

How to: TRANSLATING HEALTH PROMOTION MATERIALS INTO COMMUNITY LANGUAGES

When working with CALD communities to implement health promotion initiatives, sometimes translated written materials can be a helpful aid in communicating with the community on particular health issues. However, the health worker first needs to determine the appropriateness of undergoing the process of translation. The following demonstrates some steps to follow when deciding whether to translate health promotion materials into community languages and how to go about doing it if it is found to be appropriate.

Build partnerships with communities that will facilitate the process of health promotion

- Are key ethno-specific and community organisations being approached?
- Are community leaders being engaged?
- Is relationship building ongoing and not just for the purpose of a particular project?
- Is relationship building spread across different workers, agencies and sectors to ensure sustainability?
- Do partnerships have resources dedicated to them? e.g. workers, funds, venues, mentoring.
- Do the partnerships by their nature build the capacity of the community to participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services?
- Are you prepared to rethink your initiatives based on community input?
- Are you planning to work with the community to determine how best to address their needs?

Research community needs, values and cultural practices

- Is the health issue relevant to the CALD community you want to work with?
- Are CALD consumers contributing directly to the identification of the health issue?
- Have consumers indicated that translated materials are needed?
- Is printed material the preferred mode of delivery of health information for the community?
- Have the literacy levels of the community been taken into account?
- Would translation need to be into a number of different dialects to reach different parts of the community?
- Does the material respect the values and beliefs of its intended audience prior to translation?*
- Will culturally relevant examples of healthy behaviour be included?
- Will graphics as well as text be adapted for different cultures?
- Is the use of medical terminology appropriate for the community?
- What are effective methods of dissemination for the community?
- Have you thought about other methods of communicating if you find that translation is not appropriate for the community?

* Bronheim, S & Sockalingham, S. *A Guide to Choosing and Adapting Culturally and Linguistically Competent Health Promotion Materials*, Washington: National Center for Cultural Competence, 2003, p.1.

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Survey the available resources for translation

- What is the budget for actual translation of materials?
- Does the budget allow for two translators to work on materials to ensure accuracy can be checked through translation back into English?
- Can consumers be reimbursed for their costs participating in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the materials?
- Are resources available to effectively disseminate the materials to different groups?

Prepare the material for translation

- Are professional NAATI accredited translators available for the selected languages?
- Can the materials be checked through back translation by a second professional translator in each language?
- Will community members be available to message test the materials once they have been translated?
- Have you read the document *Improving the Use of Translating and Interpreting Services: A Guide to Victorian Government Policy and Procedures*, which is available to download from www.voma.vic.gov.au?
- Have you read the document *We speak your language: A Guide to Cross-Cultural Communication* document which is available to download from www.vits.com.au?

Message test the resource with the community once it has been translated

- Do you have a good structure in place to bring together a focus group to message test the material?
- Have you organised interpreters for the focus group?
- Have you checked not only the quality of translation but the accuracy and suitability of the message?
- Have you asked the group how they understand the materials, not just if they understand them?
- Are you willing to adjust the translation if necessary?