



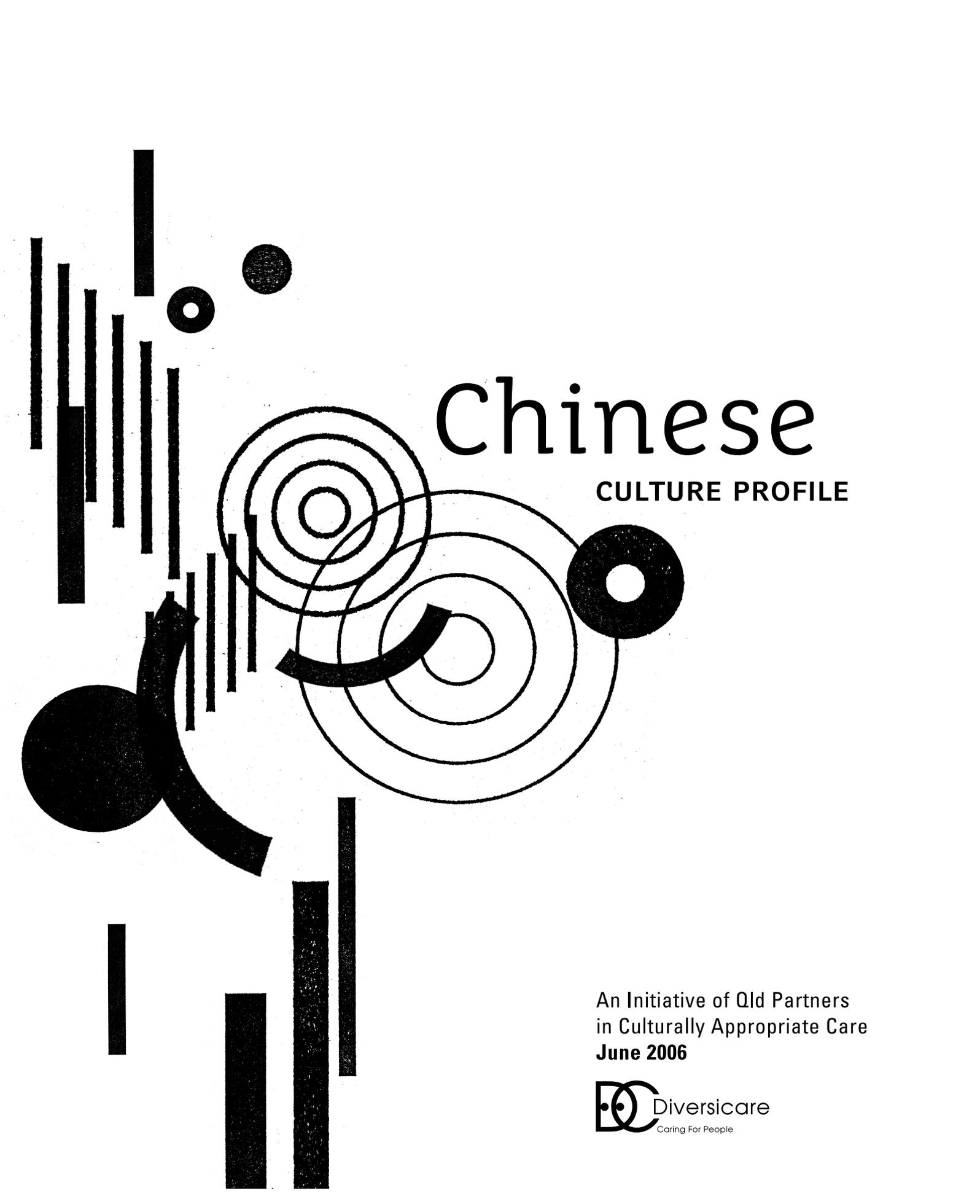
# Chinese

CULTURE PROFILE

An Initiative of Qld Partners  
in Culturally Appropriate Care  
**March 2006**

 **Diversicare**  
Caring For People





# Chinese

CULTURE PROFILE

An Initiative of Old Partners  
in Culturally Appropriate Care  
**June 2006**

 **Diversicare**  
Caring For People

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Diversicare  
PO Box 5199  
West End, Queensland, 4101  
Phone: (07) 3846 1099

### **Chinese Culture Profile**

Thanks is given to the following people:

Margaret Hess, Director, Diversicare  
Elizabeth Zajac, Project Officer, PICAC  
Stephanie Lee, Program Manager, Cathay  
Community Association

... and to all those persons who have provided  
comment about this directory.

Editor: Jennifer Leigh (J Leigh & Associates)

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# INTRODUCTION

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This profile of the China cultural community is one of the many projects undertaken by the Queensland Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care (PICAC).

The Queensland PICAC Project aims to facilitate the development of partnerships between ethnic community groups and residential aged care service providers to implement “best practice” strategies of care for older people from diverse backgrounds. The project is about ensuring the needs of older people from a Chinese cultural background are met.

Funded by Commonwealth Department of Health & Ageing, the project in Queensland is managed by Diversicare under the auspice of the Ethnic Communities Council of Qld.

Population trends within Australia are increasingly characterised by a diversity of people, languages and culture. Coupled with this trend is an ageing population, also with a rich diversity of languages and cultures.

It’s not surprising then, that residential aged care service providers are faced with increasing demands for culturally responsive facilities and care.

This profile aims to assist by enhancing:

- Staff knowledge of the cultural and linguistically diverse needs of persons from a Chinese background. It also seeks to facilitate the professional competence and development of staff in the provision of culturally inclusive care; and

- The organisation’s compliance with the Residential Care Standards and National Aged Care Standards as they pertain to the issue of cultural and linguistic needs.

The profile provides useful information about a range of topics, resources including books, articles, audio-video aids, services, and so on.



This symbol is used to indicate a “tip”, which YOU, as the caregiver of a person who was born in China, may find useful in your day-to-day support of that person.

This guide is not intended to replace one stereotype of this culture with another; instead it is intended to provide some insights into the culture. Nor does it diminish the importance of you establishing the individual cultural needs of each person as part of the care planning process.

In an effort to maintain the accuracy of this profile and improve its contents, for all stakeholders, we encourage readers to complete the feedback form on the last page to inform us of any inaccuracies or other resources available. It is considered that this feedback will assist us maintain a user relevant and quality resource.

Yours Sincerely

Margaret Hess  
Director

Elizabeth Zajac  
PICAC Project Officer

# BACKGROUND

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China (official name – People’s Republic of China) covers one-fifteenth of the world’s land mass and is the third largest country in the world. Its border stretches over 22 000 kilometres on land and the coastline extends well over 18 000 kilometres, washed by the waters of the Bohai, the Huanghai, the East China and the South China seas. The Bohai Sea is the inland sea of China.

## Migration experience

The first Chinese migration wave can be traced to 1827, when large numbers of Chinese labourers were recruited to work in the pastoral industry. Many others who arrived in the 1870s to join the gold rush followed these first migrants.

The 1861 Colonial Census, the China-born comprised 3.4 percent of Australia’s



population, and was the second largest immigrant group after those from the British Isles. Following changes to Australian government policies the immigration of Asians declined in 1947.

In 1976, the 'Australian-Chinese Family Reunion Agreement's' legislation had a direct effect on the increased numbers of older migrants who arrived to join their children in Australia. Most of the Chinese speaking immigrants, however, came primarily from other countries such as Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam.

### Australian statistics

The China-born population is one of the major communities in Australia and its population is concentrated in large cities, such as Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. The 2001 Census recorded 142,720 China-born persons settled in all Australian States, with Queensland being the third largest State behind NSW and Victoria. Of the total Chinese speaking population in Australia (2001 Census):

- 14.9% were 65 and over
- 33.7% had higher qualification (compared with 46.2% for all Australian)
- 55.2% were employed in a skilled occupation, 24.6% in semi-skilled and 20.3% in unskilled jobs; and
- male comprised 46.6% and females 53.4%; and
- their ancestry includes Chinese 92.5%, Russian 2.9%, English 0.4% and other 4.2%

(source: Chinese Community Information Summary, DIMIA 2003)

Queensland has 6.2% or (8860 persons) of this total population and they have settled across Queensland.

 The above data means the person you are caring for is most likely to have been educated, have worked in a skilled job outside the home and been part of established social and recreational links to other Chinese persons.

Cantonese and Mandarin speaking people can be born in different countries:

• Cambodia-born	940 people	41%
• Hong Kong born	6710 people	10%
• Malaysia born	7980 people	10.1%
• Taiwan born	8440 people	37.6%
• Vietnam born	11570 people	7.5%

Country of origin may influence socio-economic status, knowledge of English and exposure to Western cultures.

 In this publication the term: "Chinese people" is used. Be aware that this term is problematic because it represents a heterogenous group of people who can have widely different life experiences, cultural tradition, dialects, educational opportunities, and economic position. As mentioned previously they have experienced different patterns of migration: some have settled in Western countries via other countries such as Singapore or Hong Kong, and some have moved directly from mainland China.

### Customs in everyday life

Formal manners are important.

**Greetings.** The correct way of greeting a person is very important in Chinese culture: an inappropriate greeting is considered undesirable. Handshaking is the

accepted greeting. A handshake not only expresses a sign of welcome, but gratitude, congratulation and encouragement as well.

In China, the most useful form of greeting is a nod or slight bow. Upon meeting someone, the Chinese lower their eyes slightly as a sign of respect. Staring into the eyes of a Chinese person might make them uncomfortable. The phrase 'Have you eaten?' is used as a more familiar greeting and testifies to the centrality of food in Chinese culture.

**Referring to others.** When addressing an elder or person with high status it is considered highly inappropriate and rude to address the person by their given name. They should be addressed according to their designation, for example: Mr Tang, Doctor Liu, and Chairman Lee etc. Each person has a family or generational name and a first name (example of reading the names: Zhang Tai Man - *Family Name* - Zhang; *Generation Name* - Tai; *Given Name* - Man). Avoid using someone's given name unless you have known the person for a long period of time.

A married Chinese woman usually retains her maiden name, she will use her husband's last name on occasions for formal addressing only. It is common social practice to introduce the junior to the senior, or the familiar to the unfamiliar. When you start a talk with a stranger, the topics such as weather, food or hobbies may be good choices to break the ice. Gift giving is unsuitable in public except for some souvenirs

**Gestures.** Chinese used to cup one hand in the other before the chest as a salute (this tradition has a history of more than 2000 years).

Avoid making exaggerated gestures or using dramatic facial expressions. Using gestures while speaking to more reserved cultural groups can make communication more difficult. Avoid touching until a relationship is established. Avoid touching the child's head since 'careless touching' - it is believed to reduce the child's development.

Use an open hand rather than one finger to point. To beckon or call someone toward you, turn palm down and wave fingers towards your body. Pointing to one's nose is the indication for 'I' or 'me' similar to the Australian gesture of pointing to one's chest to indicate self.

Hands have a lot to do with face. Both hands should take objects that are offered to you as a sign of respect. Furthermore, it is recommended to hand any object of importance e.g. forms or brochures, by both hands directly to the person and not just putting it down on the table.

**Entering the room.** A Chinese host, in approaching the door with a guest, would usually gesture for the guest to proceed first. "When your guest departs, you should see them to the front door of the building, or to the elevator at the very least" - certainly this is true for formal visits, or the first time somebody visits at home. The further one sees somebody off,

the more respectful it is. The guest, in turn, should try to decline the courtesy by saying – “No need to see me off”.

Common farewells to a guest are “Goodbye”, “Go carefully” or “Come again”.

**Attire.** There are no specific rules in Chinese custom governing dress. Some conventions are considered with regards to age: the elderly are not encouraged to ‘dress young’, for example t-shirts and jeans.

**Taboos.** Similar to Western customs, you should be cautious to ask women private questions.

Odd numbers are thought to be unfortunate – so wedding and birthday gifts for the aged are always sent in pairs. Though ‘four’ is an even number, it reads like death in Chinese thus is avoided (four is pronounced similar as death). Instead of saying ‘4’, you can say ‘2 more than 2’.

During the 10 days of the Chinese New Years celebration you should not use negative words and phrases – this is time of happiness and looking forward to prosperity. Also during this time of year do not throw anything away – throwing away things away during this time is akin to throwing away the good luck.

Try to avoid White and black colours, both of them symbolise death in Chinese culture. The colours red and gold are lucky.

Do not give taboo gifts, which include clocks (*escorting someone to the grave*), green hats (*means infidelity*), pears (*sounds like separation*) or handkerchiefs (*used in funerals*).

It is not appropriate to ask the person about his/her financial matters (for example asking: “*how much do you earn*”).



The Chinese, who left their country of origin and settled in other lands, have held strongly on to their traditions for fear of losing their identity. As a result, they continue to practice or observe traditions that have been long discarded in their motherland. The above customs may not be evident in the younger generations. It is important YOU check on whether adherence to these, or other customs unique to their region of origin.

## Cultural stereotypes

The Chinese tend not to greet those close to them with greetings that may bear a negative slant such as ‘you’re looking sad’ or ‘you are looking tired’ – this is deemed improper. The concept of ‘face’, which involves avoiding making someone embarrassed, is very common among the Chinese in considering their choice of action.

Punctuality issues – lateness or cancellation can be a serious affront. This pertains to business and social occasions.

