



### Culture...

- is a community's way of life, including their ideas, beliefs and language
- provides us with guidelines for how we perceive and interpret the world
- affects everyone
- is individual
- is always changing
- creates similarities and differences

### Community participation

- involve communities in the support you provide
- work with cultural brokers
- consult communities
- conduct outreach activities

### Cultural competence means...

- discovering culture
- recognising culture
- understanding culture
- working with culture

...so you can provide the best support for consumers

### Cultural competence is a personal journey

- prepare yourself
- choose your own route
- have new experiences
- learn new and better routes and pathways
- enjoy the scenery and company of fellow travellers you meet
- gain a sense of satisfaction & achievement as you fulfil goals you set and reach each place you planned to get to



### Family involvement

- involve the family in the support you provide
- recognise family dynamics, strengths and individuality
- have ongoing contact with families
- start a NESB support group
- involve the family when you evaluate your work

Always ask the consumer if they want family to be involved. Always ask families how they would like to be involved.

## How to be

# Culturally Confident

## A guide to cultural competence

### Becoming culturally competent happens over time

- so enjoy the journey, don't obsess about the destination!
- regularly update where you are on the journey by doing a self-assessment - see the manual for details!

### When you do an assessment

- explain you are there to support the consumer and their family/carer
- look at all aspects of the consumer's life
- involve the consumer and their family / carer
- listen, offer choices and tailor options to the needs of individuals

Be creative in the questions you ask and the way you word them.

### To put changes into place

Ask yourself

- what am I trying to achieve?
- how will I know that a change is an improvement?
- what changes can I make that will result in an improvement?

So go and

- try something
- notice the consequences
- learn from them
- act on what you have learned

### Specific questions to think creatively about

(See manual for details & more examples)

- what kind of support do you want/need?
- what health/support services are available through your community?
- do you maintain any spiritual practices (eg. special prayer times)?
- what language are you most comfortable speaking?
- what behaviour do you expect of your guests? Taking shoes off? Accepting food/drink?



### Think critically

- question statements, opinions or assumptions
- find evidence
- reflect on the evidence
- form a new opinion
- communicate your new opinions to others

### Be aware of your own culture

Everyone has a cultural background. Be aware of the impact of yours.

### Cross-cultural communication

- don't shout!
- use simple words
- take your time
- be aware that some words may not translate into other languages
- don't use professional jargon, abbreviations, or technical terms

Using a trained and accredited interpreter helps!



### Be aware of the culture of others

Learn about cultures and how they might influence an individual.

Look for and get information on:

- how cultures respond to and explain disability
- the language and communication styles people use
- what is considered polite / social customs
- days and events of cultural or religious significance
- nutrition and dietary practices

Ask the consumer & their family their opinion

### Be aware of non-verbal communication styles

(Your own and the other person's)

For example

- eye contact
- use of space
- use and meaning of touch
- hand gestures

### Respect and work with differences!



Check out our website at [www.mdaa.org.au](http://www.mdaa.org.au)

Get a copy of "Cultural Competence Works! A manual to put it into Practice" which shows you more on how to put this poster into practice. Write to MDAA, P.O. Box 9381, Harris Park, NSW 2150, Australia or phone (02) 9891 6400