



Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)

Communication Strategy for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Background Communities

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September 2002

ABN 27 084 251 669

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Design and Publication by the Migrant Information Centre
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ISBN 1 876735 08 2

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Executive Summary

A Communication Strategy was developed to increase the knowledge and understanding of Home and Community Care (HACC) services by people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. The strategy emphasizes the need for agencies to involve CALD communities in the planning and delivery of services. Through doing this agencies engage communities and have access to their knowledge and experience. It is this knowledge and experience that can assist agencies to effectively target promotional activities.

The development of the strategy was informed by consultation with CALD communities and HACC service providers. The strategy was piloted with three language groups, Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese across the cities of Boroondara, Knox, Manningham, Monash and Whitehorse. The pilot provided the opportunity to test the effectiveness of the strategy as well as to receive valuable feedback from the communities involved. The final strategy detailed in this report identifies a step by step guide to implementation as well as where agencies can receive assistance and resources to support implementation.

Key components of the strategy are:

- Identifying and understanding the demographics of your catchment i.e. what languages are spoken by potential clients, what is the cultural heritage of your potential client base,
- Identifying and understanding the information needs of different CALD communities,
- Skilling staff i.e. staff are trained in using interpreters and ethnic media effectively,
- Matching the medium used to promote services to the preferences of the community - i.e. identifying what should be translated, what is better to speak about,
- Matching promotional strategies to the preferences of the community e.g. the venue, forums, written materials, targeting the audience i.e. the family of the potential clients and/or the client, and
- Providing a culturally friendly environment for potential clients.

The strategy could not have been developed without the input of CALD communities and HACC service providers. Their ideas and solutions make up the key strategies in this report.

1. Background

The Program Development and Access Project managed through the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) recognises that successful planning and delivery of Home and Community Care (HACC) Services to people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds is best achieved through an active exchange with communities.

A Communication Strategy based on available demographic data was developed to increase the knowledge of HACC services by CALD communities. Three main language groups were identified as the target communities: Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese. The country of birth of the target communities included China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Vietnam.

The project collected HACC information on HACC services from a number of providers and compiled and distributed this information to the target communities. The project piloted an information forum at the Avenue Neighbourhood House with the Eastern Region Chinese Social Club in July 2001. A total of five forums were held in Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese respectively between December 2001 to June 2002 to promote HACC services.

