

INTERPRETER SERVICES
PROTOCOL

GUIDELINES - Refer to [Interpreting in New Zealand; let's keep talking – Guidelines for Agencies using Interpreters.](#)

A_{ssess}

- **Assess** if the patient/client is able to fully understand and communicate in a health care situation. Just because they can manage to give you their personal details and talk about everyday topics such as the weather, do not assume that they have enough English to cope in a medical situation.
- **Ask** - Do you need an interpreter? Explain process and document consent
- **Ask what language they speak – not the country?** Refer to Language Line poster if necessary

B_{ook}

New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) interpreters are available through iSign – book in advance through BOPDHB Interpreter Contact List

For all other interpreter sessions:

Language Line

Monday - Friday - 9am - 6pm

Saturday - 9am - 2pm

- Dial confidential Language Line number **0800 000 702**
- Give then your name, organisation, cost code and the language you want
- Wait until interpreter comes on line, introduce yourself and begin dialogue
- At end of call ensure you clearly indicate to patient & interpreter that you have finished e.g. "Thank you, goodbye"
- **Advance bookings** may be made through Language Line - **0800 656 656** or email Language.Line@dia.govt.nz for sessions of extra length or if a gender preference is indicated (please note 24 hours notice is required of cancellation or cost centre will be charged for the interpreting session)
- Cost centre is invoiced automatically for the interpreting session

After hours or emergency situations

The following options including BOPDHB Interpreter Contacts List (see details below) and/or 'untrained' interpreters may be used in an emergency situation as deemed by the health professional in charge at that time, for the purposes of communicating with the patient:

- Web based options such as Google translate
- friends or relatives except when family violence is or may be, a consideration
- BOPDHB employees, with their consent and the consent of their line manager

*It is the **clinician's responsibility** to complete an Interpreter Service Record, make 2 copies and file one in the patient's medical health record and provide the interpreter with the other.*

*It is the **interpreters responsibility** to complete the invoice section, have it authorised for payment and forward this to Accounts Payable.*

The cost centre will be charged for interpreting session

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Confirm and document in patient's medical health record:

- Assessment of need for interpreter
- Consent and / or any refusal of interpreter services
- Interpreting service used (include date, start & finish times and who organised / authorised session) or file completed Interpreter Service Record form

 <p>BAY OF PLENTY DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD HAUORA A TOI</p>	INTERPRETERS - GUIDELINES FOR USE	Policy 1.5.1 Protocol 1
INTERPRETER SERVICES PROTOCOL		

1. Emergency Situations

A Pictographic Communication Resource pack is available from the Speech & Language Therapy Department, ICU or ED. This may be useful in an acute situation to communicate basic information where there is no time to organise an interpreter.

2. BOPDHB Approved Interpreter List

The BOPDHB Approved Interpreters List contains contact details of those authorised to provide an interpreting service for BOPDHB, including New Zealand sign language (NZSL) interpreters through an independent interpreting agency, iSign.

2.1 Contact an interpreter on the BOPDHB Approved Interpreter list and make arrangements directly with the interpreter, prior approval to be obtained from Service Manager prior to booking.

2.2 There is no charge to the patient / client if they are eligible for free healthcare in New Zealand, for patients / clients who do not qualify for free healthcare the costs will be included when the patient is invoiced.

3. Unapproved Interpreters

3.1 Unqualified interpreters are unlikely to have been tested for the technical and personal skills required of an interpreter. The following risks apply to any session with an unqualified interpreter; accuracy, confidentiality, privacy, bias or distortion, quality of service and patient rights.

3.2 Being bilingual does not make someone a good interpreter and unless there is no alternative, bilingual employees should not be asked to provide interpreting services. An employee providing interpreting services during their normal work hours does not get additional reimbursement. If the interpreting service is provided out of hours, an invoice can be submitted.

3.3 Children and close family members should not be used as interpreters. A child or family member may become distressed. This risk is greater when the session involves delicate family matters such as a serious illness. Children can easily misrepresent facts and may lack vocabulary. Because they are closely connected, the child or family member may sometimes answer questions themselves, without checking with the client. Family members will not receive payment when translating for a family member.

REFERENCES

- [Interpreting in New Zealand; Let's keep talking – Guidelines for Agencies using Interpreters](#)
- [New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct](#)

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Bay of Plenty District Health Board policy 1.5.1 Interpreter Services
- Bay of Plenty District Health Board Form FM.I9.1 Interpreter Service Record
- Bay of Plenty District Health Board Language Line Introduction Pack
- Bay of Plenty District Health Board How to Use Language Line

Issue Date: Nov 2017 Review Date: Nov 2020	Page 2 of 2 Version No: 8	NOTE: The electronic version of this document is the most current. Any printed copy cannot be assumed to be the current version.
Protocol Steward: Quality & Patient Safety Manager	Authorised by: Medical Director	