



**Australian Government**  
Department of Health

# Actions to support older Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people

A guide for consumers

*All older people experience a high quality aged care system that ensures equitable access and outcomes and embraces their diverse characteristics and life experiences.*



Aged Care Sector Committee Diversity Sub-group  
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## What are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse consumers looking for from aged care providers?

Everyone in Australia has the right to access quality, inclusive and culturally safe aged care services that cater to their individual needs and respects their background and life experiences.

The Australian Government has published the Aged Care Diversity Framework and a series of action plans to help the aged care sector to better cater for the diverse characteristics and life experiences of older Australians. The Framework and action plans were developed following extensive community consultations.

This document captures the voice of people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds expressed through those consultations. It is intended both to help people from CALD backgrounds express their needs when speaking with aged care providers and as a resource to support people working in aged care to understand the perspectives of CALD people.

### Outcome for Consumers 1: Making informed choices

*You should have* easily accessible information about the aged care system and services that you understand and find helpful to exercise choice and control over the care you receive..

#### **You can ask a Provider to**

- Provide you with simple, understandable information on your care, translated into your preferred language where required
- Provide you with a Use of Interpreter Services Policy which explains when you are entitled to an interpreter, how to get an interpreter and assist you in getting free interpreting supports where available
- Display signs in aged care facilities in your language to assist you with finding your way around your new home
- Consult with you, your carers and / or family on designing forms and information resources to make sure they are simple and clear
- Help you to local community organisations that can offer support, information and advocacy.

#### **Remember:**

If you tell providers what you think about the information they provide, they can make improvements. (For example, is the information clear and easy to understand? Does it tell you everything you want to know?)

## Outcome for Consumers 2: Adopting systemic approaches to planning and implementation

*Your provider should assist you* to be an active partner in the planning and implementation of the aged care system to meet your needs.

### **You can ask a Provider to**

- Make sure to include your cultural, linguistic, spiritual, religious and social needs in your care plan
- Help you provide feedback and complaints about the care you receive and explain how they use feedback to improve the care they provide to you
- Support you to have a trusted entity or support person during the assessment process or other decision-making processes
- Use assessment tools that accommodate and consider your cultural and linguistic background
- Share its strategic plan, diversity policy and other resources used by staff to assist them in providing culturally appropriate care
- Share information on how managers in the organisation are held accountable for ensuring culturally appropriate care is provided, for example,
- Ask them to explain how they measure and can tell if their care and services meet the needs of people from different cultures or who speak other languages.

### **Remember:**

If you tell providers what you need and make suggestions about the care you want, they can make improvements.

### Outcome for Consumers 3: Accessible care and support

Wherever you live - in rural, remote, regional and metropolitan Australian - **you should have** access to aged care services and supports appropriate to your diverse characteristics and life experiences.

#### **You can ask a Provider to**

- Provide specific and clear information on the cultural and linguistic services offered by the service and how it will provide care that accounts for your cultural and linguistic needs
- Link you with system navigators or other advocates to assist you with accessing assessment and other services
- Provide information on its service in your preferred language
- Enable access to external specialist care or services where it does not have specific capability
- Connect you with family, friends and community who live far away, including overseas, through technology and other means for example, Skype, Facetime etc.
- Assist you to remain in contact with your local community outside of your home or aged care facility.

#### **Remember:**

Wherever you live, if you tell the authorities or providers about any problems you had when trying to find out about and use aged care services, they can make improvements.

## Outcome for Consumers 4: A proactive and flexible aged care system

*You should experience* a proactive and flexible aged care system that responds to the needs of all Australians including new and emerging communities, including an increasingly diverse aged care workforce.

### **You can ask a Provider to**

- Outline how they consult with consumers and use the information received to ensure that services are accessible and culturally appropriate
- Share its policies with you on cultural safety and anti-discrimination – to make sure staff and other people do not discriminate against people from different cultures or who speak different languages
- Provide information on the cultural and linguistic skills of the staff that will care for you
- Share information on how they recruit, reward and retain staff with the skills necessary to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate care
- Provide information to you on training provided to staff on cultural competency and effective communication
- Employ bilingual and bicultural staff who can provide you with care that meets your cultural needs and / or using your preferred language.

### ***Remember:***

If you tell providers what you think about how they provide services to people from different cultures or who speak other languages, and if you tell them when some of your needs are not met, they can make improvements.

## Outcome for Consumers 5: Respectful and inclusive services

*You should experience* services that effectively meet your needs, characteristics and life experiences, and those of your family and carers, in a respectful and inclusive way.

### **You can ask a Provider to**

- Provide opportunities for you to connect to your culture and language by:
  - Having available a library of books, magazines and other materials in your preferred language
  - Using SBS's In Language service, SBS radio and television channels, YouTube and satellite television channels and in-language films
  - Offering culturally appropriate meals
  - Sourcing artwork and posters and other items that reflect your preferences
  - Facilitating participation in local community events or social groups relevant to you especially where you have an existing link
  - Seeking out bilingual volunteers, for example, through the Community Visitors Scheme or local community groups, who can visit you and speak to you in your preferred language
- Assist you in being active in your religion in ways that you choose
- Provide you with and explain your rights under the Charter Care Recipients' Rights and Responsibilities
- Arrange activities that celebrate cultural or religious festivals or important dates of relevance to you.

### **Remember:**

If you tell providers what you think about the way their services respect and include the needs of people from different cultures or who speak other languages, they can make improvements. It is also important for all staff and people who use the services to respect each other's different cultures and religions.

## Outcome for Consumers 6: Meeting the needs of the most vulnerable

*You should experience* high quality and culturally safe aged care services and supports that meet your needs irrespective of your personal, social or economic vulnerabilities.

### **You can ask a Provider to**

- Help and support you to understand and consider your choices about palliative care –also to get support, services or additional care to help you with any traumatic or difficult experiences you may have had
- Assist you to consider and plan your end of life care and funeral arrangements that respect your cultural, spiritual and religious wishes
- Provide you with information on elder abuse, translated into your own language and how to access support if this is happening to you
- Provide access to psychological services and additional care and support to help you manage the effect of the traumatic or difficult periods that you may have experienced in your lifetime.

### ***Remember:***

If you tell providers about any personal or other difficulties you may have, they can give you better help and services.

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