

Accessing Translation and Interpretation Services - Guidelines for Staff



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Bwrdd Iechyd
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Powys Teaching
Health Board

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Introduction

Equality and Fairness is at the heart of everything that we do.

This means doing our best to ensure that service users are able to understand healthcare information presented to them. This applies to information presented in written form, for example, patient leaflets, letters, and key communications. It also applies to information presented orally, for example, during clinical consultations.

Powys Teaching Health Board has a process whereby all interpretation and translation services for Welsh, foreign

languages, Braille and British Sign Language are accredited and easily accessible throughout the organisation, and that best use is then made of the services provided.

These guidelines outline the procedures for accessing accredited interpretation and translation services throughout the

organisation. This will ensure standardisation in the provision of safe care and the successful reduction of risk for those requiring such services. It is essential that the individual communication needs of our service users are met in order to enhance the patient experience and for the organisation to comply with Welsh

language legislation, Equality legislation, the All Wales Standards for Accessible Information and Communication for People with Sensory Loss and other statutory requirements.

Welsh Language

In accordance with the Welsh Language legislation, Welsh must not be treated any less favourably than English. PTHB has a statutory duty to meet the needs of Welsh speakers, providing healthcare services bilingually. Where necessary, Welsh interpreters must be arranged to accompany service users who wish to be dealt with in Welsh. All public facing documents and materials published by the health board must be produced bilingually, and of equal standard.

Other languages

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) PTHB must make reasonable adjustments and put arrangements in place in order to ensure equitable access to services for

individuals and this includes meeting their communication needs and putting appropriate communication support in place.

Sensory Loss

In line with the All Wales Standards for Accessible Information and Communication for People with Sensory Loss, profoundly deaf people who use BSL must be offered a Level 6 fully qualified BSL interpreter in clinical situations. Qualified specialist Deaf/Blind Interpreters must also be arranged for those who are Deaf/Blind. Information should also be translated into Braille for those who require it.

Procedures for accessing interpretation and translation

Welsh Language

If a person has stated that they would prefer to use Welsh, the health board must deliver services in Welsh whenever possible. Staff should follow the steps below:

Is there a Welsh speaking member of staff who can undertake the appointment?

If not, is there a support member of staff who can assist during the appointment?

Where no Welsh speaking staff are available, would the person be happy to attend the appointment in English or would they prefer for an interpreter to be present?

NOTE: Welsh speaking members of staff must feel comfortable in dealing with individuals in the medium of Welsh and have

sufficient skills to do so. No member of staff should feel pressured into providing services through the medium of Welsh, especially for clinical appointments where complex health and care procedures are being explained to service users.

All options for Welsh language interpretation at clinical appointments need to be discussed with the service user beforehand to ensure that they are happy with the agreed action to meet their communication needs.

Welsh Language Interpreters for clinical consultations:

Language Line

You can use Language Line Welsh translation by booking a call, using the app or using the browser-based version. See more details under Translation Services.

Language Line Solutions Phone:

Tel: 0800 169 2879

ID Code: [288 908](#)

Browse-based version: [LanguageLine InSight](#)

App: [Google Play](#) / [IOS](#)

If you feel you need a face-to-face interpreter due to special circumstances, then please get in touch as soon as possible and we can provide assistance on how to book one:

powys.equalityandwelsh@wales.nhs.uk

Welsh language translation for public meetings, events and group sessions:

Simultaneous translation (uses headsets) can be arranged by contacting:

Geiriau Gwyn

Website: www.geiriauwyn.cymru

Tel: 01766 771849 / 07778 960620

Written Welsh Translation

All public facing documents and materials published by the health board must be produced bilingually, be of equal standard and must not treat the Welsh language any less favourably than English.

Please forward all requests for written translations to:

Powys.WelshTranslations@wales.nhs.uk

Please do not send scanned documents to be translated. We can accept Word documents, PowerPoints, Excel sheets and text included in email format.

Please only send final drafts of documents for translation. If any changes are made after translation, you should take note of these changes (i.e. Microsoft track changes) and let the translation service know so that the Welsh reflects the final draft.

