



ECCV RESPONSE TO THE HACC PROGRAM SERVICE COORDINATION GUIDE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH February 2010

Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) welcomes the opportunity to present this response to the HACC Program Service Coordination "Good Practice Guide" of the Department of Health.

ECCV is the state-wide peak advocacy body representing ethno-specific agencies and multicultural organisations.

ECCV advocates all levels of government on a range of areas including aged care for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

ECCV convenes an Aged Care Policy Committee with broad representation from ethnic and multicultural community organisations and peak bodies with an interest in ethnic aged care. That committee provides feedback on gaps in ethnic aged care services delivery with a view to improve access for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) seniors and increase the cultural responsiveness of services.

ECCV coordinates eight CALD Supported Access Pilot (SAP) Projects for seniors in a tripartite relationship with the Department of Health and the Municipal Associations of Victoria. In this capacity, ECCV expresses its appreciation of the recent opportunity for CALD SAP workers and ECCV staff to attend the Service Coordination Professional Development forum held in Preston on 16 February 2010.

ECCV applauds the Victorian Government's approach to service coordination with regard to functionally integrating practices and processes of the HACC Program and appreciates the opportunity to provide suggestions to integrated protocols on behalf of the CALD SAPP, ethnic and multicultural aged care service providers and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) seniors,

ECCV strongly supports the principle of placing consumers at the centre stage of service delivery. The suggestions in this submission focus on strategies for improved access and culturally responsive interventions for seniors with CALD backgrounds to provide them with better health and aged care services.

Background

Cultural diversity in Victoria's ageing population is a reality that will persist into the coming decades. By 2011 40% of people over 65 in Melbourne will be from culturally diverse backgrounds. That figure exceeds 50% in some Local Government Areas of metropolitan Melbourne. By 2011 one in five people over 80 will have an ethnic background, increasing to one in four by 2026.

Evidence-based research indicates that seniors from CALD backgrounds are living at home longer than the average population. Feedback from ECCV stakeholders shows that many ethnic seniors, their families and carers access aged care services when they reach a crisis rather than seeking early intervention services.

In addition, evidence-based research (Radermacher et al 2008) indicated that CALD seniors, families and carers have a preference for ethno-specific aged care services.

Suggestions to the Service Coordination Publications and Training

In order to ensure the provision of culturally responsive services to CALD seniors, ECCV advocates that the Good Practice Guide of the Service Coordination publications (referred to as the Guide), include specific detail, guidelines and clear directives concerning the facilitation of:

- Effective alliances between HACC Program providers and the multicultural aged care sector
- A culturally competent HACC workforce and everyday practice as a Service Coordination standard
- How to access cultural diversity resources

1. ECCV applauds the current focus on the need for addressing cultural and linguistic issues in the training for HACC Assessment Officers and other staff. As an additional training support, ECCV would like to see clear guidelines, resources and directives in the Guide for HACC Assessment Officers and other aged care staff to engage in inter-agency cooperation with ethnic welfare and community-based agencies and multicultural organisations when dealing with clients in ethnic communities.

2. ECCV recommends more cultural competency training for HACC Assessment Officers and related staff. ECCV would like to see clearer directives in the Guide in relation to roles and responsibilities to provide culturally responsive assessment and care planning.

3. Due to the increasing number of seniors with a CALD background and in response to extensive feedback from the ECCV Aged Care Policy Committee about the integration of protocols, ECCV recommends the inclusion of a template profile on “culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and needs” and in the optional and supplementary template section of the “Service Coordination Tool Templates (SCTT) 2009 User Guide.

4. In line with the recent shift in thinking about health and aged care service provision from a dependency model to a person-centred Active Service Model that fosters autonomy in healthy ageing, ECCV encourages a shift in thinking about the role of ethno-specific organisations as a one-language service. In the framework of the universal concept of diversity planning, ECCV suggest the Guide indicate to aged care service providers that the core business of ethnic and multicultural community organisations is the provision of complementary, culturally competent “specialised services” that include the provision of:

- A wide range of culturally and linguistically appropriate services
- Cultural briefings
- Cultural awareness training
- Advice on language services
- Advice on plain languages translations
- Advice and resources on specific cultural profiles

5. ECCV would like to see the Guide encourage more equitable partnerships as well as more effective and productive inter-agency cooperation between aged care providers and the multicultural community sector especially in accessing, supporting and assessing seniors with CALD backgrounds.

6. ECCV would like to see the Guide provide a stronger recognition and clarification of cultural competency in the HACC and health workforce in relation to culturally diverse tools and resources, for example increased familiarisation and awareness of service directories such as the ECCV Multicultural Aged Care Directory 2009 (order forms accessible at www.eccv.org.au)

7. ECCV suggests that consideration be given to providing a clarification in the Guide of the role of the CALD Supported Access Pilot Program (SAPP) and ethnic agencies that assist ethnic seniors in relation to:

- Culturally appropriate information and referral
- Accessing services
- Accompanying clients through assessments
- Offering advice and assistance to service providers on the delivery of culturally responsive services.

8. ECCV encourages more reference in the Guide to pathways and advantages of effective inter-agency cooperation between Supported Access Workers and ethnic agency support staff on the one hand and HACC Assessment Officers and care coordination case managers on the other, to ensure that assessment of and care planning for CALD seniors is culturally, linguistically and spiritually responsive. For example SAPP workers, ethnic welfare workers and multicultural staff often have well-established, trusted relationships with clients and it would therefore be beneficial for them to be present at assessment and care planning sessions if requested by the client

9. In addition ECCV believes the Guide should indicate the need for translation and provision of bilingual care plans in some cases and encourage aged care staff to seek advice in relation to this from ethnic welfare and community based organisations.

10. ECCV recommends the inclusion in the Guide of case stories and scenarios that illustrate good practice in referral, assessment and care coordination pathways of clients from CALD backgrounds.

11. ECCV recommends a clarification in the Guide concerning the need for a sensitive understanding by HACC and aged care staff regarding the use of interpreters and language services.

Overall, ECCV encourages the inclusion of culturally competent directives, strategies and resources in the Good Practice Guide to ensure that all Victorian seniors receive culturally and linguistically responsive aged care services.

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