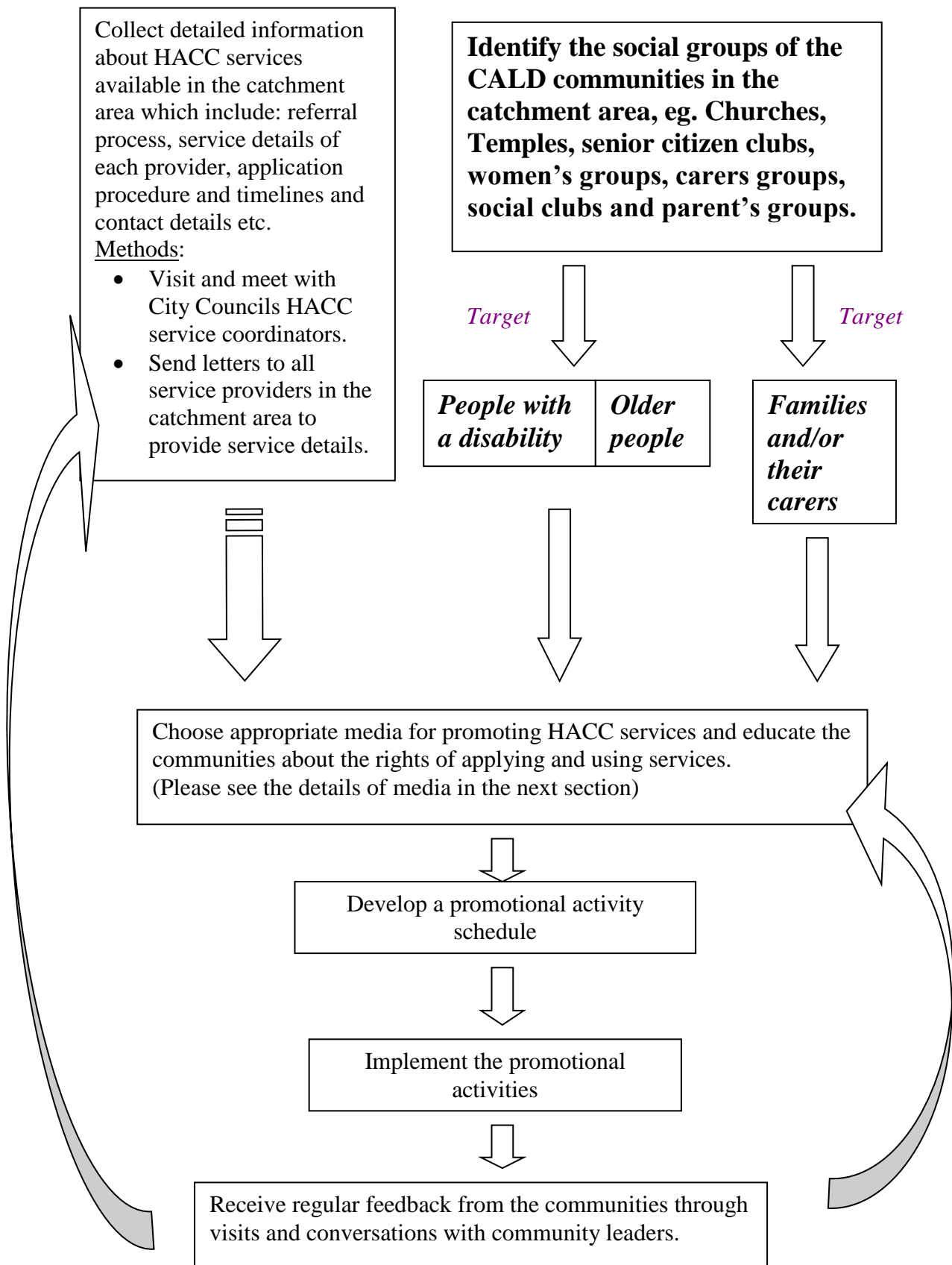
1.1 The Aim of the Communication Strategy

The aim of the communication strategy is to establish a model to promote HACC services to frail older people, people with a disability and their carers from CALD backgrounds.

1.2 Objectives of the Communication Strategy Model

- Provide linguistically and culturally appropriate materials on HACC services to CALD communities.
- Promote the Australian concept of welfare services for aged people and their families.
- Educate the communities about the individual's rights of applying and using aged care services.

1.3 Communication Strategy Model



1.4 Media to Promote Services

List of media to promote HACC services:

- Translated brochures, pamphlets using simple language.
- Ethnic radio programs.
- Articles in ethnic and local newspapers.
- Articles for community and social club newsletters.
- Promotion through religious leaders and places of worship.
- Information forums held in the social clubs, carer's groups and women's groups.
- Information provided to Bilingual GPs and English class teachers in adult learning centres and neighbourhood houses.
- Information provided to volunteers who participate in home visiting schemes.

The communication strategy not only targets older people and people with a disability in the communities, but also their families. From the consultation with the community leaders¹, they believed that for the older people, because of their limited literacy, direct contacts and word of mouth is a better approach. However, for their families, written material could provide a better understanding and more detailed information. The community leaders also suggested that community education is a positive way to encourage older people, people with a disability and their families to understand about their rights to use services and clarify that it is not a shame for the family to use government services. The communication strategy is a circular process, regular feedback from the communities would improve the effectiveness of the information flow which includes the content and format of communication.

¹ MIC Program Development and Access Project Officer has consulted totally 7 agencies and clubs which included leaders in senior citizens' clubs, carer's group, ethnic specific worker and Church leader.

2. Evaluation Objectives

- To consult with targeted communities to determine the impact of the communication strategy on raising the awareness about the individual's rights of applying and using HACC services.
- To assess the cultural appropriateness of the materials available amongst HACC service providers in promoting their services.
- To identify the effectiveness of the communication strategy in improving the knowledge of HACC services in the targeted communities.

