

The Role of Acculturation in Health Status and Utilization of Health Services among the Iranian Elderly in Metropolitan Sydney

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Key Words:

Iranian, health status, use of health services, acculturation, language proficiency and health

Research aim:

Explores the impact of acculturation on health status and use of health and community aged care services among elderly Iranian-born immigrants to Australia

Results/Conclusion:

Iranian immigrants had higher levels of psychological distress, more limited physical function, greater need for help or assistance with activities of daily living, lower feelings of wellbeing, and were much less likely to use aged care services than the general population of older Australians. Participants who did not speak English at home were more likely to experience psychological distress and had greater limitations in their physical functioning. Elderly Iranians with better English proficiency had lower levels of anxiety and depressive symptoms and reported less need for help and supervision in activities of daily living; they were also more likely to access health care services. Elderly Iranian immigrants experience higher levels of psychological distress and lower levels of physical function than the general population of older Australians; those with limited proficiency in English are at greatest risk.

Implications:

These findings contribute to the enrichment of multicultural policy, social fairness, access, and equity for ethnic aged people

Cultural Group(s):

Iranian, 'general' population of older Australian

Location of study:

New South Wales (Sydney)

Age group:

65+

Number included in study:

302

Type of participants:

Iranians aged 65+ living in Sydney area for at least 6 months

Research approach:

Mixed methods

Type of data:

Primary

Secondary data sources used:

Specific scales or analytical techniques used:

Implications/ Recommendations:

Notes: