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Tackling cancer misconceptions in multicultural Australia

The National Breast Cancer Centre's (NBCC) 2007 Women's Health Campaign led by the Multicultural Health Communication Service was launched in March by the Governor of New South Wales, Professor Marie Bashir. The campaign aims to cut through the cultural barriers and misconceptions relating to cancer that affect many women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.



Photo: Arabic Breast Cancer Survivor Jamal Ajami, NSW Governor Marie Bashir, Greek Consul Gen. Ioannis Raptakis, Mrs. Janette Howard, Dr. Helen Zorbas, NBCC National Director, Vietnamese and Greek Breast Cancer Survivors Hien Harding and Kathy Andrianakos



MHCS Team: Jess Helaratne, Germana Morassi, Chris Gollan, Rajan Manickarajah, Peter Todaro, Lee Hubber (I & G), Bevan Wilson & Michael Camit

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Director of the National Breast Cancer Centre, Dr Helen Zorbas, said women born in non-English speaking countries tend to present to their doctor with more advanced disease.

“The reasons for late presentation are unknown but may be due to cultural taboos and misunderstandings about cancer which can impact on a woman’s attitude to seeking medical advice about new or unusual changes in her body,” said Dr Zorbas.

“Some cultures believe cancer will bring shame on their family or that it is contagious. Others avoid speaking of the disease altogether, referring to it as ‘that terrible illness’, and some believe a cancer diagnosis is closely linked to concepts of karma, retribution and fate.”

The National Breast Cancer Centre is hosting a series of bi-lingual forums across Australia to provide women with culturally appropriate and potentially life-saving information about breast and ovarian cancer. The forums, co-ordinated by MHCS, are being presented in the five key languages spoken in Australia other than English – Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian and Vietnamese.

The forums are an opportunity to give women the facts on breast and ovarian cancer, address cultural misconceptions and emphasise the importance of early detection,” said Dr Zorbas.

The Arabic Women’s Health Forum was the first event, with 180 people packing Bankstown’s Emporium Function Centre on March 31, and an additional 90 people on the waiting list to attend the session. The forum was held in partnership with the Lebanese Community Council in NSW.



Audience at the Arabic Women's Health Forum



L-R Elie Nassif, LCC President, Peter Todaro, MHCS Director, Souhair Afiouny, LCC Project Coordinator, Dr. Meagan Keaney, Chair of Board of Directors, NBCC & Dr. Helen Zorbas, NBCC National Director

The Chinese Women's Health Forums followed on May 9 in Perth with the Cantonese session held in the morning, and the Mandarin session in the afternoon, with a combined attendance of 191 women.

NBCC and MHCS partnered with the Chung Wah Association Inc – their women's group did a great job of co-ordinating the forums at the Chung Wah Cultural Centre in Northbridge.



Lai-Bing Leung, Interpreter, Dr. Alison Evans, NBCC, Jean Ng Mandarin Breast Cancer Survivor, Dr. Min Zhu and Xu Jin, MC.



Women asking the panel questions on breast cancer issues at the Mandarin Women's Health Forum

Three more forums will be held in July - the Greek Women's Health Forum in Melbourne on July 9, in partnership with the Australian Greek Welfare Service, the Italian Women's Forum in Brisbane, on July 21, coordinated by CoAsIt, the Italian Australian Welfare Association Inc, and the Vietnamese Women's Health Forum in Adelaide on July 28, arranged with the help of the Australian Refugee Association Inc.

The forums are supported by a multilingual advertising campaign encouraging women to see their GP promptly about any new or unusual changes in their body that could be due to breast or ovarian cancer. The theme of the advertising campaign is 'I acted early – I survived'.

This campaign is built on the National Breast Cancer Centre's previous work in developing translated resources providing information about early detection of breast cancer and helping women diagnosed with the disease to make decisions about their treatment and support.



2007 Multicultural Health Communication Awards

We have had a good response to the Multicultural Health Communication Awards project for 2007. All entries will be judged in June and the winners announced at a presentation at Parliament House, Sydney during Multicultural Health Week on 27th July 2007.

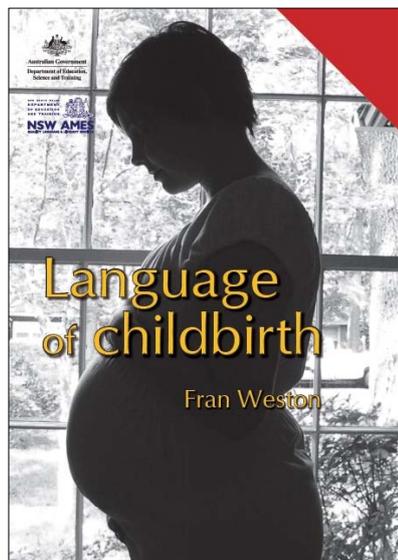
Workshop for CALD organisations on safe manual handling

WorkCover NSW has begun a long term program to reduce the incidence of injuries and disease resulting from manual handling risks in the work place – and CALD communities are a priority target because of their high representation in industries where manual handling risks are greatest.

