



Advocacy, Leadership and Education

CLESE is committed to a vision of equal access to services for all elderly, regardless of ethnicity or language. As a coalition, **CLESE** works to increase awareness of the needs, rights, and unique contributions of limited-English-speaking elderly and the community-based organizations that serve them.

CLESE promotes understanding, sensitivity, and insight into cultural variations. **CLESE** is a resource to ethnic agencies by providing assistance and information. More than 40 community-based ethnic organizations can be reached by contacting **CLESE**.

Achievements and Initiatives

- ❖ Assisting immigrants with memory problems through the Alzheimer's Demonstration project, which identifies older persons with memory problems, links them to appropriate services, escorts them for a comprehensive medical exam and assists their families through education and support
- ❖ Providing health information at community-based agencies on topics such as osteoporosis, understanding menopause, heart disease, stroke prevention and smoking cessation.
- ❖ Improving the English skills of elderly through the Bright Ideas project, a model of effective community-based English literacy instruction for low-literate elderly. The project produces written and video curriculum that focuses on the immigrants' own lives.
- ❖ Helping elderly refugees by providing opportunities for socializing and information through the Illinois Refugee Social Services Cultural Adjustment Project. The program also provides peer advocates and case advocacy and support, linking elders to needed services.
- ❖ Advocating for equal access to services; for instance, through contracts with the Illinois Department on Aging, 17 community-based ethnic organizations are able to provide homemaker and adult day service to seniors who speak their language and understand their culture.
- ❖ Implementing an elder abuse, neglect and self-neglect intervention program in ethnic communities funded through the Chicago Department on Aging. The project includes respite services to care giving families.
- ❖ Translating documents that require client signatures or explain important issues.
- ❖ Facilitating mentoring linkages between experienced ethnic providers and fledgling agencies.
- ❖ Assisting ethnic providers in their administrative and program capacity through provision of technical assistance.

