



How to work with a TELEPHONE interpreter

These steps relate to all languages other than sign language.

1. Introduce yourself and the interpreter to your client and any other people present in the room, also advise what phone equipment is being used.

2. Telephone interpreting does not enable the interpreter to see what is going on so explain what is happening if there are any pauses in the flow of conversation e.g. if you are writing notes.

3. Speak directly to the client as you would in a face-to-face interview e.g. "What is your name?" not "Ask her what her name is".

4. Use short sentences. Speak one or two sentences at a time so the interpreter can remember and interpret accurately.

5. Maintain control over the interview, especially if there are multiple people present who may talk over each other.

6. Avoid using abbreviations, slang, and sayings, as these are very difficult to interpret.

7. Use plain English – avoid medical jargon where possible.

8. Allow extra time for the interview.

9. You may need to brief your interpreter prior to the interview, e.g. patients with a speech impairment, psychiatric problems or serious injuries in the Emergency Department.

10. Clearly indicate to all parties when the interview is over.

