


The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of SA Inc



Client – Use of Interpreters Policy and Procedures

STATEMENT

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

Approved by: 	Date: 26 September 2018
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The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of SA Inc.(PQSA) is incorporated under the *Association Incorporation Act 1985 (SA)* and conducts its business through operating Divisions, namely Lifestyle Support and HomeCare+.

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

Client – a person who receives services from any division of PQSA.

Interpreter – for the purpose of this policy, a qualified person who translates speech and sign language to ensure information between two parties who communicate in different languages are understood

Interpreting – the action of transferring information between people from one language to another (including sign language)

Worker – is a person who carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking including work as a worker, contractor or subcontractor, a worker of a contractor or sub-contractor, a worker of a labour hire company, an outworker, apprentice or trainee, or a student gaining work experience, or a volunteer.

RESPONSIBILITY

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 is often used by service providers and may be used when a client is unable to communicate with a worker . This may be useful in simple day-to-day situations; however, at times it can be inappropriate, such as:

- the family member/friend may have a poor understanding of the subject matter, such as medical terminology
- they may have an insufficient understanding of the client's language or dialect. A
- the client may wish to keep certain details confidential.

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

- ◆ To facilitate effective communication between the client or potential client and PQSA
- ◆ Under Australian equal rights legislation, individuals who do not speak English may have the right to an interpreter
- ◆ Interpreters will be accurate, impartial and respect confidentiality
- ◆ To promote individual clients' rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision making.

Each client will be informed of their right to terminate a meeting with 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 doctor is called for health problems
- ◆ When communicating with family members who have a low level of English proficiency regarding specific client issues.

PROCEDURE

- ◆ If an interpreter is required, allow for adequate time for the appointment/meeting
- ◆ Meet or speak with the interpreter separately to outline the aim of the interview and/or to provide necessary background information about the client. This is a good opportunity to ask culturally specific questions e.g. cultural attitudes to death, illness etc.
- ◆ Seat interpreter, client and PQSA staff member in a triangular formation to encourage face to face communication
- ◆ Allow a brief time for a formal introduction between the interpreter and the client. This allows the interpreter to build a level of rapport with the client. Explain all conversation that takes place during the interview is required to be interpreted into English
- ◆ Allow for the option for the client to respond to the interview in English. However, if either the client or the worker is not certain that the message is understood, clarification must be sought by the interpreter
- ◆ Address the client, not the interpreter. Maintain eye contact with the client where appropriate.. Speak to the client in first person, rather than third person e.g. 'would you like a drink?' rather than, 'Ask her, if she would like a drink?'
- ◆ Speak slowly in single sentences then pause to allow for interpreting
- ◆ Allow time for the client to ask questions
- ◆ Avoid complex sentences, colloquialism and jokes

Professional interpreting services, as listed below, are available over the telephone twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days per week.

Not all members of the community are aware of their right to access interpreters. Explain to the client that a support person may also be present as well as the interpreter.

If a client refuses to use an interpreter, the benefits of using an interpreter should be clearly explained. PQSA has an obligation to ensure that duty of care is maintained through accurate communication between a worker and a client of PQSA.

Workers should ensure that clients' language needs are communicated to any other service providers, such as hospital staff, when handing over supports.

Interpreting and Translating Services

Interpreting and Translating Centre (ITC)

<http://www.translate.sa.gov.au>

Toll free: 1800 280 203

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)

<http://www.tisnational.gov.au>

Phone: 131 450

Auslan Interpreter

www.deafcando.com.au

Phone: 08 8100 8200

RELATED LEGISLATION

- ◆ Privacy Act 1988
- ◆ Human Rights Act 2004
- ◆ Discrimination Act 1991
- ◆ Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- ◆ National Disability Standards

SUPPORTING PQSA DOCUMENTATION

- ◆ Privacy Policy and Procedure
- ◆ Code of Conduct and Ethical Behavior
- ◆ Complaint/Concern Management Policy (Client Complaint)
- ◆ Advocacy Policy and Procedure

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.