3. Methodology

Mechanism for undertaking the evaluation included:

- Consultation with community leaders.
- Feedback (verbal and written) received from forum participants.
- Random survey of participants to measure their understanding of HACC services after the forums.

4. Statistics from the Forums

<i>List of forums</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eastern Region Chinese Social Club• Boroondara Chinese Senior Citizen's Club• The Chinese Senior Citizen's Club of Manningham• Rowville Baptist (Chinese) Church• Waverley Chinese Senior Citizen's Club• Blackburn North Baptist Church – Vietnamese Fellowship
<i>Number of forums</i>	Both Mandarin & Cantonese: 3 Mandarin: 1 Cantonese: 1 Vietnamese: 1
<i>Number of attendants</i>	238
<i>Age distribution of attendants</i>	Less than 30 years: 1 30-49 years: 20 Over 50 years: 217

5. Discussion and Key Findings

5.1 HACC promotion materials and procedure

The PDA project worker visited a number of HACC service providers to collect detailed information about the HACC services available in the catchment area and how to access them including: referral process, services details, application procedures and contact details etc.

The materials available varied from agency to agency in terms of cultural appropriateness. Agencies were classified along a continuum. At one end of the continuum an agency had translated a wide range of leaflets/forms/application information packs into a number of key languages and policies/procedures were in place when interpreters were requested. At the other end of the continuum an agency provided materials in English only and workers had no knowledge of using interpreters/translators. Most of the agencies in the Eastern Region were positioned in the middle i.e. some information was translated and there was a general understanding of how to access interpreters but not necessarily how to use interpreters correctly.

A number of agencies stated they have difficulty in preparing culturally appropriate promotional materials. The difficulties identified by agencies were:

- Difficulties in identifying and selecting appropriate language groups in the catchment area.
- Identifying which documents to translate given that there is not the budget allocation to translate all documents.
- Limited knowledge about how to prepare documents for translation and find an appropriate company to complete the translation.
- Staff skills in using interpreters and translation services.
- Difficulties in distributing promotion materials which included limited knowledge about ethnic media and contacts with CALD communities.

5.2 Identifying CALD Community Groups

CALD communities who required further information on HACC services in the Eastern Region were identified through an analysis of available demographic data and HACC usage rate. The data were based on 1996 census, council data on HACC usage and materials provided by the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs between 1996-2000. The result of the analysis indicated:

- The usage rates of CALD communities were lower than the English speaking population. People from China, Malaysia and Vietnam had the lowest usage rate of HACC services.
- The migration figures indicated that people migrating from China were the largest single migrant group settling in the Eastern Region between 1998-2000. The number of migrants from China aged 65+ represent the largest number of people in this age group settling in the Eastern Region. This group of people was

potential HACC users however as they were newly arrived they may not have information on HACC services.

- Other Chinese languages including Mandarin and Vietnamese speaking groups were the largest groups who recorded their English proficiency level as “not well” or “not at all” in the 1996 Census. Individual proficiency in English directly affects their ability to access appropriate information if services were required.

Three main language groups were identified as the target communities: Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese to develop the Communication Strategy Model. The country of birth of the target communities included China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Based on the model, PDA worker identified the social groups of the CALD communities in the catchment area, eg. Churches, Temples, senior citizen clubs, women’s groups, carers groups, social clubs and parent’s groups. There were a number of important issues when identifying the social groups and making contacts including:

- ***List of contact details:*** The MIC has collected details and compiled a database to hold the contact details of CALD communities in the Eastern Region. As a staff member of MIC the worker could access the database. However, for a general agency worker the worker may not be aware that the MIC could provide the information if requested. Therefore, some agency workers indicated they had difficulties identifying the groups and contact people.
- ***Understanding the composition of the groups:*** The communication strategy model targeted two main groups: the client (older people and people with a disability) and their family and carers. Group’s composition or the age of general membership will affect the emphasis of information distributed. The worker needs to understand the age distribution of the groups’ members. If it is a group of young couples and children the emphasis of information would be how HACC can assist you to take care of your older family members and people with disabilities etc.
- ***Effective Communication:*** A number of the contact people of community groups have limited English skills. It is important to use the telephone interpreter in the initial contact. Some community leaders often feel frustrated when a stranger calls and they are unable to communicate with them.
- ***Identify the best language:*** People from the same cultural background do not necessarily speak the same language. For example, a Chinese group might speak Mandarin, Cantonese or other local dialects. Therefore identifying the best language in organising an information forum is important. The community leader or the contact person of the group will be able to identify the best language(s) for the group.

5.3 Developing Promotional Activity

Identifying appropriate promotional activities is crucial in promoting services. Written brochures are the most common way to promote services. However, it might not be the best way to promote services within CALD communities. Some CALD community leaders identified their preferences in receiving information:

- Direct personal contacts with the community, holding forum/information sessions inside the club/group/church is preferred. Some older people are not very good at reading brochures, sometimes it is due to low literacy, but sometimes it is due to impaired vision.
- Some older people have difficulties with transport therefore it is preferred to hold the forum/information sessions on the club day or after Church/Temple services.
- Speakers at the forum/information sessions to speak the language of the audience or as a second preference to use an interpreter.
- Speakers should keep the talk short as some older people have difficulty concentrating for a long time; it was suggested that approximately 30-40 minutes per talk.
- Translated printed materials are available for the audience to take home following the information session. The printed materials should use simple language and avoid jargon. English material should be available as the audience might request an English version for their family members to read.
- Revisit the club/group on a regular basis, for example once a year, to remind the community about the service available and keep them informed of any changes.
- Ethnic radio and newspapers often discuss important issues or introduce services that are available for people. The ethnic media is a good means through which to distribute information.

5.4 General comments about the targeted communities

5.4.1 Previous knowledge about HACC services

Around 90% of the participants (214 out of 238 participants) indicated that they did not have any knowledge of the HACC services before the forums. 5% of the participants (12 participants) stated that they had heard about home care or personal care or meals on wheels because their neighbours are receiving the services, however they did not have a comprehensive understanding of overall HACC services and the application procedures. Only 2 participants indicated that themselves or their family members used HACC services.

Over 90% of the participants (215 participants) indicated they had a better understanding of HACC services after the forums despite the fact that the information was very general. The forums provided an overall picture of HACC services and some useful contacts for later use. In general 100% of the participants (238 participants) were very pleased and satisfied with the speaker and information distributed in the forums. 90% of respondents indicated that the information was useful to very useful and easy to understand. However

less than 10 people indicated that they would attempt to apply for HACC services within a short period of time.

A random client survey was distributed to measure the understanding of the HACC services after the forums. Ten participants were randomly selected to complete the survey. The results of the survey showed that 85% of the questions about HACC services were answered correctly. The common mistake was the participants could not identify all the services available in HACC services, some participants could only identify the most common ones, for example, personal care, property maintenance, volunteer visiting, delivered meals or nursing care. The commonly missed one was allied health. Almost 90% of the participants (9 out of 10) successfully identified all the important categories of organisations that deliver HACC services, for example, city councils, district nursing services, community health centres and aged care assessment team.

5.4.2 Understanding eligibility for HACC services

Almost 95% of participants (226 participants) indicated they had limited knowledge of who is eligible to apply for government services. The major confusion indicated by the communities was that the older person would not be eligible for any service if they lived with other family members, for example their son or daughter. The other confusions included:

- Am I eligible if I have savings in the bank? How to define my income?
- Am I eligible if I have one or two properties?
- Am I eligible if I was 50 years of age but suffer from back injury?
- Is my husband or I eligible if my husband is frail and I can not complete all the housework by myself?
- Is my mother eligible if she is frail and lived alone, at the moment all of her daughters and daughter-in-law take turns to take care of her, and all of her sons/daughters are earning reasonable incomes.

Verbal and written information about eligibility was provided in the forums, following this people seemed to have a better understanding of the eligibility requirements. The worker also reminded the potential clients that they would need to go through an assessment process. The assessor would assess their individual cases.