The older generation expect that the younger generation will be polite, caring and paying respect to older people. Do not joke with older people – they can feel offended.

 It should be remembered this is just one view and does not apply to every Chinese person. This reality means YOU should establish each person's preferences.

Having established this person's preferences be careful not to replace one cultural stereotype with another related to what should be considered stereo-typically 'Chinese'.

#### **For more information**

"The Chinese community", Community Information Summary, Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), 2003. Available as a PDF document from the following web address:

[http://www.immi.gov.au/statistics/stat\\_info/comm\\_summ/summary.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/statistics/stat_info/comm_summ/summary.htm)

## **FAMILY**

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### **Family structure**

China largely operated as a male-centred society, in which the family name is passed down through the male line. Family plays a fundamental role within Chinese culture and there are strong conceptions of what marriage and family should be.

The Chinese man continues to occupy a dominant position in the family in terms of decision-making. Chinese women are acquiring greater equity with men as they contribute their income or labour often in a family business.

The stereotyped view of the Chinese family is that of a large extended family, with several generations and immediate families all living under one roof, being a self sufficient and self-help institution for its members, providing child care and the care for of the elderly.

This is no longer true for the modern Chinese family. The family structure is mainly a nuclear one with husband and wife living with their children and sometimes their parents. Therefore, the Chinese family no longer performs the function of providing mutual help with child care and care for elderly outside their immediate relations.

However, the Chinese continue to emphasise the values of family and to maintain close family links. There is a strong bond between parents, children and other family members. It is still customary that Chinese parents expect all their children to return home for the Chinese

New Year Eve's dinner and other festival celebrations.

Whilst egalitarian roles are more widely accepted in families of Chinese professionals, many Chinese families still feel that women's roles are primarily the raising of children and running the home.

Most Chinese elderly prefer to stay with their families, so separation should be the last resort, which is usually achievable, provided the older person accepts outside help and support.

### **Attitudes to residential care**

Some Chinese people may feel they have 'lost face' in their community if they accept outside help with caring for their ageing parents, or permit their parents to move to an alternative accommodation. They can be regarded as lacking filial respect, as being self-centred and cold-hearted.

Older people who move away from living with their families might feel shame for 'being abandoned' by their children, or guilt for being considered as 'bad parents' and deserving this treatment. As the result of changing circumstances of Australian families and financial issues – many older Chinese people are moving to residential facilities.



If you need help to provide culturally appropriate care, the assistance of the PICAC Project Officer is available free of charge to your agency or the resident. This service is restricted to the greater metropolitan Brisbane and Townsville. For more information on PICAC contact Diversicare on (07) 3846 1099.

## **PERSONAL HYGIENE**

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The routines and preferences surrounding the following personal hygiene activities greatly impact on the person's sense of self, pride, dignity and confidence.

### **Bathing**

The older Chinese person for the morning wash will prefer to use a basin with a bath at night being their preference. Sometimes, when feeling not well Chinese people may like to add some herbs to the bath water. It is important that female residents support with bathing be provided by a woman.

### **Dress**

There are no specific rules in Chinese custom governing dress. Traditional costumes are rarely worn and clothing is usually chosen for comfort or according to the fashion of the day.

Bright colours are preferred for clothing in Chinese culture. Some convention applies with regard to age: the elderly are encouraged to wear dresses with high neck, collar closed, and with short, medium or full length – depending on season and taste.

### **Grooming**

Women will prefer to comb or groom their hair; no hair should be on their faces. Women *do not* wear makeup, nail polish or perfume; they wear only ear rings (connected with the family or marriage ceremonies). Men do not use cologne/aftershave, but they will trim their nails.



It is important each person's preferences in their dress, bathing, grooming etc are established as part of their care plan.

## PENSIONS

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People who lived in China and worked for government organisations/institutions are often eligible for a partial pension payment from their country. Australia doesn't have reciprocal arrangements in place (regarding the payment of pensions) with many of the countries of origin from which Chinese people may emigrated.

Problems with Centrelink can arise for the person if he/she fails to notify Centrelink of any increase in the foreign pension amount. In this situation the Australian supplement is reduced according to the increased amount. Failure to notify Centrelink can result in a debt and fine being imposed by Centrelink.



To check if eligible for any payment contact the Chinese Consulate:

Level 9, 79 Adelaide Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000

PO Box 12126, George Street  
Brisbane Qld 4003

Ph (07) 3210 6509  
Fax (07) 3012 8096

Website:

<http://brisbane.chineseconsulate.org>

### **For more information**

Check your local telephone directory for your local Centrelink office.

# LEISURE AND RECREATION

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Family plays an important role in leisure with no definite preferences from indoor or outdoor activities. Outdoor activities would include walking, doing easy exercises, Tai-Chi, gardening (vegies, flowers or herbs). Indoor activities could include listening to Cantonese Opera music, or pop music (usually from 40's & 50's), watching movies, playing chess or Mahjong (which is a game involving 4 people) - download how to play instructions from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahjong>

Some older Chinese women may be interested in painting or crafts.

The Chinese enjoy eating and celebrating for any occasion and it is usually time for family coming together.

 The above information can assist in developing diversional therapy activities eg tending potted flowers that are kept in the person's room and/or a small box of vegetables kept in a communal area and/or cooking cakes or pastries, craft work and/or card, chess or board games. However, YOU need to check with each individual his or her preferences in regard to the above.

## Daily Routine

Chinese people like a routine (eg time for meals, bath and activities) and generally have a structured pattern to the day and like sticking to these times.

 You need to establish with each individual his/her preferences related to his/her daily routine and timings.

## Social groups

A diverse range of Chinese social groups meet in various parts of Queensland and provide community functions, arts, music, information and education.

 Contact details are:

**Cathay Community Association**  
161 Wickham St, Fortitude Valley Q  
Ph (07) 3252 9066

**Mainland Chinese Society Qld Inc**  
7 Kentucky St, Sunnybank Hills Q  
Ph (07) 3344 6868

**Gold Coast Chinese Club**  
PO Box 218 Surfers Paradise Q 4217  
Ph (07) 5572 0525

**Townsville Chinese Club**  
66 Boundary St, South Townsville Q  
Ph (07) 4723 5155

**Rockhampton Chinese Association**  
PO Box 6485 Central Qld MC 4702  
Ph (07) 4928 5468

**Happy Senior Club of Brisbane**  
PO Box 886 Sunnybank Q 4109  
Ph (07) 3279 2662  
(meets every Saturday at McGregor State School)

## Television

The SBS television network is available in major cities in Queensland. SBS provides Cantonese and Mandarin-speaking movies, serials and news.

SBS television programming can be downloaded from their website by going to the following address:  
[www.sbs.com.au/whatson/index](http://www.sbs.com.au/whatson/index).  
then choose what you are interested in from the listed menu.

