

NEDA Comments to 'Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage' Paper
Issued by the Social Inclusion Board

July 2009

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Introduction

The National Ethnic Disability Alliance takes this opportunity to thank the Social Inclusion Board for conducting research into the cycles of disadvantage and inviting comments from the community.

The National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) is the national peak organisation representing the rights and interests of people with disability from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds, their families and carers throughout Australia. NEDA is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FACSI) to provide policy advice to the Australian Government and other agencies on national issues affecting the people we represent.

NEDA actively promotes the equal participation of people with disability from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds in all aspects of Australian society. We manage a range of projects relating to ethnic and disability communities and work closely with our state and territory members to ensure that its policy advice reflects the lived experiences of people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds who are living with disability.

The Productivity Commission Report on Government Services 2009 estimates that one in every four people with disability is a person of either first or second generation CaLD, representing approximately 1 million people across Australia. This figure constitutes a quarter of the total population of Australians with disability. People from NESB are the second largest group of people with disability, after women with disability.

Yet despite their numbers, people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds who are living with a disability, as well as their carers, are a highly neglected group. In the ethnicity sector, issues around their disability are vastly overlooked, and the disability sector is largely unaware of the issues surrounding ethnicity. Little research is conducted into the lives of people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds and they are underrepresented in official data collections including that of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. It is no surprise then that service and support in both the ethnic and disability sectors complain of low service uptake of people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds.

See Appendix A 'NEDA Facts Sheet 2: Access to Disability Services for People From Non-English Speaking Backgrounds With Disability' (P10).

For these reasons NEDA believes that people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds are one of the most disadvantaged and excluded groups in Australia.

The Board sites “gaps in resources, opportunities and capabilities” as the key elements of the ‘cycles of disadvantage’.

People from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds who also have a disability or are caring for someone who has a disability, are disadvantaged by the limitations imposed on them by their cultural and/or linguistic restrictions as well as restrictions that may occur due to their disability.

Carers who tend to the necessary daily activities of a person with disability, such as going to the toilet, eating, etc, are engulfed in the cycle of disadvantaged as they forego most of their own opportunities in order to look after the person with disability.

The intersection of disability and ethnicity does not create layers of disadvantage; rather, the impact is exponential and can precipitate new barriers to resources, opportunities and capabilities. To take an example, a person who has a disability and has limited English proficiency can be ostracised by his/her own ethnic or linguistic group because of his/her disability and also excluded by peers with disability due to his/her lack of English. The interplay of ethnicity and disability here often exacerbates existing forms of entrenched disadvantage and disempowerment.

Table 1 shows from the 2006 Census, the disparity between people from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) background when compared to people from a non-CaLD background for those who need assistance. Among those who are employed, comparatively fewer people from CaLD backgrounds with disability are in employment than people from non CaLD backgrounds with disability.

These figures indicate that people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds with disability are clearly disadvantaged, even over their non-CaLD counterparts with disability.

If there was equality in employment practices the number of persons employed would be approximately 10,772 persons not the 7,705 persons recorded. When we examine those from a non-CaLD background, the reverse situation exists.

There is an employment gap where the CaLD proportion is 16% whilst it should be 22.4%, which is the figure for people from non-CaLD backgrounds with disability. Overall, these figures demonstrate that people with disability in Australia are highly disadvantaged, but those from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds are at a greater disadvantage. This implies that

there are relatively fewer persons from a CaLD background obtaining employment.

Those seeking employment and those not in the labour force have similar distributions of approximately between 20 and 23 %. Overall, these figures demonstrate that people with disability in Australia are highly disadvantaged, but those from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds are at a greater disadvantage. This in turn, has knock-on effects on housing, health and other aspects of life.

Appendix C contains tables that demonstrate the disadvantage of people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds with disability.

