

Best Practice Guidelines for Agencies

These Guidelines set out principles of best practice to support agencies in their everyday communications and interactions with CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) communities.

These revised *Best Practice Guidelines for Agencies* build on CLING's original 2012 Guidelines, but have been expanded to take into account CLING's observations and learnings over the past decade in relation to different types of disaster as well as during times of 'normalcy'. As Aotearoa New Zealand becomes ever-more culturally and linguistically diverse, effective communication with CALD communities correspondingly becomes ever-more important and is something we should all strive to embrace.

The key message of the 2012 *Best Practice Guidelines* was the importance of establishing relationships between agencies and CALD communities before disaster occurs, because it is these relationships which enable the effective flow of information during disaster. The same message is reiterated in these revised Guidelines: relationships are vital. The other main message from these revised Guidelines is the importance of working to best practice at all times; not least because engaging in good practice during times of normalcy will automatically improve communication during times of disaster.



Guidelines for enabling your workforce to effectively communicate with CALD communities

- ✿ Employ a diverse workforce so that cultural, religious and linguistic knowledge is embedded in your organisation, including your communications team.
- ✿ Establish CALD liaison roles within the workplace, and utilise their knowledge.
- ✿ Continually improve cultural competency within your organisation through professional development.
- ✿ Include resource for the dissemination of messaging to CALD communities (e.g. via ethnic media and other channels) in your budgets.
- ✿ Include resource for professional translation and interpreting in your budgets.
- ✿ Create an interpreting policy for your agency, and ensure staff wholly understand it.
- ✿ Promote the use of professional translators and interpreters (both face-to-face and telephone) amongst your staff.
- ✿ Ensure staff are confident working with interpreters by providing training in this area.
- ✿ Ensure staff know who to contact to carry out translation and interpreting work (this is especially important when you require quick turnaround; for example, during times of disaster).

Guidelines for developing effective messages for CALD communities

- ✿ In addition to professionally translating and interpreting mainstream messaging, work with CALD communities and service providers to develop messages which are relevant to them.
 - Co-created messages are more appropriate to the target communities, and thus more effective.
 - Note that the diversity within CALD communities means that messages developed for 'CALD communities' - or even for specific ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic CALD communities - may not be relevant to all members of those communities.
- ✿ Keep messages simple.
- ✿ Use consistent branding for all resources in a series.



Guidelines for establishing relationships with CALD communities

- ✚ Research the ethnic and linguistic makeup of your local CALD communities, and create a profile of these communities.
 - Use a variety of sources to determine the key languages in your area, and ensure your decision is equitable. The size of the language community is not the only factor in determining a language's importance, so use knowledge of communities' circumstances and contexts alongside Census and local demographic data.
 - Refresh this knowledge regularly, as it can change quickly.
- ✚ Identify key contacts within each CALD community.
 - These contacts are likely to be credible, respected community members; democratically-elected leaders; influencers; and CALD service providers. Be sure to include women and young people when reaching out.
 - Connect into your local CALD media as a means of identifying potential contacts.
 - Identify how you can best connect with and support these key community contacts, including in the event of disaster.
- ✚ Establish strong relationships with your local CALD communities.
 - Learn about your local CALD communities.
- Build trust with and demonstrate respect for CALD communities.
- Understand the diversity within each CALD community.
- ✚ Recognise and value the strengths of CALD communities.
 - Recognise and value the resilience and connectedness within CALD communities.
 - Recognise that CALD communities want to participate in their wider community, including in post-disaster response and recovery. Supporting this participation provides a sense of belonging and makes CALD communities more resilient.
 - Recognise and value the importance of CALD community gathering places and marae, including as post-disaster recovery centres.
 - Recognise and value existing networks of dissemination including ethnic media.
- ✚ Ensure CALD community databases are kept updated.
 - Store this information electronically (i.e. in the Cloud) and in hard copy at multiple locations to ensure accessibility of information following disaster.

Guidelines for developing accessible resources for CALD communities

- ✚ In the first instance, produce resources that are written in plain English and incorporate visuals / infographics for universal accessibility.
 - Such resources are more comprehensible to everyone, including people with limited English language competency.
- ✚ As a second step, have these resources professionally translated and/or interpreted into the key languages of your target audience or locality.
 - Engage professionals if you undertake translation or interpreting.

Guidelines for disseminating information to CALD communities and agencies, organisations and community groups that support them

- ✚ Know how to get information out to CALD communities.
 - Use established networks and systems e.g. via community leaders, ethnic media, community media such as local radio, agencies with Bilingual Workers.
 - Produce written, audio and film resources that can be disseminated via multiple channels.
 - Consider sharing translations in both written and oral forms (either audio-only or video). These oral forms can be more accessible, including to people with lower literacy.
 - Share information online.
 - Also have information available in hard copy.
- ✚ Know when to get information out to CALD communities
 - Ensure information for CALD communities is made publicly available in a timely manner (which requires prioritising the dissemination of information to CALD communities).
 - As much as possible, plan for events and produce resources in advance.
- ✚ Where possible, work with other organisations to get messages out to CALD communities.
- Coordinate with other agencies about the content and timing of your messages to avoid overloading communities with information.
- Coordinate with other agencies to minimise duplication.
- Recognise that resources produced by central government may require amending to make them appropriate for local contexts.
- ✚ If you are sharing language resources online:
 - Make it obvious on the landing page of a website where to find language resources, and provide 'click-through' buttons in these languages.
 - Avoid listing all language resources under one website page; rather, use separate pages and tabs to facilitate people finding and using the resources.
 - Consider uploading resources under both the relevant language and a topic heading. People can then search for translations either by language or by topic.
 - Make it obvious which resources are the most recent/up-to-date by including a date beside the link to each resource, ensuring website "Last updated" information remains current and removing or archiving redundant messaging.

Guidelines for disseminating translated information

- ✚ If you are translating information, ensure the original English language document is easily accessible so that English speakers are aware of the exact content of the messaging.
- ✚ Clearly state on translations - in English - the language of the translation.
- ✚ Ensure translations are clearly dated, in English and the other language.
- ✚ Ensure translations clearly state their information source, in English and the other language.