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## PROVIDING INFORMATION SERVICES TO MIGRANTS LITERATURE REVIEW



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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **Key findings**

This literature review has found consistent findings in the published research that an information service for migrants should be designed, developed, and operated to meet the specific needs of an identified group of migrants in a particular time and place. The information service should provide that group of migrants with 'information grounds' ie, make information available in places where people meet or conduct activities in the course of daily life in such ways that people are confident that their needs will be addressed.

Specifically, 12 key good practices in delivering information services to migrants were identified. These practices are grouped in three categories: planning the information service, running the information service, and the information content.

### ***Planning an information service***

Good practice when planning an information service is that:

- the service is based on a detailed needs analysis for specific groups
- migrants are involved in all levels of the design and planning of the service
- a variety of services besides information services can be offered to clients, directly or through referrals
- the service has consistent and adequate funding.

### ***Running an information service***

Good practice when running an information service is that:

- the service is accessible to the specific groups to be targeted as needing the service
- the service has staff members that are culturally competent in regard to targeted client groups and trained in the provision of information services
- services are offered in a manner that is culturally appropriate to the identified target groups
- the service offers direct access or personalised referrals to mainstream or government agencies that provide further services to clients.

### ***The information***

Good practice in relation to the information is that:

- information is provided that is relevant to the identified information needs of the targeted client base
- processes and procedures are in place to ensure services are based on accurate, reliable, and up-to-date information
- services and information are provided in the client's language wherever possible and appropriate

- information is delivered through channels and media appropriate to the information grounds and the information needs of the targeted client base.

## **Purpose of this literature review**

This literature review is a survey of international good practice in the delivery of information services to migrants in New Zealand. The review can be used as a resource to guide service delivery and to enable government-funded services to be bench-marked and monitored.

Since the evaluation literature is dynamic, understandings of good practice in the provision of information services evolve over time. Therefore, future guidelines or practical assessment tools will need to change accordingly.

## **Definitions**

The literature review found that it is rare to find official or agreed definitions of the terms commonly used in the literature. However, in New Zealand:

- 'migrant' is the preferred term for people who come to live here from other countries
- 'information' describes anything migrants might need or want to know
- the 'Newcomer Settlement Continuum' is the descriptive model developed by IMSED Research (International Migration Settlement and Employment Dynamics Research) to depict the journey migrants travel from leaving their country of origin to becoming settled in New Zealand.<sup>1</sup>

## **Scope**

The literature review covers national strategies, policies, and plans to assist migrant settlement generally. The review includes specific references and provision for information services in Australia and Canada, some aspects of experience in Ireland, and some findings from an overview of the '2-1-1 service', a federally and state-funded telephone information and referral service found across the United States.

The review does not specifically address the special needs of refugees.

The review does not discuss information that might be provided to members of the host community to assist their knowledge and understanding of migrants. This is an area for future research, since the consensus is that host environments are an important part of ensuring successful outcomes for migrants.

The review focuses on information and the information needs of migrants in the published international literature of countries with immigration jurisdictions that have similar features to the immigration jurisdiction of New Zealand. The scope of the review is restricted to human information behaviour and information behaviour related to migrants and migrant settlement. The review does not include theories of information and does not explore the literature on information and communications technology.

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<sup>1</sup> See 'Terminology', p 2.

## **Theories of information behaviour**

The focus of this literature review is the relationship of migrants with information, which sits within a wider picture of how people in general interact with information. Current research in this field centres on the interface between information and the individual, their experiences, and the context in which they are operating. Relevant concepts include:

- everyday–life information seeking, the study of information behaviour and information seeking in day-to-day life
- information grounds, which are environments formed by a combination of people, place, and time, where people congregate for some kind of activity related to their daily lives and share information spontaneously and serendipitously
- information poverty, which is the condition where people lack the resources to gain the information they need.

Migrants are generally perceived to be information poor because of the challenges they face in finding and using the information they need every day.

Information-seeking theories provide useful models for providing information to people as well as for assisting people in their search for information.

## **Migrants and information**

There is a significant amount of research on both the need for information and the kind of information needed. Research has also investigated how it should be grouped or categorised to facilitate delivery and the use of the material as well as how information needs vary along the settlement continuum. The need for better targeting in terms of topic, migrant group, and timing is increasingly accepted.

## **'Good practice' in delivering information services to migrants**

'Good' practice is the preferred terminology rather than 'best' practice, reflecting the highly contextual nature of services. What works very well for one group of migrants in a specific time and place will not necessarily work for a similar group elsewhere, so there can be no ideal, context-free judgement of 'best' practice.

Good practice in this literature review is set within the wider context of good practice in running an organisation and running services for migrants.

## **Evaluating information services to migrants**

Historically, services tended to be evaluated on a transaction basis, that is, by measures such as the number of clients who attend the service or the number of queries answered. There is now a growing understanding that such quantitative measures alone are insufficient to measure the impact of these services.

Service logic models are now being widely used to evaluate inputs, activities, and processes against defined outcomes. However, difficulties remain. Models that look at the big picture and attempt to measure the wider impact of the service tend to require significant amounts of time, energy, and expertise to be applied and are often one-off evaluation efforts. Simpler models may also describe outcomes but may use simplistic quantitative measures of transactions rather than impacts.

In the United States and Canada, standards-based approaches provide both quality assurance and quality management of the service based on good practice as defined in standards, but without necessarily measuring effectiveness or value for money.

There is a paradox in the provision of information services to migrants. On the one hand, each migrant is unique, each searching for relevant information in a way that makes sense personally and each expecting that their questions or problems will be resolved in a culturally appropriate and supportive setting. On the other hand, governments and social agencies are faced with ever-increasing numbers of diverse groups of information-seekers who cannot be provided for on an individual basis. It is, therefore, no surprise that models are lacking for both the provision and evaluation of services.

Evaluation processes and procedures should establish whether the service is meeting needs and measure the impact of the service on the successful settlement of individuals and on the wider community.

At a philosophical and strategic level, however, more creative thinking is needed to address the information-related issues migrants face to bring about the successful settlement outcomes aspired to in New Zealand as elsewhere.

## OVERVIEW

This literature review is a resource for developing a guide to good practice in the delivery of information services to migrants in New Zealand. This review can be used as a guide to service delivery and to enable services funded by government to be bench-marked and monitored. This literature review is presented in five chapters.

**Chapter 1** sets the scene. It provides a context for the review, defines the terms used, and overviews migration in New Zealand, the settlement process, and the role of information in successful settlement. This chapter also discusses the role of information in settlement in other countries.

**Chapter 2** describes the theoretical framework of information behaviour. Information behaviour describes concepts and theories that are the foundation of discussions on how people find the answers to questions and problems.

**Chapter 3** discusses the information migrants need and how they find – or do not find – information when they have a problem.

**Chapter 4** describes good practices for services that provide information to migrants.

**Chapter 5** discusses models for evaluating information services that are used in the United States and Canada.

# 1. SETTING THE SCENE

As with other countries in a similar context, New Zealand provides a wide range of formal and informal services to support its citizens and residents. Immigration services to new settlers, migrants, and other newcomers are just one set of commonly provided support services. As with most, if not all, social services, information services developed in response to a local social need. Informally, agencies such as churches, ethnic social groups, and local bodies assisted new settlers with tangible assistance as well as information. At a national level, government-funded information services were developed in New Zealand after the introduction of the Migrant Levy<sup>2</sup>.

This review provides an opportunity to reflect on and improve information services to migrants in New Zealand based on internationally agreed good practices. The theoretical and conceptual discussions may contribute to a better understanding of relevant issues that will underpin the development and enhancement of information services in New Zealand.

The review starts by defining and clarifying the terms used in it, and then outlines the process and scope of the literature review. It goes on to briefly outline the settlement process and the role of information in settlement internationally and locally.

## Terms

It is rare to find agreed definitions in the literature for the terms used throughout this review and so this section provides definitions used in the review.

The most common key terms are defined using the *New Zealand Oxford Dictionary* as a base, with additional information (Deverson and Kennedy 2005, p 739). Other terms are defined in context and are also summarised here.

### **Information**

Information is defined as:

something told ... knowledge ... items of knowledge, news. (Deverson and Kennedy 2005, p 556)

New Zealand researchers define information as:

any fact, idea, belief, interpretation or opinion that will help individuals acculturate into [New Zealand]. (Mason and Lamain 2007, p 12)

### **Migrant**

A migrant is defined as:

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<sup>2</sup> Paid by most successful principal applicants and accompanying family members

[a] person who chooses to leave their country of origin to take up permanent residence in another. (Deverson and Kennedy 2005, p 712)

The term 'migrant' is used in the literature in preference to 'immigrant'. In some contexts, the term 'new settler' is used as an alternative or in addition to the term migrant. In New Zealand, the term 'newcomer' is used to mean:

migrants, refugees and their families in their first five years in New Zealand, in particular non-New Zealanders coming to live, learn and work in New Zealand for a short (temporary) or long term (permanent ) basis. This includes international students; non-New Zealanders who return repeatedly to live, learn and/or work in New Zealand; and non-New Zealanders who accompany returning New Zealanders and who intend to live, learn and/or work in New Zealand. (IMSED Research 2009, p 5)

Accordingly, this literature review uses the term 'migrant' throughout the discussion.

### ***Refugee***

Refugees are a special class of migrant; people who have left their country for a variety of reasons, but the defining factor is that they are unable to return to their country. In New Zealand, refugees are accepted as having special and additional needs in the settlement process (Macgibbon 2004; Department of Labour and Wellington Mayoral Forum 2008). Although much of the discussion that follows has relevance to the information needs of refugees, the specific information needs of refugees were not explored, so are not included in this literature review.

### ***Information behaviour***

Information behaviour is the study of how people need, search for, provide, and use information in different contexts, including the workplace and everyday living. It includes active and passive information and any subject on which the searcher might require information (Wilson 2000; Pettigrew et al 2001).

### ***Information seeking***

Information seeking describes the processes and behaviours people use when they are looking for information (Dervin 1999; Wilson 2000; Pettigrew et al 2001).

### ***Everyday-life information seeking***

Again, as the term suggests, everyday-life information seeking is the study of information behaviour and information seeking in day-to-day life; a field of research that has particular relevance for migrants (Dervin 1999; Wilson 2000; Pettigrew et al 2001).

### ***Settlement process***

Exact definitions and descriptions of the settlement process vary, but, in general terms, the settlement process describes the pathway of migrants and refugees

from their country of origin to becoming part of the social and cultural life of their new country (Savolainen 1995).

In New Zealand, the Newcomer Settlement Continuum is a framework that has been developed to describe the settlement process (IMSED Research 2009).

The terms 'settlement' and 'integration' are often used interchangeably, but settlement tends to have shorter-term goals, integration refers to the longer-term reciprocal adaptation process (Ho et al 2000; Mwarigha 2002; Caidi 2009).

## **Research process**

### ***Process followed academic protocols***

The research process for this project followed standard academic protocols.

Key word searches were carried out in several databases and journals (listed in the Appendix) and on the internet. Once relevant articles were located, citation indices were used to track and locate other articles. Websites of organisations with an interest in migrants and/or migrant information behaviour were located and reviewed (also listed in the Appendix). A database of relevant electronic articles and an Endnote library form part of this literature review.

### ***Scope of literature review***

This literature review focuses on information and the information needs of migrants in the international literature.<sup>3</sup> Separate sections discuss the applicability of findings to the New Zealand context.

The scope of the discussion is restricted to human information behaviour and information behaviour related to migrants and migrant settlement. It does not include theories of information and does not explore the literature on information and communications technology.

The literature review did not specifically address the special needs of refugees. However, if they are mentioned in the source literature, they are included in the report.

The literature review also does not include discussions on information that might be provided to members of the host community to assist their knowledge and understanding of migrants. This is an area for future research, since the consensus in New Zealand is that host environments are an important part of ensuring successful outcomes for migrants (Ho et al 2000; Department of Labour 2007a; IMSED Research 2009).

The focus of the literature search was on the period since 2000 with the inclusion of much-cited and highly influential material before this time.

The fields of information behaviour and of information behaviour of migrants are both relatively new fields of investigation, as publication dates in the reference list indicate. They are also growing rapidly fields as international migration

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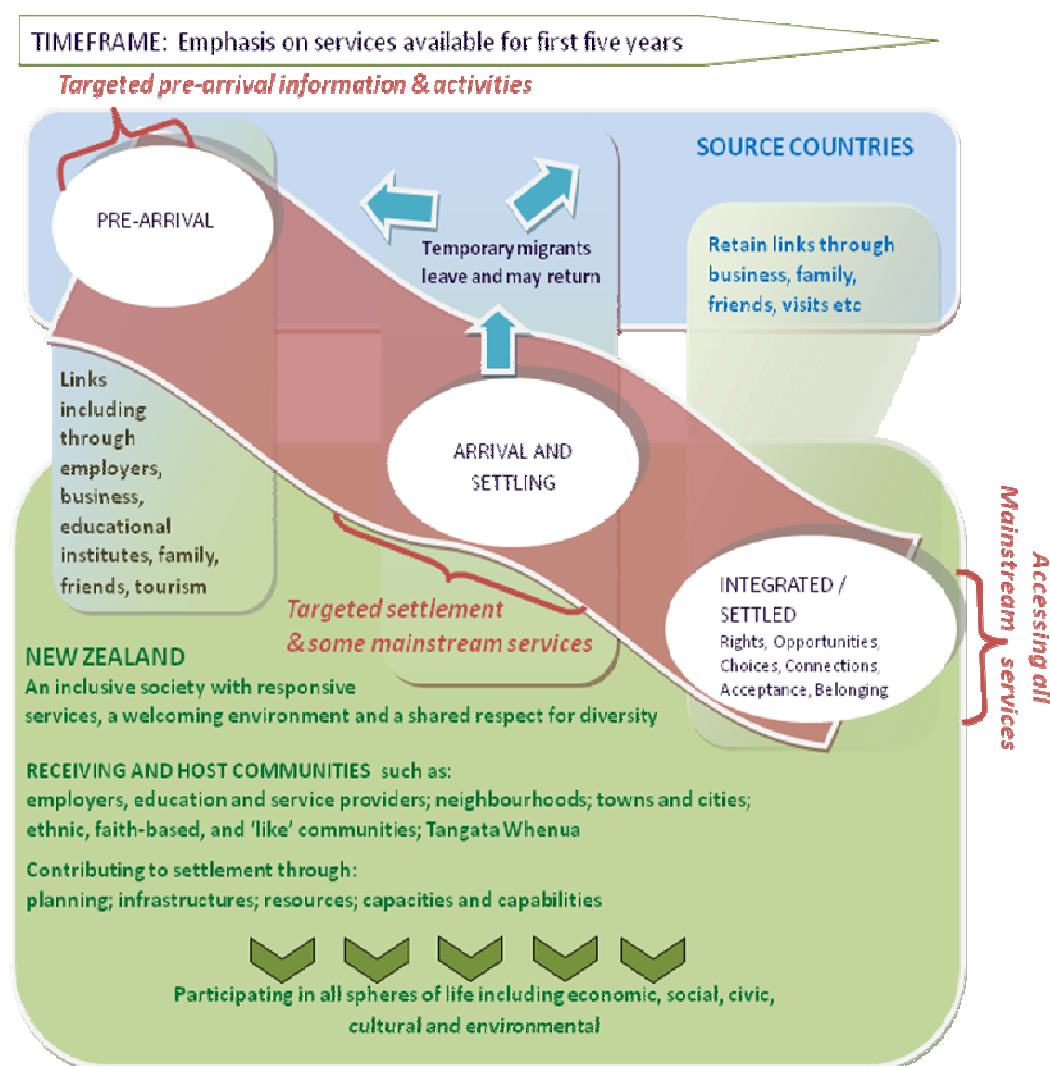
<sup>3</sup> Relevant New Zealand studies are footnoted, although they do not have published or peer-reviewed status.

increases. The researchers were emailed new articles throughout the research process. In addition, since the field of information behaviour does not have a conceptual home (Wilson 1999), research reports are found in journals that focus on disciplines from policy analysis to social policy, ICT, and libraries. Although every effort has been made to locate relevant research, the current dynamic nature of the field makes it possible that some relevant material may not have been included.

