



Council reiterates calls for calm and caution in relation to COVID19

The Ethnic Communities Council of WA (ECCWA) has again today called for calm to be exercised over issues relating to the outbreak of the Coronavirus/COVID19.

ECCWA President Suresh Rajan said today "I take this opportunity to remind media outlets of their obligations to maintain some level of harmony concurrent with their responsibilities to inform the general public of issues. There are a variety of media outlets that are pushing the COVID 19 virus issue really hard. Whilst we appreciate the issue of informing the public of the dangers posed by the virus, we urge these organisations to remind people that this is not an opportunity for them to perpetrate their racial hatred and vilification against anyone they perceive to present a "danger of infection".

Dr Andrew Miller from the AMA recently tweeted about the issue and has been quite clear in his comments:

"Don't panic, don't shake hands or kiss, don't stockpile too much, don't be racist. Do fluvax late March, do call ahead to GP if sick, do have a plan if school/work is disrupted, do reassure kids. Govt - telehealth item now pls".

Suresh Rajan said "Note the "don't be racist" comment. What the media doesn't appear to understand is that people like us in the advocacy space have to pick up the effects of the racism generated from their alarmist rubbish. Here are some other matters that have been raised on Twitter:

"My (Eurasian) daughter was racially abused coming home from school this afternoon after she sneezed on the train. A couple of well-dressed older white Aus. on the north shore line in Sydney decided to tell her she was a disease carrying Chinese. This is no longer a joke."

"Chinese born female teacher left classroom in tears after bullied by students about corona To protect themselves from virus, students yell "Corona, Corona, Corona" at top of lungs when they pass Asian students".

This morning on talkback radio a lady of Vietnamese origin indicated that she had been vilified by someone at a store when she was purchasing a product. The racist epithets that came from the abuser were vile and completely unacceptable in our society.

"It doesn't take much to bring out the basest, most vile aspects of some people's attitudes to others. Currently the media is working hard to stoke those fires" said Suresh Rajan

We remind everyone of their need to quell racist fires if at all possible.

ECCWA will take all calls relating to these issues on 92275322 or via email at admin@eccwa.org.au

**For media enquiries please contact Suresh Rajan on 0403 276 960
#COVID19 #Coronavirus #Racism #Vilification**

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