



THE HON MARK BUTLER MP
Minister for Mental Health and Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

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New Translation and Interpreting Service for Aged Care Residents

Translation services and on-site interpreters will be available to older Australians in aged care facilities who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing Mark Butler announced today.

The Gillard Government is providing \$2.2 million to engage interpreter services to help older people from non-English speaking backgrounds communicate on health and aged care matters.

"This investment delivers on our election commitment to provide improved access to translation services for older Australians from non-English speaking backgrounds and cultural awareness training for aged care staff.

"The new service will include on-site visits and telephone interpreting services and services will be available around the clock for 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

There are currently almost 30,000 culturally and linguistically diverse residents in aged care homes that could benefit from this initiative.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship's Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) will provide the translation and interpreter services.

Mr Butler said that the Government's investment would help older Australians from CALD backgrounds access the care and support they need.

"At present, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds make up 16 per cent of residents in residential aged care homes. However, the AIHW projects that by 2026, one in four people aged 80 and over will be from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

"Communication barriers can mean these older Australians may not receive timely care and support which can lead to poorer health outcomes and increased isolation.

"These services will ensure that language or culture do not act as barriers to receiving high quality aged care.

“This new initiative complements the Government's new national multicultural policy, *The People of Australia*, and underlines the Australian Government's commitment to quality aged care by improving translation services for CALD recipients of aged care.”

“Government funded residential aged care homes will be notified in coming weeks of details of the new service and how to access it,” Mr Butler said.

For more information, please contact the Minister's Office on (02) 6277 7280