## Settlement process

The Newcomer Settlement Continuum is the New Zealand model for the settlement process that is used throughout this literature review to describe the time and events between when migrants leave their country of origin until they feel welcomed and well settled (Department of Labour 2007a, p 7). This model illustrates how settlement is not a single event, but rather a process that takes place over time, as Figure 1.1 shows.

**Figure 1.1:** Newcomer Settlement Continuum



Source: IMSED Research (2009).

### ***Pre-arrival***

Pre-arrival is the time when people make a decision to migrate. Expectations are developed and the context is set for the settlement process (Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003; IMSED Research 2009).

### ***Arrival and early settling***

When migrants first arrive, settlement needs focus on 'survival needs' (Caidi and Allard nd) such as food, clothing, and shelter, although orientation, translating, and language needs are also seen as important (Mwarigha 2002; IMSED Research 2008). Most countries, including New Zealand, provide targeted services to newcomers during this period (IMSED Research 2009).

As migrants move along the settlement pathway, they need to learn about and access systems and institutions in their new country to develop or upgrade skills and bridge cultural and lifestyle differences (Mwarigha 2002, p 9; IMSED Research 2008).

### ***Integrated/settled***

In the last stage of settlement, the integrated/settled stage, migrants become full participants in the economic, cultural, social, and political life of their new country (Mwarigha 2002, p 9; IMSED Research 2008). Mainstream services, rather than targeted services, provide assistance for migrants (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2007b; IMSED Research 2009).

### ***Moving along the continuum***

The settlement process is highly variable with individuals and groups moving through each stage at their own pace (Department of Labour 2005a; Department of Labour and Wellington Mayoral Forum 2008).

More recent interest in New Zealand and elsewhere shifts the focus of settlement from adaptation by the individual or group of migrants to an interactive process, with both migrants and the host community being seen as responsible for achieving successful outcomes (Ho et al 2000; International Organization for Migrants 2000; Department of Labour 2005b; IMSED Research 2009).

The next section overviews the role of information in settlement in selected other jurisdictions.

## **Role of information in settlement – Australia, Canada, and the United States**

Access to information and support are recognised as a vital part of the settlement process in the international literature (Ho et al 2000; Caidi 2008).<sup>4</sup> Caidi argues that understanding immigrants' information practices – their needs, the barriers they face, and the ways in which they access and absorb information – is crucial to our capacity to successfully provide settlement-related services (Caidi 2009).

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<sup>4</sup> New Zealand work on this also exists, see Ho et al (2000).

The different national strategies, policies, and plans to assist migrant settlement generally include specific references and provision for information services. This section outlines how Australian, Canadian, and Irish settlement plans address the information needs of migrants to those countries. It also briefly describes the 2-1-1 service in the United States. Although 2-1-1 services are aimed at the population at large rather than on the migrant subset, they are an information service and there is currently a significant amount of both federal funding and research in this area.

### ***Australia***

Following a review of migrant services in 2003 (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2003), Australia developed the National Framework for Settlement Planning (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2006a). Recommendations from the review included recommendations for needs based planning, outcomes-focused priorities, and the assessment of client needs on a geographic and demographic basis (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2006a, p 4).

The national framework positioned settlement services as playing a short-term role in building self-reliance in migrants, so they can use mainstream services early in settlement (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2006a, p 2).

Migrant services are funded through the Settlement Grants Programme, established in 2005. The aim of the Settlement Grants Programme is to fund services that help clients to become self-reliant and to participate equitably in Australian society as soon as possible after arrival (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2007b). There are three categories of funding.

- Orientation to Australia: programmes intended to equip clients with the skills and information they need to operate independently and access mainstream services. Projects may include information sessions, referral to appropriate agencies, and casework with individuals and families.
- Developing communities: initiatives that aim to help newly arrived refugee communities to identify common goals and interests and develop a sense of identity and belonging. Community development projects may focus on developing potential leaders, harnessing the skills of the client group, and assisting community leaders to promote their community positively to Australian society.
- Integration – inclusion and participation: programmes to promote participation in mainstream society by encouraging new arrivals to interact with the broader community and encouraging the broader community to be receptive and responsive. Potential projects may include initiatives around sport, schools, developing commercial enterprises, volunteering, and driver education.

Services are delivered by:

- not-for-profit, incorporated community organisations
- local government organisations

- organisations funded to deliver services under the Adult Migrant English Programme
- in rural and regional areas, a government service delivery organisation (Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2007b).

Outcomes are determined by individual Settlement Grants Programme contracts.

### **Canada**

Citizenship and Immigration Canada has the successful integration of newcomers into society and promotion of Canadian citizenship as its third strategic outcome (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2009).

Citizenship and Immigration Canada funds programmes through the Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program, which aims to support newcomers by providing:

- the information they need to better understand life in Canada and make informed decisions about their settlement experience;
- language training so they have the language skills to function in Canada;
- the required assistance to find employment that corresponds with their skills and education; and
- help to establish networks and contacts so they are engaged and feel welcomed in their communities. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2009)

The Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program was evaluated in 2005. The evaluation found:

Local community-based service providers are reported to bring many strengths to the delivery of settlement services and are considered the most cost-efficient and effective means of direct service delivery. Therefore, the current model of settlement service delivery is considered to be the most appropriate. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2005)

Over 2008–2009, Citizenship and Immigration Canada introduced what it calls a 'modernized approach' to settlement programming (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2009). In this approach, funding for settlement programmes is targeted through six streams to achieve specified outcomes.

#### *Funding streams*

Providers can apply for the funding stream that best meets the needs of their clients. In practice, Citizenship and Immigration Canada notes that most services use the Needs Assessment and Referral and Support Services streams in addition to the other services provided. The six streams are:

- Information and Awareness Services, which provide pre- and post-arrival information, including information on housing, employment, language training, education, and skills development

- Language Learning and Skills Development Programmes, which provide language and skills development training, including language, literacy and numeracy instruction, language learning circles, and life-skills training
- Employment-Related Services, which provide newcomers with assistance in searching for, gaining, and retaining employment, including CV preparation clinics, work placements, and job search workshops
- Community Connections, which provide help in establishing a social and professional network through initiatives, including youth leadership projects, conversation circles, and mentoring
- Needs Assessment and Referrals
- Support Services.

### *Outcomes*

Services that are funded must contribute to one or more of the following five results.

- **Orientation** — Newcomers make informed decisions about their settlement and understand life in Canada.
- **Language/Skills** — Newcomers have language/skills needed to function in Canada.
- **Labour Market Access** — Newcomers obtain the required assistance to find employment commensurate with their skills and education.
- **Welcoming Communities** — Newcomers receive help to establish social and professional networks so they are engaged and feel welcomed in their communities.
- **Policy and Programme Development** — To ensure effective delivery and achieve comparable settlement outcomes across Canada. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2007)

Canada is also entering into immigration agreements at a state level to help support the successful settlement of migrants in different regions (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2007).

### ***United States – 2-1-1 service***

Across the United States, the three-digit telephone number 2-1-1 is used to provide information and referral services to over 78 percent of the total population in 47 states (2-1-1.US nd). The service is spearheaded by United Ways (a nationwide charitable organisation) and information and referral agencies in states and local communities.

2-1-1 services have received considerable attention since the September 11 attack on the Twin Towers (2001) and Hurricane Katrina (2005). In both cases, the service played an important role in the delivery and co-ordination of services. As a result, both federal and state funding to the agencies has increased significantly (Saxton et al 2007). Of interest in this context is the ensuing debate on how the effectiveness of the service can be evaluated. Models

of evaluation used in assessing 2-1-1 are discussed in the last part of this literature review (Lepler 2006; Saxton et al 2007).

### ***United States and Canada – professional associations***

The United States and Canada have professional bodies for providers of information and referral services. The Alliance of Information and Referral Services in the United States and CanadaInform (an affiliate of the American body) both operate an accreditation programme. The programmes measure an organisation's ability to meet the standards set by the organisation. They also run a certification programme that evaluates the competence of practitioners (AIRS 2009a; Inform Canada 2007). The standards are discussed in section 4.

Both associations are also a resource for members and lobby for local and national support.

### ***Common themes***

There is a clear sense that in Australia and Canada migration is seen both as essential for economic growth and as providing major challenges for governments and local populations in integration. Initiatives appear to be encompassing a range of settlement programmes, with the provision of information services just one of the many factors that will achieve the goal of successful settlement.

In all three jurisdictions, the funding and provision of services appear to be driven at a national level, but are delivered in local communities, based on local needs.

### ***Information and migrants in New Zealand***

As the cliché has it, New Zealand is a nation of migrants. The statement that nearly 20 percent of New Zealand citizens and residents were born elsewhere is widely quoted (Department of Labour 2005b; Mason and Lamain 2007; Department of Labour 2007a).

However, researchers have argued that New Zealand will benefit from migration only if New Zealand deals effectively and quickly with settlement (Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003; IMSED Research 2009). Research suggests there is a strong link between the content and accuracy of information newcomers receive, information behaviour, and the development of a sense of community, support, and belonging (Macgibbon 2004; Mason and Lamain 2007).

This view is also held by Immigration New Zealand, which has noted that knowing how to access information and services plays a key role in the settlement process (Department of Labour 2005b).

There is evidence that migrants have not always accessed the information they need for successful settlement in New Zealand. One study found that 69 percent of migrants surveyed six months after arrival said they had needed some help, advice, or information with various aspects of New Zealand life. After 18 months, the percentage needing help was still 60 percent (Department of Labour 2007a).

IMSED Research reported that:

Consultations with migrants consistently highlight the difficulties they have in accessing the right information at the right time to support their settlement (IMSED Research 2009, p 26).

The Government recognises that there is a need to assist migrants through the settlement process if they are to become settled in New Zealand and that migrants have faced barriers to accessing needed information (Department of Labour and Auckland Sustainable Cities Programme 2006b; Department of Labour 2007a; Department of Labour and Wellington Mayoral Forum 2008; IMSED Research 2009).

The importance of information in successful settlement is reflected in the high-level goal of the New Zealand Settlement Strategy:

Migrants, refugees and their families access information that is available to the wider community. (Department of Labour 2007b, p 11)

IMSED Research's Settlement Knowledge Base contains information on the programmes and services that have been implemented, along with indicators assessing progress towards achieving this goal (IMSED Research 2009).

Settlement strategies that recognise the role of information in settlement have also been developed for Auckland and Wellington. These strategies recognise the role of information in settlement.

The Auckland Region Settlement Strategy places improved access to settlement-related information and advice at the top of its 10 goals. (Department of Labour and Auckland Sustainable Cities Programme 2006b)

The Auckland Region Settlement Strategy goes on to detail how improved access to information will be achieved:

Migrants ... are able to access appropriate information and advice to help them to use services available to the wider community ... by:

- improving the accessibility of information and advice services for the wide range of migrant and refugee communities;
- strengthening relationships between providers of information and advice services and mainstream agencies ... (Department of Labour and Auckland Sustainable Cities Programme 2006b, p 23).

In Wellington, the fifth Regional Settlement Goal is that:

Newcomers to our region know where they can get up-to-date relevant and appropriate information to help them settle well and understand our laws. (Department of Labour and Wellington Mayoral Forum 2008, p 6)

Section 3 looks in detail at the information needed at each stage of the settlement process.

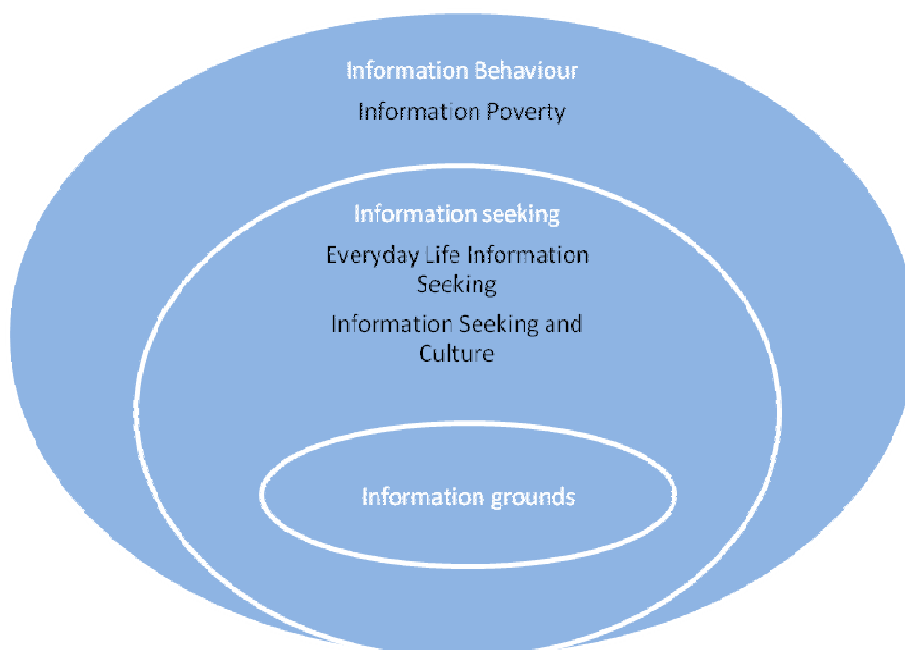
## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR AND OTHER BASIC CONCEPTS

The focus of this literature review is the relationship of migrants with information. This focus falls within the wider picture of how people in general interact with information.

The study and research of human information behaviour is fairly recent. Until the 1980s, studies in information behaviour tended to focus on technical and business users and how they interacted with computer systems (Wilson 2000; Pettigrew et al 2001). Interest now centres on the interface between information, individuals and their experiences, and the context in which individuals operate. Research in this field has grown significantly over the past 10 years with not only a significant increase in theoretical studies, but also a rapid growth in the number of international conferences (Pettigrew et al 2001).

As the information behaviour field has developed, researchers have turned their attention to other concepts that are relevant to this discussion. The concepts of everyday-life information seeking, information grounds, and information poverty recur throughout the recent literature on providing information for migrants (Caidi 2009). There is also relevant research in the cross-cultural communication literature. Figure 2.1 illustrates the nested relationship of these theories.

**Figure 2.1:** Information theory



Source: Modified from Wilson (1999).

## **Information behaviour**

### ***Definitions of information behaviour***

The study of how people interact with information is a relatively new science (Wilson 2000; Pettigrew et al 2001). There is ongoing debate over exact terminology and definitions, but writers note that the term 'information behaviour' seems to have general acceptance and is found throughout the literature (Pettigrew et al 2001).

Information behaviour is defined as:

the study of how people need, seek, give and use information in different contexts, including the workplace and everyday living. (Pettigrew et al 2001)

Wilson's (2000, p 49) definition includes other more passive information-gathering behaviours such as reading or watching television as well as activities that involve interacting with other people:

Information behavior is the totality of human behaviour in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information seeking and information use. (Wilson 2000, p 49).

There is some discussion about the discipline in which the theories of information behaviour belong, as reflected in the diverse range of journals publishing related research (eg, *Library Science*, *Communication*, *Information Science*, and *Organisational Behaviour*).

### ***Theories of information behaviour***

Pettigrew and colleagues identified three approaches to research in information behaviour studies (Pettigrew et al 2001). The approaches are:

- cognitive approaches, which examine the individual as the force behind information behaviour
- social approaches, which examine frameworks that focus on the social context of the behaviour
- multifaceted approaches, which deal with developments that consider multiple types of cognitive, social, and organisational contexts.

### ***Cognitive approaches***

Cognitive approaches to understanding information behaviour focus on the attributes of the individual and look at cognitive and emotional aspects that occur regardless of context. The research investigates how individuals apply their view of the world to needing, seeking, giving, and using information (Pettigrew et al 2001).