5.4.3 Barriers in applying for HACC

Communication was identified as one of the most significant barriers in applying for services. A number of older people indicated that it was very difficult for them to apply for services. They often relied on friends or relatives to talk to the service providers. However, sometimes it was the friend or the relative who did not feel comfortable to talk on behalf of the older person to the agency. It was not always a result of limited English proficiency; sometimes it was due to the uncertainty of whom they were dealing with and confusion with the application procedures.

The participants also indicated that sometimes they did not have a full understanding or it was not very clear to them what service they needed. Therefore, a general discussion with the aged care or ethno specific agency's worker might help to clarify their needs. However, some potential clients hesitated to discuss their issues with the worker due to the level of trust they had with the worker or if they were seeking services from an ethno specific service they were afraid to expose their personal business to a member of their community.

Long waiting periods was another barrier that deferred people from applying for services.

6. Conclusion

Through the Communication Strategy Model, PDA project provided linguistically and culturally appropriate materials of HACC services to CALD communities and successfully distributed useful information to raise awareness about the individual's rights of applying and using HACC services.

The Communication Strategy Model is effective in terms of increasing the knowledge of HACC services within the targeted communities. One of the key factors of the model was receiving regular feedback on the implementation of the model from the communities through visits and conversations with community leaders.

7. Recommendations

7.1 Promoting HACC Services

It is recommended that the following procedures are in place at an agency level:

- Demographics of CALD communities within the catchment area. The data can be obtained through the MIC.
- Notes for preparing translations and how to use interpreters are documented. The notes can be obtained through the MIC and the Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service (VITS).
- Training for staff in using interpreting and translating services.
- The ethnic media list and contacts with CALD communities are available and updated at an agency level. The list can be downloaded from MIC website (www.miceastmelb.com.au).
- Identifying promotional strategies e.g. what is best to translate and to talk about etc. MIC staff can assist agency staff to do this. A number of useful information can be downloaded from MIC website, <Appendix 1> A list of cultural resource available at MIC.
- Partnerships with other agencies, for example, an information forum on aged care for the Vietnamese Community where different agencies can participate through talking about their services etc

7.2 Identifying CALD community groups

- In identifying target communities, the MIC can provide a comprehensive demographic profile through the analysis of the census and data from DIMIA. Agencies can obtain the data through contacting MIC staff.
- In identifying CALD community contacts, the Ethnic Community Council of Victoria (ECCV) has developed a Multicultural Service Directory which can be obtained by ECCV or it's website (www.eccv.org.au). The MIC also has contact details of the groups/clubs in the Eastern Region. All contact details can be downloaded from MIC website (www.miceastmelb.com.au).
- Use interpreters in initially contacting the communities.
- Talk with the community about the best way to promote your service to them – personalise the delivery of the information.

7.3 Development of activities to promote HACC services to CALD communities:

Based on the preferences identified by the communities for accessing information, the following are recommended:

- Hold forum/information sessions inside the club/group/Church.
- Forum/information sessions are held on the club day or after the Church/Temple service or group activity.
- Use bilingual worker/volunteer or arrange an interpreter.

- Keep the talk short and focussed, approximately 30-40 minutes – personalising the information for the audience.
- Distribute translated printed materials if available at the forum. English material should be available as the audiences might request an English version for their family members to read.
- Revisit the club/group on a regular basis, for example once a year.
- Use ethnic radio/newspapers and local newspaper to promote the services.
- Some communities have difficulties in understanding the concept of aged care/disability services. Aged care/disability service is an unfamiliar concept to some CALD communities where taking care of an older/disabled person at home is a duty. In promoting services, service providers might need to change the wording of the information sessions to make people feel more comfortable to participate in the session. For example, an information session about HACC Personal/Home Care, the session could be promoted as “How the family can support older family member to stay living at home”.

