



ISLE *of*
WIGHT
C O U N C I L

SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

DIRECTORATE

POLICY AND PROTOCOL

FOR TRANSLATION AND

LANGUAGE SERVICES

May 2003

Policy and Procedure for Translation and Language Services

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1. Policy

The directorate will ensure that all service users who are unable to communicate effectively in spoken English have access to a responsive, skilled and accessible translation service. The service will be available 24 hours per day and be subject to quality checks.

Staff will be provided with tools and information that will help them to assess the first language of a service user, and if required, access to a professional translation service.

Face to face interpretation is recognised as an essential element in some complex and demanding cases. A visiting interpreter will be made available where it is considered essential for good communication and understanding

Documents that have a significant bearing on a service users access to services and care will be professionally translated into the most suitable language when they are needed.

2. Protocol

2.1 Reception And First Contact

Where effective communication is not possible without translation, staff will need to identify the most suitable language for communication.

Service users can often make their preferred language clear. If this is not possible, the directorate has a number of visual aids that can be used to select a suitable language. These include the LIPS tool and visual aids provided by the directorate's translation contractor.

The LIPS tool will be provided to workplaces visited or called by service users making first contact with the directorate. The tool will be distributed to the senior administration manager or supervisor on the site, and is likely to be of most use to reception and out of hours staff. The tool allows the identification of the users language, and the passing of important first messages to the service user. These include setting appointment times and re-assuring information about the availability of interpreters.

A postcard sized language identification tool and a matching poster for reception areas, supplied by the translation contractor, will also be widely available.

For information or further copies of these tools, please contact the Head of Adult Services at Headquarters.

2.2 Services Available

The selected translation contractor provides:

1. Telephone interpreting (including conference calls)
2. Face to face interpreting
3. Written translation

2.3 Telephone Translation

1. Ensure that the most suitable language has been selected prior to calling the translation service.
2. Arrange for access to the telephone for you and the service user. This can be from the same telephone or from two handsets or lines, It is also possible to conference call, which would enable others such as a parent, friend or advocate to join in the conversation.
3. Call EITI on 0870 701 2020.
4. Give the operator your PIN number, name and quote your organisation; 'Isle of Wight Social Services and Housing Directorate'.

5. Give the client reference, name or number that will identify the service user for billing purposes.
6. State the language that you require.
7. Give the telephone numbers of any lines that you need to include in the tele-conference.
8. You will then be conferenced with any additional lines asked for.
9. When you have finished your call, simply hang up the phone.

2.4 Face to Face Interpreting

Personal interpreting can be arranged for meetings, case conferences or other events by calling 0870 701 2020. This is a premium service. The advance agreement of the relevant Head of Service is required

2.5 Written Translation

Written information and documents can be re-written in a selected language by arrangement with EITI. A quotation for the cost and timing of the service will be given; the agreement of the relevant Head of Service is required.

2.6 Administration

The service can only be used with a dedicated PIN number. This number may change periodically. The number in use will be circulated to all managers and supervisors.

The directorate will be charged for services on a monthly basis. The cost of the service will be born from a translation budget. Extraordinary costs or premium services may be re-charged to the service that arranged the billed translation. Service rates and charges are available from the Head of Adult Services.

The translation service is subject to quality checks. If the service fails to provide a quality service, or a user of the service has any comments about the service they received, please address them to The Head of Adult Services at Headquarters, 17 Fairlee Road, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 2EA. Telephone 01983 520600.

3. Guidelines On Translation For Staff

1. The visual aids provided by LIPS and the EITI translation service will be of help, together with English, the visual aids cover 30 languages that account for 90% of the world's population.

2. Before calling the translation service, try to make sure you know exactly what language your client or patient speaks. Avoid making assumptions based on where the person is from. Use any visual aids available to confirm this at the outset.
3. When using the telephone translation service, remember that you, not the interpreter, are the 'chairman' who controls the conversation.
4. If Possible, brief the interpreter before you speak
5. Remember to allow at least twice as much time as you would for an 'English-only' conversation.
6. Speak directly to your service user or patient. For example, ask your client, 'When did you arrive?' rather than ask the interpreter, 'Can you find out when she arrived?'
7. When speaking, don't give too much information at one time.
8. Before you end the conversation, make sure that your client and the interpreter know that the session is about to finish.

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