



Culturally Competent Disability Support: Putting It Into Practice

*A Review of the International and
Australian Literature on Cultural
Competence*

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Increasingly inquiries are being made by the disability sector concerning characteristics, processes, skills and strategies needed to implement a culturally competent approach to disability support.

This literature review details, in an accessible and understandable way, the international and Australian literature on cultural competence, for managers, workers, educators, students and others interested in providing effective support to people with disability, families and communities. While the focus is on consumers from NESB, the nature of cultural competence means that the practices and approaches outlined are relevant for providing support to people from all backgrounds.

The review proposes key culturally competent tools, strategies and skills. Areas covered are:

- Definitions of cultural competence, the concepts that underpin the approach and the impact of these on practice.
- How individuals can develop and improve their capacity to practice culturally competently.
- Improving cross-cultural interactions, including the effectiveness of cross-cultural encounters, culturally competent communication, and conducting culturally competent assessments.
- Involving families and communities.
- Conducting a self-assessment to encourage culturally competent growth and change.

While this review stands alone, it also formed the basis of an accompanying manual that provides people working in the disability sector with key culturally competent tools, strategies and skills.

The practices, steps and tools outlined in this review and the manual provide the necessary skills for people to grow as culturally competent individuals and as future leaders in the industry. Most importantly the review and manual provide the basis for quality support of individual consumers and their families and carers.