



**THE LANGUAGE SHOP:
INTRODUCTION TO WORKING
WITH INTERPRETERS.**

When to request an interpreter:

- If the service user, carer or family member requests an interpreter
- If you are unable to understand the service user
- If the service user has any difficulty understanding you due to their English skills
- If you need to elicit important information from a service user with limited English. Their English skills may restrict the information they are able to give you, in this case an interpreter will be required.

Best practice when working with an interpreter:

- Allow time at the start to explain the objective of the meeting to the interpreter.
- Introduce yourself and your service user to the interpreter, allow the interpreter to introduce themselves.
- Check that the interpreter and service user can understand each other.
- Speak directly to the service user, in first person.
- Speak slower than usual and pause regularly for interpretation.
- Avoid idiomatic language, complicated sentences and changing an idea mid-sentence. If you change your mind mid-sentence, start again.
- At the end of the meeting, check that the service user has understood the outcome and the next steps.

Avoid using family members or carers.

Avoid using families and carers as interpreters. Never ask a child to interpret.

Reasons for this include:

- You are unable to guarantee the accuracy of interpreting.
- You cannot guarantee impartiality.
- Safeguarding risks, e.g., an abusive partner/carer distorting information without your knowledge