LFSP Labour Force Status * ANC1P Ancestry 1st Response Cross tabulation

LFSP Labour Force Status		ANC1P Ancestry 1st Response		Total
		CALD	Non CaLD	
Employed	Count	7,705	40,400	48,105
	Expected Count	10,772	37,333	48,105
Not in labourforce	Count	126,293	423,242	549,535
	Expected Count	123,056	426,479	549,535
Unemployed	Count	1,419	5,678	7,097
	Expected Count	1,589	5,508	7,097
Total	Count	135,417	469,320	604,737

New Zealander, Scottish, Australian, Welsh, British, nec (includes Falkland Islander), Canadian, British, American, Channel Islander, Manx, Irish and English

Non CaLD, Table generated using ABS TableBuilder© Commonwealth of Australia, 2009
Source: Brian Cooper, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney 2008.

This further intensifies the poverty experienced by these groups and increases their caught in a web of poverty, many people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds with disability become highly vulnerable.

Vulnerable groups are also subject to human rights violations as individuals often lack the confidence and/or necessary skills to speak up for themselves. Human

rights violations for people from culturally diverse and/or non-English speaking backgrounds include:

- Systemic barriers to prevent migrants with disability and their families entry into Australia. The pretext for refusing entry into Australia for migrants with disability is the assumed cost that the person would impose on the Australian community and government. This rationale is applied indiscriminately to people with disability who have skills which would benefit Australia. Those who do make it into Australia on a temporary visa, and are in employment or undertaking studies, are not eligible to disability services even though they are contributing to the Australian economy.
- Denial of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) and related services for migrants with disability who do manage to receive residency in Australia in the first 10 years of their lives in their new home. Without a regular income and associated services, such as accommodation support and travel concession to use public transport, the person's independence is reduced and their ability to learn English can be restricted.
- Exclusion from major databases – e.g ethnicity is inadequately recorded in disability databases such as the Survey on Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC).

How do people enter these cycles and become trapped in them?

Those who are disadvantaged tend to be different in some way – appearance, language, behaviour, etc – from the mainstream, or those who hold the hegemony. Social constructs and systemic barriers based on false perceptions and misunderstandings often keep people in the cycle of disadvantage.

The cycle of disadvantage for migrants begins when they arrive in their new homeland. Immigration has been a part of human life since the beginning of our written history. Some people choose to migrate in the hope of a better future; others are forced to leave their homeland due to war, famine and other disasters. Many migrants settle in new countries, integrate and do well for themselves. However, these migrants often share something in common with the host country, such as appearance, language and/or religion.

Many other migrants struggle as they do not share common elements. These migrants are often accused for taking all the jobs in an economic downturn even though they tend to work in low paying jobs with bad working conditions doing the tasks that others don't want to do.

Disability can be acquired through accidents of all kinds, some people are born with a disability and the impact on their lives is immediate. Others are born with a disability which lays dormant until they reach their teens or adulthood. The perception of disability varies from culture to culture.

Some cultures are more accepting of people with a disability and allow them to participate in society to the best of their ability. E.g. a person with a disability can look after the children while their parents go off to work.

Other cultures view disability negatively, and it is stigmatised. At worst, people with disabilities can be persecuted and killed. Often they are isolated and ignored. In some cultures, having a child born with a disability reflects badly on the parents so the child is hidden. If found, the whole family can be ostracised, visit www.mdaa.org.au for further information.

False perceptions and misconceptions translate into government policies that create systemic barriers. In recent years, we have witnessed the collapse of multicultural policies due largely to world events and the anti-terrorism campaigns. This has resulted in reduced funding in vital migrant services such as child care for mothers learning English.

While more service and support providers are providing information in alternative languages, the information is in writing and those who lack skills in literacy are still missing out.

For people with disabilities, much of society is inaccessible and this limits their participation in the Australian society. While there is now technology to aid people with various disabilities, the aids and equipment are unaffordable for many. The infrastructure is largely unsuitable for people with disabilities to move around their community e.g. busy roads that do not have audible signals to indicate when it is safe to cross, can limit the mobility of a person who is blind or vision impaired. The presence of stairs and curbs restricts the mobility of wheelchair users.

