




Client – Use of Interpreters Policy

STATEMENT

The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of South Australia Ltd (PQSA) believes in the rights of all clients to access an interpreter should they wish and where one is required. PQSA will always ensure service delivery is transparent, fair, equitable and responsive to the needs of the client.

<p>Approved by:</p>  <p>Chief Executive Officer</p>	<p>Date: May 2021</p>
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In this policy, 'us' 'we' or 'our' refers to The Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association of South Australia Ltd ACN 644 670 977, which is a Company Limited by Guarantee and conducts its business through Lifestyle Support and HomeCare+ services.

Please note that printed copies are not able to be controlled and the Shared Drive should always be referred to for the most current version.

SCOPE

Compliance with this policy is a condition of appointment for all workers engaged to provide services on behalf of PQSA.

DEFINITIONS

Refer to the PQSA Policy and Procedure Definition Glossary

RESPONSIBILITY

It is our responsibility to communicate our policies and procedures to all workers on a systematic basis. Individual Directors and Supervisors are responsible for monitoring workers' understanding of their obligations and need for compliance with policies and procedures. Workers are responsible for complying with our policies and procedures.

It is the responsibility of PQSA to communicate the contents of this Policy to all clients on a regular basis.

POLICY

Informal language interpreting assistance by family members and friends (who have a sufficient understanding of the client's language and dialect) may be used by service providers when a client is unable to communicate with a worker. and for simple day-to-day situations; however, use of family/friends to interpret a client's communication is generally inappropriate when:

- the family member/friend may have a poor understanding of the subject matter, such as medical terminology
- the client may wish to keep certain details confidential or private
- there may be a conflict of interest for the informal interpreter (e.g. discussing finances)
- the client is required to give formal consent (e.g. medical procedures for which consent has not been given previously)

The use of informal language interpreting assistance by family and friends may lead to the disempowerment of a client and/or the imparting of inaccurate information, so should be used with caution.

Why Use an Interpreter?

- They facilitate effective communication between the individual and PQSA
- For compliance with equal opportunity legislation
- To ensure accurate conveyance of information in an informal manner
- Interpreters are bound by the need for confidentiality
- Use of an interpreter may promote individual clients' rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision making.

Each client will be informed of their right to terminate with the use of an interpreter if, at any stage, they feel uncomfortable with the interpreter or the process. PQSA workers may also terminate a meeting if they feel it is necessary.

It is recommended that interpreters be used for clients with a low level of English proficiency in the following circumstances:

- during a formal assessment process
- when there is a problem and the person is not responding to either family or staff
- when a medical professional is called for health problems
- when communicating with family members who have a low level of English proficiency regarding specific client issues.

RELATED LEGISLATION

- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- National Standards for Disability Services
- Privacy Act 1988

SUPPORTING PQSA DOCUMENTATION

- Client – Advocacy Policy and Procedure
- Client – Use of Interpreters Procedures
- Code of Conduct and Ethical Behavior
- Complaint/Concern Management Policy (Client Complaint)
- Privacy – Private Information Statement
- Privacy – Private Information Procedures

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

A **breach** of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Ignorance of these procedures will not generally be accepted as an excuse for non-compliance. Only in extreme circumstances and where such ignorance can be demonstrated to have occurred through no fault of the individual concerned will PQSA accept such an argument.

DISTRIBUTION AND REVIEW

PQSA will ensure all persons engaged to provide services either paid or unpaid will be aware of this policy and will have easy access to it in an appropriate format. All policies are to be reviewed on a periodic basis or when legislation or government policy determines.