

# AGEING, CULTURE AND MENTAL HEALTH

## The 16th seminar in the “Let’s Talk Culture” series

- Date:** Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2014
- Time:** 9:30 am – 12:30 pm
- Venue:** Theatrette, Department of Health  
189 Royal Street, East Perth
- RSVP:** By Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at  
[Bernadette.Wright@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:Bernadette.Wright@health.wa.gov.au)
- Video Conference Bookings:** [ContactUs@mentalhealth.wa.gov.au](mailto:ContactUs@mentalhealth.wa.gov.au)  
(for rural and remote mental health services only)
- Cost:** Nil

Certificate of Attendance available on request.

The ‘Let’s Talk Culture’ seminar series aims to assist professionals to work in a culturally responsive way with consumers and carers from ethnically diverse backgrounds. These seminars are jointly organised by the Mental Health Commission, the Transcultural Mental Health Service at Royal Perth Hospital; and, the Cultural Diversity Unit of the Chronic Disease Prevention Directorate at the Department of Health.

The first of the 2014 seminar series will focus on ageing in a culture that may be unfamiliar or different from the culture of origin.

Opened by **Timothy Marney, Mental Health Commissioner of Western Australia**, the seminar, and panel discussion to be chaired by **Professor Alex Main, Murdoch University**, will explore:

- **Cultural influences in mental health presentations among ethnically diverse older people**
- **The challenges encountered by the increasingly multicultural workforce within the aged care sector and the relationship/communication issues that arise across the cultural divide between staff, residents and their families**
- **How multicultural staff reconcile their culture-based beliefs or values surrounding ageing and the western concept of ageing and caring for the aged**
- **The extent to which lack of dementia literacy among families from ethnically diverse backgrounds is influenced by cultural beliefs about ageing**
- **Personal experiences of ageing in a different culture – what assumptions are made by service providers ?**
- **The question of readiness of the aged care industry for a rise in demand for services from ethnically diverse older people**

**Parking and Transport Details:** Parking available opposite the Department of Health in Royal Street or at Moore Street Multistorey carpark. Costs apply. Trains run approximately every 10 – 15 minutes. The best station to stop at is Claisebrook or McIver. Free CAT service also available. Information on departures and arrivals, times for trains and buses phone TRANSPERTH on 13 62 13.

**The next seminar is on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> August, 2014 at 9.30 am.**



### ABOUT THE GUEST SPEAKERS

**BARBARA HORNER** is an Associate Professor at Curtin University of Technology. She is a social researcher who has focussed on improving the life and care for older people across a range of settings, particularly those living with dementia. Her research centres on an action research methodology and has included workforce issues, innovation in models of care and service frameworks and evaluation, quality of life factors in aged communities and organizational leadership and change. Barbara was the Director of the *WA Dementia Training Study Centre* 2006-2013, and Curtin University research leader in the *Dementia Collaborative Research Centre - Consumers & Carers* since 2006. She is also a University of Tasmania Wicking Centre Research Associate and has many national and state research partners. Barbara has developed extensive industry partnerships in her research and is recognised for her collaborative practice and leadership in aged care.



**AMAR VARSANI** is the coordinator for the Independent Living Centre Multicultural aged care service (ILC MACS). Migrating from Kenya with an educational background in Marketing and Finance, and experience in community work, she started as a volunteer with Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Centre in WA. This led to a position at Carers' Association of Western Australia, providing information and support for family carers of ethnically diverse backgrounds. Following this role, Amar has worked with the WA Association for Mental Health before joining the ILC MACS. She brings with her a vast experience gained from community and volunteering work with diverse cultures in health and education.



**OLGA RAMASAMY** migrated to Australia in 1977 and immediately became actively involved in the ethnic/cultural scene by serving on the Sri Lankan Association Committee for several years. After 10 years' employment as State Secretary with WA Girl Guides Association, Olga joined the Australian Asian Association (AAA), a conglomerate of 150 plus ethnic and welfare Associations, as its Administration Secretary and later, as Chief Executive Officer, a position she still holds. In the nineties, realising that, like herself, non-English speaking migrants were ageing, and needed help to continue living in their own homes, Olga persevered in her efforts to successfully obtain funding for aged care for the South East Asian & Middle Eastern communities. Olga currently serves on several State and Federal Aged Care Committees contributing to debates on policy and operational issues. Awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the 1998 Queen's Birthday Honours list for service to the migrant community and to women, Olga holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Curtin University. At 86, she is also the oldest student to graduate from the University of Notre Dame in not-for-profit Leadership and Management.



**LINDA GRENADE** has been with Alzheimer's WA since 2010, following a long career at Curtin University of Technology where she was a lecturer in the School of Public Health and Research Fellow in the Centre for Research on Ageing. Since joining Alzheimer's WA, she has worked in a variety of roles including delivering education and training to people working in the aged care and acute sectors, program evaluation, development of training resources and materials, and facilitation of groups for people with early stage dementia and their carers. She is currently employed as Project Officer – Multicultural Communities. A primary focus of this role is on raising awareness of dementia and related issues among ethnic communities and promoting cultural competence within organisations that provide services and care for people with dementia from ethnically diverse backgrounds. More recently, Linda has assisted the Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Services (DBMAS) WA to develop best practice guidelines for this target group, as well as the training resource *Speaking My Language*, based on these guidelines.

