

Emily James

Chatham This Week

The Cultural Coalition of Chatham-Kent will be creating and releasing three videos to educate newcomers as well as employers and health care professionals as they integrate into the community.

The project is being headed up by project manager Vic Caldwell and administrative assistant Stella Jonah and is being funded through a one-year government grant.

To assist in the making of these videos, three focus groups will be held in April.

On April 9 between 12:30 and 4:30 p.m. at Aristo's Room, newcomers are welcome to share their stories and their needs when accessing health care, finding a job and becoming a volunteer.

A free lunch will be provided and Maureen Geddes, president of CANGRAM International will be the guest speaker on creating a welcoming community.

On April 13 employers are asked to be part of a focus group and to offer their experience hiring a newcomer or new Canadian and issues they face through management.

Geddes will speak on profiting from inclusion.

This meeting will run between 7:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

On April 13 the voluntary sector is asked to offer their advice on fostering a culturally diverse workplace and recruiting strategies.

And on April 14 between 12:30 and 4:30 p.m. healthcare providers are asked to lend their support to assist with communication with patients that are new Canadians and fostering culture sensitivity.

A free lunch will be offered with each of these seminars.

While admission is free, registration is required before April 5. Participants will be taken on a first come, first served basis.

Teresa Fysh, executive director of the Cultural Coalition said the videos will be circulated throughout 100 communities across Ontario that have populations under 150,000.

She added that on April 28 another session will be held for newcomers entrepreneurs between 2 and 4 p.m. at Aristo's Room.

"We want to hear from newcomers that want to start up a business here and what it is that they need," said Fysh.

For more details about these focus groups call 519-354-0430.