The SERVICE PROVIDER should
• Use language and terms that the client will understand
• Ensure the client understands your role and the purpose for the encounter
• Verify the client’s understanding
• Respond to a client’s emotional demeanor
• Have good cross-cultural communication skills

The INTERPRETER will
• Be fluent in both languages and tested for proficiency
• Be trained to:
   Adhere to Standards of Practice: Ethical Principles and Performance Expectations
   Perform consecutive, whispered simultaneous and telephone interpreting
• Keep everything seen and heard confidential
• NOT be a family member, friend or a minor

Role of the Interpreter
To deliver, as faithfully as possible, messages transmitted between individuals who do not share a common language.

What does that mean?
• The interpreter is the transmitter, not the source of the message being communicated
• Accuracy of ALL messages (both verbal and non-verbal; side conversations; difficult words/phrases)
• NOT add, omit, distort or judge the information; not provide explanation or summary of message
• Convey the message in another language as close as possible to how the speaker uttered it
• In any interpreting situation, the interpreter is working on behalf of both parties equally

Expectations from interpreters:
• Introduce themselves to both the Service Provider (SP) and the Limited English speaking person (LESP)
• Interpret everything that is said
• Keep everything they hear or see confidential
• Take notes in order to assist with accuracy
• Deliver the messages communicated between the SP and the LESP as faithfully as possible
• Maintain impartiality
• Interrupt for clarification
• Not impose own values and assumptions
• Be respectful of all parties involved in the interpretation
The act of interpreting is complex and mentally demanding. In order to provide good service and ensure accuracy, the interpreter occasionally has to:

**Interrupt speakers** engaged in lengthy communications

**Take notes** in order to remember certain details

**Ask for a pause**

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**DOs**

- Prepare for a lengthier session when working with an interpreter; allocate sufficient time
- If possible, provide the interpreter with handouts/resource material that will be used and, if necessary, an opportunity for the interpreter to preview audio visual aids to be used (DVDs etc.)
- Clarify the objectives of the encounter - who will be present, purpose of the session and topics to be covered
- Determine the type of interpretation: consecutive, whispered simultaneous or telephonic
- Ask if the interpreter has any questions or concerns
- Allow the interpreter to perform an introduction to you and your client/patient to clarify their role and how interpretation will be performed
- Speak directly to your client/patient, NOT to the interpreter. Position yourself in a way that promotes direct communication between the client and you
- Speak clearly, audibly and naturally and in short sentences
- Allow the interpreter to finish before speaking again
- Use simple language, avoiding jargon and idioms. Provide explanations of technical terms
- Validate the client/patient’s understanding by asking the client/patient for a summary of what has been discussed
- Control the interview just as you would in a session where no interpreter is present
- If in doubt, ask the client/patient directly; check out your perceptions, or questions with the client/patient
- Clarification: **Interpreter may need to interrupt** if something is unclear, if their focus and concentration has been compromised or if they are being asked to do something beyond their role or duty
- If the client/patient and interpreter start talking to each other, ask for an interpretation
- Interpreters should be given a short break every 60 minutes
- Enable the interpreter to debrief, particularly during an emotionally charged situation

**DON’Ts**

- **Ask the interpreter directly to explain anything**
- **Hold the interpreter responsible for** what the client says or does
- **Ask for the interpreter’s opinion or a cultural explanation:** the client/patient is the expert on their circumstances and experiences
- **Request interpreters to transport or accompany clients/patients**
- **Interrupt or cut down on your explanations to save time**
- **Ask the interpreter to give** explanations to the client/patient
- **Ask the interpreter to assist the client/patient in completing documents** without your presence due to issues of liability
- **Leave the interpreter alone with the client/patient**
- **Hold a private conversation with the interpreter in the client/patient’s presence**
- **Ask the interpreter to perform any duty that is not their role or responsibility**
- **Book future appointments with the interpreter directly; contact Interpreter Services**
- **Expect the interpreter to deal with the emotional needs of the client/patient**
- **Expect the interpreter to facilitate the conversation**
- **Engage in a private or side conversation with someone else – the interpreter will continue to interpret**