

Changes to the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card

If you are an eligible self-funded retiree, you may be able to get a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card. You can use this card to get prescription medicines at concession rates if they are listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

If you can get a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card, you also get a Seniors Concession Allowance, which helps to pay for household costs, such as land rates, water and sewerage rates and motor vehicle registration. You can also apply for the Telephone

Allowance.

Changes to the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card announced in this year's Federal Budget mean that when you apply, both you and your partner will now be asked to tell Centrelink your Tax File Number. If you don't tell Centrelink your Tax File Number or don't give a valid reason why it cannot be supplied, then your claim for the card will not be approved. Centrelink can help you get a Tax File Number if you don't have one.

If you already have a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card, Centrelink will write to you in early

2009 to ask for your Tax File Number. When Centrelink writes to request your Tax File Number, you will also be asked to provide income details so that your eligibility can be checked.

Another change to the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card is that your card will no longer be cancelled if you're leaving Australia for a period of less than 13 weeks. However, you must contact Centrelink before you leave.

For more information about Centrelink's payments and services visit www.centrelink.gov.au, call 13 1202 or ask at a Centrelink Customer Service Centre.

Christmas in the Crescent

Enjoy a FREE community concert of Christmas favourites from the Australian Army Band Sydney and St Patrick's Cathedral Choir along with some toe-tapping Bollywood hits and the winning performance by the 2008 Miss Africa Australia finalists.

The program is produced by Bernard Kirkpatrick, Musical Director St. Patricks Choir and Major Andrea Davey, Musical Director of the Australian Army Band. Bollywood music produced by Suresh Gowda of Sydney Karaoke and includes favourites such as Jawani Jane Mann as well as dancing. African beauties perform contemporary music with an African beat.

Treat yourself to a break from pre-Christmas bustle, bring a picnic, the family and friends; relax under our warm southern skies and enjoy good music and good company.

When: Saturday 13 December

Where: In the Crescent, beside Old Government House

Time: 5pm to 8pm

Parking: In the O'Connell St car park, next to the swimming pool.

White Ribbon ambassadors speak out on violence against women

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Chris Evans, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services, Laurie Ferguson, have joined the growing list of prominent Australians who are White Ribbon ambassadors.

The White Ribbon Foundation of Australia aims to eliminate violence against women. White Ribbon ambassadors are prominent men from many fields who use their leadership skills and networks to raise awareness, including the importance of wearing a white ribbon on the 25th November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

"Violence against women is unacceptable in Australian society and I encourage all men to take a stand on this issue," Senator Evans said.

"We are all role models with a voice, whether as fathers, brothers, uncles, community members or



workmates and we can all make it clear that we will not condone the violence.

"Within the broader Australian community and within Australia's increasingly diverse population, we still have much to do to change attitudes and behaviour that condone domestic violence."

Senator Evans said Australia's humanitarian program offered specific protection to refugee women in particularly vulnerable situations.

"The 'woman at risk' program helps women who are in danger of victimisation and serious abuse because of their gender," Senator Evans said.

The minister said 13.7 per cent of the 13 014 refugee visas granted in 2007-08 were for the "woman at risk" category, well ahead of the program's 10.5 per cent target.

The Rudd Government also recently approved \$553 000 in funding for a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) project in Syria to support Iraqi women and girls who are victims of sexual or gender-based violence. It includes funding for a safe house where victims will receive counselling, support and other assistance in the case of emergencies.

Mr Ferguson encouraged all men to wear a white ribbon tomorrow to show their personal opposition to violence against women.

"We want an Australia in which

everyone benefits from our diverse society and in which people work towards a socially progressive, fair and united country," Mr Ferguson said.

"I commend those community leaders from Australia's migrant and ethnic communities, under the leadership of the Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia, who have recognised and addressed problems of violence within our communities.

"White Ribbon Day is an occasion to encourage all Australian men, especially from new and emerging communities, to take on the challenge."

White Ribbon Foundation chairman Andrew O'Keefe welcomed Senator Evans and Mr Ferguson as ambassadors.

"It's a campaign that reaches out to all men, of all backgrounds and all stations. And the personal commitment of Senator Evans and Mr Ferguson to working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities will be a very important contribution to strengthening the broad community of support we have in place," Mr O'Keefe said.

For more information about the White Ribbon Foundation of Australia and its aims, visit www.whiteribbonday.org.au

Senator Chris Evans

Leader of the Government in the Senate
Minister for Immigration and Citizenship

Top multicultural marketers for 2008 announced Tuesday night

Many big name national companies and government institutions lined up as finalists on Tuesday night (November 25) to hear their names announced as winners of the National Multicultural Marketing Awards for 2008.

The National Multicultural Marketing Awards have been conducted by the Community Relations Commission of NSW since 1990 with the original idea of alerting managers in the public service to their responsibility to make their services available and appropriate to all.

It now attracts entries from all over the economy and all over the country.

Apart from the Grand Prize, category winners were announced for Technology, Community, Big Business, Small Business, Export, Advertising and Government categories.

Previous winners over the last nineteen years include several major banks as well as McDonalds, American Express, Coles, Optus, the NRMA, the AFL and the ABC.

The Awards Dinner took place on Tuesday 25th November at the Westin Hotel, Martin Place, Sydney at 7.00pm.