MH|MA
Mental Health in Multicultural Australia

Organisational implementation guide
Key Outcome Area 4

Workforce

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Australia needs a mental health workforce that is able to respond to the diversity of the population. We must develop an informed, skilled, flexible and reflective workforce with strong leadership in order to deliver successful strategies that improve access, quality of care and recovery services for CALD clients.

Standard 3 of the *National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce (*2002) addresses 'awareness of diversity'. It articulates the knowledge, skills and attitudes required of the mental health workforce practicing in a diverse society. In order to provide clinically competent mental health care in a culturally diverse society, the workforce must go beyond being culturally aware, to being culturally responsive.

Clinicians and other staff responding to cultural and language diversity need to be:

- Flexible in their approach
- Able to adapt assessment processes and interventions to achieve equitable clinical outcomes across all population groups.

Cultural responsiveness needs to be integrated into clinical training programs in mental health and suicide prevention, as well as broader areas of engagement, and promotion and prevention activities. While the workforce require the knowledge, skills and awareness to provide culturally responsive mental health care, services need to support them to undertake training and to provide a work environment where the training can be put into practice.

Cultural responsiveness must be applied at all the levels of service delivery, from individual treatment through to the broader system. As stated in the *National Mental Health Workforce Strategy* (NMHWS) (2011), ongoing cultural competency training, rather than brief awareness sessions, is the most appropriate strategy for building workforce capacity.

Systemic issues also need to be addressed to support this skilled workforce. Critical outcomes for the Framework include:

- The development of leadership in multicultural mental health
- Improvements in evidence based policy input
- Systematic advocacy
- The establishment of informed networks
- Close collaboration with government and non-government services
- Liaison with workforce initiatives, professional bodies, and the tertiary sector to ensure the future workforce has an awareness of how to apply their professional knowledge and skills to a multicultural population.

The Framework, in line with the NMHWS and the *Fourth National Mental Health Plan* (2009) views the 'mental health workforce', to include other government agencies, the primary care sector, non-government organisations, community agencies, interpreters, and others.

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A culturally responsive and diverse mental health workforce which is supported
to deliver culturally and linguistically inclusive practice.

Level	Strategy	Good Practice Examples	Referencing
Outcome Indicator 4.1: Improved knowledge and skills in cultural responsiveness in the mental health workforce			
Entry	The organisation accepts and respects the importance of cultural responsiveness skills in the mental health workforce.	★ Let's Talk Culture seminars in Western Australia **www.mhima.org.au/transcultural-mental-health-services-royal-perth-hospital#lets-talk-culture**	NSMHS: 4.2, 4.5 NSQHSS: 1.4
Developing	The organisation provides professional development or supports staff at all levels, to attend cultural competency training.	★ Consultation and Discussion Groups at Transcultural Mental Health Services, Department of Psychiatry, Royal Perth Hospital **www.rph.wa.gov.au/Our-services/Service-Directory/Psychiatry**	
Advanced	The organisation engages in evaluation, research and development of transcultural mental health education and training to facilitate culturally appropriate service delivery relevant to transcultural mental health.	★ Education, training and professional development: **www.vtpu.org.au/programs/education/** **www.health.qld.gov.au/metrosouthmentalhealth/qtmhc/education_training.asp** ★ NSW Transcultural Mental Health Centre's Diversity Health Clearinghouse **www.dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/Transcultural-Mental-Health-Centre/TMH-Programs-and-Campaigns/default.aspx** ★ Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre's Cultural Seminars **www.health.qld.gov.au/metrosouthmentalhealth/qtmhc/publications.asp** ★ Workforce Development in NSW **www.dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/Transcultural-Mental-Health-Centre/Information-for-Health-Professionals/Workforce-Development/default.aspx**	

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Level	Strategy	Good Practice Examples	Referencing
Outcome Indicator 4.2: Improved knowledge and skills about seeking specialist cultural assistance and input when required			
Entry	The organisation accepts and respects the importance and benefits of seeking specialist cultural assistance and input when required.	★ Specialist transcultural mental health clinical services **www.dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/tmhc/default.aspx** **www.health.qld.gov.au/metrosouthmentalhealth/qtmhc/** **www.mhima.org.au/transcultural-mental-health-services-royal-perth-hospital#specialist-transcultural-mental-health-clinical-services-at-RPH**	NSMHS: 4.4
Developing	The organisation has processes and networks in place to seek specialist cultural assistance and advice when required and engages with specialist transcultural mental health services.	★ Victorian Transcultural Mental Health's Cultural Portfolio Holders Program **www.vtpu.org.au/cph/**	
Advanced	The organisation routinely seeks input from specialist transcultural mental health services and reviews and improves the effectiveness.	★ Consultation and Discussion Groups at Transcultural Mental Health Services, Department of Psychiatry, Royal Perth Hospital **www.rph.wa.gov.au/Our-services/Service-Directory/Psychiatry** ★ Queensland Multicultural Mental Health Coordinator Program **www.health.qld.gov.au/metrosouthmentalhealth/qtmhc/mmhc_program.asp**	
Outcome Indicator 4.3: Improved skills in working with interpreters and adherence to language services policies in mental health			
Entry	The organisation accepts and respects the importance of working with interpreters and adhering to a language services policy in mental health service delivery to CALD consumers and carers.	★ Working with Interpreters Guidelines **www.health.qld.gov.au/multicultural/interpreters/guidelines_int.pdf** ★ Resources for Working Effectively with Interpreters in Mental Health Settings **www.vtmh.org.au/resources/interpreter-resources**	NSMHS: 4.5
Developing	The organisation works with interpreters when required and adheres to a language services policy when working with CALD consumers and carers.		
Advanced	The organisation regularly reviews and improves its language services policy and the effectiveness of their work with interpreters.		

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Level	Strategy	Good Practice Examples	Referencing
Outcome indicator 4.4 Improved skills in working with translators and multicultural services in mental health			
Entry	The organisation accepts and respects the importance of working with translators and multicultural services in mental health service delivery to CALD consumers and carers.	★ Working with Interpreters **www.health.qld.gov.au/ multicultural/interpreters/ guidelines_int.pdf**	NSMHS: 4.4, 4.5
Developing	The organisation works with translators and multicultural services in mental health.	★ Resources for Working Effectively with Interpreters in Mental Health Settings **www.vtmh.org.au/resources/ interpreter-resources**	
Advanced	The organisation routinely reviews and improves their approaches to working with translators and multicultural mental health services.		
Outcome Indicator 4.5: Increased diversity of the professional mental health workforce which is representative of the ethnic and cultural groups in the community			
Entry	The organisation accepts and respects the need to recruit and employ a diverse professional mental health workforce representative of the ethnic and cultural groups in their catchment area to meet the needs of the service.		
Developing	The organisation recruits and employs a diverse professional mental health workforce representative of the ethnic and multicultural groups in the catchment area to meet the needs of the service.		
Advanced	The organisation routinely evaluates its HRM/ recruitment strategies to ensure its workforce is representative of the community it serves.		
Outcome Indicator 4.6: Improved retention of a culturally and linguistically diverse mental health workforce			
Entry	The organisation accepts and respects the importance of retention of CALD staff.		NSMHS: 4.6
Developing	The organisation has processes in place to retain a diverse professional workforce.		
Advanced	The organisation regularly reviews and improves processes to effectively retain a culturally diverse workforce.		

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Level	Strategy	Good Practice Examples	Referencing
Outcome Indicator 4.7: Increased training of the multicultural sector workforce in mental health and suicide prevention			
Entry	The organisation accepts and respects the importance of training the multicultural sector workforce in mental health and suicide prevention awareness, knowledge and skills.	★ Consultation and Discussion Groups at Transcultural Mental Health Services, Department of Psychiatry, Royal Perth Hospital	
Developing	The organisation trains the multicultural workforce in their catchment area in mental health and suicide prevention awareness, knowledge and skills.	**www.mhima.org.au/transcultural-mental-health-services-royal-perth-hospital#transcultural-dialogue-sessions**	
Advanced	The organisation routinely trains, evaluates and improves mental health and suicide prevention training provided to multicultural sector staff.		

For further information:
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