

Needs-Gap Analysis on Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Grandparent Carers 'Hidden Issues': An Insight for Community Nurses

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Abstract : In Australia, there is a significant number of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Grandparent Carers who are sole carers for their grandchildren. Services in the community such as accessible healthcare, financial support, legal aid, and transport to services can assist Grandparent Carers to continue to live in their own home whilst caring for their grandchildren. Community nurses can play a major role by being aware of the needs of these grandparents and link them to services via information and referrals. The CALD Grandparent Carer experiences have only been explored marginally and may be similar to the general Grandparent Carer population, although cultural aspects may add to their difficulties. This Needs-Gap Analysis aimed to uncover 'hidden issues' for CALD Grandparent Carers such as service gaps and actions needed to address these issues. The stakeholders selected for this Needs-Gap Analysis were drawn from relevant service providers such as community and aged care services, child and/or grandparents support services and CALD specific services. One hundred relevant service providers were surveyed using six structured questions via face to face, phone interviews, or email correspondence. CALD Grandparents who had a significant or sole role of being a carer for grandchildren were invited to participate through their CALD community leaders. Consultative Forums asking five questions that focused on the caring role, issues encountered, and what needed to be done, were conducted with the African, Asian, Spanish-Speaking, Middle Eastern, European, Pacific Islander and Maori Grandparent Carers living in South-east Queensland, Australia. Data from the service provider survey and the CALD Grandparent Carer forums were content analysed using thematic principles. Our findings highlighted social determinants of health grouped into six themes. These were; 1) service providers and Grandparent Carer perception that there was limited research data on CALD grandparents as carers; 2) inadequate legal and financial support; 3) barriers to accessing information and advice; 4) lack of childcare options in the light of aging and health issues; 5) difficulties around transport; and 6) inadequate technological skills often leading to social isolation for both carer and grandchildren. Our Needs-Gap Analysis provides insight to service providers especially health practitioners such as doctors and community nurses, particularly on the impact of caring for grandchildren on CALD Grandparent Carers. Furthermore, factors such as cultural differences, English language difficulties, and migration experiences also impacted on the way CALD Grandparent Carers are able to cope. The findings of this Need-Gap Analysis signposts some of the 'hidden issues' that CALD Grandparents Carers face and draws together recommendations for the future as put forward by the stakeholders themselves.

Keywords : CALD grandparents, carer needs, community nurses, grandparent carers

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