

THE Provincial Language Service

Who are Professional Health Care Interpreters?

Professional health care interpreters are trained in language and interpreting skills. They are fluent in their languages and follow the rules of:

- Confidentiality
- Accuracy
- Impartiality

In addition, professional health care interpreters are trained to understand the health care system. Health care interpreters are not counselors or advisors, but they can help clients and health care providers communicate effectively, efficiently and accurately.

Why are Interpreters Important for Health Care?

Many people who do not speak English fluently rely on the help of friends and family when visiting the doctor, going to the hospital or understanding their children's health care needs. This may not always be the best choice. Sometimes friends and family are busy and can't help, sometimes their English is not that good or perhaps they don't understand the system. Using family and friends can also take away the patient's right to privacy and confidentiality, allowing other people to become involved in their private affairs.

What is The Provincial Language Service?

The Provincial Language Service, a part of the Provincial Health Services Authority, provides trained interpreters in over 150 languages in communities across British Columbia – for many different types of health care appointments.

Are Interpreters Mandatory in Health Care?

Doctors and other health care professionals in BC are not required to use health care interpreters. In some cases they may not be aware that these services exist. You can mention to your doctor or health care provider that professional interpreters are available, if you are comfortable doing so. Generally, health care professionals have appreciated the assistance of a professional interpreter once they worked with them.

For More Information

Your health care provider can call the **Provincial Language Service** at **604-297-8400** or **1-877-228-2557** for more information. You can also call if you want to know more about interpreter services.

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Quality Health Care... in any language