



PICAC CONNECTIONS

The quarterly newsletter of the Queensland Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care (PICAC) Team

SPRING 2015

Aims:

- To equip aged care services to deliver culturally appropriate care to older people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- To ensure the special needs of older people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities are identified and addressed.

PICAC Services include:

- ◆ Training for aged care service providers
- ◆ Information on aged care services for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities
- ◆ Cultural resources and support for service providers and communities.

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Promoting Quality and Inclusion in Aged Care

Silvia Borges, PICAC Team Leader, State wide

The Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care (PICAC) team was recently invited to deliver a workshop for assessors and reviewers from the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency (AACQA or Quality Agency, for short). The Quality Agency sits within the umbrella of the Commonwealth Department of Health and is responsible for the accreditation and quality review processes for both residential and in-home care. All aged care service providers in Australia must meet minimum standards to receive accreditation and continue to operate. The quality agency is responsible to assess the performance of aged care service providers against minimum standards. Contemporary accreditation programs have both compliance and quality elements that work in a complementary way to promote quality and safety. Accreditation focuses on continuous quality improvement strategies.

The aim of the workshop delivered by PICAC was to develop assessors' and reviewers' knowledge in relation to older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) who, under the *Aged Care Act 1997*, are recognised as a 'special needs group'. The presentation was developed by Tonina Gucciardo-Masci from PICAC Victoria and was delivered nationally by each PICAC team. Silvia Borges, the team leader for PICAC Queensland, delivered the presentation in Brisbane to an audience of approximately 40 people that included assessors, quality reviewers and administration officers. Apart from the core presentation prepared nationally by PICAC VIC, the PICAC team in Queensland expanded the workshop to include activities, resources and information that are specific to our state.

A number of people in the audience commented that the information provided will assist them in identifying good practice in relation to meeting the needs of older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) within aged care services. They also recognised that in order to deliver quality care and meet the minimum standards of quality and safety, it is vital that services understand and respond to cultural needs. Whilst only one (of the forty-four) standard specifically addresses cultural and spiritual life of care recipients, one of the main messages of this presentation and of the PICAC program in general was to emphasise how culture is embedded in different aspects of care such as catering, palliative care, leisure interests, emotional support, etc. PICAC also discussed how important it was to address language barriers and the use of professional interpreters in aged care and health care settings.

The feedback at the end of the presentation was very positive. PICAC envisages continuing to work with the Quality Agency and all aged care service providers to promote quality and continuous improvement for older Australians from different cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds.



AGEING AND TRAUMA: A SOMALI EXPERIENCE

Amanda Bowden (PICAC Project Officer) with Hussein Ahmed (Diversicare Multicultural Officer)

Elderly survivors of extreme trauma may be more vulnerable compared with other older people. For survivors of traumatic events, such as genocide and war, the transitions of later life can worsen post-traumatic stress symptoms such as intense distress, physical pain and nightmares. Typical experiences of ageing may induce exceptionally disturbing memories and symptoms. For example, becoming dependent on others may provoke feelings of helplessness and loss of control experienced during past traumatic events. And, commonly, as older survivors become less active and occupied by work commitments and family life, painful memories from the past start to intrude more into their lives. This may be particularly likely for people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds who experience a high degree of social isolation.

The case of Mrs Ambaro (not her real name), a 65 year old Somali woman who came to Brisbane on a Humanitarian Visa, helps illustrate some of the issues that trauma survivors face as they age. During the early stages of the Somali Civil War (1980s-ongoing) Mrs Ambaro had her livelihood snatched away (she singlehandedly ran a successful livestock business), was forced to flee her home, and witnessed the death of two of her young children and countless others in gruesome attacks. She had to dig the graves herself to bury her children. Relentless bullets and malarial conditions meant that she and her remaining child struggled to survive from hour to hour. Eventually she made her way to a refugee camp in Kenya and, after many years, to Australia where she now lives with her son and daughter-in-law.