Research has led to models of information seeking, including those of Kuhlthau and Wilson (Kuhlthau 1999; Wilson 2000). Both models are described below.

### ***Social approaches***

Pettigrew and colleagues found that social approaches to information behaviour are becomingly more prominent, with a focus on social, socio-cultural, and sociolinguistic frameworks (Pettigrew et al 2001).

Chatman has pioneered research in social approaches with her work in contexts as varied as women's prisons and retirement communities. She has developed theories of relevance, including that of life in the round (Chatman 1996; Chatman 1999). The theory describes:

a dynamic world based largely on approximation where 'members move in and out of the round, depending on their need for more systematic, precise and defined information. (Chapman personal communication, 2000 in Pettigrew et al 2001, p 55)

Chatman argues that people will not search for information if they do not see a need to do so and people will ignore information if they believe their world is functioning adequately without it (Chatman 1999).

Also important is Chatman's research on normative behaviour, which suggests:

If a situation requires information behaviour that is inconsistent with the established world view, the individual is likely to avoid or disengage in information seeking or move to another social world where he or she can engage in the behaviour more freely" (Pettigrew et al 2001, p 57).

The work of other social theorists in information behaviour also includes research into information grounds and everyday-life information seeking, discussed below.

### ***Multifaceted approaches***

As the field of information behaviour research has developed, so has the recognition that cognitive and social viewpoints alone may not be adequate to describe information behaviour.

Several integrated models have been described that incorporate variables such as:

- context, with several studies focusing on workplace and organisations (Rosenbaum 1993; Johnson, Donohue et al 1995; Pettigrew et al 2001)
- the task for which information is needed (Bystrom and Jarvelin 1995)
- types of information (Bystrom and Jarvelin 1995).

Other theorists developing multifaceted approaches in the field of information behaviour are Savolainen and Dervin (Savolainen 1995. Dervin 1999). Dervin developed the sense-making approach to describing information behaviour and other theory influential in the information-seeking context (Dervin 1999).

### ***Impact of research on practice***

Although a great deal of research is in progress, this work has concentrated on developing a theoretical framework for understanding how people interact and search for information. Most of the models of information behaviour proposed do

not include specific recommendations for practice, so are reported as having had little practical impact outside information science (Pettigrew et al 2001).

However, three research concepts have been applied to investigations involving migrants: information poverty, information seeking (including everyday-life information seeking and the impact of culture on information seeking), and information grounds.

### **Information poverty**

The concept of information poverty is seen as key in much of the literature discussing migrants and their information behaviour. The concept arose out of the work of Chatman in American prisons (Chatman 1996). Chatman defined information poverty as:

lacking necessary resources such as adequate social networks, social capital and information finding skills that enable everyday life information seeking. (Chatman 1996)

Migrants are generally perceived to be information poor because of the challenges they face in finding and using the information they need every day (Fisher et al 2004; Silvio 2006).

Various researchers have applied the concept of information poverty to migrant groups in locations from Canada to the Pacific northwest of the United States (Fisher et al 2004; Silvio 2006).

### **Information seeking**

As the discussion on information behaviour above has shown, the focus of research and current practice is on the user, the person who is looking for information.

A significant body of work on information seeking investigates how individuals look for and find the information they need. Information-seeking behaviour is defined as:

the purposive-seeking for information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goal. (Wilson 2000, p 49)

As Wilson points out, an 'abundance' of models of information-seeking behaviour existed by 1996 (Wilson 1999, p 265). The work of three researchers in this field has been highly influential and is widely cited. Dervin's theory of sense-making has underpinned much work in information seeking as well as in other fields of communication (Dervin 1999). The findings of Ellis and colleagues and Kuhlthau are grounded in empirical research (Ellis et al 1993; Kuhlthau 1991) and have been tested in several studies (Wilson 1999).

### ***Sense-making***

Dervin developed the sense-making approach to inform and guide methods of studying information seeking (Dervin 1999). Dervin defines sense-making as:

A set of assumptions, a theoretic perspective, a methodological approach, as a set of research methods and a practice. (Dervin cited in Wilson 2000, p 49)

Information seeking is conceptualised as a metaphor of a person moving through time and space, identifying and bridging gaps, and moving on. The four components of information seeking are:

- a situation in time and space where an information problem arises
- a gap that describes the difference between the context and a desired situation
- the outcome, which is the consequence of the sense-making process
- a bridge that closes the gap between the current and desired state (Dervin 1999; Wilson 2000; Pettigrew et al 2001).

In sense-making theory, the concept of information is not static, and information creating, seeking, and use are not confined to the cognitive realm because feelings, wishes, and dreams come into play during the process. Kuhlthau develops this perspective (Kuhlthau 1999).

Dervin notes also that there tends to be an assumption in much of the literature that:

information seeking is always good because it allows the user access to established experts. (Dervin 1999, p 739)

Dervin challenges this position, pointing out that while finding information may be helpful in making sense of the world, there may be 'hurtful and non-useful outcomes' (Dervin 1999). An example in this context could be a migrant who is successful in finding out the rules on sponsorship of elderly parents but also discovers in the searching process that her parents are ineligible.

### ***Characteristics of the search for information***

Like Dervin (1999), Ellis and colleagues do not present a model, but rather describe the information-seeking process they saw originally as having eight defining characteristics (Ellis et al 1993). The first six defining characteristics are:

- starting – undertaking activities that are characteristic of the initial search, such as asking a question
- chaining – following connections from one source to another
- browsing – searching in a semi-directed manner across a variety of potential sources
- differentiating – selecting information based on their content and/or the intended audience
- monitoring – maintaining awareness of the area of interest or keeping up to date
- extracting – going through the material which has been selected to identify relevant material.

In later research, Ellis and colleagues added the further two activities of:

- verifying – undertaking activities to check the accuracy of the information
- ending – undertaking activities characteristic of concluding a search or ‘tying up loose ends’ (Ellis et al, 1993; Wilson 1999; Wilson 2000; Pettigrew et al 2001).

Ellis and colleagues do not specify that these activities must be carried out in a specific order and do not explain the interaction between activities; rather they argue that interaction between each of the characteristics and the sequence followed depends on the unique attributes of the person seeking information at any given time (Ellis et al 1993).

The strength of this approach in the current context is the description of the various activities a migrant seeking information might undertake. The kind of assistance that might be needed to start answering a question might be very different from the help needed to differentiate between different sources or to extract the answer needed from the information accessed. Kuhlthau develops this implication further into her theory of the zone of intervention (Kuhlthau 1999).

### ***Search process***

Kuhlthau takes the idea of information seeking being several discrete activities and incorporates the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the information-seeker that Dervin suggested to describe a structured process of looking for information (Kuhlthau 1991, 1999).

Kuhlthau’s model has six stages (Kuhlthau 1991; Kuhlthau 1999; Kuhlthau nd).

- Initiation – the individual becomes aware of a gap in understanding or knowledge and may report feelings of uncertainty and apprehension. The task at this stage is for individuals to recognise their need for information and may involve them discussing how they will meet the need.
- Selection – the task is to identify and select a general area to investigate. Uncertainty may be replaced by optimism and an eagerness to start searching. Typical actions include discussions with others and making a preliminary search. However, if these tasks are not successful, feelings of anxiety are likely to emerge.
- Exploration – the task is to investigate the topic further, and the search is characterised by confusion, anxiety, and doubt. Kuhlthau notes that an inability to express exactly what is needed can make communication in this stage between the searcher and those assisting them difficult. It is also the stage where people are most likely to give up (Kuhlthau nd).
- Formulation – the task is to form a focus for the information that has been found. Kuhlthau sees this as the ‘turning point’ (Kuhlthau 1991, p 267) of the search process. The searcher becomes more confident and starts to form their own ideas on the topic.
- Collection – there is a focus to the search, so the task is to gather information on that topic, centring and defining information that is relevant and useful. It is here, Kuhlthau notes that the interaction between searchers and the systems they are accessing function most effectively and efficiently. Individuals know what they want and can get the help they need.

- Presentation – the final task is simply to finish the search and use the findings.

Figure 2.2 summarises the interaction of feelings, thoughts, and actions with each stage of the search process.

**Figure 2.2:** Kuhlthau's model of the search process

	<b>Initiation</b>	<b>Selection</b>	<b>Exploration</b>	<b>Formulation</b>	<b>Collection</b>	<b>Presentation</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Feeling (affective)	Uncertainty	Optimism	Confusion Frustration Doubt	Clarity	Sense of direction/ confidence	Satisfaction or disappointment	Sense of accomplishment
Thoughts (cognitive)	Vague	Focused			Increased interest		Increased self- awareness
Actions (physical)	Seeking	Relevant exploring	Information seeking		Pertinent documenting	Information	

Source: Kuhlthau (1999).

## **Implications for this project**

Theories on information seeking have two significant implications for thinking through the development of information services:

First, an understanding of information seeking as a process may help those working in the field to better understand the behaviour of the clients with whom they are working. It may also assist in the design of systems and processes that support more successful information searches.

Secondly, Kuhlthau suggests that within an individual's search process, there is a zone of intervention that provides the optimal time and place to offer support and advice to the searcher (Kuhlthau nd, p 14). Intervention within the zone enables searchers to finish a task that they might not otherwise be able to complete. Intervention outside this zone is inefficient and can be seen by the searcher as intrusive or overwhelming.

Kuhlthau notes that the zone varies from person to person and from time to time, but that understanding searching as a process will enable those providing information to better identify the help a user needs (Kuhlthau 1991; Kuhlthau 1999; Kuhlthau nd).

## **Information seeking and culture**

The literature review did not explore the field of cross-cultural communication in depth. However, the search did elicit some research on the effect of culture on information seeking and findings are included here to provide further context for the discussion in the next part of the literature review.

Although researchers note that, as in the wider field of information behaviour, study on the impact of culture on information seeking is limited (Baldwin and Hunt 2002; Komlodi and Carlin 2004), research in this field is also expanding rapidly. Baldwin and Hunt comment that there is an 'ocean tide' of research into intercultural communication and find that models of intercultural communication, 'clearly reflect the deep current of information seeking' (Baldwin and Hunt 2002, p 272).

Baldwin and Hunt stress that meaning changes across cultures, citing research that finds that when people communicate with people of a different culture, meaning is attributed from the perspective of the inquirer (Casmir and Asuncion-Lande 1990; Baldwin and Hunt 2002). For example, a migrant from Ethiopia, receiving information on the rights of women in a relationship will interpret that information within the framework of his or her own cultural beliefs. However, other research indicates that when people from two cultures communicate, a third culture of shared communication can be created (Gudykunst and Kim 1997; Baldwin and Hunt 2002).

Much of the current research on the effects of culture on the meaning of information appears to be focused on the World Wide Web, with the intention of making websites more accessible across nationalities and cultures. Some work centres on the difference culture makes to information-seeking behaviour in

libraries (for example, Metoyer-Duran 1993), including a study comparing how Māori and non-Māori find information in libraries (Duncker 2002).

Findings from the limited amount of research on the relationship between culture and information behaviour located during this literature review do indicate that significant cultural differences in information-seeking behaviour are relevant to the current study.

Milewski and O'Sullivan found that engineers from 'collectivist' cultures and those from more 'individualist' cultures had different preferences in seeking different types of information. The engineers in the study rated non-social and social sources of information differently, depending on their culture and the purpose for information seeking (Milewski and O'Sullivan 2007).

Komlodi and Carlin integrated models of cultural dimensions and information seeking in electronic environments to compare differences in information searching between Finnish and American students (Komlodi and Carlin 2004).

Komlodi and Carlin made four key findings (Komlodi and Carlin 2004).

- The amount and speed at which information is presented varies between cultures. Culture impacts on the individual's ability to process information.
- The amount of information conveyed simply by the circumstance of the information seeking, has a strong impact on information-seeking behaviour.
- Cultural perceptions of use of time vary greatly and individuals from cultures with a more linear view of time are more likely to focus on one searching activity at a time than to multi-task.
- Power and status have an impact on information-seeking behaviours; people from more hierarchical cultures are more likely to seek information from people perceived to be of higher status.

These results from the work on the effect of culture on information-seeking behaviour signal important implications for practice in the provision of information services to migrants in New Zealand as elsewhere (Ho et al 2000; Allen et al 2004; Caidi 2008). It seems likely more research will emerge in this context as the field develops.

## **Everyday life information seeking**

The literature review now focuses on the relevance of theories on everyday-life information seeking. Researchers in everyday-life information seeking focus on how individuals seek, use, and share information in their everyday life, both at work and in their social environment.

Savolainen, the seminal researcher in the field, asserted that information seeking is an intrinsic component of people's everyday life and defined the concept of everyday-life information seeking as:

the acquisition of various informational (both cognitive and expressive) elements which people employ to orient themselves in daily life or to solve problems not directly connected with the performance of occupational tasks. (Savolainen 1995, p 267)

Savolainen adds:

Such problems may be associated with various areas of everyday life, for example, consumption and health care. (Savolainen 1995, p 267)

Savolainen argues that how individuals seek information is determined by the attitudes, values, and interests that characterise their individual ways of life. He links these in a theory of the 'mastery of life' (Savolainen 1995, p 259). This theory describes the ways in which people manage their lives and how this impacts on information seeking.

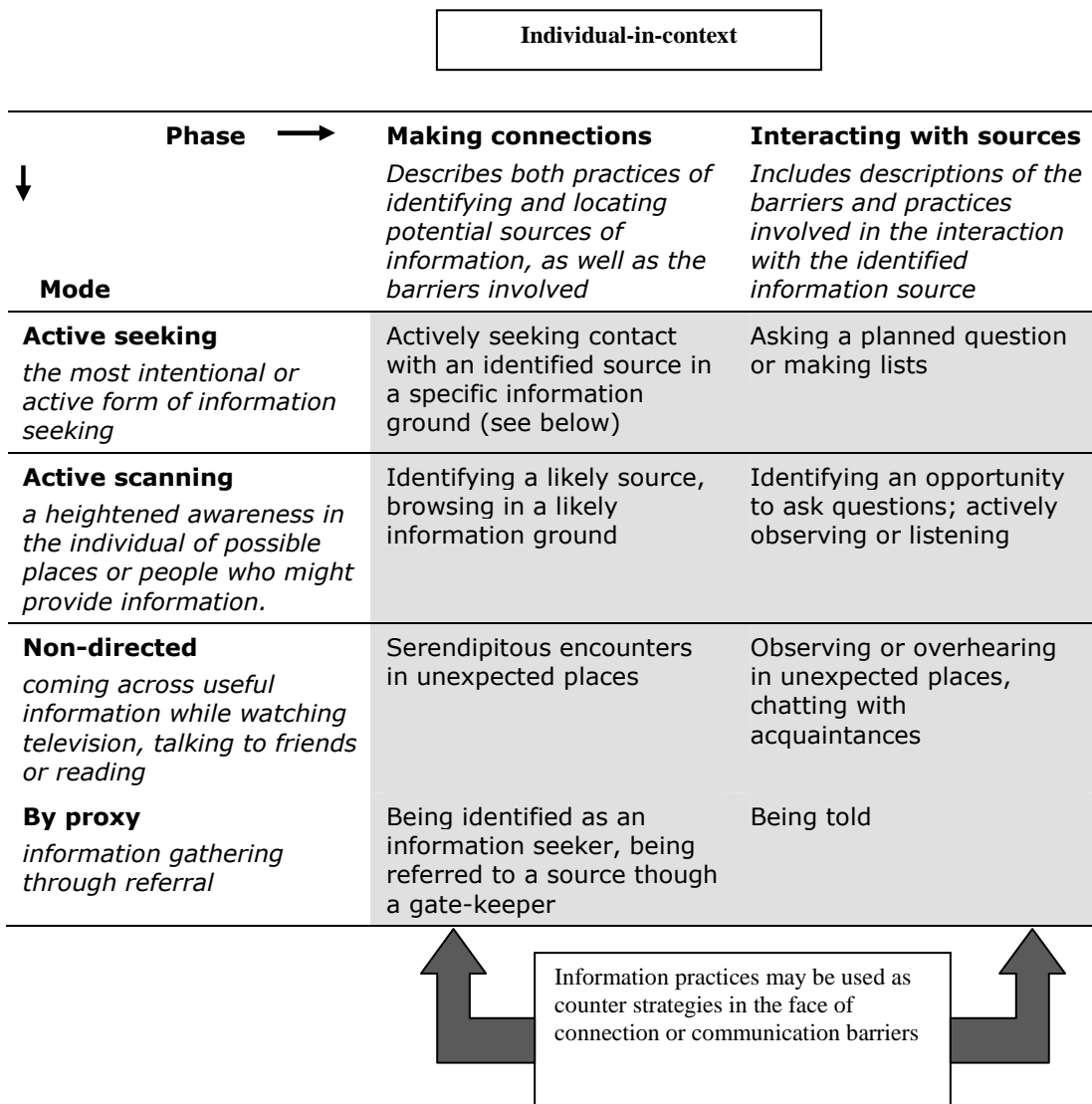
Other research has expanded the concept of everyday-life information seeking to include accidental or incidental discovery of information in everyday life, that is, the things an individual may happen upon serendipitously while engaged in ostensibly unrelated activities such as watching television or talking to a friend (Wilson 1999; McKenzie 2003).

