

INTERPRETERS

Overview

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Function	Corporate Services
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Applicable for which Patients, Clients or Residents?	All services requiring interpreters
Applicable for which Staff?	All Auckland DHB clinicians
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Content

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Purpose

This policy clarifies when interpreters are to be utilised and outlines the process for using an interpreter.

Scope

The policy applies to all staff within Auckland District Health Board (ADHB).

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Overview, Continued

Associated Documents

The table below indicates other documents associated with the information contained in this document.

Type	Document Titles
Board Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Code of Rights:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Availability of Information• Informed Consent
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health Information Privacy Code 1994• The Health and Disability Commissioner's (Code of Health and Disability Services Consumer Rights) Regulations 1996

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Definitions

Definitions

The following terms are used within this document.

Term	Definition
Interpreting	Interpreting is the transmission of speech from one language to another.
Translation	Translation is the transmission of written materials from one language to another.
Professional interpreter	A professional interpreter is one who has been specifically trained and accredited, and is employed by a recognised professional interpreting service (e.g. ADHB Interpreting Service & Deaf Association).
Untrained interpreter	An untrained interpreter refers to any individual (family member, friend, relative, employee, visitor, etc.) who are not specifically trained and accredited in interpreting profession.

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Health Care Interpreting

Health Care Interpreting

Health care interpreting is an expert specialty within the interpreting profession, given the need for interpreters to be familiar with the healthcare procedures, specialized terminology and complex issues of privacy, informed consent and confidentiality that are unique to the healthcare industry.

Code of Rights

Under the Code of Rights every consumer has the right to effective communication in a form, language and manner that enables the consumer to understand the information provided. Where necessary and reasonably practicable, this includes the right to a competent interpreter.

Information on Interpreter Services

Information for patients and visitors regarding the interpreter service is to be available, and visible, in a variety of languages, in all admission, registration and clinical areas, and community and mental health centres. The information is included in “Your Rights” brochure.

Information Pack can be ordered through Corporate Express

- English version - Item code 72571517
 - Multipack (contains 5 copies each of the 10 languages) - Item code 18780836
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Role of the Interpreter

The interpreter’s role is to facilitate communication between parties who do not have a language in common or have limited ability to communicate in, or understand the common language. Interpreter’s role does NOT include transporting patients, giving advice about patients’ health treatments and providing patient’s medical history to health professional, nor acting as a liaison with a patient unless instructed to do so.

Emergency Situations

At times, due to the emergency of the situation, an interpreter is not used prior to or at the time of treatment. If this occurs, then as soon as possible afterwards an interpreter is to be used to provide an explanation of what has occurred and to answer any questions the patient or family may have.

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Health Care Interpreting, Continued

Principles of Health Care Interpreting The key factors which influence the requirements for interpreting within health care are:

- Informed consent
 - Communication
 - Confidentiality
 - Ensuring best patient outcome
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Preferred Provider ADHB Interpreter Service is the preferred provider for ADHB.

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When to Use an Interpreter

When to use an Interpreter

An interpreter is to be provided:

- When the patient has no or a limited command of English
- When there is a concern that the patient does not understand the clinical information
- When the patient is Deaf or hearing impaired and understands sign language
- When the patient requests an interpreter
- When family are consulted regarding the patient treatment and they need an interpreter
- When an interpreter is indicated on the patient's written consent for participation in research.

Failure to use an interpreter in these circumstances is a breach of the Health and Disability Commissioner's (Code of Health and Disability Services Consumer Rights) Regulations 1996.

Remember the interpreter is there to enable you to do your job competently, not only for the patient/client.

How to Decide if an Interpreter is Required

The following are some simple test to help you in deciding if an interpreter is required:

- Ask an open question that requires the person to answer in a sentence. Avoid closed questions, that can be answered 'yes' or 'no' or a very familiar question such as 'Where do you live?'
 - Ask the person to repeat a message that you have just given, in his or her own words.
 - If the patient can not put together a sentence in English or can not relay back to you the message you have given them, then an interpreter is most likely required.
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When to Use an Interpreter, Continued

Identify the Language that the Patient/Clients Speaks

Sometimes the language needed is conveyed to you in advance or the patient/client brings some documentation naming the language required. However, you may need to seek further information from the person or an accompanying relative to confirm the language.