In greater metropolitan Brisbane, Briz31 also have programs about China. Briz31 programming can be downloaded from their website by going to the following address: <http://briz31.tv/news.asp>

 Check your TV program guide or the website for local viewing time as they may change in rural areas or across time zones.

## Movies

Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese language) DVDs are available for purchase at larger Department stores (eg. Big W). It is important you check on the back of the DVD for the list of languages in which it is available.

In most Video libraries you can find movies in Mandarin or Cantonese. Video Movie Hire & Sales:

- **Academy Movie Library**  
247 Sandgate Road, Albion, Ph 3262 7322
- **Auchenflower Video**  
409 Milton Rd, Auchenflower  
Ph 3870 1955

- **Bayside Videos**

119 Glenora, Wynnum, Ph 3396 2660

- **Brisbane CamHire**

Belmont, Ph 3348 9880

- **Birkdale Video**

120 Birkdale Rd, Birkdale, Ph 3822 2433

- **Civic Video Pty Ltd**

196B Sandgate Rd, Boondall  
Ph 3865 3667

It is also possible to purchase Mandarin/Cantonese-language movies via the internet by doing a search, eg:  
<http://multilingualbooks.com/foreignvids.htm/>  
then go to show Google cache than go to Quick Link and press Cantonese or Mandarin.

You can also search the Brisbane City Council library catalogue via its language collection by going to the following website and choosing the preferred language which will then take you to a screen where you choose your category of interest (eg movies, books, music, DVDs):  
[www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/uhtbin/cgisirsi](http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/uhtbin/cgisirsi)

## Radio

Broadcasting in Mandarin and Cantonese languages occurs on SBS – radio 1107AM from Sydney.

### Mandarin:

11.00am – 12.00 Monday  
10.00am – 11.00 Tuesday  
08.00pm – 9.00 Wednesday  
08.00pm – 9.00 Thursday  
10.00am – 11.00 Friday  
10.00am – 11.00 Saturday  
08.00am – 9.00 Sunday

### **Cantonese:**

11.00am – 12.00 Monday  
8.00pm – 9.00pm Tuesday  
10.00am - 11.00am Wednesday  
10.00am – 11.00am Thursday  
2.00pm – 3.00pm &  
8.00pm – 9.00pm Friday  
8.00pm – 9.00pm Saturday  
10.00am – 11.00am Sunday

In greater metropolitan Brisbane, it is also possible to tune into 4EB (FM98.1) and their program guide can be downloaded from their website at the following address:

<http://www.4eb.org.au/progguide.htm>

Broadcasting in Mandarin and Cantonese language occurs on 4EB FM98.1:

### **Mandarin:**

11.00pm Monday  
11.00pm Thursday  
10.45pm Friday  
8.00pm Saturday  
3.15pm Sunday &  
10.00pm Sunday Cantonese/Mandarin

### **Cantonese:**

9.15pm – 9.45pm Monday  
10.30pm Saturday  
10.15am Sunday &  
10.00pm Sunday Cantonese/Mandarin

For more specific information you can contact Radio 4EBFM – Cantonese and Mandarin sections: Ph (07) 3240 8600 Fax (07) 3240 8633



Check your radio program guide or the website for local listening times as they may change in rural areas or across time zones.

## **Newspapers**

There are number of ways to access some Cantonese and Mandarin language newspapers:

1) Every Friday, you can pick up free local Chinese Newspapers outside restaurants and grocery stores in Fortitude Valley and Sunnybank. Examples of these local newspapers are *Qld Asian Business Weekly*, *World News Weekly*, *Queensland Chinese News*, *Bridge Magazine* etc.

*Sing Tao Daily* is a daily Chinese newspaper published in Sydney, can be purchased from newsagency and Chinese grocery stores in Fortitude Valley and Sunnybank.

2) Go to the following web address <http://www.pressdisplay.com/pressdisplay/viewer>

and access a copy of the following newspapers:

- *China Daily*
- *Shanghai Daily*

3) You also can search on the web using the name of the publication

4) For more information contact below mentioned Newspapers & Publication:

- *Asian Community News*  
Ph 3324 1609, [news@acnews.com.au](mailto:news@acnews.com.au)
- *Bridge Magazine*  
Ph 3257 1500, [www.ebridge.com.au](http://www.ebridge.com.au)
- *Queensland Chinese News*  
Ph 3252 8183, Email: [sales@qcn.net.au](mailto:sales@qcn.net.au)
- *World News*  
Ph 3841 5688, [www.world-news.com.au](http://www.world-news.com.au)



If the person can't use a computer, don't forget you can access the internet and load these newspapers and print all or some pages which can then be given to the person to read at their leisure.

## Books

Brisbane City Council libraries have a variety of books in Simplified Chinese and Traditional Chinese. Regardless of your location in Queensland it is possible to arrange to have these books sent to your local library for a small fee.

You can search the Brisbane City Council library catalogue via its language collection by going to the following website and choosing the preferred language which will then take you to a screen where you choose category of interest (eg movies, books, music, DVDs):  
<http://elibcat.library.brisbane.qld.gov.au>

To buy Chinese books contact:  
 Shop 1, 31 Duncan Street  
 Fortitude Valley Q 4006  
 Ph 3252 5557  
 Email: [egb168@yahoo.com.au](mailto:egb168@yahoo.com.au)

Shop 10, Market Square  
 341 Mains Road,  
 Sunnybank Q 4109  
 Ph 3345 5111



Every council library in Queensland borrows from the Qld State Library. The State Library itself has Chinese resources (books, videos, CDs etc), which your local library can arrange to borrow for a small fee.

You can do a search of the State Library resources (which will list the resource, type of resource and call number) by going to the following web address:  
<http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/find/cat>

**Only** for those persons who are visually impaired and a member of the Qld Blind Foundation, it is possible to borrow from its talking book library, which has some Mandarin and Cantonese language taped books. You will need to complete an application form, and if approved, borrowing rights then apply. Contact Telephone: 1300 654 656 to obtain a referral form.

## Music

Music is very important for Chinese persons regardless of gender. It is strong cultural expression of who that person is and the religion he/she lived in. Older people with Chinese background would like to listen Cantonese Opera music or pop music from 40s and 50s.

You can contact Cathay Community Association to get information on how to borrow music tapes or DVDs from them.

You can search the Brisbane City Council library catalogue via its language collection by going to the following website and choosing the preferred language which will then take you to a screen where you choose your category of interest (eg movies, books, music, DVDs):  
[www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/uhtbin/cgisirsi/7U2zA3lL2U/44230061/1/1246/X](http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/uhtbin/cgisirsi/7U2zA3lL2U/44230061/1/1246/X)  
 Please note, a fee may apply for organising inter-library loans.



