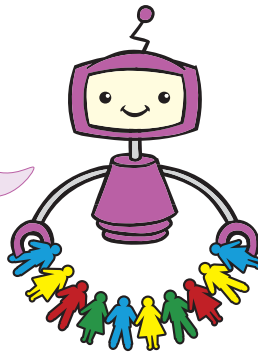


Quickly, quickly, I feel sickly

Whenever I don't feel well, all I need are new batteries and a service to get me feeling tip-top, but Peter and Anna need different kinds of care. Whenever they are sick I worry about them, and really want to help out. I wonder if the ways we look after the sick are different in Indonesia. Let's find out ...


LINKS TO:

Stage 3, Module 7

 Learning Object 2: *Where do we start?*

1 Ouch!

Bless you!

Australians generally share a range of customs and rituals for expressing sympathy when someone is unwell, or for managing their own illness. For example, if you sneeze, someone in the room will generally say, 'Bless you!'

If you have a runny nose, people will expect you to blow your nose regularly on a tissue rather than sniffle and snort. When you cough, you will be expected to cover your mouth.

If you have a cold, and are home in bed, a good friend might bring you chicken soup, which is thought to be a suitably comforting, nutritious and easy-to-eat food for an invalid. They might also bring a movie to watch, or a book or magazine to read.

Most Australians attribute illnesses to viruses or other organic causes, and treat their illnesses using a range of medical treatments.

Nevertheless, some people do have unusual ideas about health care! For example, perhaps you have heard of a cure for warts that involves the full moon and some old potato peelings. Or maybe you know someone who tried to determine what gender their baby would be by dangling a wedding ring over their belly and watching which way it swung.

Get well soon

In Australia, if you are very unwell or require surgery, you will usually be admitted to a hospital.

While someone is in hospital they are cared for by a range of health professionals, such as doctors, nurses, social workers, physiotherapists and dietitians.

Most Australian hospitals have set visiting hours, which vary depending on the type of ward a patient is staying in. Maternity wards, for example, often have short visiting hours for friends and family, longer visiting hours for fathers, and specific times when no visitors are allowed, so that the mothers and babies can rest.

If you visit an Australian hospital, you will notice that many visitors bring (or send) flowers or cards to the person who has been hospitalised. Some other common gifts are fresh fruit, or small personal items to make the stay in hospital more comfortable.

Have you ever wondered why people bring flowers? Perhaps it is to bring a little of the fresh and healthy outdoors into the sick person's room, and because the scent of flowers is preferable to the smells in a hospital.

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You've probably heard the familiar saying, 'An apple a day keeps the doctor away'. Fresh fruit as a gift for someone who is unwell provides a healthy alternative to what is often an unfamiliar diet of hospital food, and is a reflection of the importance Australians place on a healthy diet as part of a cure.

Get-well cards are frequently displayed in a hospital room. They often contain sentimental or humorous messages, expressing the sender's hopes that the patient recovers soon and returns to their usual activities.

Caring for older Australians

In Australia, many aged people live in their own homes for as long as possible, usually if they are in reasonable health, seeing this as a means of maintaining their independence. Others live with their adult children, who often provide additional

health care if it is needed. Carers — that is, people who care for an elderly person — are provided with some community and government support, such as allowances, access to respite care and other services.

However, a significant number of elderly people live in aged-care facilities. The facilities available offer a wide range of care and cost options. In retirement villages, residents live independently and are generally in good health, though healthcare staff and facilities are often on hand. Nursing homes offer a range of care, from low-level care in hostel-type accommodation, through to high-level care where the facilities are more like hospital wards. Some older Australians with increasing health issues prefer to move into a nursing home with low-level care so as not to be a 'burden' on their families or friends. Those who require around-the-clock care or more physical assistance than family members are able to provide usually go to a nursing home with high-level care.

2 More than *masuk angin*

Dokter, dokter

In Indonesia, when people are unwell, they usually visit either a *dokter umum* 'general practitioner' or a *dokter spesialis* 'specialist'. If their illness is not serious, or does not require surgery, they are generally cared for at home by their family. If, however, someone is really ill, or *sakit parah*, they can be taken to a *rumah sakit* 'hospital'. In places where there are no doctors or a hospital is not available, people can go to a *Puskesmas (Pusat Kesehatan Masyarakat)*, which is similar to a community health centre, where they can get free or low-cost health care. Unfortunately, since not everyone can access professional health care in Indonesia, it is very common for people to be cared for by their family at home, even if they are very unwell.

In Indonesia, like in Australia, friends and family will visit people who are sick and in hospital. When in hospital, visitors must observe the visiting hours: *jam Besuch* or *waktu berkunjung*. The word *besuk* comes originally from a Dutch word, *bezoeken*, which mean 'to visit', or *berkunjung*. Typically, they bring gifts of flowers or fresh fruit, especially *jeruk* 'oranges' as it is

believed that the vitamin C in oranges will help speed up the healing process. If permitted, visitors will also bring food because hospital food is not always very appealing or tasty. In some cases, a family member will stay at the hospital with the sick person. This usually happens when the sick person is a child or an elderly person. Indonesians believe that family members can attend to the needs of a sick person better than anyone else.