McKenzie argues that models of information seeking such as those of Ellis and colleagues and Kuhlthau do not reflect the complexities of what happens in real life because they tend to ignore 'less-directed practices' (McKenzie 2003, p 19). She has developed a model of information practices based on her research in Canada that she calls a 'continuum of information practice' (McKenzie 2003, p 25). The continuum combines four modes of acquiring information through a two-stage process, as Figure 2.3 illustrates.

As with other models of information seeking, McKenzie's work focuses attention on the variety of factors and influences involved in information seeking.

Research has begun to emerge on the differences in everyday-life information seeking within groups of the population such as young urban adults (Silvio 2006) and within different ethnic groups (Agosto and Hughes-Cassell 2005).

**Figure 2.3:** Information seeking



Source: Adapted from McKenzie (2003, p 26).

## Information grounds

Research on information behaviour and information seeking consistently reports that people, faced with a question, problem, or need for information, first turn to another person (Harris and Dewdney 1994, Case 2002, Savolainen 1995; Fisher et al 2004; Agosto and Hughes-Cassell 2005; Fisher et al 2005).

Interest has focused on where information-sharing interactions take place and the concept of information grounds is widely accepted in the literature. As in the research on everyday-life information seeking, research on information grounds investigates how people acquire information from the contexts of daily life.

Information grounds are a combination of people, place, and time, which Pettigrew defines as:

environments temporarily created by the behaviour of people who have come together to perform a given task, but from which emerges a social

atmosphere that fosters the spontaneous and serendipitous sharing of information. (Pettigrew 1999, p 811)

In later research, Fisher (previously Pettigrew) and colleagues described the propositions underpinning the concept of information grounds:

- 1 Information grounds can occur anywhere, in any type of temporal setting and are predicated on the presence of individuals.
- 2 People gather at information grounds for a primary, instrumental purpose other than information sharing.
- 3 Information grounds are attended by different social types, most if not all of whom play expected and important, albeit different roles in information flow.
- 4 Social interaction is a primary activity at information grounds such that information flow is a by-product.
- 5 People engage in formal and informal information sharing, and information flow occurs in many directions.
- 6 People use information obtained at information grounds in alternative ways, and benefit along physical, social, affective, and cognitive dimensions.
- 7 Many subcontexts exist within an information ground and are based on people's perspectives and physical factors; together these subcontexts form a grand context. (Fisher et al 2004, p 756)

Information grounds are operative in information gathering on topics as diverse as simple learning about local events to complex tasks like help with English competence, employment and parenting (Fisher et al 2004).

### ***Implications for information provision in New Zealand***

There is ongoing discussion about where and how information can best be provided to migrants, and much discussion focuses on 'one-stop shops' where information and a range of services are provided. But well-established information centres, such as those operated by the New Zealand Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (NZACAB) are also part of service provision in the New Zealand context. However, this review of international research suggests there is also a need to explore ways to nurture and support information sharing in places where migrants meet for purposes of everyday life such as in ethnic social groups and religious settings.

Interestingly, no research was found that specifically investigated the workplace as an information ground. However a primary goal of settlement is for people to find employment (IMSED Research 2009), so it could be hypothesised that migrants in paid work access information through their colleagues and workmates in lunchrooms or during the course of their work. This remains an area for further investigation.

Fisher and colleagues note that:

the better we understand information grounds, the better we can develop ways of facilitating information flows in them. (Fisher et al 2004, p 756)

Researchers have also pointed out that the theory suggests how information can be more effectively delivered, especially by using people of influence in specific communities such as gate-keepers and opinion leaders (Fisher et al 2005). This has implications for providing information for migrants, as the discussion on meeting information needs in the next section shows.

### **3. MIGRANTS AND INFORMATION**

There is widespread agreement that migrants need information and that satisfying this need is vital to successful settlement (NZACAB 2003; Department of Labour 2005b; IMSED Research 2008; Shoham and Strauss 2008; Caidi 2009; Demiralp 2009; IMSED Research 2009). However, there is little applied research on information behaviour of migrants to inform practice (Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003; Fisher et al 2004; Macgibbon 2004; Nash and Trlin 2006; Mason and Lamain 2007; Caidi 2008). The deficit has been noted in the New Zealand context (Macgibbon 2004; Mason and Lamain 2007).

The lack of applied research is partly due to the diverse nature of the term 'migrants'. As Caidi (2009) points out, the term covers a heterogeneous group with members at different stages of the settlement process and from many different countries, with different cultures, experiences, and skills, and in different immigration categories such as permanent migrants, refugees, and workers on temporary permits. There are also differences in age, gender, and ethnicity, as well as in language and understanding and knowledge of the host country. Research also notes that descriptions of 'the international migrant' are changing rapidly (Triandafyllidou 2008), which complicates the problem of defining terms.

There is also the issue that research on any one group in any one of a variety of settings may not be generalisable to other groups of migrants, at different times, or in other places. For example, findings that apply to migrant Hispanic workers in the northwest of America (Fisher et al 2004) or Sudanese youth in London (Silvio 2006), do not necessarily have relevance for Chinese migrants in New Zealand.

However, this part of the report reviews applied research that has been carried out on the information needed by migrants and the sources that migrants use to get information. The review of the literature on migrants and information concludes with a discussion on the barriers migrants face when looking for information.

#### **Information needs**

International research reports at length on the extent of the information needs of migrants, including the need for information, the kind of information needed, and how the information should be categorised to facilitate its delivery and use (Fisher et al 2004; Macgibbon 2004; Mason and Lamain 2007; Shoham and Strauss 2008; Caidi, Allard et al 2010). The need for better targeting is increasingly accepted (Caidi 2009), and literature using this approach is emerging.

In a widely cited example, Allen and her colleagues worked with a specific ethnic group (the Hmong people) in the United States to improve health and access to health care (Allen et al 2004). They divided information related to the health needs of the migrant group in the study into four categories.

- Information that addresses language and literacy problems. The researchers note translation and interpretation can be challenges especially when

multiple dialects are spoken that often lack medical terminology. The researchers found that some groups may prefer individualised face-to-face information rather than translated documents, particularly when people may not have high literacy skills.

- Information on health beliefs and health literacy. The researchers comment that immigrants come from places with differing health beliefs and health care systems. In response to this need, the researchers report that the United States has produced a series of picture stories for immigrants on common medical situations (eg, a doctor's appointment and domestic abuse).
- Information about immigrant and refugee health issues, specific disorders and conditions such as severe acute respiratory syndrome.
- Information about unique stressors related to refugee health status such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

Allen and colleagues' research recommendations for practice were:

- national standards for culturally and linguistically appropriate health information services
- a central database of health information in all languages and formats (not just on the web)
- advocacy with public and private organisations funding health information resources (Allen et al 2004, p 308).

## **Information categories**

Researchers have suggested a variety of ways in which information can be categorised to facilitate both development by providers and access by migrants. Examples were found of categorising information by:

- purpose
- topic
- age group
- stage in the settlement process.

### ***Categorising by purpose***

Caidi, who has extensively researched the information needs of migrants in Canada, divides the information needs of migrants into two types (Caidi 2009).

- Orienting information – the information people gather in their everyday lives about the world around them to monitor their world and its events.
- Practical information – information people need to solve problems when they arise.

Australian research by Young and colleagues followed a similar approach, classifying information into:

- practical information on advice for everyday life
- information to help meet immediate settlement needs (Young et al 2003).

### ***Categorising by topic***

Information may also be categorised by subject or topic. Much of the categorising following this approach has simply produced lists of subjects or topics that migrants report they need information on.

These lists are likely to include topics such as:

- banking and finance (International Organization for Migrants 2000; Mason and Lamain 2007; Shoham and Strauss 2008)
- education, including schooling (Forsythe Research 1998; Ho et al 2000; International Organization for Migrants 2000; Fisher et al 2004; Shoham and Strauss 2008)
- housing (Ho et al 2000; International Organization for Migrants 2000; Fisher et al 2004; Mason and Lamain 2007; Shoham and Strauss 2008)
- health (International Organization for Migrants 2000; Allen et al 2004; Fisher et al 2004; Department of Labour 2007a; Shoham and Strauss 2008)
- consumer affairs (Fisher et al 2004)
- employment (International Organization for Migrants 2000; Fisher et al 2004; Silvio 2006; Mason and Lamain 2007; IMSED Research 2009)
- political process (Fisher et al 2004; Silvio 2006).

### ***Categorising by age group***

As with the information needs of the general population, the information needs of migrants needs vary over the lifespan, as Owen points out (Owen 2000).

Silvio's work in London with Sudanese youth provides some insight into how information needs may vary in different age groups and between males and females in a targeted group. Silvio noted that the youths in the study needed information across 'multitudinous areas' and that 'their information needs were as varied as the heterogeneity of the youths' point of departure' (Silvio 2006, p 263).

Unsurprisingly given the group's age (18–25 years), the highest information needs related to education with the young people looking for information on the education system in general, scholarships, and career prospects. Members of the group had been educated in Arabic, so there was a strong emphasis on information needs focusing on adult education, continuing education, ongoing training, and new job opportunities.

Information on racism was a high area of need, with the young people wanting information on how to deal with racism, where to report it, and how to keep themselves safe.

As with adults, the young people wanted information on employment, including information on how to find a job, with specific needs around writing CVs and cover letters as well as about labour practices, employment law, and pay.

The study found a need for health care information with a need to know how to find a family doctor and where to get the best treatment for different ailments.

Young women had particular health information needs related to personal hygiene and pre- and post-natal care.

Finally, the group had political information needs. They expressed a need to know about central and local government and how it affects their lives and about their civic responsibilities.

Special information needs of older migrants have also been identified in Canada, leading to the development of a programme on prevention of elder abuse (Owen 2000).

### ***Categorising by stage in the settlement process***

Several researchers argue that a strong relationship exists between the stages of the settlement process and the information needed at that time (Macgibbon 2004; Caidi 2008; Shoham and Strauss 2008; IMSED Research 2009).

#### *Before settlement*

People considering migration need information long before their actual migration to assist them in their decision making and planning (Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003; Shoham and Strauss 2008). Information needs at this stage have been identified as very general, with people exploring places they might go to and live.

In New Zealand as elsewhere, research has shown that the information available to people before migration plays a key role in setting expectations. Researchers argue that a lack of information or poor quality information at this time can lead to dissatisfaction in new migrants as they find a difference between rhetoric and reality (Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003).

Researchers have found a heavy reliance on the internet for pre-migration information (Macgibbon 2004; Shoham and Strauss 2008).<sup>5</sup>

#### *Arrival*

Caidi reported new migrants as needing:

- language information (including information about training, translation, and interpretation services)
- employment information (including job-searching skills and special services to foreign-trained professionals)
- housing information
- information about making connections in the community (including connections to professional associations, volunteer opportunities, mentoring, and community organisations)
- information about the new culture and orientation to life in the new country (Caidi 2008).

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<sup>5</sup> New Zealand research has considered the issue showing that embassies, consulates, universities, and language schools may also be a source of information (Macgibbon, 2004).

## *Settlement*

Later in the settlement process, Caidi reports migrants need:

- health information
- employment information
- educational information
- political information and current events (especially news about the country of origin)
- language-learning information (including information about ESL programmes and materials)
- information about transportation
- information about identity construction, for example, becoming a New Zealander
- information about cultural or religious events (Caidi 2008).<sup>6</sup>

### ***Implications for information provision in New Zealand***

As this discussion has shown, there is no consensus on an approach to categorising information for migrants that will ensure every migrant will find the information they need when they need it. Rather information services need to work with their users to develop an approach that is appropriate and effective for their particular context and purpose.

There has been some thinking about categorising information for migrants. Macgibbon has suggested that information needs to be refined to meet the needs of people moving to a specific location, so that, for example, there would be general information on housing in New Zealand, followed by more specific information on housing in, for instance, Christchurch city (Macgibbon 2004)

Research has shown age matters. Research with two separate age groups identifies the information needs of teenagers and older migrants (Forsythe Research 1998; Ho et al 2000).

Teenagers were found to need information on education, entertainment, part-time employment, and legal issues.

Older migrants were identified as a group with special information needs. The research determined that this group is likely to need more information on a broad range of issues around daily life as well as about activities and accommodation for older people.

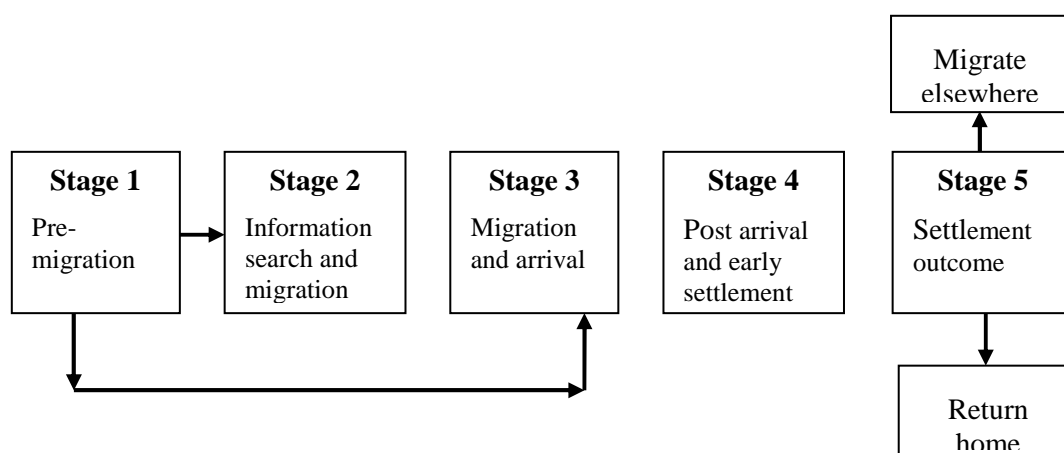
In the New Zealand context, Benson-Rea and Rawlinson have carried out studies investigating the migration experiences of highly skilled and professional migrants to New Zealand (Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003). They propose a five-stage settlement model for the New Zealand context and match this against

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<sup>6</sup> Note that migrants are not necessarily aware of all they need to know (NZACAB 2003), especially in regard to information for apparently minor matters of everyday life. Macgibbon cites the example of newcomers who bought a puppy, not knowing they needed a dog licence (Macgibbon 2004). More research is needed to identify and categorise this information.

a three-level model for analysing information availability and usage at each stage.

