

Data and Demographics

Delivery of culturally inclusive aged care relies on collection of relevant data. This data is essential in creating a baseline from which to be able to measure service accessibility and design services that meet the needs of local consumers.

Key considerations

Knowing your consumer

Capturing data about individual consumers using cultural and linguistic indicators is critical in:

- establishing an individual consumer's need for interpreting services and/or translated information;
- assessing individual needs to facilitate culturally appropriate service provision;
- identifying service usage levels by consumers from culturally diverse backgrounds;
- assessing if staff skills sets are adequate for meeting the needs of consumers from culturally diverse backgrounds;
- planning and designing culturally inclusive services.

Knowing your community

Collecting local demographic data is critical in:

- comparing service usage with local ageing population;
- marketing to potential consumer groups;
- responding to changing community needs/demographic profiles.

Measuring cultural and linguistic diversity

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 1999 developed Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity in response to a widely recognised need for a nationally consistent framework for the collection and dissemination of data on cultural and language diversity.

The statistical standards are designed to collect all the cultural and language information considered necessary for consistent and accurate measurement of cultural diversity in Australia. It is intended that the Standards be used by government, academic and private sector organisations in all relevant data collection activities.

The Standards propose ***the minimal core set of cultural and language indicators*** to be:

- country of birth of person;
- main language other than English spoken at home;
- proficiency in spoken English;
- Indigenous status.

In the case of aged care data sets, it is important to note that 'Indigenous status' is to be collected in its own right and not as part of the CALD group.

Practice guide

The Standards propose ***the standard core set of cultural and language indicators*** to be:

- the minimum core set of cultural and language indicators and;
- ancestry (a self-assessed measure of ethnicity and cultural background, identifying a person's origins and heritage (ABS 1999));
- country of birth of father;
- country of birth of mother;
- first language spoken;
- languages spoken at home;
- main language spoken at home;
- religious affiliation;
- year of arrival in Australia.

An Australian Institute of Health and Welfare review of Australian and international data collections incorporating CALD measures identified further measures used in surveys, census, administrative data sets, research, and assessment instruments. They included:

- fluency in languages other than English;
- interpreter services required;
- preferred sex of interpreter language most fluent in;
- spirituality (usually termed 'religious' beliefs and practices);
- importance of religion;
- regular attendance at religious services or meetings;
- citizenship, passports held, visa and migration details;
- visa type;
- migration status;
- permanent residency status;
- education origins.

Useful Resources

The following online sources are excellent tools for researching, planning and analysing geographic areas for a number of social, economic and demographic characteristics.

[2021 Census Community Profiles](#)

Census Community Profiles provide a comprehensive statistical picture of an area in Excel format, providing data relating to people, families and dwellings. They cover most topics on the Census form.

[Australian Institute of Health and Welfare: GEN AGED CARE DATA](#)

GEN is a comprehensive "one-stop shop" for data and information about aged care services in Australia. It reports on capacity and activity in the aged care system focusing on the people, their care assessments and the services they use.

[Australian Institute of Health and Welfare: Cultural and linguistic diversity measures in aged care](#)

This paper presents findings from an evaluation of CALD measures identified in 43 data sets and assessment instruments, and recommendations for implementing the 'top-10' measures in aged care data sets.

[SBS Census Explorer Interactive Tool](#)

The Census Explorer is an interactive tool that lets you go behind the statistics to uncover a rich, visual portrait of who we are, where we live, where we come from, and what languages we speak. The data used in this tool was taken from Australia's 2021 Census.

[FECCA: If we don't count it doesn't count](#)

This paper explores deficits in data collection and reporting on Australia's cultural diversity. The 1999 ABS Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity established a number of variables. In practice, 'country of birth' is the most common and often the only variable collected

Quick Stats from the 2021 Census around Cultural and Linguistic Diversity and Department of Health and Aged Care

- There are over 420 languages spoken in Australia including 183 Indigenous languages. (Source: SBS)
- The top five languages used at home, other than English, are Mandarin, Arabic, Vietnamese, Cantonese and Punjabi. (Source: Census 2021)
- Around 37% of people over 65 years were born overseas. (Source: Census 2021)
- The 2021 Census data collected information from more than 120 religions and faiths.
- In Department of Health and Ageing data from 2020 around 28% of people using home care and 20% of people using permanent residential and respite care were from a CALD background (in this case Department of Health define CALD as people who were born overseas in countries other than UK, Ireland, NZ, Canada, South Africa and USA).
- There is also a culturally diverse aged care workforce. 21% of the total direct care workforce identify as being from a CALD background. (Source: Department of Health, 2020, Aged Care Workforce Census)
- Personal Care Workers account for 91% of all CALD direct care workers. (Source: Department of Health, 2020, Aged Care Workforce Census)

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