identify local user groups as well as groups which may, for any reason, not be users of RDNS' services. They also target appropriate cultural education for their centres' staff, and disseminate translated health education material and other culturally relevant information. Communication activities, such as information sessions to groups/clubs or attendance at community expos, are carried out by this team.

Further, these multicultural resource nurses network with one another to share information, insights and ideas to contribute to the ongoing development of service structures and products in order for RDNS to reach CALD communities and provide culturally responsive services. The results of their work are collated by Jaklina, and contribute to RDNS' overall *Cultural Diversity Management Model* to ensure its relevance to Melbourne's culturally diverse population.

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