Informal written translations can be undertaken by Welsh speaking members of staff if they are happy to do so. For example, informal posters (e.g. advertising raffles / coffee mornings), temporary signage (e.g. toilet out of order, daily canteen specials). If in doubt, please contact the Welsh Language and Equality Team for further advice and proofreading.

Other Languages & BSL

By default, interpretation for languages other than Welsh should be accessed via LanguageLine (video or telephone). Language Line is available 24/7 without a need to book an interpreter in advance (though booking is advised for rare languages or where there are special requirements). Please see [here](#) for instructions on how to access the service.

Interpretation should always be provided by approved translators. You should **NOT** use family members or friends as interpreters (except in absolute emergencies) due to safeguarding issues. Guidance is included below for those very exceptional and urgent circumstances which may arise whereby staff, relatives or friends may need to assist with interpretation instead of accredited interpretation and translation services.

The balance of risk must be assessed in such cases by the healthcare professional who is delivering care. In such circumstances, the assessment and subsequent decision must be fully and appropriately documented at the time e.g. in the patient's medical records.

Staff must endeavour to identify service users' individual communication needs at the earliest opportunity, ensuring they are met, flagging them on the patient's computer and/or paper record and ensuring this information is transferred using the referral process so that patients do not have to continue explaining their needs.

Written translation requests for other languages and Braille must also be undertaken by a professional translator as and when required.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the person arranging the appointment to book an interpreter and not the patient.

Other Language & BSL Interpreters for Clinical Consultations

Prior to booking an interpreter:

- Every effort should be made to collate data on the communication needs of new patients and existing patients in primary, secondary, community and unscheduled care. Staff should share that information between different services via flagging systems.
- Whenever possible, establish if interpretation is required before any appointments are made. Make a note on the patient's record so that this can be flagged for future appointments.
- Check to see if the service user has used an interpreter before. Whilst it is desirable to use the same one if requested and if available, there is no obligation on the Health Board to do so if this would mean delaying the appointment.
- Before booking an interpreter, establish what language and dialect is spoken. Some patients may have more than one language need e.g. a person with a sensory loss may use Welsh or another language.
- Check that the interpreter is acceptable to the client – e.g. a male interpreter may be unsuitable for a Muslim woman.

Online Video Interpretation

PTHB staff now have access to the Language Line Insight App from the software centre of any PTHB tablet or mobile device. The app allows users to video call (or sometimes audio call, depending on the language and

time of day) a foreign language interpreter in over 400 different languages, on demand (with no need to book an interpreter in advance). It should be the default method of interpretation used in PTHB.

Language Line Insight App

SharePoint guidance on app usage: [LanguageLine Guidance](#)

Browse-based version: [LanguageLine InSight](#)

App: [Google Play](#) / [IOS](#)

If you need to book an interpreter and need to specify something ahead of time (for example: an [inte](#)preter of a specific gender) then please book a phone call [here](#) or dial 0800 169 2879 to book a video call.

Written translation

For documents you need translating in to another language for a patient you can contact Wales Interpretation and Translation Services (WITS) directly who can carry out this work for you:

Website: www.wits.wales

Tel: 02920 537 555

Telephone Interpretation Services

Telephone interpreters are an alternative to the online app (for example where internet signal is poor or unreliable, or a PTHB device is not available) and can be booked [here](#) or via:

Language Line Solutions Phone

Tel: 0800 169 2879

ID Code: 288 908

Face to Face Interpretation

Face-to-face interpreters (previously the default method) should only be booked where there is a clinical need, as determined by the clinician. If you need to do this, you can arrange it via WITS:

Website: www.wits.wales

Tel: 02920 537 555

If any booking has to be subsequently cancelled, please notify the supplier as soon as possible to avoid any cancellation charges.

What to do in urgent situations where no interpreter is present:

Welsh Ambulance Service Communication App

WAST have developed a useful app to help people communicate with staff. This may be particularly useful in community settings or in unscheduled care and any other 'out of hours' situation.

The app has pictures that you can press. The pictures speak when you press them.

