



Supporting Grief, Loneliness and Emotional Wellbeing in CALD Ageing

Why it Matters

Older people may experience grief, loneliness and emotional distress following significant life changes such as bereavement, migration, declining health, loss of independence or separation from family. Cultural beliefs and life experiences can influence how emotions are expressed and how support is sought.

Grief may relate to

- The death of a spouse, relative or friend
- Loss of health, mobility or independence
- Separation from family or community
- Migration and leaving important people or places behind
- Loss of language, cultural roles or familiar routines
- Moving into residential care
- Loss of connection with faith or cultural communities
- Past experiences of conflict, persecution, trauma or displacement

Signs to Notice

- Withdrawal, reduced motivation or loss of interest in meaningful activities.
- Changes in sleep, appetite or social engagement.
- Increased anxiety, irritability, loneliness or physical complaints.
- Frequent discussion of past losses, deceased loved ones or significant life events.
- Distress around anniversaries, religious occasions or family events, even when grief is not openly expressed.
- These signs do not confirm a mental health condition but may indicate that further support is needed.

Supporting CALD older persons

- Acknowledge that grief may be linked to bereavement, migration, loss of culture, language or independence.
- Ask about cultural, spiritual or religious practices that may provide comfort.
- Encourage connection with family, friends, community and faith groups where appropriate.
- Use interpreters or bilingual support to enable meaningful conversations when needed.
- Recognise that grief may be expressed differently across cultures and avoid making assumptions.
- Support meaningful routines, familiar activities and sources of identity, and seek additional support if concerns persist.

Practice Tip

There is no single culturally appropriate response to grief. The most respectful approach is to ask, listen and adapt support to the person's individual culture, language, beliefs, relationships and life history.

Learn More: [Micro-learning sessions by MAC](#)