7.4 Increasing the understanding of HACC services

- Community education is important for CALD communities, to provide information to both potential clients as well as their families. Distribute important messages to a variety of groups and to a variety of ages on a regular basis. This will encourage people to rethink the importance of the aged care and disability issues and ensure that people have information to inform their opinions on the role of welfare services in Australia.
- Providing a welcoming, comfortable and culturally sensitive environment for potential clients and their families. Service providers need to improve their agency’s image and to adopt a culturally sensitive approach. For example the agency foyer has posters or pictures with people from diverse backgrounds, put up a language map near the reception area and “Interpreter available upon request” signs in the front desk etc.

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) would like to thank all involved in developing the Communication Strategy and participating in consultations, forums and interviews. Special thanks to the Program Development and Access Project steering group agencies for their valuable advice and support.

Blackburn North Baptist Church – Vietnamese Fellowship
Boroondara Chinese Senior Citizen Club
Cambodian Community Welfare Centre
Care Connect
City of Boroondara
City of Manningham
City of Maroondah
City of Monash
Do Care
Eastern Region Chinese Social Club
Indo-Chinese Elderly Association in the Eastern Suburbs
Interchange (Inner East) Association
Knox Chinese Senior Citizens Club
Knox Community Health Service
Knox Hungarian Senior Citizens Club
Lao Australian Welfare Association Inc.
Lao Elderly Association
Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)
Polish Community Council of Victoria
Rowville Chinese Baptist Church
St. Mark's Adult Day Centre
The Chinese Senior Citizen's Club of Manningham
Uniting Care Community Options
Victorian Multi Ethnic Slavic Welfare Association Inc
Waverley Chinese Senior Citizens Club
Whitehorse Older Person Action Group

Appendix 1

Cultural Resources available at Migrant Information Centre, please visit the MIC website (www.miceastmelb.com.au) to download the information.

<i>Title</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Languages Available</i>
<i>HACC Program News</i>	A brief introduction of HACC services	English, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Polish, Turkish, Vietnamese
<i>Demographic Profile</i>	Demographic Profile of different communities in the Eastern Region	English
<i>Definitions of HACC Personal Care and Home Care</i>	An introduction of HACC personal care and home care services	English, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Laotian, Vietnamese
<i>Countries and Languages Spoken</i>	A list of countries and languages spoken	English
<i>Promotion Strategy</i>	The strategy provides a step by step guide for agencies to use in developing and promoting services to culturally and linguistically diverse communities and includes a contact list for ethnic media.	English
<i>Eastern Multicultural News</i>	The Newsletter facilitates information sharing between agencies and programs on new programs and project initiatives for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.	English
<i>Religion Fact Sheets</i>	Buddhism Christianity Hinduism Islam	English
<i>What are the jobs for volunteers</i>	A brief introduction of the jobs for volunteers, handy for volunteer recruitment.	English, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Arabic, Vietnamese

<i>Title</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Languages Available</i>
<i>Notes for using translators and interpreters</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy for the use of Interpreters • Working with interpreters • Guidelines for the use of Auslan interpreters • Speaker Notes • Preparing text for translation 	English
<i>Translation for “Interpreter available upon request”</i>	“Interpreter available upon request” in different languages	English, Arabic, Bosnian, Chinese, Croatian, Farsi, Greek, Italian, Serbian, Turkish, Vietnamese
<i>Translation for “Welcome”</i>	“Welcome” in different languages	English, Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Farsi, Greek, Spanish, Vietnamese
<i>A Guide to Services for Senior Victorians (Published by DHS)</i>	The Guide provides contact details of services available for older people in Victoria	Chinese, English, Croatian, Dutch, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Macedonian, Maltese, Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, Vietnamese
<i>Aged Care - Make the Choices that are Right for You: Quality Care for Older Australians (Published by Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care)</i>	The booklet provides a list of aged care services available in Australia.	English, Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Dutch, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Maltese, Polish, Serbian, Spanish and Vietnamese.
<i>Residential Care for Older People - A Guide for Families and Carers in Culturally and Linguistically diverse Communities in Victoria (Published by DHS)</i>	The booklet provides information about residential care for older people, this guide also lists ethno specific community organisations and facilities catering for culturally and linguistically diverse people.	Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, English, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Russian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese.