



Cultural Awareness Policy

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO: Employees and Volunteers of RW

Document Control			
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Record of issue		
Version	Date	Reason and comment
1	February 2008	Titled; <i>Cultural Awareness Policy</i>
2	February 2013	
3	January 2016	Richmond Wellbeing Rebranding
4	June 2016	Review – no amendments made
Review by Consumer and Family Reference Group		
Version	Date	Reason and comment

Policy Context	
Applicable standards, legislation or other requirements.	QIC Health and Community Services Standards National Standards for Mental Health Services Disability Services Standards
Related RW documents	

Contact for enquiries and proposed changes	
All queries and changes regarding this document should be directed to	
Name	Anya-Jane Statham
Position	Compliance Risk and Safety Manager

1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Richmond Wellbeing (RW) meets its obligations to ensure equitable access to services for people from culturally diverse and indigenous backgrounds and to address the current underutilisation of services, communication barriers and cultural differences in the understanding of mental illness/distress and treatment. This policy applies to all staff and volunteers of RW.

2 Introduction

As far as is practical, the organisation will acknowledge and meet the cultural, linguistic and spiritual requirements of residents. Richmond Wellbeing is part of a culturally diverse society, and views people through the broad lens which reflects the diversity of cultural experience.

3 Policy

RW seeks to recruit staff that reflects the diversity of culture. We seek to understand the cultural context, and take a holistic view of mental health that is sensitive to cultural diversity.

Richmond Wellbeing will develop partnerships with the State wide Aboriginal Mental Health Service and other Aboriginal organisations to facilitate culturally sensitive work practices. We recognise that an Indigenous agency will be able to support and best assist us to meet the needs of our Indigenous clients and residents.

Staff will receive cultural sensitivity training at least every two years across a broad range of cultures and cultural issues. There is a commitment for culturally appropriate training to include our commitment to the Indigenous people and to providing a service, which meets the needs of Aboriginal clients.

Our policy is to promote access to our services for CALD people and professional interpreter services are an important part of achieving that goal. Although a person may speak some English, they may not be able to articulate their needs effectively in English and should therefore be given the opportunity to work with an interpreter if desired. Auslan interpreters may also be required for hearing-impaired persons.

Alternatively, they have the right to refuse interpreting services. Although a worker may think that an interpreter is required, a client may not choose this for a number of reasons, (e.g. size of their local community making confidentiality an issue).

Professional interpreting services are to be used with client consent when:

- Conducting Intake interviews.
- Recovery plans are developed and reviewed.
- Informed consent is required.
- Requested by clients or their families.

4 Procedure

Given agreement from the client and prior approval from Manager, Administration Services, (if payment is required), the Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS) (Phone 131 450) can be contacted to book a face-to-face or telephone interpreter.

Free interpreter services are available via TIS. However, because TIS only make a certain number of face-to-face sessions free in each week, they do require a few weeks' notice to ensure access to a free session. Interpreter services will be provided regardless of the availability of a free session.

TIS require that we fax the completed standard form as soon as possible, including the following information:

- Language of CALD person (and dialect if relevant).
- Purpose of interview e.g. Health / Mental Health Issues (this requires a higher level of expertise than a basic interpreter).
- Name of Organisation (i.e. Richmond Wellbeing).
- Date and time interpreter required.
- Location of appointment.
- Whether male or female interpreter is required.
- Name and contact number of person making request.
- Any additional information that they may need.

Once received, TIS will contact with the job number and confirm their attendance.

Before a session begins, the worker should meet/speak briefly with the interpreter to clarify and agree on the procedure for the session to ensure that the session will run smoothly. RW confidentiality forms should be signed by the interpreter.

At the conclusion of the session the worker should also provide the interpreter with an opportunity to debrief. TIS recommends this in case anything raised during the session may be emotionally distressing for the interpreter.

4.1 Key Considerations

- As there is one main interpreting service in Perth some clients may have already built rapport with a particular interpreter. Check this out with the client, or referring agency, and see if they have a preference for a particular interpreter based on past experiences. If a preference is indicated for someone who has worked with the client in the past, ask the interpreting service for this person to be available for your appointment.
- Be aware of the consumer's own preferences and that our own cultural influences will affect how we perceive people.
- Be aware we may judge other people's behaviour and beliefs according to the standards of our own culture, and we need to reflect on our practice to begin to understand the person.
- Be aware of making assumptions about cultural influences and applying generalisations to individuals.

- Understand that the behaviour and beliefs of people within each culture can vary considerably. Respect the variance and don't stereotype.
- Understand that not all people identify with their cultural or religious background.
- Increase your knowledge about different cultural practices and issues through cultural awareness training or cultural background information.
- Understand the importance of appropriate communication and adjust your communication accordingly.
- Don't pathologise. Always explore cultural explanations.
- If at all possible, never use family members to interpret for you.
- Some ethnic groups favour talking to women over men and vice versa. Ask about the consumer's gender preference before booking an interpreter.
- Always remember to talk to the client and not to the interpreter.
- Remember to use short sentences and to stop frequently for the interpreter to repeat to the client. Big pieces of dialogue can take a while for interpreters to repeat and the interpreter can forget parts if he/she has to wait for you to finish.
- During the session check to make sure the client has understood what has been interpreted. Quite often words or concepts do not translate well into other languages.

4.2 Access to information

When necessary, information about services should be made available in the preferred language of service recipients.