



Submitted by Braeside Hospital Speech Pathology

Multilingual signs and symbols in the health service

In a society that speaks so many different languages, health care facilities need a range of multilingual tools to help communicate important information to non-English speakers when an interpreter is not available. These tools include signs and symbols, pictograms, multilingual phrase books, 'talking' pictures and bilingual information cards.

Multicultural Communication has been funded by NSW Health to investigate the use of these resources (excluding leaflets in other languages), and we're now collecting a cross section of material in use in Australia and internationally. A sample of the collection, together with a report on their use in the health sector will be presented at the *Health in Diversity Conference* in May.

For more information, or if you have examples of signs, symbols or other tools you would like us to consider for inclusion, please call our project officer, Neil Poetschka on (02) 9382 7526 or email <poetschkan@sesahs.nsw.gov.au>.



Clear the Air: World No Tobacco Day 2001

For the second year running, Multicultural Communication is working with the NSW Health *World No Tobacco Day* campaign to highlight the dangers of passive smoking, and inform restaurant owners and consumers about laws banning smoking in public places.

Part of our role is to conduct research in selected ethnic restaurants to find out more about compliance rates, and how best to help promote the importance of a smoke-free environment.

NSW Health has formed a steering committee to provide us with guidance on developing and implementing the campaign.

For more information, or to go on our mailing list for resources and updates on the campaign, please contact Michael Camit on (02) 9382 7528, or email camitm@sesahs.nsw.gov.au



Active Australia Campaign

During May and June this year, Active Australia's new *All Fired Up* campaign is encouraging all Australians to join a club or organisation offering recreational physical activity. The idea is to raise awareness of the health and social benefits of taking part in organised sport and recreation.

Multicultural Communication is taking the same message to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. Part of our campaign involves updating information on physical activity options available for non-English speakers in NSW. If you'd like a list of ethno-specific activity groups in your area, or if you have a group you'd like to add to the list, please contact Michael Camit on (02) 9382 7528, or email camitm@sesahs.nsw.gov.au, or fax (02) 9382 7517.

Make a Move campaign targets Arabic, Chinese and Italian seniors

As part of our campaign to get more non-English speakers involved in gentle exercise, we're offering eight-week gentle exercise classes – free of charge – to Arabic, Chinese and Italian seniors. The classes will be run by accredited fitness leaders provided by Multicultural Communication.

Free places are limited, so if you're in touch with seniors from these communities who'd like to take advantage of this offer, contact Michael Camit on (02) 9382 7528, or email camitm@sesahs.nsw.gov.au.

Arabic, Chinese and Italian speakers have been chosen as part of a pilot program. The results of this project will be used in future campaigns targetting other communities on the issue of falls prevention.

You're invited to the Multicultural Health Conference

Diversity in Health: Sharing Global Perspectives is Australia's first national conference on multicultural health and wellbeing. As one of the world's most multicultural nations, we have firsthand experience of the challenges of providing health services to a culturally and linguistically diverse population – and we know that an understanding of culture is important to the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of illness.



This conference, at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour, from the 28-30 May, promises a lively exchange of ideas, and will give delegates the chance to evaluate current practice, and develop innovative ways to improve health care for people of multicultural backgrounds. It features international and local speakers who will challenge traditional thinking, reflect on global trends, and propose creative solutions to inspire delegates.

Registrations are now open. Information, including a preliminary program and full list of speakers, is available from the conference website at www.tmhc.nsw.gov.au/diversity.htm, or email: diversity@pharmaevents.com.au We hope you can join us for an exciting conference.

Abd Malak
Conference Co-Convenor
Director
NSW Transcultural Mental Health Centre
Australian Transcultural Mental Health Network.

Sam Choucair
Conference Co-Convenor
Director
Multicultural Health Unit
South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service.

Can our health fax-back service help you?

Our health fax-back service is up and running. It's a simple way of providing multilingual health information to people without access to either the internet or the NSW HealthNet, but with access to a fax.



You can use it by phoning 1300 859 659 for the cost of a local phone call. The first time you call, you will be asked if you want to receive a fax-back catalogue. If so, you'll be asked for your fax number.

The fax-back catalogue is a list of all the multilingual resources available, and each resource in each language has its own code number. Once you have a catalogue and have identified the items you want, and in which languages, you simply punch in the code numbers, plus your fax number, and the material will be faxed to you within a few minutes. This system is easy to use – directions are given on the phone to guide you through each step.

We have created this service because many people working with non-English speaking communities have no access to the net, but still need to provide multilingual information to clients.

Please try it, and give us some feedback. Was it easy to use? Did you get the information you wanted? Did you have any problems? This service is an exciting innovation for us – but only if it's useful to you.