Again establish each individual's preferences and check whether family members can assist in finding Cantonese or Mandarin language books, videos, DVD, music etc.

### **For more information**

Refer to Diversicare's Multicultural Resource Directory (2004) for more detailed information about sources and other options.

Cathay Community Association  
Ph (07) 3252 9066

Chinese Business Directory (available from Chinese Consulate) or Chinese Business Directory:  
[www.chinesebusinessdirectory.com.au](http://www.chinesebusinessdirectory.com.au)

## **RELIGION**

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### **Profile**

While China is officially an atheist state, religion still plays a significant role for many Chinese. Confucianism is the basis around which the cultural aspects of Chinese life is organised. Confucianism is practiced more as a philosophy, than a religion.

Although Chinese people might not all be religious, going to the temple or church can have spiritual value and can provide them with social interaction. The 2001 Census shows the major religions amongst China-born persons were Buddhism and Western Catholicism.

The 2001 Census related to the religion beliefs for other countries with Mandarin/Cantonese speaking people shows that Buddhists, Taoism, Muslim and Christians are the religions of these regions.

The religion observed by each Chinese person impacts on everyday observances, e.g. Muslims do not eat pork, some Buddhists are vegetarian etc.

Remember there can be a difference between nominating a particular religion to practicing that religion in ones' everyday life (or whether all or only some rituals/practices within that religion are observed).



YOU need to establish each person's religious preferences and link him/her into a local minister of that religion.

### Important days

There are a variety of special events with many of them varying from year to year because the Chinese use the Chinese Lunar Calendar.

Festivity	Month / Date	Customary practices
New Year' Day	1 January to 15 January Chinese Lunar Calendar	Parties everywhere: in parks, dancing halls and universities.
Qing Ming	Refer to Chinese Lunar Calendar	Originally it was a celebration of spring. People used to customarily go out on an excursion to "tread grass". Later it became day dedicated to the dear departed. Tidying up ancestors' tombs is the major big event.
Buddha's Birthday	7 May	Will be celebrated by Buddhists only.
Dragon Boat Festival	5 May Chinese Lunar Calendar	Eating of bamboo-leafs and rice dumplings.
Chung Yeung Festival or Chongyang Festival	9 September Chinese Lunar Calendar	This day is celebrated as a Double Yang Festival. It is marked by a family outing, particularly going up to the top of a hill. Viewing and admiring juhua (chrysanthemum flowers), decorating houses with zhuyu (cornus official plants), eating double-yang cakes, and drinking chrysanthemum wine are part of the festival. In 1989, the Chinese government made the festival the Elders' Day to encourage young people to respect their parents.
Mid-Autumn Festival	15 August Chinese Lunar Calendar	The moon on this day is the fullest and largest to the eye. Viewing it with the whole family while feasting on good wine, fruits and moon-cakes occurs.
Family Day Coming of Winter Day	Always around Xmas 3 - 4 days before Christmas	Families celebrate the end of the work in the farm or field. Good food preparation, dancing, singing and consuming wine.

### **Mother's Day**

This day promotes filial respect for parents with a carnation often given as the present.

### **Christmas**

The Chinese, particularly the young generation, embrace Christmas without paying attention to its religious background. They decorate their homes with Christmas trees and lights, giving their children gifts, and go to parties to enjoy a carnival-like night.



The above listing is not intended to be exhaustive; rather it lists the major shared 'special days'. You should check with the person or his/her family if there are other special days, which is important to that person.

## **FOOD AND DIET**

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Food is a very important part of Chinese culture. The Chinese not only enjoy eating but believe eating good food can bring harmony and closeness to the family and relationships with the types of foods considered auspicious varying from province to province.

Shopping daily for fresh food is essential for all Chinese cooking. Chinese people in general are not as concerned about nutrition as Western culture. They are more concerned with the food's texture, flavour, colour and aroma.

Chinese daily meals consist of four food groups: grains, vegetables, fruits and meat. Because big numbers of people are lactose intolerant, they try to not consume large amounts of dairy products. Instead, Chinese substitute these with soymilk and tofu, which contain large amounts of protein and calcium.

### **Meals**

**Breakfast** Can consist of an open sandwich with jam, peanuts butter or soup (*very popular Congee - rice soup - rice with more water as usual*).

**Lunch** Can consist of hot cooked pork or chicken, piece of fish or dumplings with rice or noodles (older people do not like to eat beef and lamb). A soup for lunch is also desirable.

Bread	Soup / Rice	Vegetables	Meat / Fish	Fruit	Drinks
bun (white colour)	red bean soup, steam papaya soup, vegetable or chicken soup  Rice: grain, jasmine, brown, steamed, fried.  Rice soup, Pot rice	napa cabbage, bean sprout, soybean, cucumber, garlic, eggplant, etc.	chicken or pork	All seasonal fruits (oranges, bananas, watermelon etc).	herbal tea  soy milk  fruit juice

**Afternoon Tea** Piece of cake, or cookies and herbal tea.

**Dinner** Dinner is the main meal and has to be rice, meat dishes and vegetables, cannot be a sandwich.

Western desserts such as cookies, cakes, pies, and ice cream are eaten only on special occasions such as birthdays and weddings.

Chinese culture believes there is positive ('Yang') and negative ('Yin') energy in the universe. Both these energies have to be equally balanced to create a harmonious and healthy state, otherwise, conflict and disease will be created.

Foods belonging to the '**yin**' (also know as 'cold' food) are: bitter melon, winter melon, Chinese green, Napa cabbage, bean sprout, soybean, mung bean, water chestnut, oranges, watermelon, bananas, coconut, cucumber, beer, pop, ice cream, grass jelly, clams and oysters. These foods cannot be eaten excessively and are thought to cause stomach-aches, diarrhoea, dizziness and weakness.

Foods that belong to the '**yang**' (also know as 'hot' food) are: chilli, pepper, garlic, onion, curry, cabbage, eggplant, toro, pineapple, mango, cherry, peanuts, beef, turkey, shrimp, crab, french fries, fried chicken, and pizza. Excessive intake of these foods are thought to cause skin rashes, hives, pimples, nose bleeds, gas, indigestion, constipation, redness in the eyes, and sore throat.

Older Chinese people usually avoid eating yellow cheese, scrambled eggs (because they contain fat and milk) or beef. Check with the residents their preferences as some do not eat lamb either.

If not feeling well a plate of 'Congee' rice soup is appreciated as there is a culturally belief that soup is good for the digestive system and healing.

Also check with the person his/her preference regarding the use the chopsticks or other utensils.



It is important to establish each person's food preferences, cooking style (eg fried versus poached), quantity and timing of meals and recorded as part of their care plan.

### **Food sources**

More and more of the larger food stores (eg Woolworths, Coles) stock Chinese foods. Below is a list of known suppliers of Chinese foods in Brisbane area.