You can use the app to help patient communicate

- Their name and date of birth
- What has happened to them
- Where it hurts
- You can use the app if the person is
- Too ill to talk
- Is unable to hear
- If English is not their first language

Apple iOS – search the App Store for PreHospApp

Android – search the Play Store for Pre-Hospital Communication App

On Blackberry – search for pre hospital app

The use of staff, family members or an alternative 3rd party to act as an interpreter

Staff, family members, friends or an alternative 3rd party **must not** be used as interpreters. There are safeguarding concerns we must consider; the patient/client could be an adult or child at risk of harm or a potential victim of domestic violence/ violence/coercive control/ honour-based

violence. Use of these groups as interpreters in these circumstances may significantly increase the risk of harm to the client/patient.

It is inadvisable and inappropriate to use these groups for interpreting in clinical settings as they may have difficulty in relaying medical advice and information accurately. There are also issues of dignity and sensitivity for all parties.

If they are the only option in exceptional and emergency situations (where efforts made to gain independent interpretation are unsuccessful, and the lack of any interpretation may be detrimental to the care of the patient) the balance of risk needs to be assessed by the healthcare professional who is delivering care. If one is used following such an assessment, the decision must be fully and appropriately documented at the time.

Children ***should also never*** be used as interpreters for medical or personal information except in absolute emergencies.

Written communication (for use with Deaf persons) or that which is translated using translation software (e.g. Google Translate) must be avoided and should only be used as a last resort as this cannot be relied upon as an accurate interpretation and translation.

In all cases where it has been deemed as an emergency so that either a member of staff, family member, friend or child has been used to interpret in a clinical setting, or a written communication method has been used, ***staff must document this fully in the case notes.***

Training & Support

Training and guidance can be provided to help staff communicate effectively with people who speak Welsh, other languages or those with a sensory loss, in order to better support them when attending appointments. Please contact the Welsh Language and Equality Unit for further information.

Translation and Interpretation Costs

The costs for interpretation and translation will come out of a central budget. An invoicing system is already established meaning that individual members of staff do not have to deal with the invoicing or payment system when they need to arrange interpretation and translation services.

Meetings, Conferences and Public Events

When organising public events, staff must ask ***in advance*** if a member of the public wishes to speak Welsh or use BSL, and appropriate interpretation and translation services must be arranged to meet the needs of the service user. Staff can book appropriate interpretation services via the providers listed earlier in this document or by getting in touch.

Appendix 1: Guidance on using Interpretation for clinical settings

- The interpreter should be fluent in both English and the required language. The interpreter and client must speak the same language dialect.
- It is important for the health professional to have a discussion with the interpreter immediately prior to the appointment with the client to set the scene and clarify any points that may arise. The health professional should allow the interpreter and client a few minutes in discussion prior to consultation.
- Additional time should be allocated for the appointment to allow more time for the consultation. Interpreting from one language to another can be difficult.
- It is important that the interpreter understands the meaning of what is being said. Sometimes literal interpretation does not convey messages correctly.
- The interpreter should be treated as an equal in the consultation process.
- Actively listen to the interpreter and the client. Speak and look directly at the client during the consultation.
- Use simple language – avoid jargon and abbreviations.
- In some situations the interpreter may receive the direct impact of the client's distress, grief or anger and may need support to deal with this during the consultation.
- Pause frequently to allow the interpreter to translate.
- Check that the information being conveyed to and from the client is understood.
- At the end of the consultation ensure that the major points are understood by the interpreter, and allow time for the client to ask questions.
- The health professional must take time away from the client after the consultation to debrief the interpreter.

