



PICAC Alliance Media Release

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People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds make up approximately a third of our older population, however, they are not a homogenous group. Each person is unique in their life experiences and identity and there are additional diversity intersections to consider in each individual's identity such as their language, faith, religion, migration experience, settlement experiences, year of arrival in Australia, health conditions and social, educational and economic determinants to name a few.

The Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care Alliance (PICAC Alliance) is a national program funded by the Department of Health to support aged care providers to deliver culturally appropriate care. It welcomes the Federal Government's aged care budget which proposes a roadmap to ensure safer and better quality care for older Australians. One of the directions of the budget is the compilation of a new Aged Care Act which places human rights principles in the centre of governance and service delivery.

It is critical that the new Aged Care Act (The Act) enshrines the cultural, linguistic, and spiritual needs and preferences of older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and that the principles of The Act are translated into everyday practice within aged care service delivery. This means embedding inclusive service models and delivery into the heart of the organisation and that responding to the needs of all older people, including those who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, is deemed essential in delivering quality and equitable care.

The PICAC Alliance applauds the Federal Government for its proposed investment in translating and interpreting services to help culturally and linguistically diverse older people to access and navigate the aged care system. There is also the proposed implementation of the Specialist Verification

Program, which will certify providers who offer specific services directed at diverse consumers. This program will make specialist providers more accessible to consumers, their families, carers and advocates.

With an ageing population, there will be an increasing number of culturally and linguistically diverse consumers in Australia in the future and it is key that organisations receive the appropriate support to become more inclusive in relation to governance and service delivery. The PICAC Alliance recommends that inclusive governance is reflected in a whole-of-organisation approach to diversity and inclusion and that diversity is represented across all levels of the organisation. The Aged Care Diversity Framework launched in 2017 highlights the need to strategically support older people with diverse characteristics. To complement this framework, more sector support resources and further work is required to ensure the delivery of inclusive care.

To achieve inclusive and equitable care, the PICAC Alliance recommends that:

- Organisations place culturally inclusive care at the centre of operations and deem it essential to the quality of care for its consumers;
- Language services and associated costs are supplemented to ensure equitable access to communication and essential health information;
- Information and service delivery approaches regarding the needs of older people from culturally diverse backgrounds to be provided, as preferred by the care recipient, in people's first language or in plain English and delivered in culturally sensitive and inclusive ways;
- Aged care information is provided using multilingual and multimodal formats and channels, such as in language videos and podcasts and supported by dissemination of printed copies and face-to-face engagement;
- Diversity training is delivered to staff in aged care and central to all training approaches within the organisation, including upon induction;
- Further resources are placed in supporting providers to implement and integrate the Aged Care Diversity Framework and its associated action plans;
- More resources are allocated to build the capacity of culturally and linguistically diverse consumers, their carers, families and advocates to be included and appropriately represented in upcoming aged care consultations and advisory groups.

The [PICAC Alliance](#) continues to work towards an inclusive aged care system that meets the diverse needs of Australia's older population and has developed a broad range of resources to address the needs of older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to support providers on their journey to inclusive care provision. It looks forward to continuing the collaboration with the

Department of Health, aged care service providers, and the wider aged care sector to journey toward an inclusive aged care system.

For more information or media comment, please contact the PICAC Alliance Secretariat, Agnieszka Chudecka, via e-mail on picac.secretariat@mac.org.au and telephone on 08 8241 9900.