

Interpreting dementia with care: The MINDSET Study



“In multilingual and multicultural societies, translating and interpreting services play a vital role in ensuring equitable access to public services. This project brings that mission to life.”

Associate Professor Erika Gonzalez

**Social Equity
Research Centre
researchers**

Associate Professor Erika Gonzalez Garcia



Project Lead

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**Project
partners**

National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), Dementia Australia, Australian Institute of Interpreters & Translators (AUSIT), the Migrant and Refugee Health Partnership, the NSW Health Interpreting Service, All Graduates Interpreting and Translating Service, Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National, and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care.

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Imagine navigating a dementia diagnosis when English isn't your first language — and neither is your interpreter's training.

Until recently, most interpreters supporting cognitive assessments in Australia had received little or no preparation in dementia care. Many didn't know what to expect. Some had never supported cognitive assessments before. Yet the stakes couldn't be higher for patients and families, especially in Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

That's where the MINDSET Study comes in.

This **world-first project co-designed a training program with interpreters, clinicians, carers and agencies to improve interpreter-mediated dementia assessments.**

The need was clear: "We need training — now," interpreters told the team.

What followed was a rigorous research program grounded in equity, care and real-world applications. A randomised controlled trial showed the training significantly improved interpreter readiness and confidence.

Since then, the course has been scaled nationally, reaching 865 interpreters across 97 languages, with a 99% pass rate.

To ensure long-term sustainability, the training package is now freely available through the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), alongside core resources shared via the Open Science Framework.

"After this training, I finally felt ready to support a patient and their family properly."

Interpreter, NAATI

In just a few years, **MINDSET has equipped 14% of all interpreters in Australia** — many of whom had never supported a cognitive assessment before. Through simulated assessments, interpreters gained new confidence, skills and clarity in a deeply sensitive clinical setting.

And the ripple effects are growing. MINDSET is now informing Action 4 of the National Dementia Action Plan and has sparked a new European trial.

This research is about making sure that no matter your language, background or diagnosis, you are heard — and supported.

This is research that changes systems — and changes lives.