

## Aged Care Services & COVID-19 Response in Japan & Australia

**Dr Mari Miyake (PhD) lecturer, Kansai Medical University, Osaka, Japan speaking**



WA Speakers(seated): Irene Mooney, CEO, MYVISTA, Theresa Kwok, CEO, Community Aged Care & Henrietta Podgoska, Umbrella  
Standing from left: Devika Solanki, Intern form Edith Cowan University (ECU), Mary Gurgone, Deputy Chair, Association for Culturally Appropriate Services (AfCAS) and Dinusha Hemasiri, ECU volunteer

Thresa Kwok at the Podium with Dwayne Osborne, technology support and Rika Asaoka providing online translation to Dr Mari Miyake seated to the left while other speakers, audience and online participants from Japan and Victoria listen.



**Elizabeth Drozd, CEO of Australian Multicultural Community Services speaking online**



COVID-19 has disproportionately attacked the aged-care sector globally, but some countries have done better than others at protecting those most vulnerable to coronavirus. We learned about some of the differences between Japan, WA and Victoria at a recent online seminar “Aged Care Services & COVID-19 Response in Japan & Australia (Victoria & WA), conducted by the Association for Culturally Appropriate Services (AfCAS).

**Association for Culturally Appropriate Services (AfCAS)**

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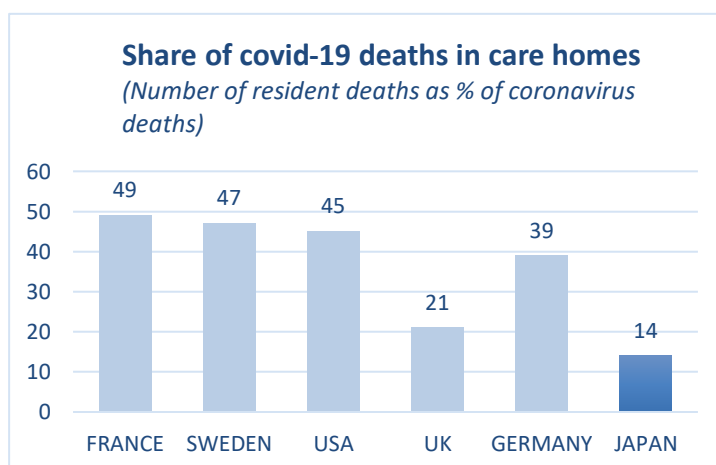
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Given the global pandemic and Japan having the world's oldest population with 28% of the total population over 65 years of age, it is noteworthy that the nation has amongst the world's lowest death rates from COVID-19. In contrast, there is a disastrous impact on Victorian aged-care residents of the recent COVID-19 outbreak, with about 75% of all deaths in Victoria occurring in residential aged care. In Australia on 22 September 2020, COVID-19 caused 634 deaths of people living in residential aged care services subsidised by Government. Compare this to about 750 deaths in aged care in Japan despite Japan having a population four times larger than Australia with a higher percentage of the population over 65 years of age than Australia.

The speakers provided a great overview of some of the distinctive aspects of the aged care sector in Japan from mask wearing, to checking temperature of staff four times a day on a non-contact thermometer, to limiting the elderly contact to particular aged care workers, to the focus on preventative therapies as people age. Some of the planning to meet the shortfall of care workers involving overseas workers is new to Japan while Australia has had a large overseas-born sector among our direct care workers. So, the opportunity for sharing knowledge and experiences is mutually beneficial.

Our speakers shared experiences from residential, home and community programs in WA and Victoria that were focused on elderly migrants. The fantastic examples of caring for the mental, emotional and physical health of elderly migrants and their carers were inspirational, see the photos from the event. Contact us at <https://www.afcas.net/> to get a recording of the webinar.



For more information please contact:

Mary Gurgone, Deputy Chair

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