

Culturally Sensitive Mental Health Care

According to the 2016 Census, nearly half of Australians had either been born overseas (first generation Australian) or one or both parents had been born overseas (second generation Australian). In 2016, there were over 300 separately identified languages spoken in Australian homes. More than one-fifth (21 per cent) of Australians spoke a language other than English at home¹.

People from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds have a significantly lower level of access to mental health care and support in the wider community, due to stigma, language barriers and cultural issues².

WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) is responsible for planning, guiding and directing investment towards primary health services across Western Australia, on behalf of the Australian Government. WAPHA regularly engages with culturally diverse communities, peak bodies and The Office of Multicultural Interests, and recognises the importance of their role in informing planning.

Culturally Diverse Psychological Service

WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) has commissioned the Culturally Diverse Psychological Service to support people who find it difficult to use mainstream mental health services, because of language and cultural barriers.

Commencing in late 2020, the service will offer face-to-face culturally appropriate support for people with mild-to-moderate mental health issues, whilst providing some care coordination to those needing assistance to access additional healthcare services.

Clinics will be based in Mirrabooka, Cannington and Leederville, and service the surrounding areas.

People can access the service by being referred by their General Practitioner, health services, school psychologist and other allied health practitioners.

See Your GP campaign

WAPHA's See Your GP campaign encourages people from CALD backgrounds to visit their doctor and stay on top of their physical health and mental health.

The campaign was created during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic after some general practices in Western Australia reported a drop off in patient numbers, believed to be related to COVID-19 fears.

The campaign reminds health consumers of the importance of regular medical appointments and assures them of the availability of safe, essential health care.

Resources, which have been translated into a number of languages including Indonesian, Hindi, Punjabi, Tagalog, Chinese, Vietnamese, Italian and Arabic, are available for download from thesocialpresskit.com/see-your-gp

Framework for Mental Health in Multicultural Australia

Embrace Multicultural Mental Health (the Embrace Project) is run by Mental Health Australia and provides a national focus on mental health and suicide prevention for people from CALD backgrounds. An outcome of The Embrace Project is the development of the [Framework for Mental Health in Multicultural Australia \(the Framework\)](#), a free nationally available, online resource. The Framework has been developed to support Australian mental health services, practitioners, Primary Health Networks and others to work effectively in a multicultural context.

1 Australian Government Bureau of Statistics. Media Release - Census reveals a fast changing, culturally diverse nation. 2017. Accessed at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/lookup/Media%20Release3> on 12 February 2020.

2 Commonwealth of Australia. Suicide prevention and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Department of Health and Ageing. Canberra. 2007 Available online: <<http://www.mhima.org.au/pdfs/LIFE-Fact%20sheet%2020.pdf>>

The Framework allows organisations and individual practitioners to evaluate and enhance their cultural responsiveness, with access to a range of support and resources. It is mapped against national standards to help organisations meet their existing requirements. WAPHA is imbedding the Framework across its programs.

The Translating and Interpreting Service

WAPHA encourages primary care and commissioned services to utilise The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS). TIS is an interpreting service provided by the Department of Home Affairs for people who do not speak English and for agencies and businesses that need to communicate with their non-English speaking clients.

Visit the [TIS website](#) for more information.



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This is one of a series of factsheets regarding mental health and primary health care, developed by WAPHA. Further factsheets and other resources can be found at www.wapha.org.au/mental-health-framework. The information in this factsheet was accurate at December 2020.