For those persons outside of Brisbane, you could phone and see if they can organise a delivery to your local area. There would obviously be additional costs.

#### **Daily BBQ & Butcher**

Shop 3B, 90 Markeri St  
Mermaid Waters Shopping  
Gold Coast Qld 4218  
Ph (07) 5578 6522

#### **Sunrise BBQ & Butcher**

Shop 122 & 42  
Sunnybank Plaza  
Sunnybank Qld 4109  
Ph (07) 3216 9833

#### **Kwan Wo Noodle Foods P/L**

43 Alfred Street  
Fortitude Valley  
Brisbane Qld 4006  
Ph (07) 3252 9636

#### **Formosa Asian Market**

Aspley Hypermarket Shop 88  
59 Albany Creek Road  
Aspley Qld 4034  
Ph (07) 3263 2553

#### **Australia Fair**

Shop G73  
Southport Qld 4215  
Ph (07) 5591 5516

#### **Exotic Asian Groceries**

Shop T15  
Logan Hyperdome  
Pacific Highway Qld  
Ph (07) 3806 0788

#### **Cathay Chinese Herbs**

877 Ann Street  
Fortitude Valley Qld 4006  
Ph (07) 3852 2288

#### **Chin Cho Tong Herbalist**

81 Warrigal Road  
Runcorn Qld 4113  
Ph (07) 3219 8239

#### **TC Beirne Centre**

28 Duncan Street  
Fortitude Valley Qld 4006  
Ph (07) 3257 1367



For more addresses check the 'Chinese Business Directory' (available from Cathay Community (Ph (07) 3252 9066) or Chinese Consulate in Brisbane.

# HEALTH

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## Trauma situations

Many older Chinese speaking people have been born in different countries including China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia and have lived through a very traumatic time from wars and violation of human rights. It is also likely that many families were split up and dislocated to different parts of the world.

## Attitudes to illness and pain

In general, Chinese believe most illnesses are caused by disharmony an imbalance of energy flow in the body. **Yin** represents negative energy and **Yang** represents positive energy. They have to be in balance to create a harmonious and healthy life. There are elements that belong to both **Yin** and **Yang** meaning some elements of **Yin** fall within **Yang** and vice versa. Health is maintaining **Yin/Yang** balance not only in the body, but also in the environment. It is important to maintain harmony with body, mind and spirit, as well as with family and friends.

The Taoist view of health is that there is an interrelationship between our sources and uses of energy, our diet, expression of our emotions, and the connection we have with our environment, the seasons, and nature. Any illnesses occur when these energies are out of balance.

Chinese people are often stoic about pain, however you can often see their pain in their faces expressions or not wanting to eat or being touched or moved etc.

The person will try to cope with pain for as long as possible mostly by trying change their diet by consuming more herbal teas, soups, soupy rice or congee etc. The person will generally not talk about their pain or illness unless a close friend or family member mentions any changes they have noticed.

## Perception of health professionals

Chinese medicine can be used both for symptom removal and improving overall health through strengthening the energy flow of the body. Often, when the Chinese feel a deficiency in their health or strength, they seek a traditional method first, which is to use herbs and special ingredient soups to replenish the energy level and to stay healthy. They also seek out advice from an elder or a wise person to learn how to cook a special soup, or they visit a doctor.

Chinese patients may prefer being cared for by Chinese doctors, simply because there is a cultural connection and more trust. They are likely to ask the doctor: "is there anything that I should not eat?"- with the patient expecting advice on how to avoid aggravating the illness.

Complementary medicine is also seen as having an integral role in the health of Chinese persons, often alongside western medicine. Chinese people usually use home remedies for minor ailments such as colds, musculoskeletal or skin problems. It is not uncommon for the person to seek medical advice and medication and then seek help from health practitioners eg. Herbalist, naturopath, homeopath or acupuncture and undertake a remedial exercise program.

Chinese people usually use home remedies for minor ailments such as colds, musculoskeletal or skin problems. In Chinese culture – food plays an important role in mediating health, so Chinese tend to consume a balanced diet, rice and noodles as staples, with a variety of vegetables. Vegetables are often mixed with meat to balance the yin and the yang.

When working cross-culturally, the first step is to understand the perspective of the patient and family, especially their treatment goals. The next step is to identify a treatment plan that is acceptable both to the patient and family, and to the health care team. The most effective way to address cultural difference is through open and balanced communication.

 This may mean YOU shouldn't perceive a Chinese person who questions a doctor or health professional as being difficult. Nor should you consider the person as 'being difficult' should he/she wants a second opinion or to access complementary medicines or some type.

## DEATH AND DYING

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### Palliative Care

The Chinese community are not a heterogeneous group and draw upon many influences, such as Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. Values such as loyalty, filial piety, the maintenance of social order, the superiority of men over women, self-restrain, self-respect, and self-blame are embedded in Chinese culture and have implication for health care during end-of-life care. The implication of these values is that collective decision-making within the family is regarded as the norm. Usually females take the caring role, the oldest male is the decision maker but doesn't provide the physical care.

The open discussion of terminal illness and end of life issues is not regarded as appropriate in Chinese culture.

### Death

Preferences about the choice of place of death take a central role in palliative care. However, not every Chinese person wants to die in their home, because of the belief that death in a house can make the house 'dirty' at an energy level.

**Taoism procedures after death:** The body should be placed with the head facing south and cleansed with a white cloth. Once the hair is combed the comb is broken and buried with the other washing implements. Organ donation is considered acceptable but not autopsies.

The funeral will generally take place seven days after the death.

**Buddhism procedures after death:**

Once consciousness has left – the body is viewed as an “abandoned house”. And there are no special rites for disposal of the body.

There are no formal funeral rituals so those observed tend to be cultural observances as much as religious practices.

You can obtain more information related to different religious beliefs and end of life issues through the PICAC training sessions which can be run in your residential facility.

 It is important to establish each person’s wishes in the event of palliative care or death and recorded as part of their care plan.

## LANGUAGE

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The Chinese do not have a phonetic alphabet using characters to express words, thoughts, or principles. A Romanized alphabet Pinyin is used to help teach Chinese in school and for international communication.

There are seven major Chinese dialects and many sub dialects. Mandarin (or Putonhua), the predominant dialect, is spoken by over 70% of the population. It is taught in all schools and is the medium of government. Other spoken languages are: Mongolian, Tibetan, Uyghur, Turkic and Korean.

The main languages spoken at home by China-born people in Australia are: Chinese-Mandarin (48%), Chinese-Cantonese (36.8%) and Chinese-Other (6.8%).

(source: Chinese Community Information Summary, DIMIA 2003)

 YOU need to be aware that just because they once could speak English, this does not mean a) they necessarily spoke it fluently or extensively OR b) they have retained these skills as he/she aged OR c) that it is their preferred language as speaking English can be tiring to the elderly – as they are engaging in a translation-type of process.