Such restriction of mobility prevents many people with a disability from accessing important services and information. Lack of government policy to build accessibility into all programs, services and infrastructure, maintains the exclusion of people with a disability.

The scaling down of the multicultural policy and lack of attention to address the issues of people with disabilities retains the double disadvantage for people from culturally diverse and/or non-English speaking backgrounds with disabilities.

There are some provisions to safeguard people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds with disability, such as the racial Vilification Act 1975 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992. However, these provisions require individuals to speak up and make complaints, yet many people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds do not have the skills or confidence to make their voices heard. Moreover, Australia's discrimination system does not adequately accommodate for those experiencing double discrimination due to their disability and race. A claim must be made under the

Disability Discrimination Act or the Racial Vilification Act and thus the issues are not sufficiently addressed.

How do people avoid or break out of cycles of disadvantage, that is what is it that makes a difference for these people?

There are many examples of people from NESB with disability leading successful and fulfilling lives and making valuable contributions in all areas of life in Australia.

Consultations and research conducted by NEDA and our members indicate that a good social network that is based on positive attitudes is instrumental in the improvement of the lives of people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds with disability. Some people have supportive families who acknowledge their abilities and encourage them to strive for their potential. Others receive this support from friends and/or their religion, faith or spiritual networks.

Through their social networks, people from culturally diverse and/or non-English speaking backgrounds gain the skills and ability to make their voices heard. Importantly, these skills are further ingrained and nourished by government policies. NEDA strongly believes that linking social inclusion with human rights frameworks and support for advocacy provides a direction for giving people opportunities to be heard. Furthermore, policies, services and supports that incorporate cultural competency in their ethos and operation, tend to attract more people from culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds with disability who may otherwise not have reached out.

This section is based on a report published by NEDA in 2008 entitled, 'This is My Home: Belonging, Disability and Diversity' available for download from our website: www.neda.org.au.

Does personal choice play a role in breaking cycles of disadvantage, and if so how can you help build motivation and aspirations?

Personal choice can play an important part in breaking the cycles of disadvantage; however, one must have the means to make choices. These means include decision making skills, information, education and support.

A person's culture or disability may reduce their ability to make decisions. In such cases, it is vital that a person is supported to make choices. Without the support, it is all too easy for a family member or others to make a choice for the person. Such choices may not necessarily lift a person out of the cycle of disadvantage. Rather, it could further increase their disadvantage.

Supported decision making can incorporate the information and education necessary to make particular decisions.

All decisions have consequences, thus further support may be required to assist a person to carry out their decision e.g. a person from a non-English background with disability, who decides to move into his/her own accommodation, may face the risk of losing his/her family ties due to strong family opposition. Without adequate support to help him maintain good relations with his/her family and develop independent living skills, the person may not be able to go ahead with his/her decision.

Are there any successful interventions that should be considered?

Substantive Equality

In December 2004, WA endorsed the Substantive Equality Framework. Substantive equality draws on the principles of the Equal Opportunities ACT, the Racial Villification Act, and the WA Charter of Multiculturalism to promote equal outcomes for people from Aboriginal, culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds using services of Government agencies and those they fund.

In order to produce equal outcomes for people from Aboriginal, culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds, Substantive Equality provides a framework by which Government agencies and the organizations they fund can develop culturally sensitive strategies to support and develop the skills, confidence and contribution level of these groups to the WA community.

Substantive Equality thus acknowledges that some individuals require assistance, such as interpreting services, in order to reach the level playing field. For further information visit: <http://www.equalopportunity.wa.gov.au/ar0405-4.html>

The Disability Services Commission of WA (DSC) is one of 23 government agencies who has adopted the Substantive Equality Framework and is currently in the process of implementation. Anecdotal evidence seems to show an increase in the uptake of services by people from Aboriginal, culturally diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds. However, the report on the DSC's implementation of the Substantive Equality Framework is not yet available. For further information, please go to: <http://www.disability.wa.gov.au/dsc/annualreport/legalcompliance/govtpolicy/substantiveequal.html>

Stigma Reduction Project

The Multicultural Mental Health Australia (MMHA) has developed a training package to "build the capacity of CALD communities to address the stigma associated with mental illness and mental health problems and to build the capacity of CALD communities to support those affected by mental illness and mental health problems". For further information, please visit:

[http://www.dhi.gov.au/default.aspx?ArticleID=770#Stigma Reduction Project](http://www.dhi.gov.au/default.aspx?ArticleID=770#Stigma%20Reduction%20Project)
As it is quite a new project, an evaluation is not yet available.

