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Getting our message across to early childhood workers

Recently we arranged translation into 10 languages of a new publication by NSW Health: *Children's Infectious Diseases*, and decided to promote the translations to all Early Childhood Centres in NSW. The English language version was sent to these Centres together with a list of the languages available on the HealthNet (intranet).

We then took the opportunity to conduct a survey, to establish:

- i) the extent to which Early Childhood Centres have access to multilingual resources, and
- ii) which topics they'd like to be covered in future multilingual publications.

We also provided details of other resources relevant to early childhood, along with our website address and the phone number for our faxback service.

A total of 443 questionnaires were sent out, and 66 were returned, with results showing that:

- 52% of respondents had seen the English version of the infectious diseases publication before it was sent to them
- 62% of respondents have access to the Internet or intranet, while only 36% of respondents use the Internet or intranet
- 50% of staff know about the NSW health intranet site; 33% know about the Multicultural Communication site, but only 9% had used it. 42% knew where to find the distributor for multilingual resources in their area.

Shortly afterwards, our web data showed that sending materials directly to key users had paid off – we had received 128 requests for the infectious diseases publication on the HealthNet, while 13 of the top 25 requests for our website material were for our early childhood resources.

There were requests for new resources on the following topics:

- The role of the early childhood centre
- Settling infants and children
- Normal development/milestones
- Allergies in infants
- Personal health record
- Normal eating for toddlers
- Breastfeeding
- Health and development screening.

We plan to continue this direct approach with selected publications.

Joining forces with the Pharmaceutical Society

The Pharmaceutical Society produces fact sheets on health called Self Care Cards, available from most pharmacies in Australia. Our website address will be added to all cards produced in the future, and the Pharmaceutical Society will promote our site to pharmacists who can then print out information for their customers.

Evaluating the Multilingual Sexual Assault Information Project – can you help?

The Education Centre Against Violence (ECAV) has been working with culturally diverse communities to develop accessible and culturally appropriate publications about sexual assault.

This work grew from a recognition of the lack of appropriate material about sexual assault, and that translations from English are less effective than resources developed from the ground up. The result is a booklet, *What is sexual assault and where can you get help?* available in Arabic Chinese, Italian, Khmer, Korean, Spanish, Turkish, and Vietnamese, as well as a bilingual version in Hindi/Punjabi.

The booklets explain the nature of sexual assault, and provide details of services to help victims, as well as information on interpreters, counselling, and the role of the police.

ECAV is evaluating this project and will be running focus groups in several target group languages to assess the impact of the booklets.

If you'd like to take part in a focus group consultation, or have any other relevant feedback, contact Sarah Stewart at the Education Centre Against Violence on (02) 9840 3737.

***Made in the Future* – 14th Annual Australian Health Promotion Association Conference**

The Multicultural Health Communication Service was a major sponsor of this conference at Darling Harbour in June, and we used this event to reach participants from interstate and overseas with a display promoting our products and services.

During the Conference we surveyed delegates about their use of multilingual health information and/or their need to use our products and services in the future. We also offered them the opportunity to join an email list for updates on our future multilingual health resources. This is in line with our new Strategic Plan 2002 - 2007, in which there will be a more co-ordinated approach to developing resources in key topic areas such as aged care, asthma, cancer, cardiac health, diabetes, early childhood, injury prevention, maternity and tobacco control. (For more details read *Pause in production of MCHS publications* at the end of this newsletter).

If you missed the conference and wish to join the email list for *Polyglot*, or be updated on future multilingual resources, contact Marketing/Communications Co-ordinator Michael Camit camitm@mhcs.sesahs.nsw.gov.au

World No Tobacco Day strikes again

As usual, World No Tobacco Day was held on 31 May, and many smokers took the brave step of quitting in the interests of better health. As in 2001, Multicultural Communication was asked to help the cause by providing support to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Multilingual Quit lines were set up during May and June to help Arabic, Chinese, Turkish and Vietnamese smokers who were trying to quit. These multilingual Quit Lines were an initiative of NSW Health, in co-operation with the NSW Cancer Council, the Vietnamese anti-smoking campaign, Health is Gold, together with South West Sydney Area Health and the Australian Turkish Social and Cultural trust.

Review of language quality in our publications

As all our multilingual material is professionally translated, and we get very little criticism of the quality of the language, we feel the overall standard of translations on our website is high. But given the wide distribution and importance of the materials we publish, we believe it's important to do a periodic review.

On the rare occasions when we do get negative feedback, we ask for more details so that the translator concerned can respond. We have also developed a publication called *Seven Steps*, a simple guide to checking translations of health information, and this is available on our website.

For our current review, we're selecting a sample of publications added to the website in the last two years, and which relate to topic areas frequently used by health workers.

We will ask health workers who use our multilingual material whether they consider them to be well written and easily understood by their non-English speaking clients. They will also be asked to point out if anything is missing from the language version when compared with the English, or if they see any mistakes. Where possible we'll also seek input from linguists familiar with the languages concerned.

This review should be completed by the end of the year. We'll keep translators informed of progress, and pass on any feedback. Any bilingual health staff who would like to take part in this review, or who can recommend others who may like to provide feedback, should contact Terry Cheshier. For further information, or to pass on any comments, email Terry on cheshert@sesahs.nsw.gov.au or call 9382 7529 (Wednesdays only).