A workshop/focus group was held in March for WorkCover NSW to look at the issue of injuries sustained by manual handling, with particular emphasis on CALD communities. CALD community organisations that were represented were: The Arab Council; Australian Chinese Community of NSW; Asian Women at Work; African Community Council; Greek Welfare Centre; CoAslt (Italian Association of Assistance); Korean Welfare; NSW Spanish and Latin American Association for Social Assistance, and the Turkish Welfare Association.

Recommendations based on the findings of the workshop/focus group included: The development of multilingual resources to address gaps in communicating the risks of manual handling. the need for WorkCover NSW to help raise awareness in CALD communities of WorkCover's role the need to help change existing attitudes and increase understanding of work place safety, especially manual handling issues.

The Language of Childbirth



The Language of childbirth is an English language resource designed for women from non-English speaking backgrounds having babies in Australian hospitals.

The project, begun in 2005, was developed by the NSW Adult Migrant English Service (NSW AMES). It was funded under the Adult Literacy National Project by the Australian Government through the Department of Education, Science and Training.

Focus groups held with Sudanese women showed they needed access to more information on antenatal and postnatal issues. While interpreters are used by the health system, women want to be able to communicate without a third person. Information and improved language skills enable women to make informed choices in relation to pregnancy, birthing and parenting.

The following organisations were consulted to ensure that the resource reflects current clinical and birthing practices:

- Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Health, at the University of Technology, Sydney
- Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre
- NSW Education Programs FGM, Parramatta
- NSW Refugee Health Services
- Metropolitan hospitals.

The resource, a student workbook and two audio CDs, was trialled in the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) across Australia. It's now available at www.ames.edu.au or leading bookshops.

For further information please contact:

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What's a literal translation? Report from the Critical Link Conference



The Critical Link Conference, held in April at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Parramatta, included many papers and workshops looking at interpreting and the health care profession, the role of translators, ethical issues involved in the translation process, technology in the translation environment, current research in translation, and many other issues.

In her paper *How meaningful is the concept of literal translation?*, Susanne Van Der Kleij from Radboud University, Nijmegen in the Netherlands, talked about the challenges faced by the term 'literal translation' in the context of the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND).

She began with the interpreter's code of conduct which stated that 'if anything said by an alien cannot be literally translated into Dutch – such as an expression or proverb – it shall be described in more detail. In that case the interpreter shall tell the IND employee conducting the interview that the translation given is a description rather than a literal translation.'

The question raised is whether this description will help the interpreters to perform adequately.

Some believe the word *literal* is an unfortunate term. Does it mean word for word translation (and therefore ungrammatical), for example, or the closest grammatical translation?

Other concerns with variations in translation occur when interviews involve lengthy passages of speech so that for the interpreter, whose memory has its limits, it becomes impossible to provide a word for word translation. In cases like this, the rendition can only be as close to the original as the memory permits.

The paper's conclusion was that a 'range of translation types needs to be covered by the term *literal translation*'.

New Publications placed on the Multicultural Communication website

Publication No. & Title	Summary	Languages
DOH – 7960 Post mortem examination of a stillborn baby	Information for parents about the post-mortem examination of a stillborn baby	Arabic, Chinese, English, Indonesian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Thai, Turkish, Vietnamese
DOH – 7950 Fruit and vegetable fact sheets	Eating plenty of fruit and vegies not only contributes to good health, but also protects against a number of diseases and helps maintain a healthy weight.	Arabic, Chinese, English, Italian, Khmer, Korean, Macedonian, Serbian, Thai, Turkish, Vietnamese
OTH – 7945 Rubella information (with special emphasis for women of childbearing age)	Describes rubella - the disease, its symptoms, the risks to pregnant women and prevention	Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Chinese, Dari, English, Farsi, Filipino, Indonesian, Khmer, Russian, Serbian, Somali, Thai, Tigrigna, Turkish, Vietnamese
AHS – 7955 Palliative care	Palliative care is support for people with an illness for which a cure is not possible.	Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Dutch, English, Filipino, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Macedonian, Maltese, Polish, Punjabi, Sinhalese, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish
DOH – 7935 Families and friends affected by the drug or alcohol use of someone close	Contains information about how to look after yourself and support your family if someone close to you is abusing alcohol or other drugs. Also includes the facts about drug and alcohol use and drug dependence, and treatment options for the drug affected person.	Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, English, Serbian, Turkish, Vietnamese
DOH – 7970 Lift the Lip	Check your own and your children's teeth for early signs of tooth decay.	Arabic, Chinese, Dinka, English, Farsi, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Pushto, Samoan, Somali, Thai, Turkish, Vietnamese

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