

Care in the Multicultural Society of Australia

—With a focus on Palliative Care and Transcultural Care—

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Two prominent characteristics of Australia, that is, multicultural society, and advanced welfare state, are beginning to cross each other substantially. Both of them are closely connected to the important health areas of palliative care and transcultural care, which means care for aged ethnic minorities.

In this paper, I want to clarify what the present situation and quality of life (QOL) in palliative care and in care for aged ethnic minorities are, what the future situation will be by examining what measures the government has taken and by estimating what measures the government will take to improve the quality of care in Australia.

In Section I, I examined the way palliative care, after being introduced into Australia, developed in a unique way throughout the country. It was characterized by the recognition of individual thinking, and respect for ethnicity, races, religion and culture. At present, the division between cure and care is disappearing, and care is becoming more flexible. Now palliative care is adopted in care situations where patients want it. The government recommends community care at home to older people because it provides better QOL.

In Section II, I examined care for aged ethnic minorities. Multiculturally sensitive policy has brought about appropriate care for them. The government provides equal care opportunities for the whole Australian population. It gives equal care information, service and support facilities and ensures respect for each ethnic tradition, custom and language. To elderly people from non-English-speaking backgrounds the government provides care interpreters. The government is aiming to achieve holistic care, and in doing so, to improve QOL.

In Discussion section, I argued “decision-making” regarding individual autonomy in palliative care, and “universal health care” and “individual health care” regarding multiculturalism.

In the future, the number of aged ethnic minorities will increase and the level and scope of transcultural care will also need to increase. It leads to “Well-being” to them.