

Interpreting and translation

Interpreters provide a service for patients, people using care and support services, carers, social workers and clinicians to help them understand each other when they do not speak the same language. Not being able to communicate well with health professionals or social care services can impact on health outcomes, increase the frequency of missed appointments and reduce the effectiveness of consultations and patient/residents experience.

What is interpreting and translating?

Interpreting and translating are not the same thing. Interpreting is spoken, translation is written. Some language professionals do both. Interpreters charge by the hour, translators charge by the word.

There are a range of organisations that provide interpreting and translation services in Newcastle. This section gives information on some of these.

Bilingual Services and Interpreted Advice

If your first language isn't English, you may sometimes need an interpreter or translator to help you understand what is being discussed. This is particularly important if you are having a **personal** or **carer's needs assessment** or receiving health or medical information and advice. Services offer:

- face-to-face Interpreters
- document translation of any kind
- telephone and voice Interpreting
- British Sign Language

There are several ways in which you can access interpretation services depending on when and where you need them.

Using translation and interpreting services

Many services provide the option to request an interpreter or video call if needed. Speak to the service directly to see what is available to you.

[NHS 111](#) and [999 emergency services](#) when you call, say the language that you need. They can arrange an interpreter to help with your call. BSL interpreters are available to help with can be arranged using video calls for:

- [NHS 111 British Sign Language interpretation](#)
- [999 BSL video calls](#)

Online translation is available for NHS 111 information.

Doctors and GPs: speak to your [GP](#), nurse practitioner, other health service and local organisations to ask for an interpreter.

[SignLive](#) provide interpreter services for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) that regulate health and social care

[Relay UK](#) is the emergency text message service for deaf, hard of hearing and speech-impaired people in the UK to call for help from the police, ambulance, fire rescue, or coastguard. The emergency services can reply to you. You need to download the app and register your mobile phone number to use this service.

Finding your own interpreter or translator service

[Interpreting is not a protected profession](#). This means that agencies can hire people to work as interpreters who are not trained to a set standard. Their language level may not have been checked. If you are hiring an interpreter, request that they are appropriately qualified. Look for interpreters who have level 6 qualifications. For example DPSI Health, DPSI law or DPI policing.

If you want to look for an interpreter yourself instead of going through an agency, you can search the [National Register for Public Service Interpreters](#). You can search by region and by language. All the interpreters on the register are experienced and qualified to level 6. To search the register you need to create an account but it is free to do so.

There will be an online [Register of Public Service Translators](#) soon, where you can find translators.

More advice on how to work with interpreters is available on [the English Unlocked website](#).

[The North East British Sign Language website](#) has a list of the professional sign language interpreters working in the North East.

[SignHealth](#) is a Deaf-led charity with expertise in issues related to access and health.

[Becoming Visible](#) is a Deaf-led charity with interpreting services, training packages and media and campaigning work.

Translated health information

Patients should be able to request a translation of their summary care record into their preferred language and format (including easy read, Braille and other accessible formats) at no cost to

themselves over and above the standard cost of accessing their patient record. See the Accessible Information Standard (SCCI1605) for further information.

The NHS 111 provides [online language translation](#).

[The CNTW Patient Information Centre](#) offers a range of health related information in many languages including:

- medical conditions
- procedures and treatments
- details about self help and support groups
- information about complaints procedures
- copies of leaflets in many languages

[NHS](#) online has health information in a range of languages other than English.

[Doctors of the World](#) provide translated information about vaccines and other health care needs in 20 translated languages.

[Connected Voice Haref](#) work to identify areas where it is difficult to access health information. They have created a leaflet to help with requesting interpreting services.

The leaflet contains information about:

- How to request an interpreter at different NHS services
- Who to contact if you need more help
- How to complain if a health service doesn't give you an interpreter

You can view the [Spoken Language Interpreters in Health Services leaflet here](#)

Information NOW uses [Recite ME](#) so that you can translate an article, information, organisation or event into your language of choice. This includes translating into an audio MP3 file.

Alternatively, you can ask a friend or relative to make the call on your behalf. Wait until an interpreter is on the line before you explain why you are calling.

Disabled people who are d/Deaf, blind or deafblind

The Equality Act 2010 places a legal duty on all service providers to take steps or make "reasonable adjustments" in order to avoid putting a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage when compared to a person who is not disabled.

How to translate and read aloud InformationNOW

You can change InformationNOW into over 100 different languages. Click the white button to open the Recite Me software. [Read more about tailoring InformationNOW to your needs.](#)

Accessible Information Standard

The Accessible Information Standard is a UK law to make sure that people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss are given information they can easily read or understand. Health and social care services must find out your information and communication needs make sure you get support the way you need it in an accessible format.

For example you may ask for texts instead of phone calls for appointments or a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter at medical appointments for communication.

[Read more about Accessible information](#)

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Useful Organisations

Patient Information Centre – Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW)

Website: www.cntw.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0191 246 7288

Address: St Nicholas Hospital, NE3 3XT

Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Website: <https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk>

Telephone: 0191 233 6161

Address: Freeman Hospital, NE7 7DN

Newcastle City Council

Website: www.newcastle.gov.uk

Telephone: 0191 278 7878

Address: Civic Centre, NE1 8QH

NHS

Website: www.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0191 278 7878

North East British Sign Language English Interpreters

Email: paulhann@me.com

Website: <http://www.northeast-bslenglish-interpreters.co.uk>

Telephone: 07790 959 884

Address: 24 Henry Street, NE3 1DQ

Connected Voice Haref

Email: haref@connectedvoice.org.uk

Website: <https://connectedvoice.org.uk/services/haref>

Telephone: 0191 235 7022

Address: One Strawberry Lane, NE1 4BX

Telephone: 0191 235 7022

National Register for Public Service Interpreters

Email: admin@nrpsi.org.uk

Website: <http://www.nrpsi.org.uk/>

Telephone: 020 7721 5500

Address: Token House , EC2R 7AS

Sensory Support Service – Newcastle City Council

Email: communication.support.service@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/care-and-support/adults/adult-care-services/sensory-support-services>

Telephone: 0191 278 8377

Address: Sensory Support Service, Community Health and Social Care Direct, NE4 9LU

InterpreterNow

Email: support@interpreternow.co.uk

Website: <https://interpreternow.co.uk/>

Telephone: 0333 344 7712

Address: Victoria Court , DN3 3YA

SignHealth

Email: info@signhealth.org.uk

Website: <https://signhealth.org.uk/>

Telephone: 020 394 72600

Address: CAN Mezzanine Ltd , N1 6AH

SignLive

Email: hello@signlive.co.uk

Website: <https://signlive.co.uk/>

Telephone: 0330 822 0288

Address: SignLive, EH3 9QA

Telephone: 0330 822 0288

Becoming Visible

Email: hello@becomingvisible.org.uk

Website: www.becomingvisible.co.uk

Telephone: 0191 233 0999

Address: Becoming Visible, SR5 1AH

Relay UK

Website: <https://www.relayuk.bt.com/>

Telephone: 0800 7311 888

Address: Relay UK Team, PR1 1BA

Related Articles

[Looking after someone](#)

[Needs Assessment with Adult Social Care](#)

[10 Tips for good health](#)

[How to complain about health services](#)

[Your Doctor or GP](#)

[Walk-in centres \(Urgent Treatment Centres\)](#)

[Urgent medical help from NHS 111](#)

[Healthy eating and drinking](#)

[British Sign Language and subtitles](#)