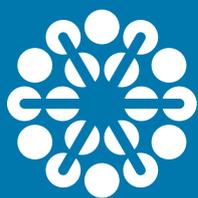


RESEARCH TO ACTION

>> Bridging the
gap between
what we know
and what we do



Centre for
Applied Disability
Research

An Initiative of National Disability Services

NDS National
Disability
Services

Culturally Proficient Service Delivery

A Practical Guide for Practice Leaders



THE CENTRE FOR APPLIED DISABILITY RESEARCH

The Centre for Applied Disability Research (CADR) is an initiative of National Disability Services (NDS). CADR aims to improve the wellbeing of people living with disability by gathering insights, building understanding, and sharing knowledge. CADR's applied research agenda is helping to build the evidence base and support stakeholders to better understand what works, for whom, under what circumstances and at what cost.

RESEARCH TO ACTION GUIDES

Bridging the gap between what we know and what we do. Our objective is to build a comprehensive online collection of disability research and translational resources for the Australian context. Our Research to Action Guides are based on the best available local and international evidence and put together by subject matter experts to support research end users to engage with the evidence. We gather and analyse evidence about what works, and package that information into efficient and practical resources.

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ABOUT THIS RESEARCH TO ACTION GUIDE:

This Guide is based on findings from the Research to Action Culturally Proficient Service Delivery Rapid Review. It has been developed to provide practice leaders and managers in disability services with a pathway to cultural proficiency.

This Guide includes a listing of existing good practice resources to support individuals and organisations to develop culturally proficient service delivery. It also includes case studies of organisations that have undertaken cultural proficiency development strategies.

This Guide forms part of a suite of resources produced for CADR on this topic. A separate guide has been developed to support staff working alongside people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds with disability to build their individual cultural proficiency.

The entire Research to Action Guide suite is available at the CADR Clearing House, www.cadr.org.au.

FEEDBACK

Do you have feedback, or a suggestion for a Research to Action Guide? We welcome your thoughts and ideas. Please contact info@cadr.org.au.

A GOOD PRACTICE MODEL

A culturally proficient organisation recognises, respects and responds to diversity in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for all the people it supports.

Working towards cultural proficiency requires:

- an organisational culture that actively challenges and addresses unconscious bias towards people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds with disability and their communities
- a whole-of-organisation commitment to effecting change at all levels of the organisation, and
- processes to guide, support and evaluate the effectiveness of any changes.

As practice leaders, you have an important role to champion and drive these changes.

1. Key elements of cultural proficiency – good practice model



The diagram shows three key elements for enabling cultural proficiency within organisations and how they interconnect. The three elements are:

- 1) Person-centred practice
- 2) Ways of working
- 3) Core principles of cultural proficiency

1. PERSON-CENTRED PRACTICE

The person from CALD background with disability is at the centre of everything we do and is the expert of their own lives. When working alongside a person from CALD background with disability we need to start from a position of respect for their cultural world view and resist applying our own.

2. WAYS OF WORKING

Organisations must have practices in place to enable critical reflection on every aspect of how they work and be committed to effecting change throughout the whole organisation. This includes thinking about:

- a) **Organisational culture:** organisational culture, governance, and leadership influences and impacts on how we respond to the cultural and linguistic diversity of the people we support, our communities and our workforce.
- b) **Workforce:**
 - attracting and retaining a culturally diverse workforce
 - supporting the workforce to become culturally 'self-aware'
 - assessing effectiveness of culturally responsive and respectful practices when working alongside people from CALD backgrounds with disability
- c) **Community:** Focuses on how we connect, engage and network with people from CALD backgrounds with disability, their families, and communities.

Note: For more information on these ways of working, see practice examples and useful resources.

3. CORE PRINCIPLES OF CULTURAL PROFICIENCY

Reflective practice	Recognising the importance of honestly enquiring into our cultures, values and beliefs to develop an understanding of how these inform the ways we perceive and interact with people.
Human rights based approach	Understanding that all people have the same basic human rights in society, and this needs to be respected.
Social model of disability	Recognising and taking responsibility for eliminating the physical, attitudinal, and communication barriers that impede people with disability participating in society on an equal basis with others.
Inclusion	Recognising the importance of all people being active participants in society – we all need to belong, have purpose, and meaningful connections.
Social justice	Giving everyone a fair go and an equal share to resources.

