



Australian Government
Department of Health

Shared actions to support all diverse older people

A guide for aged care providers

*All older people experience a high quality aged care system
that ensures equitable access and outcomes and embraces
their diverse characteristics and life experiences.*



Aged Care Sector Committee Diversity Sub-group
February 2019

Shared actions to support all diverse older people
February 2019

Publications Number: 12164

Creative Commons Licence -
Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives CC BY-NC-ND



© 2019 Commonwealth of Australia as represented by the Department of Health

This publication is licensed under the Creative Commons
Attribution-NonCommercial-No Derivatives 4.0 International
Public License ("Licence") available from:

creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode.

You must read and understand the Licence before
using and sharing this publication.

Sharing

Without limiting your obligations under the Licence, you may share and make
this publication available to the public in any medium or format, but only if:

- you share or make this publication publicly available for
free and do not use it for a commercial purpose;
- you share or make this publication publicly available
'AS IS' and you do not alter, change, modify, amend or
rearrange the content of this publication in any way;
- you do not remove this copyright notice found in this publication; and
- you do not suggest that the Department of Health endorses you, or your
use of this publication as a means to promote your goods and services.

Restrictions

The Licence may not give you all the permissions necessary for your
intended use. For example, other rights (such as publicity, privacy and
moral rights) may limit how you use the material found in this publication.

Enquiries

Enquiries regarding any other use of this publication should be addressed to
the Branch Manager, Communication Branch, Department of Health, GPO
Box 9848, Canberra ACT 2601, or via e-mail to copyright@health.gov.au

What is this plan about?

Australia is a diverse nation, and this is reflected in the diversity of religion, spirituality, sexuality, culture, socio-economic background, geographic spread, medical and care needs, and personal experiences of our senior population.

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that all consumers of aged care can access information, and receive aged care services, appropriate for their individual characteristics and life experiences. The Aged Care Diversity Framework (the Framework), launched in December 2017, is a key part of achieving this.

This is one of four distinct action plans developed under the Framework:

1. Shared actions to support all diverse older people, an overarching set of actions in recognition of the many commonalities within and between diverse groups.
2. Actions to support older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
3. Actions to support older people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds
4. Actions to support older Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and gender diverse, and Intersex peoples

The plans can assist providers to identify actions they could take to deliver more inclusive and culturally appropriate services for consumers. The plans acknowledge that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to diversity, and that each provider will be starting from a different place and operating in a different context. Therefore, the action plans are designed so that providers can work through three levels of actions – Foundational, Next Steps, and Leading the Way – and decide which are most relevant to their organisation, in consultation with consumers, their support people, and staff.

Delivery of safe and inclusive services to people with diverse needs and life experiences is built into the Aged Care Quality Standards. Diversity is woven through the standards and underpinned by Standard 1 to value the identity, culture and diversity of each consumer and to deliver culturally safe care and services. The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission will assess aged care providers based on the quality of service experienced by service users (consumers).

There are many benefits for providers in taking action to provide better services to diverse groups. These include opportunities to:

- celebrate successes with consumers, their support people and the wider community;
- engage with new groups of potential consumers;
- improve the wellbeing and satisfaction of consumers;
- build new partnerships with the community;
- increase the vibrancy of the service environment;
- demonstrate to employees with diverse backgrounds and life experiences that they are valued and engaged within the service.

Actions to support all diverse older people

The following six outcomes, taken from the Aged Care Diversity Framework, provide a guide for assessing current performance, identifying gaps and designing pathways to improve inclusive service provision. Each outcome has example actions to support providers:

Outcome for Consumers 1: Making informed choices

Older people have easily accessible information about the aged care system and services that they understand and find the information helpful to exercise choice and control over the care they receive.

Provide information in an appropriate format, through different forms (online/hardcopy/newsletter/verbal) and in a language the consumer understands)

Foundational Actions

- Provide consumers with simple, understandable information on:
 - their residential or home care agreement, including the financial detail of their care.
 - how to report, and receive support for, elder abuse.
 - how to access the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission's reports on your service.
 - how to make a complaint about their care, and supports (for example, an advocate) they can access to assist with this.

Moving Forward

- Have regard for the principles in [Supported Decision-Making In Aged Care - A Policy Development Guideline for Aged Care Providers in Australia](#) when making decisions about a person's care.
- Include consumers, their families, carers and communities in designing your information products and forms.

Leading the Way

- Organisation leadership is reflective of the diversity of the consumers.

Outcome for Consumers 2: Adopting systemic approaches to planning and implementation

Older people are active partners in the planning and implementation of the aged care system.

Engage consumers in a culturally safe, supportive environment that enables them to participate as active partners, as well as articulate their individual needs

Foundational Actions

- Understand the community in which your service is located. Apply this knowledge to increase the effectiveness of your service model and promotional material.
- Ensure the consumer's nominated support people are present when discussing their care needs. Support people should be identified as part of the service intake process and could be partners, family members, friends, ex-partners, community leaders or advocates.
- Review each consumer's care plan on a regular basis, and immediately if their circumstances change. Ensure the consumer, their family and/or representative are involved in developing the revised plan.