Choosing topics for Multicultural Communication's fact sheets

We have a new approach to selecting topics and languages for our fact sheets which appear monthly in a number of languages in three different forms – as a health information story in the ethnic press, as a simple leaflet in hard copy, and on our website.

To help us decide which language groups our fact sheets will target, we are developing profiles of different non-English speaking communities, using demographic data drawn from the Chief Health Officer's Report 2000, the Midwives Data collection, and the last Australian Bureau of Statistics Census. We have now identified Assyrian, Indonesian, Japanese, Persian, Samoan and Tongan as high demand languages in the younger age group, and Greek, Maltese and Ukrainian in the older age groups.

Through the listserv set up recently for the Multilingual Information Steering Committee (MISC) which guides the development of fact sheet topics, we can also seek input and feedback from committee members as new topics come up for consideration. When we have chosen a priority topic for translation, we will then refer to the community profiles to help us select the 15 priority languages for translation – these languages will vary, depending on the topic. A fact sheet on breastfeeding, would obviously be translated in the 'younger' languages, for instance, while a fact sheet on arthritis would be more appropriate for 'older' communities. You'll see this policy reflected in the latest fact sheets listed on the back page.

We are also having some of our existing fact sheets translated into further languages, and these will be added to our website.

Most of our fact sheets are based on one standard English text, but in some cases, where there are significant cultural differences, for instance, we need to vary the information to suit different communities. Our May 2001 fact sheet on cholesterol, is a good example. Our journalist, Paula Goodyer, has developed three different texts to accommodate the food choices of different communities – one for European and Middle Eastern groups, another for Asian communities and a third for Pacific Islanders.

See back page for information about our latest fact sheets and available languages.

Sexual assault – new multilingual resources available

For the last two years the Education Centre Against Violence (ECAV), a statewide service based at Western Sydney Area Health Service, has worked closely with a number of communities to develop accessible and culturally appropriate booklets about sexual assault in community languages. This project grew from a recognition of two things – the lack of culturally and linguistically relevant material on this sensitive issue, and the fact that using translations of English resources has proved less effective than developing more appropriate resources ‘from scratch’.

The booklets are now available in Chinese, Italian, Korean, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese. A bilingual Hindi/Punjabi booklet is almost completed, and booklets in Arabic and Khmer will be available in June. The publications provide information about the nature of sexual assault, services available to assist victims, including counselling and access to interpreters, and the role of the police.

For more information, or to obtain copies of the booklet, contact the Education Centre Against Violence on (02) 9840 3737.

Relaxation tapes available in Arabic

Simple Meditation, Relaxation and Exercise is a relaxation tape available from Auburn Community Health Centre. One side of the tape is suitable for Arabic women, the other for Arabic men. Cost is \$8.00, plus \$2.00 postage and handling. For copies, contact Agnes Polese on (02) 9646 2233.

What our health fact sheets said...

March 2001	<p>Title: Getting older? How to take charge of your future</p> <p>Topic area: Older people</p> <p>Summary: Getting older raises some difficult issues. Who will make decisions about a person’s medical treatment if illness or disability affects their ability to decide for themselves for instance? Practical advice to help older people take some control of their future wellbeing</p>	<p>Languages: Arabic Chinese Croatian Greek Hungarian Italian Korean Macedonian Maltese Polish Russian Serbian Spanish Ukrainian Vietnamese</p>
April 2001	<p>Title: Contraceptive pills for women</p> <p>Topic area: Women’s health</p> <p>Summary: A guide to how the contraceptive pill works, its benefits and risks</p>	<p>Languages: Arabic Assyrian Chinese Farsi Indonesian Japanese Khmer Korean Punjabi Samoan Serbian Spanish Thai Tongan Turkish Vietnamese</p>
May 2001	<p>Title: Cholesterol: too much is dangerous (in three versions) (1) European and Middle Eastern foods (2) Asian foods (3) Pacific Islander is in production</p> <p>Topic area: Nutrition</p> <p>Summary: How physical activity and eating the right food can reduce cholesterol</p>	<p>Languages: Arabic Assyrian Chinese Croatian Farsi Greek Indonesian Italian Khmer Korean Macedonian Portuguese Punjabi Russian Samoan Serbian Spanish Thai Tongan Turkish Vietnamese</p>

New from our Library...

We now have a Greek video on depression, from the Educational Media Series. It’s available on loan to health staff.

Deadline for next edition: 20th June, 2001

Polyglot is published by the New South Wales Multicultural Health Communication Service. Articles for inclusion can be sent to Cecilia George, NSWMHCS, Sydney Hospital & Sydney Eye Hospital, P.O. Box 1614, Sydney, NSW 2001 fax no. (02) 9382 7517 email: georgec@sesahs.nsw.gov.au.