The other resource staff can use is to print off the PDF formatted [Language Identification](#) Card on the intranet Interpreters site to show the patient so that he/she can simply point it. The card says “I speak xxxxx, I need an interpreter” which is translated into 37 highly used languages.

Gender Issues

It may be appropriate to check if a male or female interpreter is required. Some patients and families will have strong views on this issue. Flexibility and negotiation may be required in an acute situation.

Telephone Interpretation

An interpreter may be used over the phone in an emergency situation where a delay in obtaining an interpreter for a face to face interview would result in harm to the patient. Or telephone interpreting is adequate in the type of the situation. A record of the telephone interpretation must be documented in the clinical record.

Issues for the clinician undertaking the telephone interpretation to consider are:

- Some languages are less amenable to non-visual communication
 - Some people may be uncomfortable communicating personal information on the telephone
 - Some cultures may perceive telephone communication as materially different than face to face communication
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Documentation

Each time an interpreter is used it is to be documented in the patient’s Clinical Record and where appropriate on clinical forms, for example on the Agreement to Treatment form. This includes situations where family members or untrained interpreters act as interpreter. If the patient refuses a professional interpreter for any reason this is to be documented in the clinical record.

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When to consider patient's preference to interpreters

ADHB Interpreter Service manages all bookings and assigns interpreters to ADHB patients who require interpreting services for their visits.

In general, we do not accommodate patients' own preferences as to which interpreter they want to engage for the interpreting except when there is a compelling reason to use or NOT use a particular interpreter. The reasons for this policy include: spreading workload; promoting training and expertise; discouraging self promotion; avoiding conflicts of interest; and avoiding service disruption and cancellation fees.

**Circumstances
where compelling
reason exists to
accommodate
patient preference**

1/ Where :

- Sensitive treatment such as mental health, sexual health, EDU sessions etc;
- Gender match is an important cultural aspect;
- Conflict of interest of the proposed interpreter,. (another interpreter to be selected by Interpreter Service)
- Other reason approved by the Interpreter Service

and

2/ The preference can be accommodated without significant disruption to service delivery, eg interpreter is available.

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Discretion to Using Untrained Interpreters – Guideline

Use of a Professional Interpreter

Whenever reasonably practicable a professional interpreter is to be used.

Professional interpreters can be contacted at a recognised professional health interpreting service, e.g. ADHB Interpreter Service for spoken languages. Interpreters for the deaf and the hearing impaired are available through ADHB recognized sign language agencies.

Maori interpreters may be reached by contacting, in the first instance, the Maori Health Advisor of the hospital or service.

Use of an Untrained Interpreter

Generally family members or friends are not to be used as an interpreter, however in some instances, for example small ethnic groups, it may not be appropriate to go outside the immediate family group. This is a decision to be made by the patient and their family in conjunction with the health professional and the reason should be clearly documented in the patient's clinical record.

“Untrained” interpreters usually are only used:

- To interpret information:
 - Which is not clinical or technical, confidential or sensitive, or of a critical nature
 - Which does not necessarily need to be accurate
 - If a patient expresses a preference and the provider feels it is okay.
 - In emergency situations where immediate access to a professional interpreter is not possible and a delay in obtaining a professional interpreter would result in harm to the patient.
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Discretion to Using Untrained Interpreters – Guideline,

Continued

Use of an Employee of ADHB

Some employees of ADHB are accredited interpreters and may be employed by ADHB Interpreter Service or Health Interpreter & Translation Service to provide interpreting services to ADHB.

An employee who is an accredited interpreter may be utilised for interpreting services by their manager and for other areas if there is agreement between the managers concerned and the employee.

In any other circumstances, during normal working hours, time taken by an employee to provide interpreter services at the request of the professional interpreting agency is to be negotiated with the employee's manager.

Where reimbursement is to be received by the professional interpreting agency employing the staff member the time taken will be without pay.

Complaints About Interpreting Service

If there are complaints about the quality of the interpreting service provided to patients and staff, these should be made to the manager of the interpreting service concerned and copied to the Quality Manager.

