



## HOW TO WORK WITH A TELEPHONE INTERPRETER

- Introduce yourself to the interpreter.
- Briefly explain the situation, and provide client's name.
- Let the interpreter know if you have a:
  - Single telephone handset;
  - Dual handset telephone; or
  - Conference telephone.
- Describe where you are e.g. counter, office, hospital ward.
- Introduce yourself and the interpreter to the client and describe the purpose of the interview.
- Limit your communication to short sections of information.
- Pause often to allow the interpreter to speak.
- Keep in mind that telephone interpreters rely entirely on what is said. They have no visual cues (such as body language) to assist in their interpreting.
- Clearly indicate the end of the session to the interpreter.

### When telephone interpreting is not appropriate

Telephone interpreting may not be appropriate if:

- The client is under emotional, mental or physical stress.
- The client is deaf or hard of hearing (Note: this may be possible if the deaf person and the interpreter are at one end and a hearing person is at the other and the interpreter has a "hands-free" phone).
- The interview will be long.
- Visual aides are needed.
- Documents need to be referred to.
- There may be risks, such as in situations involving the police, legal or medical issues.