Please also ensure that you sign the Claims form for the Face-to-Face Interpreter as this will be their record for payment

Appendix 2: Guidance on British Sign Language Interpretation

- Interpreters are sometimes perceived as being present on behalf of either the deaf or the hearing parties. This is not the case. Professional interpreters are trained to be impartial. Their presence is of equal importance to all parties.
- Professional interpreters that are registered with the Council for Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP) are bound by a code of behaviour and ethics that CACDP recommends. BSL interpreters will have had basic training in the Code of Conduct and will be bound by rules of confidentiality.
- Professional interpreters assess the appropriateness of each case regarding gender, need and procedure.
- When a person speaks or signs the interpreter will extract the meaning or content of their communication. There will be a variable time lapse, as the interpreter will need to make sense of what is being communicated before they can reproduce it in the target language.
- A literal word for word translation is rare, this would not be an accurate translation in the target language. On occasion, the interpreter will work simultaneously, and although it will appear that the interpreter is keeping pace with the speaker/signer, they will in fact be working some seconds behind them, and this should be remembered when asking questions and expecting a response.
- Alternatively, an interpreter may decide to work consecutively. Consecutive interpreting differs from simultaneous interpreting as the interpreter 'manages' the communication more openly. They will consider chunks of communication and ask the speaker to pause momentarily whilst they communicate the content to the other participants.
- Although every effort would be made not to interrupt a consultation, there will be instances when an interpreter will need to clarify aspects of the communication with participants. This is done to maintain a high level of accuracy.
- Different situations call for different arrangements. Interpreters may need to 'arrange' seating or standing positions to accommodate the needs of the communication participants e.g. to ensure maximum visibility. A professional interpreter will be open to suggestions and

will try to accommodate the needs and wishes of all participants in order to ensure successful communication.

Please also ensure that you sign the Claims form for the Face-to-Face Interpreter as this will be their record for payment

Appendix 3: How to answer the phone bilingually

Powys THB welcomes calls from Welsh speakers and staff must not treat the Welsh Language any less favourably than the English Language when providing a corporate greeting on the telephone. Staff **must** give a bilingual greeting when answering the telephone to a member of the public. Below is a good example of good practice:

- ✓ Use the following bilingual greetings depending on the time of day
 - Bore Da / Good Morning (*Boar-eh Da*)
 - Prynawn Da / Good Afternoon (*Prin-hown Da*)
 - Noswaith Dda / Good Evening (*Noss-why-th Tha*)
- ✓ State the name of the organisation or hospital
 - Powys Teaching Health Board

If the person responds in Welsh and wishes to speak in Welsh and you are:

A confident Welsh speaker:

Continue the call naturally in Welsh if the caller wishes to.

Not a confident Welsh speaker:

If the caller wishes to continue the conversation in Welsh, we must facilitate this as far as possible. If the call is of a general subject matter than it is our duty to continue the call in Welsh.

The Welsh Language Standards state that if a 'specific subject matter' is raised by the caller and as such cannot be answered by the call handler then calls may be transferred to another member of staff (preferably Welsh speaking staff, but if none are available then transferring to non-Welsh speaking staff is acceptable in these circumstances).

Remember, there are Learn Welsh courses available to you free of charge as PTHB members of staff, which could help with your confidence in answering general queries. Visit this [link](#) to find out more.

Please remember that Welsh speakers appreciate the efforts of all staff to greet them in Welsh.

If you would like to go further in your bilingual greetings, here are some useful phrases to help you:

Bwrdd Iechyd Addysgu Powys – Powys Teaching Health Board
(Boor-th Ye-ch-id Ath-us-gee Powis)

Carol yn siarad – Carol speaking
(carol un sharad)

Sut alla i eich helpu chi? – How may I help you?
(Sit a-ll-a ee eye-ch helpy ch-ee)

Daliwch y lein – Please hold the line
(Dally-oo-ch uh line)

Ysbyty Aberhonddu – Brecon Hospital
(Us-butty Aber-hon-thee)

Ysbyty Bronllys - Bronllys Hospital
(Us-butty Bron-ll-ease)

Ysbyty y Drenewydd – Newtown Hospital
(Us-butty uh Dre-ne-with)

Ysbyty y Trallwng – Welshpool Hospital
(Us-butty uh Tra-ll-oo-ng)

Meddygfa [Insert name] – GP Surgery
(Me-thug-va)

Appendix 4: Useful links:

[Cymraeg a Chydraddoldeb / Equality & Welsh Language - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

If you have any questions please contact us on:

Powys.equalityandwelsh@wales.nhs.uk

Diolch / Thank you

