

My name: Imran

My town: Melbourne

My COVID19 experience:

COVID was difficult for Cabbies. In a normal time, Cabbies are still struggling because of the other options, like uber, hire cars etc. It's not like it was before where everyone had a fair bit of work. Now everyone has their own clients. The luxury cars are busy, but the ordinary cabs are not so busy. Everyone was afraid of COVID19 – we were doing our best to keep our cars and ourselves clean, but it was hard to do because to sanitize was more cost. Where I was working an 8-hour shift before, I needed to work 14 hours to get enough money so that was less time to spend with my family. I don't want to complain.

When COVID hit and people were staying in their homes and were hardly not taking cabs. I didn't have any source of income other than taxi. We are not residents yet, so we don't get any other source of income. No Centrelink payments. No job seeker. I would wait at the taxi rank for hours and hours and then someone would come and they would be going around the corner.

I am lucky I am in Australia because I got support from Red Cross. What we have here in Australia to help people with job seeker and job keeper is really appreciated. In this hard time people are not making the money like they were before. I believe that whatever the support we got it was amazing. Everyone should appreciate that. The supports are amazing. Other countries are still struggling. We struggled a lot in Victoria with lockdown and where we are at now we can breathe outside. We can go outside. We can catch up with families. Other countries are still going through the COVID thing. We have freedom without stress. We are COVID free. Thank God

Act of Intersectional Kindness

We connected in with Drummond Street Services. They looked after our family. The person we connected with knew what stress we were going through with no money and no work. The whole Drummond Street team have helped us a lot. They know how we was struggling. They were helping up with food and vouchers. They got me work as a food delivery guy. Most of the delivery guys are refugees and they take the food to people who are really struggling. When I got a job it was like some angel came down. It was like a relief. I was getting no benefits and I had three kids and my wife is not working and we are working on our visa. It was a lot of stress. When I was not working it was hard to pay the kids school fees and the electricity bills. I applied for utility grant. We were at home and so it was more expensive.

All the support we got was really amazing. If you are struggling, you need to know there is support for every single person. I appreciate that. I always tell my friends and family that we are lucky that we get that support. The support we have here I am sure they don't have in other places. I am happy and I am blessed. My kids were born here – this is the best place to give them a life. If you go out, you can find friendly people – without any issues. Multicultural people. I am so happy for the support we get.