CULTURAL PROFICIENCY IN YOUR ORGANISATION: GETTING STARTED

Here are twelve action points to help your organisation get started on the path to cultural proficiency.

People you support:

1. Work in culturally responsive person-centred ways with the people you support by recognising the diversity within differences

Organisation:

2. Identify cultural proficiency champions in your organisation and establish a community of practice or working party
3. Undertake a cultural proficiency audit, and build findings into your strategic and annual planning processes
4. Allocate resources to promote and effect change
5. Embed cultural proficiency into your quality assurance and planning frameworks
6. Put in place practices that encourage critical thinking and reflective practice, recognise and reward creativity, and develop a culture of learning within the organisation

Workforce:

7. Seek to attract and retain a diverse workforce
8. Recognise and strengthen the cultural and linguistic skills within your current workforce
9. Develop culturally responsive skills across your workforce including: empathy, cross-cultural communication, critical thinking and reflection, and cultural self-awareness

Community:

10. Make information available in community languages and in formats that are accessible and used by CALD communities
11. Support communities to understand disability within a human rights and Australian context
12. Make links with CALD communities, nurture collaboration and community engagement

For more information and references, see the Rapid Review section of this guide.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

This section provides examples of organisations that have undertaken cultural proficiency strategies. Every organisation's pathway will be unique but the principles outlined here are useful in moving towards culturally proficient service design and delivery.

These good practice examples show that:

- change processes can be started by different people across an organisation
- staff are a key resource in organisational development processes
- community engagement is essential to ensuring a sustainable, appropriate strategy is implemented

ORGANISATION

Cultural proficiency champions drive the change process

MS Australia's first step towards working more effectively with CALD communities was to identify key people in the organisation who were passionate about diversity issues and invite them to be part of a working group to drive change.

With support from the Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association (MDAA) the working group conducted a cultural competency audit looking at every aspect of MS Australia's operations. The group was able to liaise with the audit facilitator throughout the process and facilitated access to key executives, managers and staff.

The group then presented the outcomes of the audit to the Executive and secured support for the strategies identified. The ongoing role of the group is to oversee and keep track of progress against the strategies, and maintain the momentum for change within the organisation.

All of this has enabled MS Australia to think critically about how it works with the diversity of the community and develop and implement strategies to address the gaps and barriers identified. There is now a CALD action plan in place that includes policies and procedures, service delivery and structures, HR protocols, training and funding allocations and champions within the organisation to drive the change processes.

WORKFORCE

Using reflective practice to build a culturally responsive workforce

The NSW Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Metro North area, wanted to redress the inequity experienced by their CALD service users with disability. They ran a series of workshops using case studies based on issues identified through a cultural competency audit to engage workers in reflective practice.

Through these, workers were challenged to clarify their cultural position in relation to clients' issues and needs, and identify key points of conflict and agreement. This was the starting point for workers to become conscious of their own cultural position. The premise was that considering the impact of your own cultural beliefs and values improves your ability to work respectfully with cultural positions that may differ from your own.

Workers worked together to adapt their work practice to better align to the world view of the people they were working with. This was an exercise in discovery and was often uncomfortable for workers who had been trained to see and respond to disability and diversity in particular ways.

COMMUNITY

Supporting communities to understand disability in an Australian context

A number of strategic and practical initiatives exist to support people with disabilities from CALD backgrounds and their communities to understand the changing disability environment and disability within a human rights framework. These include:

