Cultural Diversity Strategy

Strategic Aim

Carers SA Board members, managers, staff and volunteers will understand and embody cultural competency and this will be reflected in program development and delivery.

Carers SA AUSTRALIA

Supporting Family Carers

Introduction

Mission

Carers SA's mission is to promote, assist, empower, and enhance the lives of family Carers.

Carers SA has a key role in leading change and empowering family Carers to participate in a partnership with government and non government service providers, particularly across the health and community sectors, for better services, to improve the conditions under which family Carers work and to increase the recognition of the contribution of family Carers to the South Australian community.

In its efforts to achieve its mission statement Carers SA continues to work with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) Carers, enabling and encouraging their participation and involvement in the organisation and its programs.

Carers SA works with and through key communities, their leaders, workers and Carer members to develop appropriate responses to meet the needs of CALD communities.

Carers SA is mindful that any activity undertaken with regard to CALD Carers is respectful of the important role of community leaders and the need to work at an acceptable pace and within the priorities of the individual communities.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Carers

There are 31,720 Carers (14.2% of all Carers) in South Australia from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, of whom 7,000 are primary Carers (16.2% of primary Carers).

CALD immigrants have been part of South Australia since white settlement, including their arrival as part of a number of 'waves', including Europeans post World War Two; Asians, particularly Chinese and Vietnamese in the 1970s and 80s and more recently from Africa and some areas of Asia and the Middle East, mainly under humanitarian visas.

Often the more recent immigrants have had a history of traumatic experiences due to political and economic unrest in their countries of origin.

The age profile of South Australian CALD immigrants born overseas reflects these various waves of immigrants.

Cultural Competency

"Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enable that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (Cross et al 1989).

"Cultural competence is much more than awareness of cultural differences, as it focuses on the capacity of the health system to improve health and wellbeing by integrating culture into the delivery of health services."

As a culturally competent organisation, Carers SA will:

- Develop a deeper understanding of South Australia's cultural diversity.
- Identify CALD Carers.
- Value diversity.
- Develop its capacity to assess its cultural awareness.
- Be conscious of the dynamics that occur when cultures interact.
- Be proactive in reaching out to CALD Carers.
- Develop and maintain the skills needed to effectively provide service to CALD Carers.
- Develop and maintain relationships with CALD communities.
- Consult with CALD Carers and CALD communities.
- Institutionalise cultural knowledge and lessons learned.
- Adapt service delivery so that it reflects an understanding of the diversity between and within cultures.

Front Cover: Cagliuso family *Photographer:* Phil Martin

Guiding Principles

Principle 1

Carers SA as the state wide organisation established by family Carers in 1989 to represent the interests and needs of all Carers and to be the voice of and for Carers in South Australia, has a responsibility to address the needs of all South Australian Carers regardless of their cultural or linguistic background.

Principle 2

An equitable approach based on population data will be used to allocate Carers SA resources.

Principle 3

Developing cultural competency within Carers SA will be given a priority and allocated sufficient funding to ensure that it occurs.

Principle 4

All Carers regardless of their cultural or linguistic background have a basic right to be made aware of community and Government services and programs for Carers and to have some input into Carers SA policy through a variety of initiatives.

Principle 5

As South Australia's CALD community represents a significant percentage of the State's population and has diverse needs in program development and service delivery, they will be represented on all key Carers SA committees.

Principle 6

Carers SA will aim, over time, to reflect community diversity in its staffing mix.

Principle 7

Carers SA will utilise a community development approach to address the needs of South Australian CALD communities.

Actions: Stage One

Action 1

There will be a minimum pro rata allocation of time and resources to the CALD sector, based on CALD Carer population data and regional variation, to ensure equity.

Action 2

Every locally based program will identify the key CALD groups within their region to receive a minimum of three contacts per year to inform CALD groups of services, policies and initiatives for Carers and to enable information exchange and collaboration.

Action 3

Key Carers SA committees and the Carers SA Board will undertake their best endeavours to include at least one CALD representative.

Action 4

Allocate funding from within resources for a two year CALD Coordinator position.

Action 5

The appointment of a CALD Coordinator who will:

- Collaborate with managers on the review of existing program delivery and the identification of systemic issues which impact on effective service delivery to CALD communities.
- Identify the various South Australian CALD communities and the key issues which their Carers face: trial new initiatives to overcome these barriers.
- Develop strategies for improved service delivery into CALD communities, including for both majority and minority CALD groups.
- Develop a model for working across Carers SA to coordinate Carers SA links with CALD communities.
- Provide CALD input into major policy initiatives, position papers and funding submissions.
- Develop and maintain relationships with key/peak CALD organisations.
- Identify the most effective communication strategies for the various CALD communities.
- Develop and maintain relationships with key community stakeholders.
- Maintain an awareness of best practice of cultural competency to inform Carers SA practices.

Actions: Stage One continued

Action 6

Carers SA will build on its existing knowledge base of CALD issues in a systematic way to ensure that all staff members reach a basic level of cultural competency.

Action 7

Ensure that all promotional material takes in to account the needs of the CALD community.

Action 8

Support and mentor ethno-specific organisations to build capacity in Carer support and where appropriate deliver complementary and/or collaborative services.

Action 9

Develop joint funding submissions with CALD communities for specific projects where appropriate.

Action 10

Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of CALD initiatives and ensure that appropriate CALD statistics are maintained.

Action 11

Lobby for ongoing funding for CALD project staff and aim to have this in place within two years, including funding to support and mentor ethno-specific Carer support programs.

Actions: Stage Two

Action 12

The establishment of an ongoing CALD position to deepen the work of Carers SA with CALD Carers and continue the initiatives outlined in the above actions, plus:

- Develop, implement and evaluate complementary and collaborative Carer support services with ethno-specific organisations.
- Coordinate regular research into the effectiveness of Carers SA services and programs in terms of the CALD community.
- Assist Carers SA staff to identify ways to work with other mainstream organisations to improve service delivery to CALD Carers.

Glossary

Community development approach: empowering communities with the skills and resources to meet and resolve their needs.

Cross cultural: working across cultural boundaries.

Culturally and linguistically diverse: immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds.

References

Cross T. et al. (1989) *Towards a Culturally Competent System of Care: vol.1* Washington, DC, National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health, Georgetown University Child Development Centre.

Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council (2006) *Cultural Competence in Health: a guide for policy, partnerships and participation*, Commonwealth of Australia.

The Carers SA Cultural Diversity Strategy is based upon the Carers SA Cultural Diversity Plan, developed by HOKJOK. It is a companion document to Carers SA's Strategic Plan 2009-2011.

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