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## Carers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

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### Summary

- Extended family and kinship networks may support the care in Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
  - If you are an Aboriginal carer, a carer who does not speak English as your first language, or come from a different cultural background, it might mean you face different or greater challenges as part of your care role.
  - For example, communication barriers can make it hard for some carers to find the information and services available to them, especially if they do not see themselves as a carer.
  - The **Care Aware website** provides information and resources in 15 community languages and in a culturally appropriate way for Aboriginal carers. **Carers Victoria** can organise an interpreter when you call its advisory line.
  - Some Carers Victoria brochures and fact sheets are also available in languages other than English. Culturally appropriate respite services are available to Aboriginal people through Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.
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If you are an Aboriginal carer, a carer who does not speak English as your first language, or come from a different cultural background, it might mean you face different or greater challenges as part of your care role. For example, communication barriers can make it difficult for many carers to find the information and carer support services available to them, particularly because some carers from multicultural backgrounds do not identify themselves as a carer.

### Barriers for carers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Some carers are reluctant to ask for help or emotional support because they feel that caring for their family member is a cultural expectation.

Also, there may be cultural issues related to the care recipient's frailty or illness, such as a different understanding of dementia, and accessing carer services outside the family or cultural group may not be culturally acceptable.

Understanding potential barriers to access for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds can help in providing support. Carers from a particular cultural background may prefer to deal with healthcare professionals who share or understand that culture.

### Barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers

In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, caring is a community undertaking, with many people often sharing the care of one person. Because of this, people looking after family and friends often do not see themselves as carers. For this reason, they may not seek out the carer support services available to them.

Mainstream organisations that provide respite services may not be culturally appropriate or have the flexibility to meet the respite care needs of Aboriginal communities. The concept of respite care often has a different meaning for Aboriginal communities. For example, mainstream models of home respite care may not suit the cultural needs of Aboriginal people.

### Help for carers from a CALD background

Carers Victoria can organise an interpreter when you call its advisory line. Some Carers Victoria brochures and fact sheets are also available in languages other than English.

The Care Aware website, which provides information for carers, has a 'snapshot' of information available in 15 community languages. Visit **Care Aware's Website Snapshot Translations**.

The Australian Government Department of Social Services supports carers with programs, services, benefits and

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payments for carers. The [Department of Social Services website](#) is another good resource for general carer information.

### **Support for carers of Aboriginal people with a disability**

The [First Peoples Disability Network](#) is the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities. With the aim of bringing individuals with a disability together to share their unique experiences, the network provides support and is a voice for positive change on issues of concern.

For information and advice, call (02) 9319 1422.

### **Respite care services for Aboriginal communities**

Aboriginal people refer to 'family' rather than 'carers' and there may be a number of family members who share the carer role. Respite for Aboriginal people may mean the whole family has respite together. Some Aboriginal community-controlled organisations offer respite services for Aboriginal people.

Contact your nearest service using the Health Services Directory on this website.

### **Support for carers of people with a disability from multicultural backgrounds**

The National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) is the national voice advocating for the rights and interests of people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds with a disability, their families and carers throughout Australia.

Find more information about [Translation and interpreter services](#).

For more information visit the [NEDA website](#).

### **Where to get help**

- [Carers Victoria](#), call (03) 9396 95
- [First Peoples Disability Network](#), call (02) 9319 1422

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