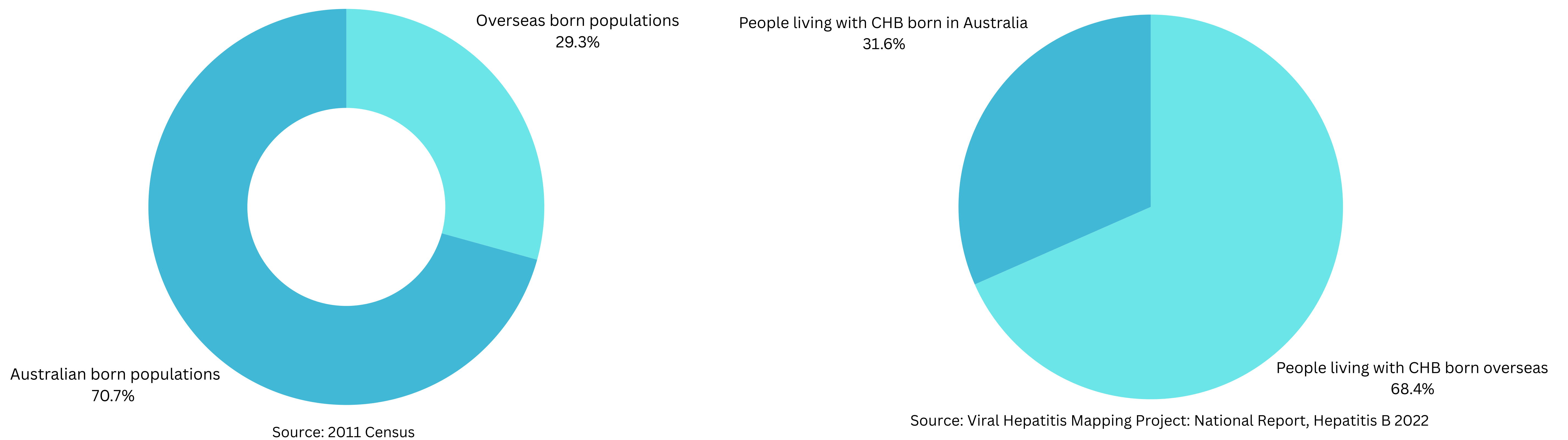


Beyond Education: The Diverse Roles of Bilingual Community Health Workers (BCHWs)

Zhihong Gu & Marriane Black, Love Health - Hepatitis, HIV/AIDS and Sexual Health Program
Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland

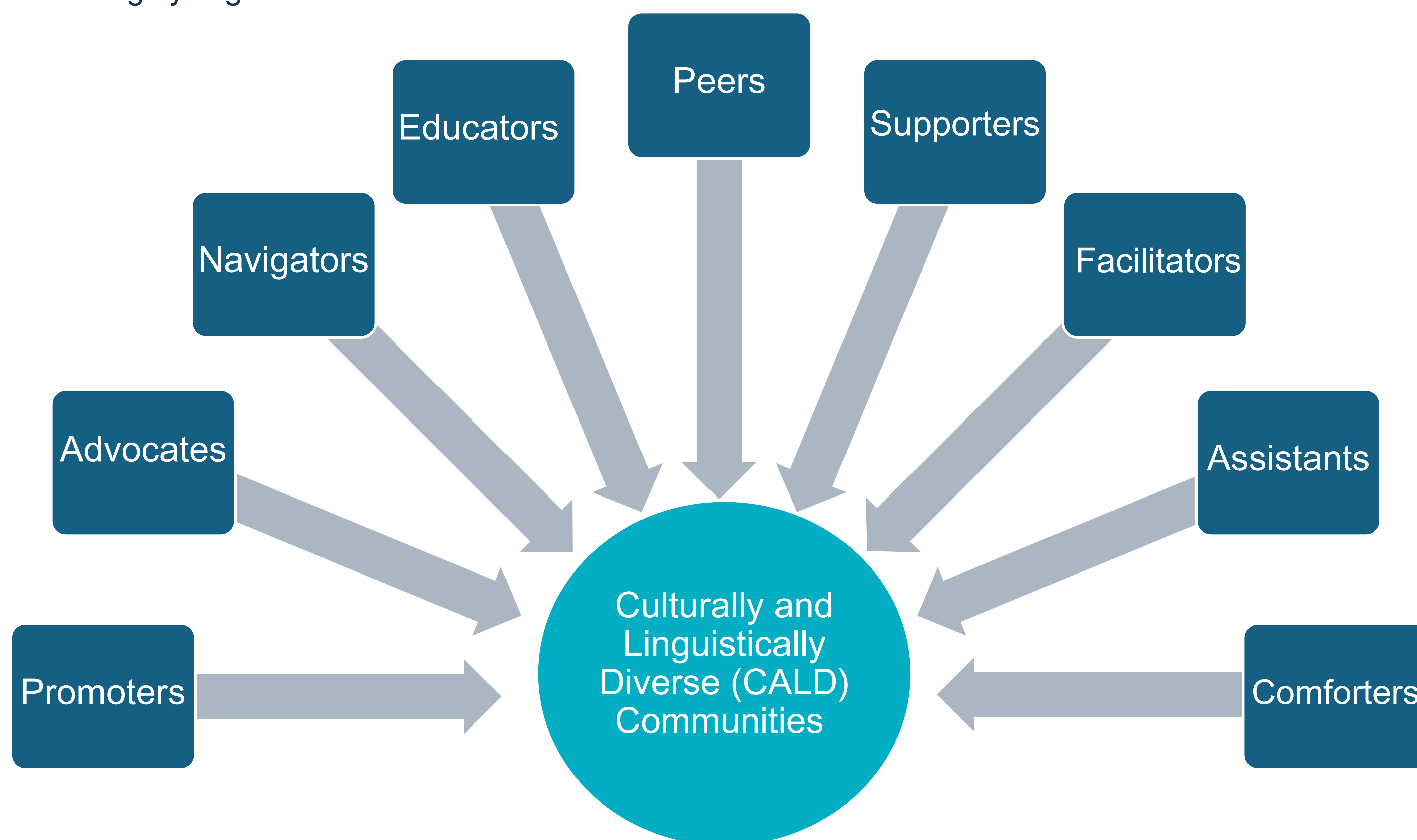
Background

Australia is an increasingly multicultural society. The 2021 Census shows that 29.3% of all Australians were born overseas, with more than half of the population having a parent born overseas. However, overseas born populations are disproportionately affected by chronic hepatitis B (CHB), with about 70% of people living with CHB having been born overseas. They face multiple challenges in accessing health information and care, particularly due to language barrier.



What are the roles of BCHWs?

BCHWs play a pivotal role in breaking down critical language barrier. They also act as peers, navigators, advocates, promoters, facilitators, supporters, assistants, and sources of comfort when needed. Their focus extend beyond the disease to the individual, their family and their community - embracing a truly people-centered and holistic approach. The relationship and approach are built on long-established trust, grounded in shared language and culture, which is especially crucial in addressing this sensitive and highly stigmatised health issue.



Outcomes

On average, each year our well-trained and experienced BCHWs:

