

Chinese Australian Neuropsychological Normative Study (CANNs)



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1. Aim of the Project

- To develop and validate neuropsychological normative data for use with a Chinese Australian population

2. Introduction

The need for accurate and reliable measurement of cognitive functioning in those from a CALD background has significantly increased in line with our increasing local cultural diversity.

Neuropsychological testing is essential in the detection of the degree and nature of brain dysfunction, treatment and planning.

It is imperative for new tests or those to be used on a new (specific) subset of the population to demonstrate reliability and validity.

To date there have been no studies identified in the literature that document the neuropsychological performance of Chinese Australians.

Chinese Australians represent one of the fastest growing and largest CALD communities in Australia.

3. Method

We established a working party including Chinese health care professionals to assist with engaging participants.

The Working Party oversaw a process of translation of test materials and cultural relevance of test items from a set of existing standardised tests developed for an English-speaking population.

3. Method cont.

Non-brain-impaired Chinese Australians were invited to participate.

- Age = 55-89 years
- N=150
- Recruited from both Govt. and non-Govt. Facilities
- Provided with a \$20 grocery voucher as a token of appreciation

Use of a 'Chinese'-speaking Interpreter

- Mandarin
- Cantonese
- Shanghainese
- Vietnamese
- Hokkien



One hour of face-to-face testing on standard cognitive tests, covering the following domains:

- Attention
- New learning / memory
- Processing speed
- Naming
- Spatial / constructional abilities
- Executive skills.

15% of total participants were randomly invited back to complete retesting between 5-9 months of initial data collection.

4. Key Learnings / Findings

- The Chinese working party members were invaluable in facilitating recruitment of participants and assisting with determining cultural relevance of test items.
- The HCIS were invaluable in ensuring translated materials were culturally relevant.
- Assessment of acculturation was complicated by low levels of literacy in the older participants.
- The participants were enthusiastic and supportive of the project aims and excited about the project outcomes.
- The study has strengthened relationships between the area health service, health care interpreter service, university and community groups.

5. Future Work

- Complete data analysis.
- Publish findings.
- Provide feedback to groups that assisted on the project.

Acknowledgements

SWAHS Interpreters
Chiu Poon
Frank Lai
Bao Kim Mach

SWAHS Multicultural Health Network
Clarissa Mulas
Gordana Kostadinovska
Ina Gaha

SWAHS Health Care Interpreter Service
Gordana Vasic
Ailene Valencia
Eva Melhem

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Theresa Chow
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