Are you aware of any current research which is focussed on this?

In February 2009, NEDA released its research paper on inclusion and exclusion. This paper entitled, 'Cultural and Linguistic Inclusion? Literature Review on Social Inclusion, Cohesion and Culture' can be downloaded from www.neda.org.au



Access to Disability Services

for people from Non English Speaking Backgrounds with Disability

Disability support services enable people with disability to live independently and participate in social and economic life.

People from non English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB) with disability face significant barriers to accessing disability services in Australia. The Productivity Commission Report on Government Services 2009 suggests that people from NESB with disability are not using government funded disability services.

✘ Accommodation Services provide housing and / or support to people with disability within a residential setting, including group homes, large residential facilities, and some in home support services. People born in a Non English Speaking Country are approximately 4 times less likely to receive accommodation support services than people born in English Speaking Countries.

✘ Community Support Services provide support for individuals to live independently and include therapy, early intervention and case management. People born in a Non English Speaking Country are approximately 2.5 times less likely to receive community support services than people born in English Speaking Countries.

✘ Community Access Services provide skills and activities to people with disability including learning and life skills development and recreation / holiday programs. People born in a Non English Speaking Country are approximately 2.5 times less likely to receive community access services than people born in English Speaking Countries.

✘ Respite Services provide short term breaks for families and carers who support people with disability. Families and carers of people born in a Non English Speaking Country are approximately 3 times less likely to receive respite services than families and carers of people born in English Speaking Countries.

✘ Employment Services either provide support to individuals to enter the open labour market, or provide employment within a supported environment. People born in a Non English Speaking Country are approximately 2 times less likely to receive employment services than people born in English Speaking Countries.



N E D A



Participation includes disability, culture and language.

Australia has recently ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Convention urges respect for difference (Article 3), equality before the law (Article 5), freedom from discrimination (Article 5) and recognition and respect for culture and language (Article 30).

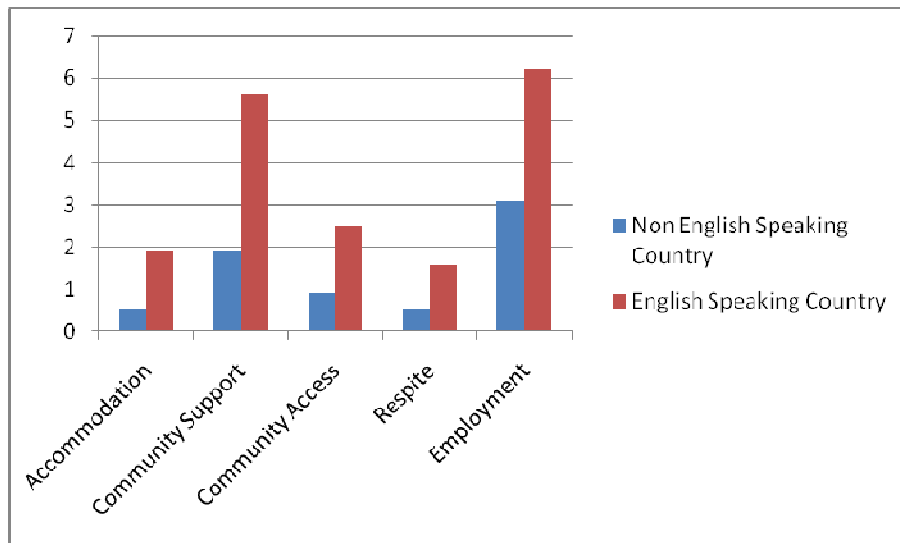


Table: Participation per 1000 people in Disability Services by Country of Birth

NEDA urges Australian, State and Territory Governments to take seriously the poor access to disability services for people from NESB with disability by:

- ✘ Prioritising and planning for improved service deliver to people from NESB with disability
- ✘ Ensuring that services are culturally competent and flexible to meet the needs of a diverse community
- ✘ Committing to meeting translating and interpreting needs
- ✘ Developing resources for advocacy and research in order to improve understanding and recognise the rights of people from NESB with disability.