Moving Forward

- Provide regular opportunities for feedback and discussion with consumers, their families, carers and the community.
- Your service's governing body actively seeks to embed the Aged Care Diversity Framework and action plans into organisational planning practices.

Leading the Way

- Include consumers, their families, carers and communities in your organisation, governance and decision-making. For example, by having a board position for a consumer representative.

Outcome for Consumers 3: Accessible care and support

Older people in rural, remote, regional and metropolitan Australia have access to aged care services and supports, appropriate to their diverse characteristics and life experiences.

Collaborate with stakeholders to identify and overcome barriers in accessing the aged care system

Foundational Actions

- Establish processes to capture consumer feedback on a regular basis, and demonstrate how your service has acted on that feedback.

Moving Forward

- Identify opportunities to link with other service providers, especially those with specialist services, to ensure better continuity and coordination of care for diverse consumers. This is particularly important for consumers in rural and remote areas.

Leading the Way

- Consider ways to link consumers with local community groups that are relevant to them. You might offer a space on-site for a local group to meet, for example.

Outcome for Consumers 4: A proactive and flexible aged care system

A proactive and flexible aged care system that responds to the needs of existing and emerging diverse groups, including an increasingly diverse aged care workforce.

Engage with the local community and stakeholders to identify emerging needs and how service delivery models can be adapted to embrace those needs, including how the organisation's workforce demonstrates an inclusive approach to care

Foundational Actions

- Build a culture of respect for diversity at all levels of your organisation.
- Implement routine cultural competency training for staff and make consumers aware of this.

Moving Forward

- Engage with consumers, their support people and the community to support continuous improvement. Monitor progress.
- Include a statement about your service's commitment to diversity (both for staff and consumers) in job advertisements and intake paperwork for new employees.

Leading the Way

- Reflect the diversity of your service's client base in the membership of its governing body.

Outcome for Consumers 5: Respectful and inclusive services

Services effectively meet the specific needs of older people with diverse characteristics and life experiences, their families, carers and representatives in a respectful and inclusive way.

Seek out, develop and use tools, training and information that support delivery of care that is inclusive of diverse characteristics and life experiences

Foundational Actions

- Ensure questions about a consumer's routine, hobbies, cultural/spiritual/social/environmental/health needs and identity are asked during development of their care plan.
- Plan activities throughout the year that celebrate different forms of diversity; for example, you might organise activities around Mardi Gras, Harmony Day, International celebratory days or National Reconciliation Week. This shows consumers that their diversity is identified within your service and is celebrated. It also provides opportunities for other consumers and staff to learn about diversity.

Moving Forward

- Educate other consumers about the lived experience and specific needs of vulnerable consumers, to build acceptance and a sense of belonging.

Leading the Way

- Explore flexible methods of service delivery to meet the emerging needs of consumers; both those who are already receiving your services, and those in your local community.

Outcome for Consumers 6: Meeting the needs of the most vulnerable

Older people can access high quality and culturally safe aged care services and supports that meet their needs irrespective of their personal, social or economic vulnerabilities.

Provide inclusive service models to address the needs of the most vulnerable, and work with other stakeholders to ensure that full spectrum of needs are met

Foundational Actions

- As an organisational leadership team, build a culture of respect and inclusion for staff and service users.
- Ensure that you have staff trained in trauma informed care practices to support the many consumers who have experienced trauma (for example, veterans, migrants, people from a refugee background, members of the Stolen Generation, older people who are LGBTI, or those who have experienced homelessness).

Moving Forward

- Ensure the diversity of consumers and the community is represented in organisational governance.
- Develop or strengthen your service's policies around cultural safety, anti-discrimination, or codes of conduct for staff and consumers.

Resources

Title	Author	Link or contact information
Advance Care Planning	Advance Care Planning Australia	www.advancecareplanning.org.au
Australian Guidelines for the Treatment of Acute Stress Disorder and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder	Phoenix Australia Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health	www.phoenixaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Phoenix-ASD-PTSD-Guidelines-Summary.pdf
Diversity and Financial Elder Abuse in Victoria	Monash University	www.eapu.com.au/uploads/research_resources/VIC-Diversity_and_Financial_Elder_Abuse_FEB_2011-Monash.pdf
National Guidelines for Spiritual Care in Aged Care	Meaningful Ageing Australia	http://www.meaningfulageing.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/National-Guidelines-for-Spiritual-Care-in-Aged-Care-DIGITAL.pdf
Strengthening Diversity Practice in Home and Community Care	VIC State Government	www2.health.vic.gov.au/ageing-and-aged-care/home-and-community-care/hacc-program-for-younger-people/hacc-program-guidelines/hacc-quality-and-service-development/diversity-in-hacc/diversity-planning-practice