

Working with a Telephonic Interpreter Best Practices

1. Try to find a quiet room and control any background noise (i.e. fans, music, other conversations if in a cubicle setting)
2. Make sure your interpreter has read and abides by an Interpreter's Code of Ethics.
3. Give the interpreter your name and the name of the patient(s).
4. Give the interpreter your phone number in case there is a disconnection and discuss reconnection procedures.
5. Give interpreter background information, including subject matter and potential issues that may be emotionally charged.
6. Allow the interpreter to give an introduction covering the process.
7. Let the interpreter ask for pauses for questions and clarification. Due to the lack of visual cues, the interpreter may need to say "stop" or "pause."
8. Avoid side conversations.
9. Keep statements relatively short.
10. Ask only one question at a time.
11. Use first and second person. Example: "I would like to know how you are today, Mrs. Gonzalez."
12. Avoid acronyms, highly technical terminology, slang, and metaphors. There are not always good equivalencies in both languages.
13. **DO NOT USE A PATIENT'S FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND TO SERVE AS THE INTERPRETER.**
14. Be patient.

Useful Links

To find Translators or Interpreters

1. American Translators Association (ATA) www.atanet.org
 - a. Searchable national database of interpreters/translators for most languages.
 - b. Only organization that offers certification for translators
2. Atlanta Association of Interpreters and Translators (AAIT) www.aait.org
 - a. Local division of ATA
 - b. Searchable Georgia-based database of interpreters/translators for most languages
3. Georgia Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf <http://garid.camp7.org>
 - a. Information on sign-language interpreters in Georgia
4. Georgia Interpreting Service Network <http://www.gisn.info>

Medical Interpreter Certifications

5. Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters <http://www.cchicertification.org>
6. The National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters <http://www.certifiedmedicalinterpreters.org>

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