

**Determining the Need for a Translator for Formal Presentations**

- Ask if there is preference for an English-speaking person with a translator or a native-speaking person.
- Find out if the presenter of information and the translator should be male or female based on the content of the discussion.
- Meet with the interpreter prior to the scheduled presentation to discuss content and terminology.
- Avoid using social service terminology that may get translated out of context.

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***CULTURALLY SENSITIVE APPROACHES TO OUTREACH: A GUIDE FOR THE AGING SERVICES NETWORK***



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P.O.Box 807, Trenton, NJ 08625



## INTRODUCTION

Linking New Jersey's senior citizens and their caregivers to vital aging programs and services remains a major goal for professionals throughout our state.

As New Jersey continues to evolve as an increasingly multicultural/ethnic state, aging professionals are urged to critically examine how home and community-based services are accessed, delivered to and received by ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

Professionals cannot assume that methods designed for the majority of older persons and their caregivers will automatically apply to racially and ethnically diverse communities.

Face-to-face group interaction within diverse communities is an effective outreach strategy. Direct outreach should be done on an ongoing basis. This provides opportunities to identify present and future service needs of the community.

Direct outreach requires that agency staff understand and are sensitive to a group's culture, beliefs, and norms.

We offer the following brochure as a helpful adjunct to your organization's policies, practices and strategies to deliver quality interventions to the multicultural clients and communities that you serve.

## Culturally Sensitive Approaches

### Tips for Understanding the Group

- Remember an ethnic group is not a homogeneous group. Customize recommendations and interventions.
- The level of acculturation impacts on caregiving and acceptance of services.
- The historical context of a cultural/ethnic group effects how members seek information.
- Understand the variety of cultural views on the aging process.
- Understand the family hierarchal system and determine what key roles family members play.
  - \* Who are the decision makers?
  - \* What roles do males and females have as caregivers?
  - \* Are there non-traditional family arrangements?
  - \* Are there any other community support networks that the family relies upon?
- Interracial couples may experience internal differences in caregiving that need to be addressed.
- Be familiar with self-care traditions.

### Communication Tips

- Be aware that cultural/ethnic groups tend to vary with regard to verbal or nonverbal self-expression.
- Body gestures can be perceived positively or negatively by different cultural/ethnic groups.

- Avoid using acronyms and unfamiliar social service and medical terms.
- If possible, use visual aids as a way to communicate.

### More Points to Consider

- Inquire about group protocols (such as acknowledging the elder in the group).
- Discuss preferred presentation format—visual, auditory, or a combination.
- Have an open mind. Formal presentations are an opportunity to use the audience as a source of information.
- Try not to be judgmental—understand and accept differences. Be an active listener!
- Speak distinctly, not loudly and repeat messages in different ways, if necessary.
- Know how, when, and with whom to use eye contact.
- Always use surnames and titles, until given permission to do otherwise.
- When using a survey, clearly explain the purpose and process and how the information will be used.