

Abstract Body**Background:**

Under-screened populations are those populations that face systemic barriers to participation in cancer screening programs. Barriers to screening can include literacy, accessibility, cultural and psychosocial factors.

BreastScreen Victoria (BSV) participation data [2013-2015] shows lower rates of participation amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) women (42.0%) and some Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) groups when compared to the general population (52.2%).

Method:

In an attempt to improve equity in the early detection of breast cancer, BSV provided their Mobile Screening Service (MSS) for nine days in the Victorian suburb of Dandenong – a region with the largest population of new and emerging migrants from any multicity in Victoria, and a large ATSI population. The MSS was utilized as it has the ability to provide a culturally safe environment and offer a flexible approach to breast screening.

To engage the target populations BSV partnered with six local organisations already engaging with these groups to build their capacity to deliver BreastScreen's key messages and promote screening to eligible women accessing their services. Partner organisations organised group bookings for women of similar cultural backgrounds and provided accompaniment to screening by a familiar case, health or bi-cultural worker.

Results/Discussion:

A total of 144 women screened, including 10 women who identified as ATSI and 109 women born overseas. The largest group of women born overseas were from Afghanistan, followed by Sri Lanka, Iran, and Burma. The majority of women (84.7%) who screened were first time screeners.

By creating partnerships with, and building the capacity of local organisations this project enabled culturally appropriate access to information and screening for women who commonly face barriers.

This project is the foundation for the development of ongoing and effective partnerships with key organisations that engage with under-screened populations, and will be implemented in across the state of Victoria.