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Appendix B (P14).

INCP Individual Income (gross weekly) * ANC1P Ancestry 1st Response
Crosstabulation

		ANC1P Ancestry 1st Response	
		CALD	Non CaLD
High Income GE \$1300	Count	1,382	7,310
	Expected Count	1,946	6,746
Middle Income \$ 600 to \$ 1299	Count	5,132	32,305
	Expected Count	8,383	29,054
Low Income \$ 0 to \$ 599	Count	128,903	429,705
	Expected Count	125,087	433,521
Total	Count	135,417	469,320

Chi-Square
Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1,985.51	2	.000
N of Valid Cases	604,737.00		

New Zealander, Scottish,
Australian, Welsh, British, nec
(includes Falkland Islander),
Canadian, British, nfd,
American, Channel Islander,
Manx, Irish and English

Non CaLD Table generated using ABS TableBuilder © Commonwealth of Australia, 2009

QALLP Non-School Qualification: Level of Education * ANC1P Ancestry 1st
Response Crosstabulation

		CALD	Non CaLD	Total
Postgraduate Degree Level	Count	1,126	2,901	4,027
	Expected Count	902	3,125	4,027
Graduate Diploma and Graduate	Count	423	2,102	2,525
	Expected Count	565	1,960	2,525

Certificate Level				
Bachelor Degree Level	Count	5,923	16,610	22,533
	Expected Count	5,046	17,487	22,533
Advanced Diploma and Diploma Level	Count	5,558	18,616	24,174
	Expected Count	5,413	18,761	24,174
Certificate Level	Count	13,485	58,716	72,201
	Expected Count	16,168	56,033	72,201
Level of education inadequately described	Count	2,127	7,430	9,557
	Expected Count	2,140	7,417	9,557
Level of education not stated	Count	11,789	48,775	60,564
	Expected Count	13,562	47,002	60,564
Not applicable	Count	94,986	314,170	409,156
	Expected Count	91,621	317,535	409,156
Total	Count	135,417	469,320	604,737

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1,351.18	7	.000
N of Valid Cases	604,737.00		

New Zealander, Scottish, Australian, Welsh, British, nec (includes Falkland Islander), Canadian, British, nfd, American, Channel Islander, Manx, Irish and English

Non CaLD Table generated using ABS TableBuilder © Commonwealth of Australia, 2009

HHCD Household
Composition *
ANC1P Ancestry
1st Response
Crosstabulation

		ANC1P Ancestry 1st Response			Total
		CALD	Non CaLD	NS	
Multiple family household	Count	7,987	8,701	524	17,212
	Expected Count	3,328	12,586	1,298	17,212
Non-family household	Count	23,713	105,050	4,091	132,854
	Expected Count	25,689	97,147	10,017	132,854
Not applicable	Count	16,757	101,236	35,131	153,124
	Expected Count	29,609	111,969	11,546	153,124
Not classifiable	Count	804	5,978	192	6,974
	Expected Count	1,349	5,100	526	6,974
One family household	Count	86,498	292,421	12,999	391,918
	Expected Count	75,784	286,584	29,551	391,918
Total	Count	135,759	513,386	52,937	702,082

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	78,758.42	8	.000
N of Valid Cases	702,082.00		

New Zealander, Scottish, Australian, Welsh, British, nec (includes Falkland Islander), Canadian, British, nfd, American, Channel Islander, Manx, Irish and English