**Figure 3.1:** Settlement model



Source: Benson-Rea and Rawlinson (2003, p 66).

### **Levels of information**

Benson-Rea and Rawlinson use the model shown in Figure 3.1 to identify three levels of information migrants require (Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003).

Macro-level information is information on the wider environment, including the legislative environment of policy and law as well as economic settings

Meso-level information is information on companies and specific local conditions. It includes sources such as business organisations, recruitment agents, and trade bodies. These sources were found to be useful only during settlement, possibly, the researchers hypothesise, because this information is lacking in the home country.

Micro-level information is information at the individual level, that is, information gained by the migrant in New Zealand interacting with people and their social networks to locate information. This information is used throughout all stages of the migration and settlement process.

Other research in New Zealand has found different levels of need for information services based on the variables of level of English usage, cultural backgrounds, and the environments refugees and migrants have come from (Department of Labour and Auckland Sustainable Cities Programme 2006b; IMSED Research 2009).

Figure 3.2 matches the level of need against the stages in the settlement process found in this study.

**Figure 3.2:** Settlement Support Continuum

<b>Low/minimum level of need</b>	<b>Intermediate level of need</b>	<b>High/maximum level of need</b>
Information on how to access services	Information and advice on settlement services and support to access them	‘Hands on’ support and advocacy to understand, access and utilise a wide range of settlement services
Similar political, governmental, social infrastructures	Different political, governmental, social infrastructures	Refugees with high and complex needs as a result of their refugee-related and vastly different, pre-migration experiences
<b>Finds own way around systems</b>	<b>Requires support to understand and access support services</b>	<b>Requires intensive support over the long term to settle</b>

Source: Department of Labour and Auckland Sustainable Cities Programme (2006b, p 4).

### **Pathways and information sources used by migrants**

Getting information to the people who need it is a complex process. People need to know what they need to know, know how to find it (Mason and Lamain 2007), and where to find it and the information resources need to be available for people to find.

The sources migrants use for information have received attention from researchers in New Zealand and overseas, although it is noted more research is still needed (Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003; Caidi 2009; IMSED Research 2009).

Research has tended to focus on people and places where migrants in general report seeking information rather than on the sources used by particular groups or subgroups with migrant populations.

As the discussion on information grounds showed, evidence from the literature is overwhelming that for a given question or problem, people’s first preference is to locate a trusted person or use their social networks to find answers or solutions (Fisher et al 2004; Caidi 2008).

In the New Zealand context, this remains as pertinent as in larger and more complex societies. Research into the information needs of refugees and new migrants to Christchurch has shown a ‘ripple’ of information seeking outwards from the individual who uses the known and trusted in the first instance, and if the search is unsuccessful only then searches more broadly and taps into formal sources. This is shown in figure 3.3.

**Figure 3.3:** Social networks and information seeking



Source: Macgibbon (2004), graphic added.

Networks, thus, become significant information sources. Fisher and her colleagues conducted in New York research into why people in a migrant context rely on their networks. Respondents listed reasons such as reliability, ease of use, familiarity, ease of communication, expertise, and neutrality (Fisher et al 2004; Caidi 2009).

The issue of trust appears core to people's reliance on known sources or sources with which the seeker has some connection (Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003) although credibility is also important (Fisher et al 2004).

Researchers have found that the credibility of information received is closely associated with the reputation or status of the person providing the information (Fisher et al 2004; Caidi 2009). It has been suggested that an area for further research on the preference for face-to-face information seeking may be based on credibility rather than on a wish for personal contact (Milewski and O'Sullivan 2007).

In spite of people's reliance on social networks, research has established that people do also recognise the disadvantages of asking someone they know. Such individuals may not be:

- expert on the topic, that is, they may not have accurate and reliable information
- able to communicate face to face or in person.

And they may be:

- unreliable
- difficult to access or contact
- biased
- difficult to communicate with (Fisher et al 2004).

In addition, interpersonal contact does not allow information seekers to be anonymous; this may cause migrants to go outside their ethnic community. Mason and Lamain, for instance, report an example of a group of migrants to New Zealand preferring to get information from outside their own community

(Mason and Lamain 2007). The New Zealand Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux has also reported this (NZACAB 2003).

Other research notes that using personal networks does not guarantee any emotional support that may be needed (Fisher et al 2004). London migrant youth in Silvio's study noted there were times when there were good reasons for not using interpersonal sources (Silvio 2006). Other researchers have noted the potential negatives of relying on personal networks:

When people seek information only from others much like themselves or are sceptical of claims not personally experienced, their world has a limited range of possibilities. (Chatman 1999, p 215).

Finally, as Caidi and Allard point out, many new migrants do not have social networks when they arrive in a new country, so must rely on other sources (Caidi and Allard 2005).

### ***Role of information and communications technology***

There is some research on migrants' use of information and communications technology with researchers reporting that the web is often used as a source of information on the new country. Caidi found that people who have migrated to Canada spend more time online than people born in Canada, and that where the language at home is not English or French (the official languages of Canada), migrants were significantly more likely to use the internet as a source of information (Caidi 2009).

However, Shoham and Strauss report that although the internet was the prime source of information before migration, the preferred source after arrival became person to person (Shoham and Strauss 2008).

Information and communications technology can provide culture- and language-specific news and information to new arrivals (Caidi 2008; Shoham and Strauss 2008) and is often a vital source of information from government departments (Caidi 2009).

Following on from the discussion above, it is reported that the use of information and communications technology can decrease reliance on information from one's own social group (Mason and Lamain 2007). Caidi and Allard also suggest that providing access to computers for migrants may aid community building (Caidi and Allard nd). In New Zealand, one study on Community Technology Centres found that migrants using the computers at a centre established ongoing relationships within their own migrant community and with other local people using the centre (Herrick 2007).

However, technology does not benefit all migrants; migrants have been found to be less likely to be connected digitally, and online interfaces and services have been found to be difficult for new users to navigate (Caidi 2008). As do other users, migrants report getting distracted or lost while on the internet (Fisher et al 2004).

More research is needed on cross-cultural usability (Caidi 2008).

### ***Community groups and organisations***

Non-governmental organisations, including community groups and ethnic organisations, are seen in international and New Zealand literature as important sources of information for migrants (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998; Ho et al 2000; Macgibbon 2004; Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement – Toronto 2005; Nash and Trlin 2006; Mason and Lamain 2007). These groups are reported as most likely to be used for information on everyday life such as questions about where and how to access further education, training, and health care (Forsyte Research 1998).

The Canadian Council of Refugees in its influential Best Practice Guidelines, sees these agencies as key in providing information and other settlement services and lists their strengths as lying in their:

- Settlement workers who are highly experienced, dedicated, knowledgeable and professional.
- Long-term commitment which derives from their mission to make a positive contribution in the lives of the people served and in society.
- Roots in the community, which mean they are trusted and can quickly identify and adapt to changing needs.
- Cost-effectiveness, since they have low overheads and benefit from significant community contributions.
- Accountability, since they are governed by volunteer boards of directors representing the community as a whole.
- Community approach, which results in a welcoming environment, personalized services and broad community participation.
- Holistic approach, through which the range of needs of individuals and of the community as a whole are considered.
- Diversity of approach, resulting in the existence of a range of different organizations from which newcomers can choose the approach that best suits them. (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998, p 15).

Ho and colleagues note that ethnic associations not only provide a source of information but also assist in building social and supportive networks (Ho et al 2000).

### ***Other sources of information***

A theme in the international literature is the increasing involvement of libraries in providing information services to migrants (Allen et al 2004; Fisher et al 2004; Caidi and Allard 2005). The steady development of libraries from repositories of information to proactive providers of information has been recognised by libraries in New Zealand that have become increasingly involved with migrant populations. For example, Waitakere City Library points out that:

Multicultural and migrant services are provided to enable those who are newly arrived in New Zealand, or are non-English speaking members of the community to gain access to the library and to library services and facilities. In addition migrant services exist to provide information, or

access to information to assist new migrants to effectively settle in Waitakere. (Waitakere City Library and Information Services nd)

Other New Zealand research on sources of information found that translation services were one of the main ways for migrants to get information (White et al 2002 in Mason and Lamain 2007).

### ***Role of gatekeepers***

Research is also emerging on the role of gatekeepers in migrant information flows. Gatekeepers are defined as individuals who are considered to be knowledgeable who 'monitor' flows of information and link members of their communities to the resources needed to solve problems (Metoyer-Duran 1993).

Identifying and working with gate-keepers can assist information providers to provide effective services to migrant communities (Metoyer-Duran 1993).

Caidi also notes the importance of the gatekeeper, pointing out that the reputation of the gatekeeper can affect the perceived credibility of the organisation (Caidi 2009). That is, if the gatekeeper does not see the service as a credible source of information, then that community is likely to take a similar view.

### ***Children and information***

The children of migrants are known to be important in information seeking by migrants, particularly where the migrant parents have host-language difficulties. Children attending English-language schools may become fluent in English before their parents and thus become their family's primary information source about the new land (Chu 1999; Fisher et al 2004).

However, children experience difficulties finding information (Mwarigha 2002). Researchers have noted that the interpretation of information given to parents is through the lens of the child, so is not necessarily the interpretation of a parent or adult. Successful reliance on children may inadvertently create longer-term issues for parents who do not learn the language and access information themselves.

### **Barriers to information seeking**

It appears that at least some problems are not in the availability of information, but in the ability of migrants to access it and in the forms in which information is presented. This has been recognised as a practical issue in New Zealand (Macgibbon 2004; Department of Labour and Auckland Sustainable Cities Programme 2006b; Mason and Lamain 2007).

A local library provides an example:

The thing which annoys and irritates me every time I walk into the library is to see a big poster, in English (!), telling people if they are new to New Zealand, there are language classes and people available to help with problems. (Volunteer with local multi-cultural group, personal communication, 2009)

Researchers investigating the information needs of migrants consistently comment on the volume of information available (Macgibbon 2004; Shoham and Strauss 2008). However, one study reported that although immigration, government, and non-governmental agencies are seen to be 'filled with information' (Shoham and Strauss 2008, p 7), every immigrant interviewed still needed information they could not get (Shoham and Strauss 2008)

Mwarigha places the discussion on barriers to finding needed information with the wider framework of migrant settlement issues and identifies barriers to assistance, including:

- suspicion or mistrust of authority (including government and other institutions)
- isolation and the sense of being an outsider
- emotional stress (a factor also discussed by Caidi, 2009)
- social isolation
- not knowing how to ask (Mwarigha 2002).

This is another area where research is lacking. Caidi comments there is:

Little research which examines the extent to which newcomers are able to adequately access and make use of government, settlement, and ethnic-cultural information and services available to them. (Caidi 2008, p 1)

However, some barriers to information searching for migrants have been identified, including:

- access barriers
- language barriers
- structural barriers.

### **Access**

Access in this context has a broad meaning, ranging from knowing where to go to factors such as location and operating hours (Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement – Toronto 2005) and the provision of culturally appropriate services that migrants feel comfortable using. The problem is recognised in New Zealand as elsewhere:

Auckland Citizens Advice Bureaux, who have worked to develop their profile as information providers to migrant communities, report that they have developed new strategies for dealing with Islamic couples where all conversations are held through the male partner. Interviewers must ask questions of the male and respond to the answers they provide, even when it is clear the woman may provide a more pertinent response. (Citizens Advice Bureau manager, personal communication, 2009)

Researchers comment that migrants' lack of knowledge about where to go and who to ask is often the greatest problem in accessing information (Ho et al 2000; Mwarigha 2002; Macgibbon 2004; Silvio 2006; Department of Labour and Auckland Sustainable Cities Programme 2006b; Caidi 2009).

Providing services that are culturally appropriate is a major factor in ensuring access (Ho et al 2000; Allen et al 2004; Caidi and Allard 2005). Culturally appropriate practices span all aspects of operation, including the spaces that are provided (eg, a private room for female clients (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998)) and the need for well-trained and culturally competent staff (Ho et al 2000; Allen et al 2004; Nash and Trlin 2006).

When migrants do know about a service, it may not be open at times that are convenient (Mwarigha 2002), and transport is often a problem (Ho et al 2000; Nash and Trlin 2006).

Allen stresses that access does not simply mean providing access to information on the web or in libraries and that this is especially true for people with minimal exposure to Western culture (Allen et al 2004).

### ***Language***

Barriers associated with language difficulties, including a fear of speaking in English are frequently discussed (Young et al 2003; Macgibbon 2004; Mason and Lamain 2007; Caidi 2008; Shoham and Strauss 2008). Migrants seeking information may also have limited reading skills or have problems receiving information orally (Allen et al 2004). Unsurprisingly, those with an understanding of written and oral English have been found to have significantly fewer difficulties accessing information (Macgibbon 2004).

The need to have information clearly presented and written in appropriate languages is repeatedly stressed (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998; Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003; Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement – Toronto 2005; Caidi 2008). However, problems are associated with providing material in different languages such as the number of resources potentially required. This can be an issue even in relatively small migrant populations. For instance, Macgibbon has identified 160 languages spoken by migrants in Christchurch (Macgibbon 2004).

The use of interpreters may be seen as a strategy to address this issue, but some research has found the costs often outweigh the benefits of seeking information and immigrants either do not ask for help with translation or they just wait until someone helpful comes along (Fisher et al 2004). Allen stresses that interpreters need to have skills to bridge cultural gaps as well as the ability to communicate in other languages (Allen et al 2004).

### ***Structural barriers***

The literature shows structural barriers to accessing information are caused by:

- the lack of co-ordination and collaboration between service providers
- conflicting advice, gaps, and overlaps in service provision.

These issues have been identified in New Zealand, as elsewhere (Mwarigha 2002; Young et al 2003; Macgibbon 2004; Millbank et al 2006).

## **4. GOOD PRACTICE IN PROVIDING INFORMATION TO MIGRANTS**

The literature is unanimous that no 'one size fits all' strategy will meet the information needs of all migrants all the time. This is well accepted in New Zealand (Macgibbon 2004; Department of Labour and Auckland Sustainable Cities Programme 2006b; Caidi 2008). As the previous discussions in this review have made clear, writers stress the diversity of migrant groups in terms of culture, ethnicity, and language and emphasise the need to address the needs of subgroups such as youth and women. They note again that information needs change over the settlement period and that different approaches are needed over time.

Put very simply, the information practice that works well for one group of people at one time and in one place may not be transferable or useful elsewhere. Not only does this mean that no general theoretical frameworks or models for providing information to migrants were located during the literature review, it also means it is very difficult to make generalisations on good practice (Mason and Lamain 2007; Caidi 2009).

### **'Best' and 'good' practice**

There is an increasing reluctance in the literature to use the term 'best' practice. A workshop of international experts on best practices related to migrant workers cautioned against the concept of 'best practice', commenting that they were reluctant to name a particular service as best because:

a service or program or service which works well for one group of immigrants in one context, may not work at all for another group in another context. (Owen 2000)

The group went on to say that:

What are most important to review are the key elements of programs which make them work, rather than the programs themselves. (Owen 2000)

Following this recommendation, the discussion that follows identifies key elements of information services to migrants and describes good practice rather than best practice for each of those elements. However, where the term 'best' is used in the text of a major study or report – as in the UNESCO material and that from the Canadian Council for Refugees – that term is mirrored in this discussion.

### **Development of the guidelines in this review**

The guidelines for good practice presented here were developed from two sources. The first source was the full literature review. Most of the literature reviewed did not focus on good or best practice per se, but on some aspect of migration of information behaviour. However, wherever there was a discussion on good or best practice in a particular context, this was recorded separately in the research notes. The second source was the specific best/good practice

literature located during the research (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998; International Organization for Migrants 2000; Owen 2000; Immigrant Council of Ireland 2001; Bendixsen and de Guchteneire 2003; OCASI 2008a, 2008b).