Accessing information on our website – tips from our webmaster

Did you know you can access our site directly by typing the URL (Uniform Resource Locator) into the *Address* field of your browser? If you're using the intranet, the URL is <http://internal.health.nsw.gov.au/health-public-affairs/mhcs>, if you are using the Internet it is www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au. Neither address is easy to remember – the solution is to save every URL into your *Favourites* (Internet Explorer users) or add them to your *Bookmarks* (Netscape users). Open the site you want to add, click on *Favourites* (Internet Explorer) or *Bookmarks* (Netscape), then click *Add to Favourites/Bookmarks* and you'll never need to type the URL of your favourite site again.

Let's go one step further. The Multicultural Communication website is on your screen and you're overwhelmed by the number of articles there. What's the best way to find what you're after? That depends on whether you need a range of articles within a special topic/subject or you want all articles in a particular language. Both are only the click of a button away. The 33 topics on the blue navigation bar on the left side of your screen connect you to alphabetical listings of our articles. The button *Index by Language* (either in the top menu with the *GO* button right to it or in the footer of each page) leads you to a list of 43 languages, again showing the number of articles we publish in the selected language.

Cancer - Breaking the silence

The biggest problem for multicultural communities dealing with cancer is silence, said Lebanese-Australian actress Doris Younane at the recent launch of the Cancer Council's Multicultural Cancer Information Service in Sydney. Doris, best known for her television roles in *Heartbreak High* and *Sea Change*, spoke about the impact of cancer, and how lack of information leads to misconceptions about the disease.

According to the Cancer Council, about one in three people from a non-English speaking background will die from cancer, while about another third will get cancer and survive. Yet most common cancers among people in these communities can be prevented or successfully treated following early detection.

The Multicultural Cancer Information Service (MCIS) provides information sessions, telephone support and information, written material and media interviews to multicultural communities about all aspects of cancer.

The Service can be contacted on:

Arabic phone 1300 301 625

Cantonese phone 1300 300 935

Italian phone 1300 301 431

Greek phone 1300 301 449

Mandarin phone 1300 300 935

The MCIS co-ordinator is Joanne Petrovic on (02) 9334 1758.

2002 NSW Health Survey – the role of Multicultural Communication

For the fifth year running we've been asked to collaborate on the translation component of the NSW Health Survey Program. Terry Cheshier is working with Maria Torres from the Epidemiology Branch of NSW Health. The questionnaires are about 4000 words long and are being translated into Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian and Vietnamese.

Are you bilingual? Do you have expertise in the area of Dementia?

In Australia there are 162,000 people living with dementia. Dementia sufferers from NESB have difficulty in accessing services and information due to language and culture barriers. From time to time there are requests from different organisations and government departments for people to be involved in radio interviews, community talks, education sessions, etc.

Yvonne Santalucia is developing a register of bilingual workers and health professionals. If you are a bilingual health worker and have expertise in the area of dementia and would like to be placed on this register, or if you would like more information please contact Yvonne Santalucia on (02) 9780 2805 or e-mail at yvonne.santalucia@swhs.nsw.gov.au. A network meeting for people already on the register will be held in October 2002.

Meningococcal disease alert for non-English speakers

A new publication on meningococcal disease will soon be available, as part of the NSW Health Department's Health Alert publications. NSW Health and the Department of Education will send every public school parent in NSW a letter and fact sheet about meningococcal disease, and both will be produced in 22 languages. The information will also be distributed to all Early Childhood Centres in NSW. To access this information on-line go to the Chief Health Officer's Health Alerts of the NSW Health website. Some of these health alerts are being translated into community languages. The Internet address for NSW Health is www.health.nsw.gov.au and the intranet address is <http://internal.health.nsw.gov.au>

What our Health Fact Sheet said ...

April 2002	Title: What's the best treatment for Prostate Cancer? Topic area: Men's Health Summary: Information about different prostate cancer treatments to help men decide which is the best option for them	Languages: Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Farsi/Persian, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Maltese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese
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News on other MHCS publications

MHCS publications currently waiting for approval from the Department of Health are:

- *Maternity Care Options* describes choices for maternity care, depending on where you live and what options are available.
- *Injections for newborn babies - why they're important* Information about two injections for newborn babies - vitamin K, which prevents a rare, but serious disorder called Vitamin K Deficiency Bleeding, and the hepatitis B immunisation which protects against the chronic liver disease, hepatitis B.

Both publications will be translated into Albanian, Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, English, Farsi, Greek, Indonesian, Khmer, Korean, Punjabi, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Tongan, Turkish, and Vietnamese.

Pause in production of MHCS publications

Due to Multicultural Communication's new five year strategic plan, *Strategic Directions 2002-2007*, we're introducing an improved planning process for production of publications. In the meantime, there'll be a break in the regular production until we have consolidated and created partnerships with health services' staff, and other health delivery agencies. Our aim is to develop more culturally competent communication strategies, and improve access to information and services for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

While we're sorry about the delay in providing multilingual information, our new focus will mean more systematic planning to provide quality information in priority health areas.

Deadline for next edition: 20th September, 2002	Polyglot is published by NSW 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 .
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