If someone is very sick and is cared for by the family at home, it is quite acceptable for friends to come and visit, bringing gifts not only for the sick but also for family members who are caring for the sick person. Usually, the gift would be in the form of food. Other family members who visit might also give the family some money to help share the costs of caring for the sick person.

Kerokan

One unusual healthcare treatment in Indonesia is *kerokan*. This is best described as the act of drawing an oiled coin over the skin repeatedly until it turns

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bright red. *Kerokan* is the most common treatment for *masuk angin* 'catching a cold', which is the usual term that Indonesians use for feeling generally unwell. Some people blame the changing weather, as it moves from the dry season to the rainy season, for example, as the cause of their feeling unwell. It is called *masuk angin* because *angin* 'the wind' gets into your body, and *kerokan* is believed to be the best way to make the wind leave your body!

Rumah jompo

It is not only sick people who are cared for by their family, but the elderly — who are commonly referred to as *manusia lanjut usia* or the shorter expression *manula* — as well. In Indonesia, the idea of a *rumah jompo* or *panti jompo* 'nursing home' is different from

that in developed countries. In *rumah jompo* the care given and the facilities available to the residents are not as developed as they are in Australia. Furthermore, many people consider that being sent to a *rumah jompo* is like being ousted from your family and relatives, because they do not want to look after you. Therefore, in Indonesia, there is a belief, or even an expectation, that, while someone still has a family, they should not need to be cared for in a *rumah jompo*.

Children are expected and feel obliged to care for their parents when they are old and frail. It is very common to find an elderly person living with a daughter and her family. In situations like this, the elderly person is not expected to contribute financially to the family, even if the family is poor.

Exercises

Exercise 1

Let's think a little more about how Australians support those who are sick.

- 1.1 Have you ever been sick? What did your friends or family do to support you while you were sick? What kinds of gifts did they bring to you, or send to you?**

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1.2 Have you been to visit someone in an Australian hospital? Write about what you did when you went to see them.

Consider questions such as: What time of day, or day of the week, did you go to see them? How long did you stay? Did you bring a gift? What did you do while you were visiting the patient? Were there particular questions you asked, or topics you talked about?

1.3 In Learning Object 1, *See you soon*, Nenek was hospitalised for a short time. As people age, they often need increased levels of care. In Australia, many older people live in aged-care facilities such as nursing homes.

What do you know about aged-care facilities? Have you ever visited someone in a nursing home?

Based on your prior understanding, or after doing some research, describe a typical Australian nursing home or other aged-care facility.

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1.4 What values, attitudes and beliefs inform the ways Australians care for people who are unwell, particularly the aged. Give reasons to support your answer.

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Exercise 2

Now let's think about how Indonesian people support those who are sick.

2.1 When a person in Indonesia is sick, what kinds of gifts or messages do their friends and family send? Are there particular things they would usually do for the sick person?

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2.2 If someone was hospitalised in Indonesia, how would their friends and family support them?

Consider questions such as: Would they go to visit them, when and for how long? Would they take a gift? What would they do while they were visiting?

2.3 In Exercise 1.3, you thought about aged care in Australia. Now let's consider what aged care is like in Indonesia.

Write about typical arrangements for aged care in Indonesia. In what ways are these arrangements in Indonesia similar to, or different from, those in Australia? Give reasons for your answer.

2.4 What values, attitudes and beliefs inform the ways Indonesian people care for those who are unwell, particularly the aged? Give reasons to support your answer.

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Exercise 3

3.1 What similarities and differences are there between the ways Australians and Indonesian people show their affection and concern when their friends or family are unwell?

3.2 How do these differences or similarities reflect the differences or similarities between Indonesian and Australian cultural values, attitudes and beliefs?

Exercise 4

The following question asks you to think about some of the ethical issues that surround aged care.

Ethics, or ethical philosophy, is the study of how and why we make moral decisions about what is right or wrong behaviour. It is a complex field, but one that you already know a lot about.

Every day, you make decisions about whether you 'should' go to school, do your chores or homework, listen to your teachers or parents, and so on. These simple decisions have an ethical dimension but, often when we study ethics, we consider more complex and challenging moral dilemmas, such as what rights elderly people have.

Hint! When considering the rights of an elderly person, you might find it useful to first consider what rights you think all people are entitled to. That is, what basic human rights are there?

You might like to research the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which was declared by the United Nations in 1948.

Then you could think about whether there are any rights that particularly apply to elderly people. For example, many people believe that elderly people have a right to be treated with dignity and respect.

What facilities, activities and services do you think should be made available to people living in an aged-care facility? What rights do you think residents should have?

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