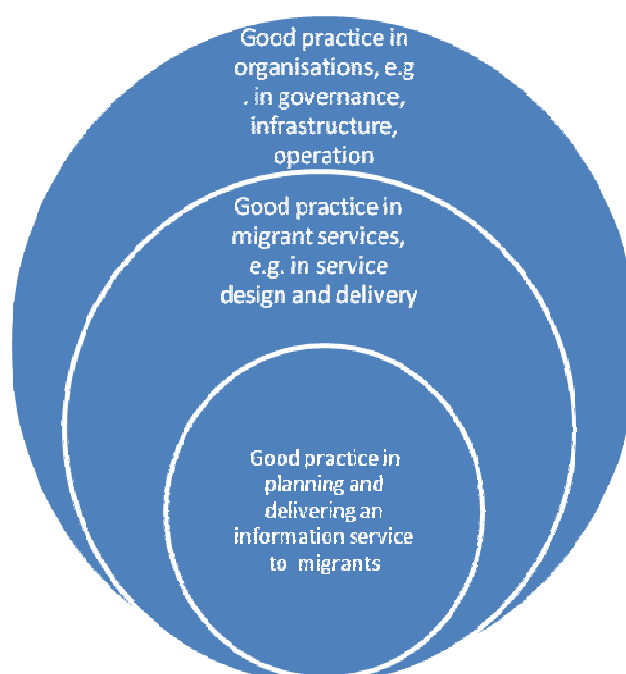
Findings from both sources were then amalgamated to produce the description of good practice in providing information services to migrants.

## Scope

The discussion on good practice focuses on the provision of information services. Thus, it does not include the full range of good practice that is suggested in the literature in a wider framework of good organisational practice or to the provision of other migrant services generally.

Figure 4.1 illustrates this 'nesting' of good practice.

**Figure 4.1:** Framework for good practice



Source: Following Wilson (1999).

However, where an overlap is specifically indicated in the literature that practice is included in the discussion. For example, some literature indicates that there are difficulties funding information services to migrants (Ho et al 2000). Although this issue sits within the wider picture of ensuring services to migrants are adequately funded, a guideline on ensuring information services are adequately funded is included in the good practices discussion below.

Note also that the good practice identified in the literature review and discussed here focuses on the services provided to migrants. However, there is an increasing understanding of settlement as a two-way process; the host community also needs to develop understanding and knowledge of the newcomers in their midst and this is well understood in New Zealand (Department of Labour and Auckland Sustainable Cities Programme 2006b;

Lovelock and Trlin 2007). However, it is not clear from the literature where responsibility for providing information to help achieve this two-way goal lies. It remains an area for further research.

## **'Best practices' in international migration**

UNESCO has developed a central database in which it collects information about best practices in international migration with the intention of providing inspiration for policy making and planning.

UNESCO (nd) defines best practices as successful initiatives that:

- have a demonstrable effect and tangible impact on improving people's quality of life
- are the result of effective partnership between the public, private, and civic sectors of society
- are socially, culturally, economically, and environmentally sustainable.

UNESCO stresses that any practice must be adapted to the political, historic, cultural, social, and economic context of the society in question.

The Canadian Council of Refugees defines best practices as those:

that have proven their worth and deserve to be emulated. (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998, p 19)

The Canadian Council of Refugees sees the purpose of best practices in this context as:

- enhancing efforts at improvement
- sharing information
- encouraging debate (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998).

## **Delivering an information service to migrants**

The literature makes it clear that for information to be relevant and useful, it needs to be structured and targeted to address a specific purpose for a particular and clearly defined group.

Not only does the information need to be carefully targeted, it must also be delivered at the right time in the right place by the right people, which, as Mason and Lamain point out:

will always be a challenge for both the immigrants and those who associated with them through formal or informal channels. (Mason and Lamain 2007, p 19)

Recommendations, suggestions, and guidelines to meet this challenge are included for:

- planning an information service
- running an information service
- the information provided.

Good practices derived from the literature are summarised in Table 4.1 and in the text following the table.

**Table 4.1:** Summary of good practices

<b>Good practice</b>	<b>Description</b>
Planning an information service	<p>The service is based on a detailed needs analysis.</p> <p>Migrants are involved in the design and operation of the service.</p> <p>A range of services is offered to clients, either directly or by referrals.</p> <p>The service has consistent adequate funding.</p>
Running an information service	<p>The service is accessible to the groups identified as needing the service.</p> <p>The service has staff who are culturally competent and trained in the provision of information services.</p> <p>Services are offered in a culturally appropriate manner.</p> <p>The service has a strong relationship with other agencies that provide further services to clients.</p>
The information provided	<p>Information is provided that is relevant to the identified needs of the client base.</p> <p>Processes and procedures are in place to ensure services are based on accurate reliable, up-to-date information.</p> <p>Services and information are provided in the client's own language wherever possible and appropriate.</p> <p>Information is delivered through channels and media appropriate to the needs of the client base.</p>

## **Planning an information service for migrants**

Four elements of good practice in planning an information service were identified from the literature. These elements are:

- identifying a need
- involving migrants in the planning process
- establishing and ensuring funding
- providing, or providing access to, a range of services.

### ***Identifying a need – service is based on a detailed needs analysis***

The theme of diversity in the client base runs very strongly throughout this literature review and has significant implications for good practice in planning a service. As Allen and colleagues state:

Learning about the special needs of immigrant and refugee populations is the basis for the needs assessment that is the basis for any ... programme designed for a specific population. (Allen et al 2004, p 302)

Caidi also stresses the need to know the community for whom the service is designed and describes in detail the knowledge and understanding needed to develop an effective service. Caidi argues that services must be designed taking

into account known factors in information behaviour and information seeking in that group. She suggests assessing the problems experienced by a member of a specific group and finding out how information moves within and between groups (Caidi and Allard 2005; Caidi 2009).

The Immigration Council of Ireland calls this *relevance*, setting a standard for good practice that specifies:

The organization effectively fills a gap in service and information provision to migrants. (Immigrant Council of Ireland 2001)

The widely cited Best Practice Guidelines developed by the Canadian Council for Refugees reinforce the requirement for needs analysis:

User-defined services are assured by:

- undertaking an individual assessment for each client of needs, expectations, goals and priorities
- assessment of the needs and priorities of newcomer communities and the host society
- ongoing assessment of whether services continue to meet needs
- listening to clients and communities served
- responding to the particular needs of refugees (recognition of differences, changing needs). (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998, p 21)

### ***Involvement of migrants – migrants are involved in the design and operation of the service***

In establishing that a need exists for an information service, the literature sets good practice as the direct involvement of migrants in the planning process (International Organization for Migrants 2000).

This practice is also stressed in the Canadian Best Practice Guidelines:

Services respond to needs as defined by users.

User-defined services are assured by:

- assessment of the needs and priorities of newcomer communities and the host society
- involving newcomers in needs assessments
- ongoing assessment of whether services continue to meet needs
- listening to clients and communities served
- responding to the particular needs of refugees (recognition of differences, changing needs)
- offering flexibility in services
- incorporating flexibility into programmes, in order to allow them to adapt to changing needs
- involving users in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services

- offering users maximum control over programmes. (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998, p 21)

Owen points out that there are good reasons for involving migrants:

Not only are programmes which are run by immigrants more effective at addressing the needs of the people they serve, but the opportunities (paid and voluntary) that organizations provide to immigrants are in themselves beneficial to their settlement and integration. (Owen 2000, p 4)

Finally, Caidi cautions on the risks of not involving migrants in all aspects of service design, development, and delivery:

Information services introduced into a community through outsiders will likely be regarded with suspicion and considered irrelevant to the needs of that community. (Caidi 2009, p 3)

***The service – range of services is offered to clients, either directly or by referrals***

*The one-stop shop...*

Good practice in most of the literature appears to favour what is called an holistic service mode (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998; International Organization for Migrants 2000; Owen 2000), or 'one-stop shop' that aims to provide a single point of contact needed for refugees and migrants to get information and advice and access services. This has also been argued for in New Zealand (Ho et al 2000).

Owen reports that:

Organisations which provide services that meet more than one settlement need tend to be more successful as settlement agencies. (Owen 2000, p 4)

Not only can 'one stop shops' respond to the multiple needs of an immigrant and/or their family (Owen 2000), multiple services at one location can help address issues around transportation (International Organization for Migrants 2000).

Kuhlthau explains the problem of simply providing an information service from the migrant point of view:

from the user's perspective the primary object of information seeking is to accomplish the task that initiated the search, not merely the collection of information as an end in itself. (Kuhlthau nd)

Australian research into the role of information services within the wider picture of migrant services reinforces this view. The research found that providing information services in isolation from other services frustrated the migrants they interviewed. Not only did clients want to know about, for example, access to housing, they wanted help to actually get a place to live (Young et al 2003).

Therefore, some agencies have moved from an original focus of providing information to providing services such as:

- translating and interpreting (White et al 2002; Mason and Lamain 2007)
- support for improving literacy skills (Caidi 2008)
- language training (Owen 2000)
- housing assistance (Owen 2000).

In New Zealand, the Department of Labour cautions that information and advice providers who try to provide multiple services to help their clients may not only reduce pressure on mainstream providers to change, but also spread their agencies too thinly (Department of Labour and Auckland Sustainable Cities Programme 2006b).

*Or focused information and referral...*

Some information and referral services in the United States and Canada and some information services in New Zealand (e.g., NZACAB) focus on providing information and referring people to appropriate other agencies where necessary. Some researchers argue that there are users who need intermediaries to help them follow through on referrals and find the appropriate service (Saxton et al 2007). Migrants who are unfamiliar with systems and agencies would appear to fall into this group (NZACAB 2003).

Australian research has stressed that where people are referred from one service to another, there is a 'duty of care' particularly with respect to issues such as domestic violence, and standards of service delivery and protocols need to be in place (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2003).

Good practice then is seen to be that an information service either provides a range of services to clients or provides access to those services (see 'Relationships with other organisations' below), exercising a duty of care.

### ***Funding – service has consistent, adequate funding***

Good practice for information services to migrants sit within the framework of good practice in wider migrant services (Prairie Global Management nd). The Canadian Council for Refugees adds that having sustained funding means agencies can change more quickly when they need to (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998).

The Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants adds depth to this guideline in its organisational standards:

Financial management practices are in line with legal, regulatory and funder requirements, as well as sound financial management practices.  
(Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants 2008)

New Zealand research suggests difficulties with funding are a significant challenge for organisations providing information services to migrants in this country (Ho et al 2000; Nash and Trlin 2006), so this element is also included here.

## **Running an information service**

The literature contains comprehensive guidelines for running effective services for migrants. These guidelines detail the specific requirements for good practice in running an information service. The discussion focuses on the three elements:

- access
- staffing
- relationships with other agencies.

### ***Access – service is accessible to groups identified as needing it***

In addition to providing appropriate staff and having the relationships with other agencies specified below, good practice includes all aspects of access described in the discussion on barriers to service.

Good practice in this context stresses the importance of:

- location, with access to transport services a priority (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998; Ho et al 2000; International Organization for Migrants 2000; Owen 2000; Nash and Trlin 2006; Prairie Global Management nd)
- having opening hours that reflect the needs of identified client communities (Mwarigha 2002)
- creating an environment where people feel comfortable (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998; Owen 2000; Prairie Global Management nd).

Following the Canadian precedent (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998) the Manitoba Best Practice Guidelines provide further detail on ensuring accessibility:

Services are accessible to all who need them. Access is assured by:

- offering services in the client's own language, where possible and appropriate
- offering culturally appropriate services
- communicating effectively about the organization and its services
- where possible, offering services irrespective of immigration status or other criteria of eligibility
- providing an environment where women feel comfortable
- offering childcare, where appropriate
- having a physically accessible site
- listening to and responding to concerns about accessibility. (Prairie Global Management nd, p 16)

In addition, there is a need to specifically target groups who may not currently access the service to enable them to use the services offered (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998; Owen 2000; Caidi 2009; Prairie Global Management nd).

Allen and colleagues add:

unless we make the effort to reach out beyond serving those who come to our libraries, we miss the opportunity to serve those in greatest need. (Allen et al 2004, p 302)

### ***Staffing – service has staff who are culturally competent and trained in the provision of information services***

That trained and experienced staff are required in any organisation working with migrants is recognised in New Zealand (Ho et al 2000; Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2003; Allen et al 2004; Nash and Trlin 2006). However, the literature suggests it is particularly important for staff who provide information to people from other cultures to have cultural and language skills relevant to the people they are working with (Ho et al 2000; Allen et al 2004; Caidi and Allard 2005). An understanding of the settlement process and information needs associated with different stages of the process is also considered vital (Prairie Global Management nd).

In a New Zealand context, Nash and Trlin have suggested that additional skills such as advocacy skills may also be needed in the context of an information service (Nash and Trlin 2006). Allen and colleagues insist that special training is needed for dealing with information that is culturally sensitive such as information related to death or women's health (Allen et al 2004).

The literature also stresses that migrants should be involved in service delivery (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998; Owen 2000; Allen et al 2004; Prairie Global Management nd).

### ***Cultural sensitivity – services are offered in a culturally appropriate manner***

An understanding of the culture of clients is fundamental to all migrant services, but the requirement is seen as particularly important in the provision of specific types of information, especially in areas such as health (Ho et al 2000; International Organization for Migrants 2000; Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2003).

Cultural sensitivity encompasses not only having staff and volunteers from the same background as the clients who are being served and who are knowledgeable about the culture of those they serve, but also:

- offering services in a culturally appropriate manner
- developing and implementing policies on cultural competency and anti-racism
- showing respect for different cultures (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998; Prairie Global Management nd).

Research in New Zealand has found that staff in community organisations recognised a need for further training, particularly in cultural understanding (Lovelock and Trlin 2007).

### ***Relationships with other organisations – service has a strong relationship with other agencies that provide further services to clients***

Good practice literature suggests that an information service must have very strong links with other organisations to deliver services effectively (Caidi 2009). Other organisations include community bodies, government and non-

governmental agencies, and organisations such as local libraries (Allen et al 2004; Nash and Trlin 2006; Saxton et al 2007).

The Canadian Council for Refugees points out that these relationships may have the additional advantage of assisting with funding applications (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998).

The relationship between agencies has been identified as an area for improvement in New Zealand services as well as an area requiring further research (Lovelock and Trlin 2007; Mason and Lamain 2007).

## **The information provided**

Information is the heart of information services.

### ***Content – information is relevant to the needs of the client base***

The theme of consulting with migrants and targeting services to provide information based on that consultation is stressed throughout this review and is restated in this practice.

### ***Reliability – processes and procedures ensure services are based on accurate, reliable, and up-to-date information***

Good practice here includes requirements for social research and exchanging information with other agencies (Mason and Lamain 2007; Prairie Global Management nd). The Alliance of Information and Referral Systems' standards contain comprehensive and detailed specifications for the necessary infrastructure (AIRS 2009a).

### ***Language – services and information are provided in the client's language wherever possible and appropriate***

Good practice specifies that language material appropriate to the client is the preferred source of information (Caidi 2008), and researchers in New Zealand have recommended the distribution of pamphlets and information in ethnic languages wherever possible (Ho et al 2000). In some areas this practice is vital, with health information the most often cited example. Research has identified a critical need to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate health information for immigrant and refugee populations (Canadian Council for Refugees 1998; Allen et al 2004).

### ***Channel – information is delivered through channels appropriate to the needs of the client base***

Once again, this theme has run throughout the review. However, extra detail is provided from Caidi. Caidi found evidence to suggest multiple forms of communication (including using a client's first language and popular media) may contribute to the improved provision of health information and services (Caidi 2008).

In New Zealand, research has suggested information-sharing initiatives need to be publicised to new migrants (Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003).

The research on preferred sources of information proposes developing communication paths using people rather than less-trusted sources such as written materials. This research suggests processes for disseminating information may need to change (Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003).

