

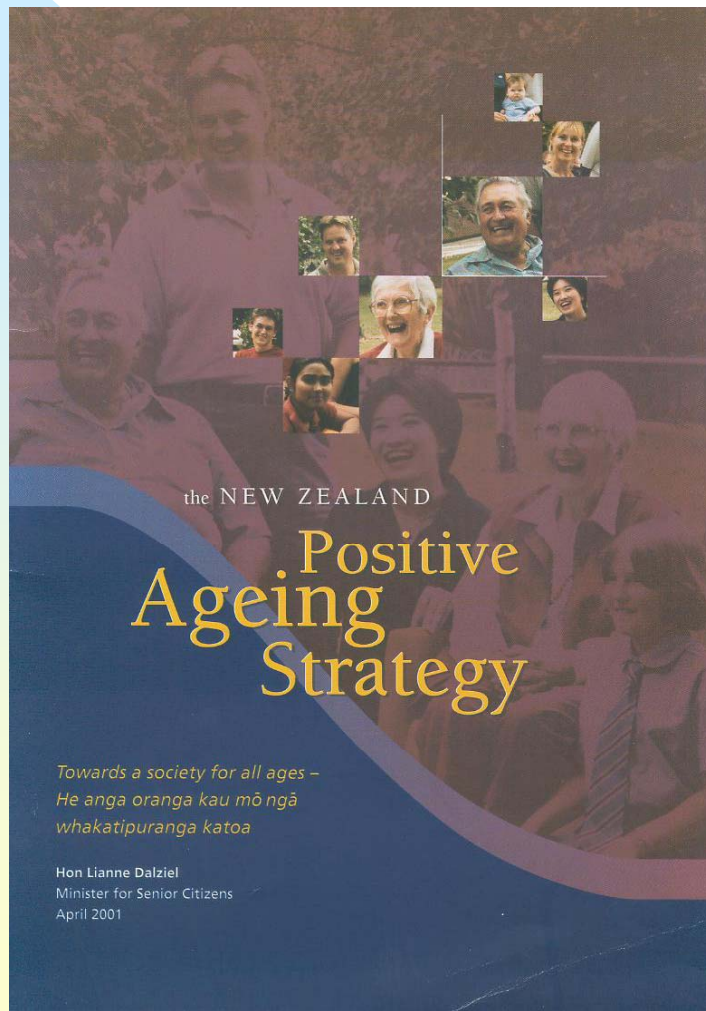


Ageing in Place: Issues and Challenges for Chinese Communities

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Ageing in Place



- Ageing in place is a concept which implies that older people will be enabled to live independently and continue to participate in their communities.
- It has been identified as a priority goal in the *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy* (Dalziel 2001).

Ageing in Place

The articulation of 'ageing in place' strategies is reflected in the OECD intentions that:

Elderly people, including those in need of care and support should, wherever possible, be enabled to continue living in their own homes, and where this is not possible, they should be enabled to live in a sheltered and supportive environment which is as close to their community as possible, in both the social and the geographical sense (OECD 1994: 3)

Demographics

| | Chinese in NZ | Total NZ population |
|--|---------------|---------------------|
| % over 65 years | 6.5% | 12.3% |
| % overseas-born older people | 91.1% | 25.5% |
| % older people resident in NZ for under 10 years | 49.8% | 11.9% |
| % older people living in Auckland in 2006 | 67.2% | 21.3% |

Being old in a new country

A number of individual and environmental factors contribute to the ability of an older person to remain independent in their later life.

- Personal health
- Adequate housing, transport, finance, access to support services, safety, a sense of community, contact with family, attitude of host community ...

Home safety awareness

- Awareness of ageing effects
- Awareness of house-related injuries – fall, slips and trips in bathrooms & kitchens because of wet or slippery floors; cuts or burns while cooking
- Lack of awareness of the side effects of medications and of the simultaneous use of Western and traditional/herbal medicines
- Misjudgment of their own abilities
- Lack of knowledge about home repairs and maintenance

Access to service & support

- Migration factors
- Financial concerns
- Concerns about being a burden to the family

I feel language barrier is the biggest problem. I was always in need of my son's accompanying who did the interpretation. My son was willing to accompany me but he needed to work until night time. When I was sick, he needed to go different places with me – family doctor, blood test, hospital, CT scanning – even going to have blood test, [at] the reception was a Kiwi [and] I couldn't talk to her. I felt that was a burden for him and I felt bad. I feel awkward that I couldn't be a help to him while asking him to help me all the time (Chinese respondent).

Challenges

- Support that would help older Chinese to age in place:
 - access to information
 - interpretation
 - transport
 - housing
 - Chinese associations
 - friends
 - home maintenance
- Building familial and community capacity to respond to the needs of older people