

INTERPRETING FACT SHEET

What's the difference between a trained interpreter and one who is untrained, e.g. a friend or family member?

A trained interpreter will keep everything **confidential**. They will **never** talk about what happened in your meeting—they will not even acknowledge that they interpreted for you.

There are other differences as well:

A trained interpreter	An untrained interpreter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bound by a code of ethics to maintain confidentiality • Will pass on everything said fully & accurately, not just the main points, but every single detail • Will convey the way of speech and every subtlety, preserving feelings e.g. reservation, doubt, objection, approval • Will tell you and seek clarification if they don't understand • Will take notes to ensure accuracy • May stop you to ask for clarification or repetition to ensure accuracy • Is aware of role boundaries requiring them to remain neutral. Will not give personal opinions or advice and will only do interpreting, no other tasks. • Has had specific training for the area they interpret about. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not bound by a code of ethics, which means they could pass on your private details to someone else • Is unlikely to pass on all the main points and details accurately, causing significant distortion of the contents • Tends to sanitise and make cosmetic changes, removing much useful information • May bluff or drop out any information they don't understand or found too complicated or technical • Tends to rely completely on short term memory, which is far from perfect without special training • May sound very fluent because they don't stop to clarify or check facts • Is not aware of role boundaries, and may give personal opinions or advice, or perform other roles, such as providing transport. • Will not have had any specific training.

Don't put yourselves or your family in danger by using an untrained interpreter or a family member to interpret for you.

What are your rights?

It is your right to ask for an interpreter in many situations.

- Legally you have the right to have a professional interpreter when you deal with government officials, hospitals, courts and police. So, don't be embarrassed or ashamed about asking for a trained interpreter.

- You can also indicate if you want a face to face interpreter or a telephone interpreter. It is not recommended to have a telephone interpreter for a long or complex consultation or an emotional situation.
- Even if your English is reasonably good, you have the right to use your own language, in which people invariably express themselves better. In many circumstances, you may not feel confident enough to use English, or you may not know the medical or legal jargon, or you may not understand the professional's accent.

How can you get an interpreter?

- When making an appointment with the English speaking professional, be sure that you ask in advance for a professional interpreter. The agency has an obligation to arrange, and in most cases, pay for an interpreter.

What do you do if you have a bad interpreting experience?

- Please complain. If you don't complain nothing will change and other people in your community will suffer and no one may notice. If you make a change, everybody in your community and other communities will benefit.
- If you are dissatisfied with an interpreter in a health situation, you can complain to the Health and Disability Commissioner. You can get a translated version of their brochure, "Making and Resolving Complaints", or listen to your rights in your language, from their website: <http://www.hdc.org.nz/complaints> .

Please pass this information on to everybody in your community.

Take this page to request an interpreter:

<p>I speak [language]</p> <p>I need an interpreter, preferably</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Onsite</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Telephone</p>	<p>[translated version here]</p>
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For more information, please contact:

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Visit the Interpreting New Zealand website: www.interpret.org.nz