

Dementia language not universal: study

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Credit: Ricardo Liberato / Flickr

The barriers facing Australian dementia sufferers from non-English speaking backgrounds will be the subject of a new study from The Australian National University, which seeks to speak directly to people in the early stages of dementia.

The research project will be conducted by Tushara Wickramariyaratne from the Department of Psychology at ANU. It aims to shed light on many unanswered questions about the challenges that Australia, as a multi-cultural country, faces in its efforts to cater to its [aging population](#).

Ms Wickramariyaratne said that different cultures approach the onset of

dementia very distinctly and that there was little research into the barriers that people from culturally and linguistically different backgrounds face.

“We know that there is a huge difference in dementia literacy between people from Anglo-Australian backgrounds and CALD backgrounds,” she said.

“We also know that people from CALD backgrounds have difficulties accessing mainstream support services.”

“What my study aims to find out is what barriers people from CALD communities face in accessing support and seeking help for dementia, with an aim to inform policy about outreach and early intervention programs, particularly targeting these groups.”

As part of the study, Ms. Wickramariyaratne is looking for people to participate in the research, from both Anglo-Australian and CALD backgrounds.

“Most dementia research that exists has not actually involved the person with dementia, and so this is an essential point for me. In order to ensure that people with dementia can fully participate in the research, I am looking for people with early stage dementia.”

Ms Wickramariyaratne who is running the study as part of her research placement with Alzheimer’s Australia, said that there might be an opportunity for her to provide short-term supportive therapy subsequent to the study for people struggling with their experience of the onset of the [dementia](#).

Provided by Australian National University

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