- **Diversitat** is a not-for-profit community service organisation that supports CALD communities in Victoria. In collaboration with other government and NGOs, they developed and piloted an alternative service delivery approach to provide additional support to people with disability from hard-to-reach groups (including CALD groups) seeking to access the NDIS. A four-step process called '**the Alternative Approach**', was developed as an alternative to current casework models within organisations. It was a flexible and useful model that created safe pathways to the NDIS through NGOs and government organisations. The tools developed to support workers reflect the strengths-based approach of the project which emphasised cultural safety. The approach successfully linked people with disability from CALD backgrounds to the NDIS in a very short timeframe.
- The **Peer Engagement in CALD Communities Project** is a joint initiative of the Diversity and Disability Alliance (DDAlliance) and NSWCID. It provides a peer-mentoring program for people from CALD backgrounds with disability and includes development of a support network of facilitators and peer-mentors to share leadership skills and promote individual and community capacity.
- The Ethnic Community Services Co-operative's **CALD Capacity Building Project: Getting Prepared for the NDIS** and the Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association's **My Future, My Life Project** work with CALD communities to help prepare people with disability for the NDIS through :
 - Information sessions on disability in a cultural context and in Australia, disability rights, and the changes taking place in the disability support system.
 - Information and education to raise awareness on the NDIS and disability supports.
 - Person centred planning resources to empower disability service users to identify goals, interests and support needs.
 - Facilitated pre-planning support sessions for small groups.

USEFUL RESOURCES

This section identifies useful resources to support individuals and organisations to develop culturally proficient service delivery.

It has two parts:

1. Cultural Competency Practice Resources – frameworks and tools that support organisations and individuals embed cultural proficiency in their policies and/or practices;
2. Connecting with Communities – resources to support organisations and individuals connect effectively with people with disabilities from CALD backgrounds and their communities.

PART 1: CULTURAL COMPETENCY PRACTICE RESOURCES

Each of the guides below offer practical approaches for the implementation of cultural competency ranging from individual reflective practice approaches through to whole of organisation frameworks.

1. NDS Person-Centred Practice Across Cultures

NDS has a portfolio of resources for the sector on working more effectively with various aspects of cultural proficiency. These cover topics such as active listening, empathy development and story-based marketing. The 14 workbooks are available online at: <https://www.nds.org.au/resources/person-centred-practice-across-cultures-resources>

2. Cultural Diversity Competency Framework

This resource includes two components: (1) a Cultural Diversity Competency Framework which provides a broad overview of the sector and emerging issues, as well as; (2) a Positive Organisational Review Tool (PORT) that supports a self-audit and organisational development process. Both are available online at: <http://www.diversityindisability.org/>

3. Cultural Competence Works: A Manual to Put into Practice

This user-friendly manual contains self-reflection exercises, case studies and further readings to support the reader to reflect on their own personal journey towards cultural competence, think critically about their work practice and develop skills for working with the diversity of people with disability and their families. Contact the Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW on 1800 629 072 or info@mdaa.org.au

4. National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC)

The NCCC at Georgetown University is a pioneer in the American and international cultural competency movements. They provide a regularly updated range of theoretical and practical resources for cultural competency/proficiency for practitioners. These are accessible online at: <https://nccc.georgetown.edu/index.php>

PART 2: CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITIES

The following resources may help you better understand and/or connect with the communities you are working with.

5. The Cultural Atlas

The Cultural Atlas is a collaborative project between SBS, International Education Services and Multicultural NSW. It provides comprehensive cultural information on the countries that Australia's biggest migrant populations have originated from. It includes information on cross-cultural attitudes, practices, norms, behaviours and communication in order to improve social cohesion and promote inclusion in Australia. Available online at <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au>

6. Factsheet: Understanding Disability in Australia

This factsheet, developed by AMPARO Advocacy (QLD), supports people from CALD backgrounds with disability to better understand disability in an Australian context. The factsheet has been translated into 33 community languages and is also available as audio visual translations in eight of these community languages. It can be found at: <http://www.amparo.org.au/publications-resources/>

7. MDAA Factsheets supporting cultural competency

Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association (MDAA) has produced a range of factsheets supporting individuals and organisations to build cultural competency and better connect with CALD communities including a step-by-step guide for networking with CALD communities. They can be found at: <http://mdaa.org.au/mdaa-publications/>

8. NEDA data cube

The National Ethnic Disability Alliance has compiled data pertaining to disability and multiculturalism for use in building effective services and programs for CALD people with disability <http://www.neda.org.au/neda-data>