## **Policy implications of the good practice literature**

The literature review of good practice in providing information to migrants has resulted in solid descriptions of good practice at an operational level, as the discussion above shows. However, the literature is less specific on the strategic implications of these practices, particularly in the two key areas of:

- deciding which migrants to target in the provision of information services
- the components of the much-discussed 'one-stop shop'.

### ***Choosing the clients***

Migrants are a diverse group. Migrants come from diverse cultures, nationalities, and ethnicities, are male and female, are younger and older people. The literature is prescriptive about the requirement to carry out a needs analysis before planning an information (or indeed any other) service for a subgroup of the migrant population. However there is little guidance on which subgroup to target.

Discussions through the literature review have illustrated how the groups selected elsewhere vary from Sudanese youth in Canada (Silvio 2006) to Hmong peoples in the United States (Allen et al 2004). In both these examples, the case study is wide-ranging and informative, as citations elsewhere in the literature review attest. However, there are no clues about why these particular groups were chosen in preference to any other group with specific information needs in the migrant populations in those locations at that time.

This creates a key question at a policy or strategic level: How should providers decide which migrants they are going to carry out a needs analysis and provide information services for?

There seem to be several answers, not explicitly detailed in any of the literature reviewed.

- The group is perceived to be in need of information to solve a known set of problems, as with Kuhlthau's women prisoners (Kuhlthau 1991).
- The group is highly visible in the community and authorities see a need to provide settlement assistance, as in the case of the Hmong people (Allen et al 2004).
- There is a political will to ensure people become settled as soon as possible, as seems to be the case with Shoham's example of migrants moving to Israel (Shoham and Strauss 2008).

In most cases, the decision on the appropriate migrant group or subgroup to target appears to be made at local, rather than national, level, reflecting the importance of communities in successful settlement (Mwarigha 2002; Caidi et al 2010). Where there is national funding, the strategy appears to be built on

feedback at the local level (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2006a; IMSED Research 2009).

It may be helpful to groups planning to deliver information services to provide guidelines on targeting client groups within the wider migrant population.

### ***Setting up a one-stop shop***

The discussion above has also made it clear that the preference is for a 'one-stop shop' where all settlement needs can be met (White et al 2002; Young et al 2003; Mason and Lamain 2007). Once again, however, detail is lacking about the agencies that make up a one-stop shop. One-stop shops are reported as providing services from initial orientation to the city to helping to set up bank accounts to finding accommodation (Owen 2000).

This also raises a strategic question: What services should be included in a one-stop shop to assist migrants in settlement?

Reading between the lines, the answer seems to be – it depends.

In some cases, it appears the service centre is targeted to provide support and assistance for migrants at first arrival. There will be specific information and assistance on, for example, housing. In other cases, the service centre acts as a liaison point between the migrant and mainstream services.

Services may include help with any or all areas of identified migrant need from housing, tax, and education to language and interpreting services.

It appears the definition of a one-stop shop depends on a combination of funder and provider philosophies, driven by perceived migrant needs at a particular place and time.

## **5. EVALUATING INFORMATION SERVICES TO MIGRANTS**

Given that this literature review has shown the lack of models for providing information to migrants, it is not surprising that there is also a lack of models for evaluating services that provide information (Hwalek et al 1998, in Saxton et al 2007).

Services that provide information have traditionally been evaluated on a transaction basis, that is, by measures such as the number of clients who attend the service or the number of queries answered. However, there is a growing understanding that quantitative measures alone are insufficient to measure the impact of these services:

evaluation of information systems and programmes is in a state of creative turmoil as researchers realise that current quantitative tools fail to reflect the depth and breadth of impact. (Fisher et al 2004, p 755)

This part of the literature review first sets the context for the discussion and then reviews the literature on evaluation of information and referral services based on the 2-1-1 service in the United States described in section 1.

Although the focus of the 2-1-1 service is on supporting longer-term residents, the philosophy and services offered have much in common with the services discussed throughout this literature review. Therefore, the two models evaluating the 2-1-1 service are discussed in detail.

In addition, the professional bodies for information and referral services in North America operate a certification programme for information services that is of interest in this context. The approach used is described to provide further input to the discussion on evaluation.

### **Context**

The nested model in figure 2.1 also applies to this discussion.

However, literature of interest that sits in the wider framework of evaluation of services to migrants was located from Canadian and Australian perspectives and is summarised here. In addition, relevant research was located about evaluating library services, and it is suggested this is an area for further research as it relates to migrant services.

### **Canada**

The Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants has carried out extensive research to develop and implement standards to strengthen capacity and accountability in the immigrant and refugee serving sector. It has subsequently developed an online self-assessment tool for organisations. This tool could serve as a model for information services (Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants 2008).

## **Australia**

Two reviews of services to migrants were carried out in Australia in 2003. Both reviews note the importance of the information services within broader services for migrants, and as with the Canadian study, consider their findings and models apply across all migrant services.

The client survey on the effectiveness of community settlement services funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship aimed to investigate how effective department-funded community services are in assisting migrants, refugees, and humanitarian entrants to settle in Australia and to pilot a methodology for evaluating these services (Young et al 2003).

The survey methodology was qualitative, including consultations with service providers, clients, and community stakeholders. The researchers note that this three-pronged approach provided the opportunity to look at different aspects of the services, including service and community development. However, they caution about the limitations of focusing on evaluation from a client viewpoint, noting that clients may not know about the full range of services offered or of the limitations of any given service (Young et al 2003). The study looked at both what should be evaluated in services to migrants and how they should be evaluated, but it did not describe the factors to be included in the evaluation.

The Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants noted that the Department of Immigration and Migrant Affairs has an obligation to monitor the performance of service providers it funds and argues that a successful performance and accountability model will:

- ensure the accountability of government expenditures
- monitor service delivery
- evaluate the effectiveness of services and programmes in meeting the settlement needs of clients
- provide valuable information that can be used for future planning and improvement of service delivery. (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2003).

The review made recommendations on service delivery and suggested a stronger focus on outcomes, which is reflected in the discussion above on information and migrant services in Australia.

## **Libraries**

Libraries have become increasingly involved in providing information to their clients, and migrants are part of that client base. Some research emerged during this literature review that could provide further input to this discussion.

Durrance and Pettigrew, who have been cited extensively in this review, investigated how community information initiatives in libraries might be evaluated (Durrance and Pettigrew 2001). They note that librarians have been unable to show the impact of this work, commenting that current tools are not effective. They stress the importance of developing tools that will allow these services to demonstrate the effectiveness of the work libraries are doing in this context.

Similarly, the Institute of Library and Museum Services in the United States has published a paper on outcome-based evaluation for libraries and museums (Institute of Museum and Library Services 1999). Writing in the report, Rudd presents a similar argument, noting that the organisation counts circulation figures, attendance, and variables such as library use as a percentage of the population, but none of these figures measures the effect of the services in the community.

Further research is needed to establish whether there has been progress in these areas that would provide insights for assessing information services for migrants.

## **Evaluation of information services**

### ***Quantitative compared with qualitative approaches***

Researchers challenge evaluation processes of information-based services that focus on transactions (that is, the number of interactions that take place), arguing that quantitative data alone cannot provide an accurate picture of the impact, quality, or effectiveness of the interaction (Childers, 1976, in Saxton et al 2007).

### ***Problems with quantitative approaches***

Saxton and colleagues describe problems associated with transactional evaluation (Saxon et al 2007). They note that a single transaction can have an effect on several people (within a family, for example) and that intangible benefits, such as well-being, or in this context, successful settlement, are not captured in such a simple quantitative approach.

Specifically, Saxton and colleagues note that the robustness of this style of quantitative methodology is threatened in five critical ways.

- Monetary benefits assigned to transactions are easily challenged by critics, and minor decreases to the estimates for each type of transaction will reduce the estimate of total benefit significantly due to multiplier effects.
- Once a service hits a plateau in terms of call volume, transaction costs are highly likely to increase over time with inflation; such measures do not reflect the quality of the referral or the number of persons ultimately served by the transaction.
- Centralized service models will always have lower transaction costs than decentralized service models; such measures fail to capture the intangible benefits of service agents' tacit knowledge of the local resources and the most feasible options for persons living in a given region.
- Transaction cost measures do not reflect actual savings to the partner service agencies ultimately providing the needed social aid.
- The systemic effect resulting from an increase in information flow regarding social services in a community is not captured. (Saxton et al 2007, p 190)

### ***What is needed***

Saxton and colleagues argue that cost-benefit analysis and outcome assessment of information and referral services should:

- Identify the social values of the service at three levels – for the individual, organisations and society at large.
- Focus on the total costs of the service rather than individual transaction costs.
- Discuss the efficiency and effectiveness of the service from the funders' viewpoint in terms of:
  - cost savings to other services currently being funded OR
  - building greater capacity in services for each dollar which is spent.
- Distinguish the benefits of the information and referral service from the benefits of the service agency providing aid or benefits to the client. (Saxton et al 2007, p 190)

That is, a client may learn from the information agency that help is available, what the options are and where to get help, or, in the words of agencies both in New Zealand and elsewhere, clients need to be empowered to solve that problem for themselves now and in the future (NZACAB 2003; Alliance of Information and Referral Services 2009a).

The client will also benefit from contacting the required service agency by having their problem resolved:

For example, NZACAB receives requests from migrants on how to get children into their local school. Interviewers explain private and public school systems, school zoning in New Zealand, admission policies and will locate schools near the client's home. The client will probably then be advised to visit local schools and discuss their child's needs.

The client now has a better understanding of the New Zealand education system and is empowered to take the necessary action, and has clearly benefitted from the information they have received. (NZACAB 2003)

Saxton and colleagues cite other research stressing that evaluation should be an ongoing process rather than a single event (Childers, 1976, in Saxton et al 2007) and that evaluation should include both quantitative and qualitative measures (Patton, 2002, in Saxton et al 2007).

However, Saxton and colleagues also acknowledge the difficulties in collecting data:

- The need for confidentiality means that people may not be identifiable and traceable after they have used the service so feedback on impact cannot be measured.
- It is difficult to measure intangible benefits from interactions such as increased confidence. (Saxton et al 2007, p 195)

Saxton and colleagues (2007) went on to develop a logic model for evaluating the 2-1-1 service, as had Lepler in the previous year (Lepler 2006).

The next section in the literature review describes these two models before discussing the standards-based approach to evaluating 2-1-1 services used by the two professional bodies in North America, the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems in the United States and InformCanada.

### **Logic model 1 for evaluating 2-1-1 services – Saxton and colleagues**

Saxton and colleagues have developed a logic model to evaluate outcomes of the 2-1-1 service, including individuals, the organisation, and the wider community across the short, medium, and longer term (Saxton et al 2007). The matrix identifies the inputs, activities, reach, and outputs of the 2-1-1 service and then describes short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes for each input.

#### ***Inputs***

Inputs identified in the logic model were initially based on a cost-benefit model that identified only the funding streams into the service as inputs. However, the research found that other organisations also provided input by referring people to the service, and the public also contributed input through its knowledge of the service and by referring people.

Finally, the model recognises that indirect inputs should also be recognised. These inputs were identified as:

- research and good practice which may inform development of other services
- information on the availability of the service, which may contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.

#### ***Activities***

The activities described in the logic model evolved over the course of the project. Initially, the model listed only the telephone service, but aggregated information was added when evidence suggested this information could play a role in the further development of services to the community. The research also recognised the role the service plays in the wider community through networking and other activities.

#### ***Reach, outputs, and outcomes***

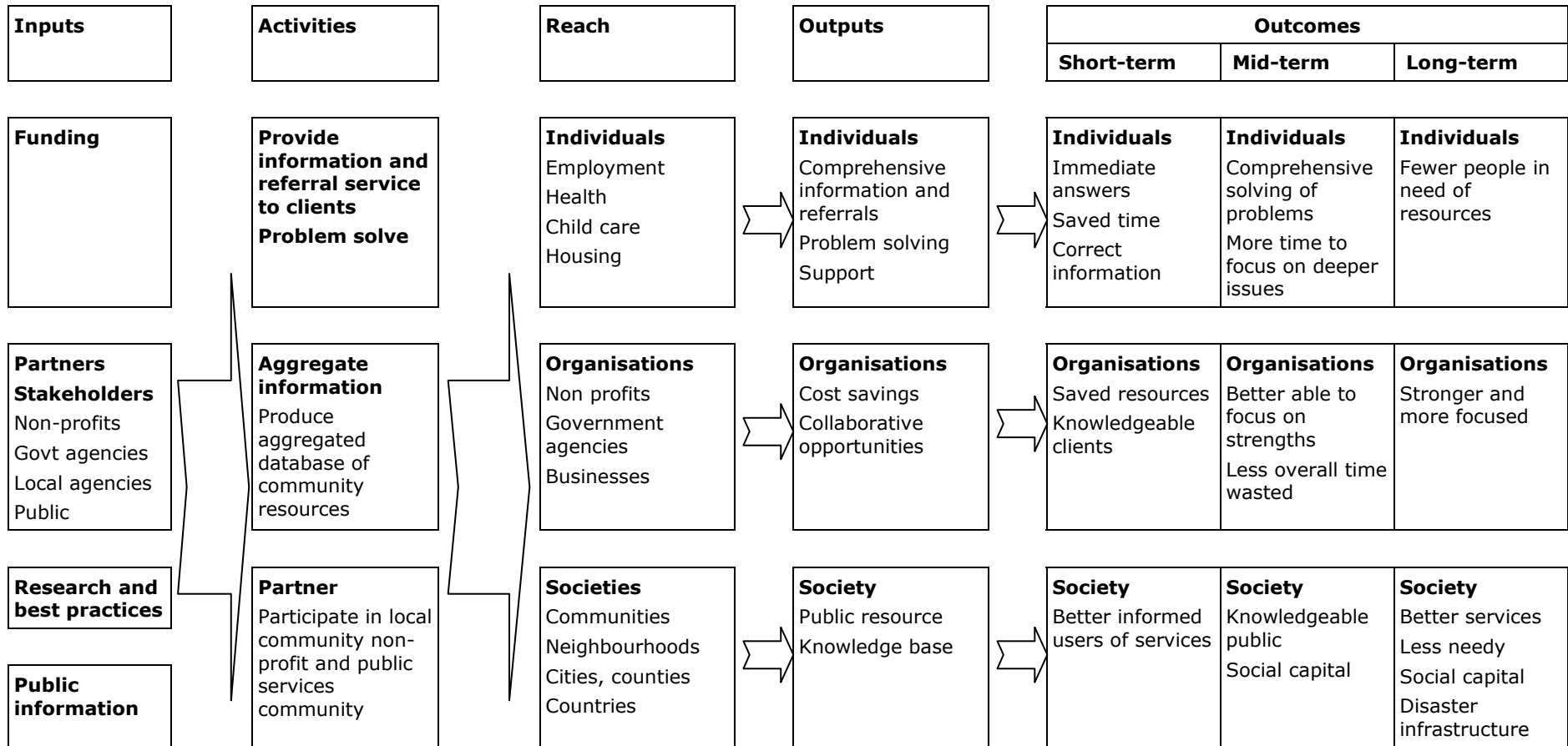
The logic model organises the reach and outputs of the service on three levels, recognising the impact of the service on the wider society as well as on the individual. It divides outcomes over the short, medium, and long term, recognising that the impact of intervention is not always immediate. Measures are provided for each outcome.

#### ***Putting it all together***

The logic model is shown in Figure 5.1. The University of Washington's Information Behaviour in Everyday Contexts website (<http://ibec.ischool.washington.edu>) provides detailed information on measurement of the outcomes and a tool for organisations to develop their own outcome-based evaluation.



**Figure 5.1:** Evaluating the 2-1-1 service



Source: Saxton et al (2007).

## **Applying Saxton and colleagues' model**

Saxton and colleagues argue that the benefits of the 2-1-1 service can be found at individual, organisational, and society levels (Saxton et al 2007, p 19). Other findings relate to:

- the relationship between the 2-1-1 service and the other social agencies where clients are referred
- processes for continuous improvement in the service
- the impact of 2-1-1 on the local social services infrastructure.

## **2-1-1 and other agencies**

The research set out to distinguish between the benefits the individual receives from using the information service from the benefits they receive when they go to another agency, such as a medical centre. Saxton and colleagues point out that the most commonly reported indicators are that the other service (the medical centre) is found and used and that the individual and their network now know about that service for future reference (Saxton et al 2007).

However, in terms of monetary value, the researchers argue that every dollar invested in a 2-1-1 service has a 'multiplier effect' (Saxton et al 2007, p 20) in cost savings to other services by:

- providing appropriate referrals, so the service agency is not wasting time dealing with inappropriate calls
- the increased number of people assisted by the service agency through the referrals received
- early intervention, which can reduce the cost of the help that is needed.

Saxton and colleagues argue that the benefits of the information-referral service can be properly measured only if the service can gather detailed information about its clients and workloads from the agencies it is referring to (Saxton et al 2007).

## **Improving the service**

The researchers maintain that a key role of the evaluation process is to improve the quality of service in the organisation under review. They advocate integrating assessment into the regular workflow of the organisation. Qualitative interviews with clients and staff are seen as providing valuable input.

## **Impact on social infrastructure**

Saxton and colleagues conclude that information services may have a significant effect on social services infrastructure (Saxton et al 2007, p 23). They argue that by organising information on the services available, the service creates a holistic view that can lead to increased cooperation and decreased fragmentation across the sector. In addition, the service can provide a valuable source of information on current issues and problems that can feed into community planning.

## **Logic model 2 for evaluating 2-1-1 services – Lepler**

Lepler's model also develops a logic model for evaluating the 2-1-1 service, but relies almost completely on quantitative measures (Lepler 2006).

### ***Underlying principles***

Lepler developed the model on the basis of three principles (Lepler 2006).

- Keep it simple.
- Make sure outcomes are easy to communicate.
- Include outcomes that the 2-1-1 collaborative has control over and can fairly be accountable for.

### ***Components of the model***

The model includes inputs, activities, and outcomes for the service at individual and 'system' levels. Each outcome includes measures, a performance target, a statement of significance of the measure, benchmarks, methods of obtaining the necessary data, and guidelines on the frequency of data collection and reporting.

The model is illustrated in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1:** Lepler’s model for evaluating the 2-1-1 service

Inputs	Activities	Projected outcomes			
		Outcomes for people	Measures	Outcomes for systems	Measures
<b>Funding</b> Start-up and annual budget	Maintain capacity to offer 24/7 coverage or provide service to callers	2-1-1 callers receive service in a timely fashion	Percent of calls: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>answered within 20 seconds by a telecounsellor</li> <li>answered before they are abandoned by caller</li> </ul>	2-1-1 code is accessed throughout district	Percent of population who have access Number of cell phone carriers in region
	Assess caller satisfaction and 2-1-1 effectiveness				
<b>Staff</b>	Collect and track information about percentage of 2-1-1 callers receiving help through referrals	2-1-1 callers report being satisfied with the information and referral service received	Percent of callers who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>report being satisfied or very satisfied with the information and service they received</li> <li>respond that the telecounsellor seemed to understand their needs</li> <li>respond that the telecounsellor was courteous</li> <li>respond that the telecounsellor was helpful</li> <li>respond that they would use 2-1-1 again</li> </ul>	2-1-1 becomes widely recognised as the place to get help	Percent of calls that come into the centre compared with previous service Percent increase in calls to 2-1-1 Percent of general population that indicates awareness of 2-1-1 percent increase in website activities Number of new initiatives that ask 2-1-1 to provide services
	Provide training for new hires				
<b>Governance</b>	Provide ongoing professional development for employees				
	Maintain comprehensive accurate database of human services				
<b>Information</b>	Maintain 2-1-1 website				
	Work with telephone companies to ensure coverage				
	Report on compliance				
<b>Space/ equipment</b>	Report to community on volume, demographics, service in highest demand, service gaps				
	Market 2-1-1				
<b>Quality assurance</b>					

Inputs	Activities	Projected outcomes			
		Outcomes for people	Measures	Outcomes for systems	Measures
		2-1-1 callers receive accurate information from 2-1-1	Percent of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>callers who report that the information provided by 2-1-1 was correct</li> <li>database records that are verified as being 100% correct</li> <li>records containing major errors</li> <li>records containing minor errors</li> </ul>	2-1-1 provides real-time community service inventories and needs assessments to help community planners and funding organisations to address emerging needs and shifting demands	<i>To be developed</i>

Source: Lepler (2006).

## **Standards models for evaluating information services – Alliance of Information and Referral Systems and InformCanada**

Both the United States and Canada have professional associations for information and referral services that set and monitor standards for their industry: AIRS and InformCanada. In both cases, a national association runs an accreditation programme that certifies that an organisation meets the standards.

Both organisations have a Bill of Rights for Information and Referral and a clearly defined philosophy that outlines expectations of providers (Inform Canada 2007; AIRS 2009a).

### ***United States – Alliance of Information and Referral Systems***

AIRS is an organisation with a mission to:

Provide leadership and support to our membership and affiliates to advance the capacity of a Standards driven information and referral industry that brings people and services together. (AIRS 2009a, p ii)

AIRS states the goal of information and referral services is:

to be able to deliver information that is needed to link inquiries with available and appropriate services at the lowest cost without duplication of effort. (AIRS 2009a, p viii)

### ***Accreditation***

Information and referral agencies can apply for accreditation by AIRS. Accreditation assesses the ability of an information and referral programme to demonstrate full compliance with the standards. Certification is available for:

- information and referral specialists
- information and referral specialists in ageing
- resource specialists (AIRS 2009b).

According to the AIRS website, accreditation by AIRS is required in most states (AIRS 2009b).

### ***Standards***

The standards are extremely comprehensive, detailing requirements and standards in the six categories of:

- service delivery
- resource database
- reports and measures
- cooperative relationships
- disaster preparedness
- organisational effectiveness.

Each standard contains requirements and quality indicators. For example, Standard 2 of Service Delivery details the requirements for assessment and referral provision:

The I&R service shall provide information to an inquirer in response to a direct request for such information. Information can range from a limited response (such as an organisation's name, telephone number and address) to a detailed description of community service systems (such as explaining how intake works for a particular agency), agency policies and procedures for application. Active listening is necessary to establish a positive contact with the inquirer, understand context and provide an appropriate response.

#### Quality indicators

- 1 The I&R service clarifies the inquirer's initial request for information because requests do not always accurately reflect the inquirer's actual needs and there may be an underlying or unstated problem.
- 2 Information is accurate and pertinent to the request of the inquirer.
- 3 The I&R service encourages re-contact by the inquirer if the initial information proves to be incorrect, inappropriate or insufficient to link the individual with needed services.
- 4 The I&R service accurately records the nature of the inquiry, the problems/needs addressed by the inquiry if confirmed, and, if applicable, the organisation discussed in the course of the inquiry. (AIRS 2009a, p 4)

The standards manual argues that the standards serve as indicators of service quality and effectiveness, aid in the development of new services, and can be used to improve existing services (AIRS 2009a).

### **Canada**

The Canadian approach and standards documents follow the AIRS model closely, but with some wording changes. For example, assessment and referral provision is called information provision. The requirements and quality indicators remain essentially the same (Inform Canada 2007).

### **Towards developing a model for the evaluation of information services for migrants in New Zealand**

This literature review has found that there is a theoretical and conceptual foundation for information services to migrants that provides an understanding of how people behave when they need information, the processes they follow, and the places they turn to.

The research has established the depth and breadth of the need for information and difficulties migrants face as they try to develop their understanding and the knowledge they need to settle in new countries.

Although there is some understanding of the components of good practice in this very challenging field, it does not appear to have translated into effective and pragmatic models for evaluating information services to migrants.

Two approaches were found; one based on logic models and the other on a standards-based approach that results in certification of the service.

There are strengths and short-comings in both approaches.

### ***Logic models***

Logic models are widely used to evaluate inputs, activities, and processes against defined outcomes. Both examples described above offer insights into possible evaluation strategies for information services for migrants in New Zealand. However, they also illustrate the difficulties in this approach.

On the one hand, Saxton and colleagues' model provides a compelling argument for looking at the big picture and measuring the true impact of the service, but it requires significant amounts of time, energy and expertise to be applied (Saxton et al 2007). On the other hand, Lepler's model is simple and easily applied, but misses entirely the points made about the shortcomings of transactional measurement of services (Lepler 2006). Neither model refers to the literature of good practice.

### ***Standards-based approach***

A standards-based approach provides both quality assurance and quality management of the service based on good practice without necessarily measuring effectiveness or value for money. However, the model could be used as a preliminary tool for benchmarking information services to migrants in New Zealand.

### ***Going forward***

The theme of the need for services designed to meet the needs of specific groups of migrants has run throughout this review. However, there is a paradox here. On the one hand, the literature is adamant that every migrant seeking information is unique, searching for information that is relevant to them, following a process that makes sense to them, and expecting that their question or problem will be resolved in a culturally appropriate and supportive setting.

On the other hand, governments and social agencies are faced with ever-increasing numbers of diverse groups of information-seekers who face challenges in settlement often caused by a lack of knowledge or understanding who cannot be provided for on an individual basis.

The literature does offer some pragmatic advice.

An information service for migrants should be designed, developed, and operated to meet the specific needs of an identified group of migrants in a particular time and place, providing them with information grounds that they can access with confidence that their needs will be addressed.

It follows that evaluation processes and procedures should then establish whether the service is meeting those needs and, following Saxton and colleagues, addresses the key question: What impact is the service having on successful settlement of individuals and the wider community?

Selecting an approach and tools to provide the answer to this question will depend on the purpose for evaluation, whether it is to establish whether the service is proving value for money and/or following industry-accepted standards of good practice.

Whatever the purpose, both quantitative and qualitative tools are needed to evaluate the outcomes for the individual and the community at large.

At a philosophical and strategic level, however, there is a need for more creative thinking to bring about the successful settlement outcomes aspired to in New Zealand and elsewhere.

Caidi and Allard point out that:

much time and effort has been put into developing resources but that increasingly diverse societies require new directions for information organization and provision aimed at immigrant groups. (Caidi and Allard 2005, p 303)

New Zealand has taken a first step by both setting clear high-level goals and developing robust high-level indicators to track how well we are doing in providing our migrants with appropriate information and responsive services (IMSED Research 2009). The challenge now is to find innovative ways to achieve the goal.

## APPENDIX: REFERENCE SEARCHING

### Key words

Combinations of terms were used to search, based on the left-hand column and moving across the table, using Boolean terms (for example, New Settler AND Information AND Australia).

Immigrant	Information	Needs	Australia
Migrant		Provision/providing	Canada
		Service/s	Ireland
		Centre/s	UK
		Center/s	New Zealand
		Program/me/s	
		Seeking	
		Policy	
New settler			NZ
Measurement/measuring	Migrant	Information centre/s	
Benchmark		Information	
		Provision/providing	
Good practice		Information Service/s	
Best practice		Information Centre/s	
Effectiveness			
Settlement Services			
Migrant Resource			
Center/Centre/s			
New settlers			
Information seeking			
Information behaviour			
Logic model/s			
Evaluation			

## Organisations

Organisation	URL
Migration Policy Institute, United States of America	<a href="http://www.migrationpolicy.org">www.migrationpolicy.org</a>
Centre for Migration Studies, New York	<a href="http://www.cmsny.org">www.cmsny.org</a>
International Organisation for Migration, (Note New Zealand is a member of this organisation)	<a href="http://www.iom.int/">www.iom.int/</a>
UNESCO	<a href="http://www.unesco.org">www.unesco.org</a>
Centre for Migration Policy Research, Swansea University	<a href="http://www.swansea.ac.uk/cmpr">www.swansea.ac.uk/cmpr</a>
Immigration Policy Center	<a href="http://www.immigrationpolicy.org">www.immigrationpolicy.org</a>
International Labor Organisation	<a href="http://www.ilo.org">www.ilo.org</a>
Immigration Services, Australia	<a href="http://www.immi.gov.au/">www.immi.gov.au/</a>
Centre for Migrant Advocacy, Philippines	<a href="http://www.fes.org.ph/">www.fes.org.ph/</a>
Sussex Centre for Migration Research	<a href="http://www.sussex.ac.uk/migration">www.sussex.ac.uk/migration</a>
Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick	<a href="http://www2.warwick.ac.uk">www2.warwick.ac.uk</a>
Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement, Toronto	<a href="http://www.ceris.metropolis.net">www.ceris.metropolis.net</a>
The International Migration and Ethnic Relations Research Unit, University of Bergen	<a href="http://imer.uib.no/">http://imer.uib.no/</a>
The European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations (ERCOMER)	<a href="http://www.uu.nl/uupublish/onderzoek/onderzoekcentra/ercomer/24638main.html">www.uu.nl/uupublish/onderzoek/onderzoekcentra/ercomer/24638main.html</a>
Information Behaviour in Everyday Contexts	<a href="http://ibec.ischool.washington.edu/">http://ibec.ischool.washington.edu/</a>
Metropolis International	<a href="http://international.metropolis.net/index_e.html">http://international.metropolis.net/index_e.html</a>
DecisionMaker New Zealand	<a href="http://www.decisionmaker.co.nz">www.decisionmaker.co.nz</a>
The Maytree Foundation	<a href="http://www.maytree.com/">www.maytree.com/</a>
Migration for Development	<a href="http://www.migration4development.org/">www.migration4development.org/</a>
United Nations Instraw: Gender and Migration Community	<a href="http://www.un-instraw.org/grvc/library">www.un-instraw.org/grvc/library</a>
Canadian Council for Refugees	<a href="http://www.ccrweb.ca/">www.ccrweb.ca/</a>
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)	
Citizenship and Immigration Canada (Integration-Net)	<a href="http://integration-net.ca/english/index.cfm">http://integration-net.ca/english/index.cfm</a>
Association of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS)	<a href="http://www.airs.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1">www.airs.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1</a>

## Journals

Keywords were used to search the journals list below.

Journal	URL
International Migration Review	<a href="http://www.wiley.com/bw/journal">www.wiley.com/bw/journal</a>
Migration Information Source	<a href="http://www.migrationinformation.org/">www.migrationinformation.org/</a>
Annual Review of Information, Science and Technology	<a href="http://www.asis.org/Publications/ARIST/">www.asis.org/Publications/ARIST/</a>
International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care	<a href="http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/1369183X.asp">www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/1369183X.asp</a>
Information Research	<a href="http://informationr.net/ir/">http://informationr.net/ir/</a>
International Journal on Multicultural Societies	<a href="http://www.unesco.org/shs/ijms">www.unesco.org/shs/ijms</a>
International Journal of Migration and integration	<a href="http://jimi.metropolis.net/frameset_e.html">http://jimi.metropolis.net/frameset_e.html</a>
Information Research	<a href="http://www.informationr.net/ir/">www.informationr.net/ir/</a>
Journal of Ethnic and Migrant Studies	
Immigrants and Minorities	<a href="http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/02619288.asp">www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/02619288.asp</a>
The Journal of Migration and Refugee Issues	<a href="http://www.acquirecontent.com/titles/the-journal-of-migration-and-refugee-issues">www.acquirecontent.com/titles/the-journal-of-migration-and-refugee-issues</a>
Journal of Regional Science	
Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology	
Information, Communication and Society	
Human Communication Research	

## Databases

Keywords were used to search the databases:

- ABINFORMERIC
- Web of Science
- Google
- Google Scholar
- EBSCO
- Interscience
- Questia
- Wiley Interscience
- Scopus
- Informaworld
- Multicultural Australia and Information Studies (MAIS)
- Informit
- Informaworld

- Libraries.

A combination of keywords, identified authors, and Dewey reference numbers was used to search the:

- Waitakere City Library
- Massey University Library.

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