

A qualitative study of barriers to mental health services utilisation among migrants from Mainland China in South-east Sydney

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Key Words:

Chinese, mental health, service access, service use

Research aim:

Chinese-language speakers comprise the largest non-English speaking population in Australia but they have among the lowest rates of mental health services utilisation. This paper explores the reasons for this.

Results/Conclusion:

Participants identified several factors that limit access to mental healthcare as well as the quality of care received: mental health literacy, communication difficulties, stigma, confidentiality concerns, service constraints and discrimination. Cross-cultural communication was not just a matter of hearing individual words but also appreciating idioms and cultural and social references.

Implications:

Findings have implications for the prevention and treatment of mental disorders among migrants from China, and caution against assuming heterogeneity within ethnic groups. Mental health services must become more culturally competent in their attempts to engage the target group and to deliver both acute and continuing care.

Cultural Group(s):

Chinese

Location of study:

New South Wales (Sydney)

Age group:

not specific to older people

Number included in study:

9 patients, 1 caregiver, 11 service providers, 13 community members

Type of participants:

Chinese language speakers, carers, stakeholders - recruited through mental health services groups in Sydney

Research approach:

Qualitative

Type of data:

Primary

Secondary data sources used:

Specific scales or analytical techniques used:

Implications/ Recommendations:

Notes: