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Joining forces: Rohan Braddy and The Migrant Hub's Walter Villagonzalo sign an agreement.

Picture: Cathy Jackson

Vital hub gets new lease of life

BY CAMERON TAIT

AFTER weeks of uncertainty about its future, Wyndham's only migrant resource centre has found a new home.

As reported in the *Weekly* on February 23, The Migrant Hub was told it would have to move from its Hoppers Lane premises by this week, with the building to be demolished to make way for a medical centre.

The hub, which opened in 2009, provides services including a café, skills bank, information and referral service and tuition for Wyndham's growing multicultural community.

Last Friday, disability services provider Mambourin came to the rescue.

Representatives from both organisations signed an agreement to allow The Migrant Hub to operate from Mambourin's Café and Sensory Gardens in Werribee.

The move has breathed new life into the café, which itself was forced to close in December due to a lack of trade, making it financially unviable. Its primary purpose had been to provide meaningful employment and continuing training to people with disabilities.

Mambourin chief executive Rohan Braddy said that as part of the agreement, the hub would operate the café and help maintain the gardens, initially for a six-month trial, and involve Mambourin clients in both.

"We firmly believe that this is an opportunity

to build on the hard work that has been put into these gardens and café over so many years, to create something truly wonderful for and with the people that we support and the wider community."

The Migrant Hub president Walter Villagonzalo described it as a "wonderful outcome".

"We were faced with such an uncertain future, but this outcome exceeds best hopes.

"It allows us to continue almost without faltering so we don't lose any of the momentum we have worked so hard to generate, and in an environment that will lend itself brilliantly to our community activities."

The hub will open for business at Mambourin on Monday.