

# **Project Report on the Study into the Needs of Carers from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities in the Nepean Area**

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**Reference:**

**Key Words:**

informal care, CALD carers, Greek, Macedonian, Arabic-speaking, Filipino, service access, HACC services

**Research aim:**

To explore issues related specifically to the use of HACC and other disability services by CALD community members in the Nepean area. Local research was required so that local services could understand the issues and begin to address the issue of under-utilisation of services by carers from CALD backgrounds. The report describes a qualitative study into the service use needs of carers from culturally and linguistically diverse CALD communities in the Nepean area in 2007.

**Results/Conclusion:**

1) The majority of CALD carers and other participants in the Nepean area who participated in this study stated that they not only had a need for community care services but that they were willing to use these services. This result is contrary to prevailing misbeliefs/ misconceptions that "CALD communities do not demand or need services because they will look after their own" (NSW Aged Care Alliance, 2004, p.12). 2) The prevailing message from all four focus groups was that CALD communities who are potential system users are not able to access community services information. Very few participants (no participants within the Arabic speaking group) were aware of the role of, nor had ever heard of, Commonwealth Carelink Centres. 3) Participants within each of the four focus groups offered strategies which they felt could be used to overcome these barriers to information access. These strategies included the distribution of relevant language multi modal material distributed through exposure points such as medical officers, pharmacists, churches, guest speakers at social groups, print and electronic media, and Centrelink mail outs, as well as a centralised point for information access and language specific instructions on agency answering machines. In addition, the Filipino group discussed the need for visually attractive material, including culturally relevant images. 4) families declared that they were unaware how to access the 'system' and they didn't know where to start, who to talk to or what to do. 5) researchers observed that there was some dependence on the interpreters for effective communication in each of the focus groups, no matter the length of settlement since migration. - The level of dependence, however, did appear to be connected to the length of time that communities had been settled in Australia and consequently, whether the group included participants who had been born in Australia, and also the probability of exposure to English language development prior to migration. Also observable differences in need for an interpreter based on Socioeconomic status and the likelihood of exposure to higher education/English language. 6) the researchers became aware of the need for caution when deciding on the need for interpreters for any community group or family; and that members of CALD communities may be disadvantaged if interpreters are not offered or available, regardless of the level of English language proficiency perceived by the community services worker

**Implications:**

There are some commonalities across groups but also differences in the experiences of people from different cultural groups explored in this study in access, barriers and preferences for services. Many similarities between the four focus groups were evident: 1. That participation in these focus groups was perceived to be a whole community concern, because the issue was viewed as a whole community issue. 2. A strong sense of familial obligation was evident within all four focus groups. However, this was not always matched by the carers capacity to provide the care required. 3. The type of service that was most in need, i.e. most participants across the four focus groups stated that their priority was for lawn mowing and personal care services. 4. Most participants also stated that when they received information about community care services, this information was in English. 5. Participants stated that interpreters were generally offered when accessing health services but not generally when accessing community care services. Issues of shame (regarding the need for an interpreter) and not knowing how to ask for an interpreter were also widespread among the focus groups. Key differences between groups: - Greek did not expect to be cared for by family as much as newer migrant groups, Arabic-speaking group less well resourced than other groups and this group also expressed concern about lack of consistency in workers making it difficult to build trust, lack of social capital in Arabic and Filipino group where community connectedness was obvious in the Greek and Macedonian groups

**Cultural Group(s):**

Greek, Arabic-speaking, Macedonian, Filipino

**Location of study:**

New South Wales (Nepean area)

**Age group:****Number included in study:**

N/A

**Type of participants:**

CALD (informal) carers

**Research approach:**

Qualitative

**Type of data:**

Primary

**Secondary data sources used:****Specific scales or analytical techniques used:****Implications/ Recommendations:****Notes:**



