

LETTER RE: COVID-19 RESPONSE FROM THE WELCOME DINNER PROJECT

Wednesday 12th August 2020



To all our Welcome Dinner Project community and future participants,

In these times of uncertainty we want to assure you that the Welcome Dinner Project is endeavouring to continue bringing about our vision for a welcoming and connected Australia. For those directly or indirectly impacted by this crisis, our thoughts are with you and we would like to thank everyone for doing their best to keep their communities as safe as possible during these difficult times.

Our priority is the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved in this project, including our wonderful team of coordinators, facilitators and volunteers. With the COVID-19 situation continuing to unfold throughout the nation, we are not yet able to put in place a timeline for when we will reactivate the home and community Welcome Dinners.

We understand that face to face connection is irreplaceable however, in adapting to the current situation we are now implementing an alternate way of creating connection between newly arrived and established Australians. Not long after the Covid-19 crisis emerged we began to trial some virtual Welcome Dinners and they proved to be successful and meet many of our aims, despite not being able to share our amazing dishes with one another through the screen!

For now we are only offering Welcome Dinners virtually. Please continue to register via our online form for dinners and you will be contacted when a Virtual Welcome Dinner is being held with people in your area. We will regularly review the situation and keep you updated as to when we can start offering at home and community dinners again.

During this time, the WDP Board, the State Coordinators and other team members have also been working on a new and exciting rejuvenation phase of the project. We are excited about what has emerged from this and look forward to putting some of these improvements into action when we begin Welcome Dinners again in person.

We would like to thank you all for your ongoing support and wish you all the best wishes, health and safety during this difficult time.

The Welcome Dinner Project

P.S If you or someone you know is finding this time particularly stressful, is experiencing emotional distress, suicidal thoughts or is generally struggling to cope, please contact Lifeline on 13 11 14