



YOUR CULTURAL WELLBEING

Title Your Cultural Wellbeing

About the workshop

Your Cultural Wellbeing is a two-hour, face-to-face, highly interactive workshop. It includes group discussions and activities designed to help IMGs better navigate the challenges of working across cultures—without losing their own cultural identity.

The aim of this workshop is to give participants the knowledge and skills to cross-culture code-switch—that is, to adjust to the New Zealand context while still remaining true to themselves.

Who the course is for

This workshop is for IMGs who:

- Are currently registered and practising in New Zealand
- Have practised in a country other than New Zealand for two or more years

Why this workshop is needed

New Zealand continues to rely on IMGs, but retention remains a challenge. Research by Mariska Mannes (2023) found that:

- IMGs are often expected to cross-culture code-switch without support
- The greater the cultural and professional differences, the greater the psychological stress experienced
- Many IMGs feel frustrated, unsupported, and vulnerable in their transition
- Minimal support has contributed to lower retention rates

Workshop outcomes

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Identify their own cultural values
- Understand key New Zealand values
- Recognise differences between their own values and those of New Zealand, and understand the significance of these differences
- Understand the concept of cross-cultural code-switching
- Develop strategies to effectively cross-culture code-switch (adjust) to the New Zealand cultural and medical context without losing themselves

Workshop Developer: Dr Mariska Mannes

Mariska completed her PhD at the University of Otago in 2023. Her research focused on understanding the cultural challenges faced by IMGs seeking to practise authentically and effectively—and to remain in New Zealand.

Interview results showed there was an expectation for IMGs to cross-culture code-switch¹. The greater the cultural and professional differences of IMGs compared to New Zealand-trained doctors, the greater the intensity of psychological stressors experienced when switching. IMGs received minimal support, making it difficult to overcome challenges, leading to frustration and feelings of vulnerability. A sense of losing one's identity, or part of it, was reported by IMGs, as were challenges to deeply held beliefs.

Mariska has developed *Your Cultural Wellbeing* as a pilot programme in response to her findings. Following conversations with the Medical Council of New Zealand and Te Whatu Ora, both organisations acknowledge that more must be done to support IMGs.

Mariska has over 20 years' experience developing and delivering cultural competency training through her work with Te Whatu Ora Waitematā's CALD team (now eCALD). Stories shared by migrant practitioners in these sessions inspired her research.

¹ Cross-culture code-switch is *the conscious act of deviating from one's native, default cultural code of interaction in order to meet or match expectations for behavior in a foreign cultural setting.*

What you'll need to do to join the workshop

To take part, you will need to:

- Register through the NZIMG Learning Management System
- Sign a confidentiality statement
- Complete a short pre-course questionnaire (approx. 10 minutes; this will inform the workshop)
- Attend the two-hour, in-person Your Cultural Wellbeing session
- Complete an anonymous post-course survey

Privacy and use of information

- Registration information will remain confidential and held only by NZIMG – Deliquo Communication Ltd
- Participant names may be included in reporting for validation purposes
- All feedback will be anonymised and used solely for the purposes of improving the workshop and IMG orientation.

A final word

Some discussions in the workshop may highlight challenging or uncomfortable experiences. We acknowledge this and have included time at the end of the session for optional debriefing.

This workshop is about recognising the value IMGs bring to New Zealand and improving the systems that support them. We see this as a step forward—and we hope you'll see it as an opportunity to contribute to positive change for current and future IMGs.

For further information please contact Mariska

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