

# **Intergenerational Perceptions of Ageing Well: A Pilot Study of the Australian Greek Diaspora**

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## **Abstract:**

Australia is one of the most culturally diverse nations in the world. The 2011 Australian census revealed that one in five older Australians was born overseas and in the coming years this will increase to one in four, a product of post-World War Two migration policies and a culture of immigration in Australia. A significant proportion of these older Australians will be from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds including Italy, Greece, Germany, China, India and Vietnam. There are great variations in the needs and preferences of older people not only between CALD and non-CALD population groups but also across different birthplace groups within the older CALD population.

This paper presents the results of a pilot study carried out in 2013 that involved in-depth interviews (n=90) with three generations of the Australian Greek community, including an overseas-born cohort (aged 75+), their adult children and grandchildren. This research gives a voice to older Greek-born individuals, along with the younger, Australian-born generations to express what 'ageing well' means to them. It explores how the lifecourse, and family and community networks influence ageing well and expectations of support in older age. The research shows that cultural norms combined with lifecourse events impact on how older CALD people view older age and ageing well. The experiences of older generations also influence perceptions on ageing for younger generations within the same family and there are different attitudes and expectations around provision of care across generations but conversely, some strong cultural norms across generations.

In light of a culturally diverse and ageing Australia, it is imperative to understand the expectations, needs and preferences in ageing for people of different cultural backgrounds. This paper will discuss the current resources and challenges older people from CALD backgrounds have to enable a positive ageing experience. This includes highlighting the challenges and choices older people from CALD backgrounds have around access to aged care services in light of the reforms to Australia's aged care services.