Mrs Ambaro says that the passing of time has made her traumatic memories and stress (*walwal* in Somali) worse rather than better. No matter how hard she tries to forget, the horrific scenes she witnessed of beheadings and dismembered bodies intrude into her mind. Her family have commented that she cries out during her nightmares and disturbs the whole household. Ordinary events will trigger extreme emotions, such as when she is introduced to someone with the same name as her son who was killed at three years of age. Memories and grief come flooding back. The worse thing, she says, is being at home



alone with her thoughts: “My son and his wife look after me very well. They do all the cooking and cleaning and wait upon me like a newly married bride. But when they are at work, and my grandchildren are at school, I’m alone at home and that’s when all the memories come.”

Mrs Ambaro feels very grateful for the safety Australia has offered her, but believes that if it was possible for her to live in Somalia she would be fitter and healthier as she would be able to walk outside with familiar people in the environment she grew up in. Language would not prevent her from conversing and connecting with others, and younger people would value her and seek her advice as an elder. “Somalia is where all my friends and social networks are,” she said. Mrs Ambaro copes with her suffering through her faith in Allah and total acceptance of her destiny. She attends a Qur’an reading group in which she finds some solace. She also added that she would love to attend a multicultural social group to provide activities and entertainment for people of her generation and that is appropriate to her cultural needs. It would give her something to look forward to, provide activities that she could contribute to, foster new friendships, and importantly, occupy her mind to help keep the memories at bay.

ARE YOU AWARE HOW PICAC CAN ASSIST YOUR ORGANISATION?

Mary Andrew, PICAC Project Officer

What is PICAC?

PICAC (Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care) is a program within Diversicare. The objective of the program is to provide information, education, training and resources to ensure older people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds receive culturally appropriate care.

The PICAC program is fully funded by the Federal Government Department of Health to achieve this outcome.

What does PICAC do?

The PICAC team continues to support aged care service providers by providing cross cultural training on a range of related topics and fosters links between cultural communities and aged care providers.

PICAC also supports older people from CALD backgrounds by providing advice and information on the range of aged care services available and how to navigate and/or access the system.

What type of training is provided by PICAC?

PICAC can deliver, or facilitate, training on a number of topics - examples of the most frequently delivered topics include:

- Cultural Awareness (including a specific cultural briefing if required)

- Cross Cultural Communication
- Culture and End of Life
- Working with Interpreters
- Working Effectively in Diverse Teams

These training sessions usually run for 1-1.5hrs, are delivered in-house (ie, at your office/premises) and at no cost to your organisation. Recommended minimum numbers (in-house) are 8-10 as this allows for greater participant discussion. Smaller / larger numbers can also be facilitated by agreement.

PICAC can also facilitate additional training in partnership with other specialist organisations. These 'Open Workshops' are usually held at community venues and can include topics such as:

- Supporting CALD older people who have experienced Trauma/Torture
- Dementia behaviour change from a CALD perspective
- Understanding Palliative Care from a CALD perspective
- Understanding Continence issues from a CALD perspective

If you would like to make a booking for any training in 2016, or need further information, please don't hesitate to contact a PICAC team member (see contact details page 4).

Multicultural Health Network

Silvia Borges, PICAC Team Leader State wide

The Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care (PICAC) team invites you to be part of the Multicultural Health Network. The Network aims to build the capacity of multicultural health service providers, organisations and community representatives to achieve the best health outcomes for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in Brisbane and Queensland.

The Network is recommended for managers and workers in programs and organisations which provide information and services to multicultural communities. The network meets quarterly and is a great opportunity for:

- ◆ Networking and contacts
- ◆ Identifying and responding to challenges in relation to CALD people
- ◆ Information sharing and resources

Our next meeting will take place on Thursday 25 February 2016. Come and share what is happening in your organisation.

For more information, please contact Silvia Borges (see contact details page 4).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Contact PICAC Team, details below, for more information

MONTH	EVENT	DETAILS
10 December 2015	VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION	CENTRELINK INFORMATION Old Inala Library Cnr Abelia and Rosemary Streets Inala 10.00am—1.00pm
14 January 2016	VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION	ADVANCE CARE PLANNING Old Inala Library Cnr Abelia and Rosemary Streets Inala 10.00am—1.00pm
28 January 2016	VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION	UNDERSTANDING AGED CARE Old Inala Library Cnr Abelia and Rosemary Streets Inala 10.00am—1.00pm
11 February 2016	VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION	MANAGING STRESS Old Inala Library Cnr Abelia and Rosemary Streets Inala 10.00am—1.00pm

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