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Conducting Face to Face Interview with Interpreter Present

Before an Interview Pre-session set up:

- Arrange a place where the interview can be conducted in private.
 - Allow extra time for interpreting process.
 - Arrange the seating to allow for easy communication: in a circle: or triangle or place the interpreter to the side and just behind you.
 - If working with a deaf patient the sign language interpreter should be placed alongside the speaker and facing the Deaf person so as to be clearly in view.
 - Brief the interpreter prior to the interview where possible.
 - Ask the interpreter for any cultural factors that may affect the interview but remember that interpreters do not consider themselves to be cultural experts.
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Introduction & Setup

Introductions to begin the interview:

- Introduce yourself and the interpreter.
 - Explain both your role and the interpreter's role and gain the individual's verbal consent for the use of the interpreter.
 - Stress that both you and the interpreter are bound by codes of ethics to maintain the confidentiality of the interview.
 - Explain the purpose of the interview and how it will proceed.
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During the Interview

How to effectively conduct an interpreted interview:

- Sit facing the patient/client
 - Look at the person and maintain awareness of body language.
 - Avoid looking at the interpreter unless you are directly addressing him/her
 - Speak directly to the patient/client as you would with an English speaking person
 - Always use the first person e.g. 'How are you feeling?' Not (to the interpreter) 'Ask her how she is feeling?'
 - Don't try to save time by asking the interpreter to summarise
 - Be aware that it may take more words than you've spoken to convey the message
 - Don't let the interpreter's presence change your role in the interview. It is not the interpreter's role to conduct the interview.
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Conducting Face to Face Interview with Interpreter Present, Continued

During the Interview, continued

- Speak a little more slowly than usual in your normal speaking tone. Speaking louder does not help.
 - Use plain English where possible.
 - Pause after 2 to 3 sentences to allow the interpreter to relay the message.
 - Stop speaking when the interpreter signals by raising a hand or starting to interpret.
 - Summarise periodically when complex issues are involved
 - If the person does not understand it is your responsibility (not the interpreter's) to explain more simply.
 - Seek the patient/clients permission if you need to obtain cultural information from the interpreter.
 - Avoid long discussions with the interpreter. If you need to talk to the interpreter directly then the interpreter should explain to the patient about the nature of the conversation.
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Ending the Interview

Things to be checked on before ending an interview:

- Check that the patient/client has understood the key messages in your interview. Ask for any questions.
 - Thank both the patient/client and the interpreter. Say good-bye formally.
 - Debrief the interpreter if the interview was emotionally taxing and clarify any questions you may have arising from the interview. This may need to happen later as it may make the patient/client uncomfortable if you are seen to be in detailed conversation with the interpreter.
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ADHB Interpreting Service

Introduction The ADHB Interpreting Service is managed by Greenlane Clinical Centre Management, Auckland District Health Board.

Services Offered The service offers interpreting covering 74 languages and has 189 interpreters registered with the service. A translation service is also offered. Translation requests must be forwarded to the service and not to the interpreters. All information communicated to the interpreter remains confidential.

Cost There is no charge to the patient or family/whanau if they are eligible for publicly funded healthcare in New Zealand.

For patients who do not qualify for publicly funded healthcare, interpreter costs are included when the patient is invoiced by the service.

Information on Services Information about the service is available from ADHB Interpreting Service, Level 4 ,Building 15 Greenlane Clinical Centre and on the ADHB intranet site.

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ADHB Interpreter Service, Continued

Booking an Interpreter

Staff who need to arrange interpreters for patients need to make bookings via the Interpreter Service Online Booking system, all booking are managed by the Interpreter Service. The Online Booking Tool is titled as "[Request for Interpreters](#)" under 'Useful Links' on the [ADHB Intranet Homepage](#).

Interpreting Service is operated 24/7 within ADHB by the Interpreter Service and ADHB Contact Centre	
Phone	(09) 630 9943 ext: 26653 / 27203 / 27018 / 27121
After Hours and Emergencies	Book via Online Booking System or ADHB Contact Centre
Mailing Address	P O Box 92189 Auckland Mail Centre

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Sign Language for the Deaf Communities

Introduction	ADHB provides sign language interpreting through recognised sign language interpreting agencies
Services Offered	Sign Language interpreters facilitate communication between the Deaf and the hearing impaired people through New Zealand Sign Language. They provide Sign Language interpreters on a fee-for-service basis.
Cost	<p>There is no charge to the patient or family/whanau if they are eligible for publicly funded healthcare in New Zealand.</p> <p>For patients who do not qualify for publicly funded healthcare interpreter costs are included when the patient is invoiced by the service.</p>
Booking an Interpreter	Staff will make booking for sign language interpreters by using the Online Booking Tool and selecting "sign language" on the booking.