Non CaLD
Table generated
using ABS
TableBuilder
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TEND Tenure Type * ANC1P Ancestry 1st Response
Crosstabulation

		ANC1P Ancestry 1st Response			Total
		CALD	Non CaLD	NS	
Not Stated or Applicable	Count	19,680	111,255	36,362	167,297
	Expected Count	32,350	122,333	12,614	167,297

Other	Count	2,647	11,789	438	14,874
	Expected Count	2,876	10,876	1,121	14,874
Owned	Count	81,040	275,893	10,226	367,159
	Expected Count	70,996	268,479	27,684	367,159
Rental Accommodation	Count	32,392	114,449	5,911	152,752
	Expected Count	29,537	111,697	11,518	152,752
Total	Count	135,759	513,386	52,937	702,082

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	66892.448 ^a	6	.000
N of Valid Cases	702082		

HIND
Household
Income (gross
weekly) *
ANC1P
Ancestry 1st
Response
Crosstabulation

		ANC1P Ancestry 1st Response			Total
		CALD	Non CaLD	NS	
High Income	Count	28,714	86,487	3,598	118,799
	Expected Count	22,972	86,870	8,957	118,799
Low Income	Count	46,632	149,630	6,718	202,980
	Expected Count	39,249	148,426	15,305	202,980
Middle	Count	43,614	175,759	7,467	226,840
	Expected Count	43,863	165,873	17,104	226,840
Not Applicable	Count	16,799	101,510	35,154	153,463
	Expected Count	29,675	112,217	11,571	153,463
Total	Count	135,759	513,386	52,937	702,082

Chi-Square
Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	71552.061 ^a	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	59043.489	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	30599.879	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	702082		

HHCD Household Composition				ANC1P Ancestry 1st Response		Total	
				CaLD	Non CaLD		
Multiple family household	TEND Tenure Type	Other	Count	115	87	202	
			Expected Count	96	106	202	
	Owned	Owned	Count	6,049	6,654	12,703	
			Expected Count	6,050	6,653	12,703	
		Rental Accommodation	Count	1,682	1,886	3,568	
			Expected Count	1,699	1,869	3,568	
	Total	Total	Count	7,846	8,627	16,473	
			Expected Count	7,846	8,627	16,473	
	Non-family household	TEND Tenure Type	Other	Count	992	5,412	6,404
				Expected Count	1,185	5,219	6,404
Owned		Owned	Count	12,824	54,682	67,506	
			Expected Count	12,488	55,018	67,506	
		Rental Accommodation	Count	8,920	40,072	48,992	
			Expected Count	9,063	39,929	48,992	
Total		Total	Count	22,736	100,166	122,902	
			Expected Count	22,736	100,166	122,902	
Not classifiable		TEND Tenure Type	Other	Count	74	372	446
				Expected Count	53	393	446
	Owned	Owned	Count	412	3,538	3,950	
			Expected Count	470	3,480	3,950	
		Rental Accommodation	Count	256	1,590	1,846	
			Expected	219	1,627	1,846	

			Count			
Total		Count	742	5,500	6,242	
		Expected Count	742	5,500	6,242	
One family household	TEND Tenure Type	Other	Count	1,466	5,918	7,384
			Expected Count	1,680	5,704	7,384
	Owned	Count	61,755	211,019	272,774	
		Expected Count	62,049	210,725	272,774	
	Rental Accommodation	Count	21,534	70,901	92,435	
		Expected Count	21,027	71,408	92,435	
Total		Count	84,755	287,838	372,593	

Chi-Square Tests

HHCD Household Composition		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Multiple family household	Pearson Chi-Square	7.348 ^a	2	.025
	N of Valid Cases	16473		
Non-family household	Pearson Chi-Square	52.315 ^b	2	.000
	N of Valid Cases	122902		
Not classifiable	Pearson Chi-Square	24.343 ^c	2	.000
	N of Valid Cases	6242		
One family household	Pearson Chi-Square	52.839 ^d	2	.000
	N of Valid Cases	372593		

Source: Brian Cooper, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney 2008.