### **For more Information**

A variety of language guides targeted at health and everyday activities is available at a cost from:

**HENDRIKA (HEalth aND Rapport Interactive Kommunikation Aid)**

PO Box 326, Beaudesert, Qld, 4285 or via website address: [www.hendrika.com.au](http://www.hendrika.com.au)

## **PHRASE CARDS**

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Following is a sample of phrase cards, originally produced by the Multicultural Access Unit, Health Department of Western Australian (reproduced with the permission of the Department of Health Library, Perth, Western Australia).

The cards are arranged under five headings, in the following order:

- Greetings
- Food
- Personal Care
- Pain
- Requests

These cards are available from Diversicare's PICAC Project Officer by contacting on (07) 3846 1099.

## CHINESE

### Nursing Home Phrase Cards

These cards are designed to assist communication between carers and residents for everyday situations when there is no interpreter present. Do not hesitate to use them - they have been made for staff who do not speak Chinese. Remember your efforts to speak a resident's language will usually be seen as a mark of respect and a recognition of their individuality. This is an excellent way of building rapport.

The cards are arranged under five headings, in the following order:

- Greetings
- Food
- Personal Care
- Pain
- Requests

For situations where an interpreter is needed (see page 22 of **Nursing Home and Hostel Care: A Multicultural Resource Kit** for guidelines), telephone the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450 (24 hours).

**Turn over for guidelines on using these phrase cards.**

Multicultural Access Unit  
Health Department of Western Australia  
☎ (08) 9400 9511

## CHINESE

### How to Use These Phrase Cards

There are two ways to use these cards.

1. If the resident can read, you can point to the appropriate phrase in Chinese on the card.
2. Otherwise you should read the phrase aloud. Follow the phonetic pronunciation on the bottom line. Remember to speak clearly - don't hurry -- and don't worry if you have to repeat a phrase.

The phonetic pronunciation is based on a system popularly used in the Cantonese-speaking parts of the world. There are nine tones in the Cantonese dialect, but we won't worry about them here.

There is no "end sound" to any Cantonese word. Therefore, in phonetic symbols like "ware", "chek", "kap" and "kat", try to pronounce the words without uttering the c,k,p and t sound at the end if possible.

Multicultural Access Unit  
Health Department of Western Australia  
☎ (08) 9400 9511

# CHINESE

## GREETINGS

"YES"

"NO"

好

唔 好

HO

NG IIO



"GOOD MORNING"

早 晨      CHO   SUN

"TIME TO GET UP"

起 身      HEI   SUN

"HOW ARE YOU"

你 好 嘛 ？      NEI   HO   MA ？

"IT IS OKAY, DO NOT WORRY"

唔 駛 擔 心      NG   SAI   DARM   SUM

**G  
U  
I  
D  
E**

(top line)  
(bottom line)

English  
Chinese/  
Phonetic pronunciation

## CHINESE

### GREETINGS



"YES"

係  
HAI

"NO"

唔 係  
NG HAI

"GOOD NIGHT, REST WELL"

晚 安

MAN ON

"VERY GOOD"

好 好

HO HO

"THANK YOU"

多 謝

DOR JEH

"PLEASE WAIT"

請 等 一 陣

CHING DUNG YAT JUN

**G  
U  
I  
D  
E**

(top line)  
(bottom line)

English  
Chinese/  
Phonetic pronunciation

## CHINESE

### FOOD

"YES"

係  
HAI

"NO"

唔係  
NG HAI



"ARE YOU HUNGRY?"

肚餓嗎？ TO NGAW MA?

"TIME TO EAT NOW"

食嘢啦！ SIK YEH

"TIME FOR BREAKFAST"

食早餐啦！ SIK CHO CHAAN

"MIDDAY MEAL" (LUNCH)

食晏 SIK NGAN

**GUIDE**

(top line)  
(bottom line)

English  
Chinese/  
Phonetic pronunciation

# CHINESE

## FOOD



"YES"

係  
HAI

"NO"

唔係  
NG HAI

"EVENING MEAL" (DINNER)

晚飯 MAN FAN

"DO YOU WANT A DRINK?"

飲嘢嗎? YUM YEI MA?

"WOULD YOU LIKE TEA OR COFFEE?"

茶? 咖啡? CHA? GA FEI?

"SUGAR"

糖 TONG

"MILK"

奶 NAI

**G  
U  
I  
D  
E**

(top line)  
(middle line)  
(bottom line)

English  
Chinese/  
Phonetic pronunciation



# CHINESE

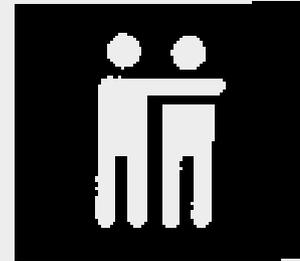
## PERSONAL CARE

"YES"

"NO"

係  
HAI

唔 係  
NG HAI



"ARE YOU COMFORTABLE?"

舒服嗎? SUE FOOK MA?

"WOULD YOU LIKE TO LIE DOWN?"

想翻低嗎? SHEUNG FUN DAI MA?

"ARE YOU TOO WARM?"

熱 唔 熱? YIT NG YIT?

"ARE YOU TOO COLD?"

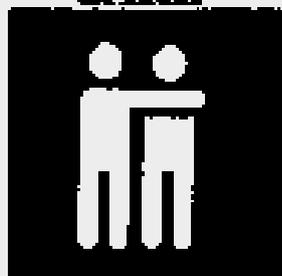
凍 唔 凍? DUNG NG DUNG?

(top line)  
(bottom line)

English  
Chinese  
Phonetic pronunciation

**PERSONAL  
CARE**

**CHINESE**



"YES"

係  
HAI

"NO"

唔 想  
NG SHEUNG

"DO YOU WANT TO GO TO THE TOILET?"

去 廁 所 嗎 ? HUI CHI SOR MA?

"TRY TO USE YOUR BOWELS NOW"

大 便 啦 DAI BIN LA

"IT IS TIME FOR A SHOWER NOW"

沖 涼 啦 CHUNG LEUNG LA

"I WOULD LIKE TO CLEAN YOUR TEETH"

幫 你 擦 牙 BONG NEI CHAAT NGA

(top line)  
(bottom line)

English  
Chinese  
Phonetic pronunciation

**CHINESE****PERSONAL  
CARE**

"YES"

"NO"

想  
SHEUNG唔 想  
NG SHEUNG

"WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR NAILS CUT?"

剪指甲嗎？ JIN JEE GARP MA?

"WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR TOE NAILS CUT?"

剪腳甲嗎？ JIN GEUK GARP MA?

"WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR HAIR CUT?"

剪頭髮嗎？ JIN TAU FAT MA?

"WE WOULD LIKE TO WEIGH YOU"

磅吓你 BONG HA NEI

**G  
U  
I  
D  
E**(top line)  
(bottom line)English  
Chinese/  
Phonetic pronunciation

**PERSONAL  
CARE**

**CHINESE**



"YES"

"NO"

好  
HO

唔 要  
NG YU

"PLEASE TAKE YOUR MEDICINE NOW"

食藥啦！ SIK YEUK LA!

"PLEASE TAKE YOUR TABLETS NOW"

食丸啦！ SIK YUEN LA!

"TIME TO REST NOW"

休息啦！ YAU SIK LA!

**G  
U  
I  
D  
E**

(top line)  
(bottom line)

English  
Chinese/  
Phonetic pronunciation

# CHINESE

## PAIN

"YES"

係  
HAI

"NO"

唔 係  
NG HAI



"ARE YOU COMFORTABLE?"

舒服嗎? SUE FOOK MA?

"ARE YOU IN PAIN NOW?"

痛唔痛? TUNG NG TUNG?

"SHOW ME WHERE THE PAIN IS"

邊度痛? BIN DO TUNG?

"IS IT A BURNING KIND OF PAIN?"

尺尺痛? CHEK CHEK TUNG?

**G  
U  
I  
D  
E**

(top line)  
(bottom line)

English  
Chinese/  
Phonetic pronunciation

## CHINESE

### PAIN



"YES"

係  
HAI

"NO"

唔 係  
NG HAI

"IS IT AN ACHING KIND OF PAIN?"

厭 厭 痛？ YIM YIM TUNG ?

"IS IT A PRICKING KIND OF PAIN?"

針 咭 咭 痛？ JUM KAT KUM TUNG ?

"DO YOU WANT MEDICINE FOR YOUR PAIN?"

要 止 痛 藥 嗎？ YIU JI TUNG YEUK MA?

**G  
U  
I  
D  
E**

(top line)  
(bottom line)

English  
Chinese/  
Phonetic pronunciation

## CHINESE

## REQUESTS

"YES"

係  
HAI

"NO"

唔 係  
NG HAI



"PLEASE STAND UP"

企 起 身    KEI HEI SUN

"PLEASE SIT DOWN"

坐 低    CHAW DAI

"TIME TO REST NOW"

休 息 啦 !    YAU SIK LA!

"ARE YOU GOING OUT?"

出 去 嗎 ?    CHUET HUI MA?

**G  
U  
I  
D  
E**

(top line)  
(bottom line)

English  
Chinese/  
Phonetic pronunciation

**REQUESTS****CHINESE**

"YES"

"NO"

係  
HAI唔 係  
NG HAI

"PLEASE COME WITH ME"

跟我嚟 GUN NGAW LAI

"PLEASE LIFT UP YOUR FOOT"

遞高隻腳 DAI GO JACK GEUK

"PUT YOUR FEET ON THE FOOT PLATE".

將腳放喺踏板嘅  
CHEUNG GEUK FONG HAI DAP BAAN DO

"LEAN FORWARD".

向前彎身 HEUNG CHIN WAAN SUN

**GUIDE**(top line)  
(bottom line)English  
Chinese/  
Phonetic pronunciation

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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## **Diversicare Resources**

- Cultural Diversity Resource Directory for Residential and Community Care Agencies, 2005. Lists all known resources under chapter headings of – Communication, Cultural background, Health and Personal Care, Lifestyle, Legal, Management, Resources.

Phone Director, Diversicare for this resource on (07) 3846 1099.

## **Useful Websites**

### **Western Australia**

[www.health.wa.gov.au/mau/](http://www.health.wa.gov.au/mau/)

### **New South Wales**

[www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au/health-public-affairs/mhcs/resources/index.html#top](http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au/health-public-affairs/mhcs/resources/index.html#top)

### **Victoria**

[www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcht.nsf/CategoryDoc/PresentCategory?Open](http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcht.nsf/CategoryDoc/PresentCategory?Open)

### **Federal Government**

[www.ageing.health.gov.au/publicat/multilin.htm](http://www.ageing.health.gov.au/publicat/multilin.htm)

[www.ageing.health.gov.au/publicat/pubindex.htm](http://www.ageing.health.gov.au/publicat/pubindex.htm)

### **Cross Cultural Health Program (USA)**

[www.xculture.org/resource/order/index.cfm?Category=Articles](http://www.xculture.org/resource/order/index.cfm?Category=Articles)

## **Centre for Culture Ethnicity and Health - Video Catalogue**

[http://www.ceh.org.au/video\\_catalogue.htm](http://www.ceh.org.au/video_catalogue.htm)

## **Alzheimers Australia**

[www.alzheimers.org.au/content.cfm?categoryid=14](http://www.alzheimers.org.au/content.cfm?categoryid=14)

## **Alzheimer's Australia NSW**

[www.alzheimers.org.au](http://www.alzheimers.org.au)

## **Queensland Health – Multicultural Health Publications**

[www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/restopicmaster.asp?Rec=40&frmHealthTopic=MulticulturalHealth](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/restopicmaster.asp?Rec=40&frmHealthTopic=MulticulturalHealth)

## **Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre**

[www.health.qld.gov.au/pahospital/qtmhcmultilingual\\_resources.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/pahospital/qtmhcmultilingual_resources.asp)

## **Cancer Foundation**

<http://www.cancerindex.org/clinks13.htm>

## **Nutrition Australia**

[www.nutritionaustralia.org](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org)

## **Information Lines**

### **Aged and Community Care**

**Information Line:** 1800 500 853

**Carelink:** 1800 052 222

## **Libraries**

*Organisations must be registered to borrow*

### **Diversicare**

Ph (07) 3846 1099

### **Blue Care**

Ph (07) 3377 3327

### **Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre**

Ph (07) 3240 2833

### **HACC Resource Unit**

Ph (07) 3350 8653

### **Alzheimers Association of Queensland Inc.**

Ph (07) 3857 4043

# CORRECTION / ADDITION FORM

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Please complete the following page if you are aware of either incorrect details or you know of additional resources that should be included.

## Correction

Listed item	Correction
Title:	
Page:	

## Additional Resources / contact

Contact details	Description of resource
Title:	(include whether Person contact, book, tool, video, article, course)
Publisher:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Website:	

## Send this form:

Post  
Diversicare  
PO Box 5199  
West End Qld 4101

Fax  
Attention: Margaret Hess  
Diversicare  
Fax: (07) 3846 1107

Thank you for your assistance in keeping this document current.



49 – 51 Thomas Street West End Q 4101  
PO Box 5199 West End Q 4101  
Ph 07 3846 1099 Fax 3846 1107

