Guide for Staff at Women's Aid on Working with Interpreters

2020

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The number of service users who have limited English language proficiency and seek support from Women's Aid has been steadily increasing in recent years. In some geographical locations changing patterns of migration have led to a greater diversity of language combinations spoken by service users, which raises issues for effective intercultural communication and organisation of appropriate language support.

It is well known that limited language proficiency can be a barrier to help seeking (e.g. Crandall et al. 2005, Vidales 2010), which is why the Women's Aid National Quality Standards published in 2015 pledge the following:

> *No survivor who has a need for support is refused a service because English is not her first language, because of her immigration or asylum-seeking status or because she has no recourse to public funds.*
> *(2018: 8)*

Support for survivors with limited language proficiency involves interpreting and translation at critical points of risk assessment, access to services to support transition to independent living, well-being and resilience building; however language support services need careful management in order to balance service user need with longer-term goals of developing competence and confidence in using the English language and independent living.

Although professional interpreting services are readily available, training for interpreters in the specific issues of domestic violence and training for service users on working effectively with interpreters is typically very limited. This Guide has been designed to support Women's Aid organisations on commissioning interpreting provision and delivering services through interpreters. It is accompanied by a separate Guide for Interpreters that can be given to interpreters prior to assignments with the organisation and/or made available online.

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A glossary of key terms is provided at the end.

1. Getting started: commissioning quality services

1.1 Selecting a Language Service Provider (LSP)

Interpreting provision (whether face-to-face or remote) will be sourced through a preferred Language Services Provider on the basis of organisational procurement processes. Ad hoc provisions for rare languages may be required and in some Women's Aid organisations a volunteer scheme may also support professional provision (see section 2.4).

1.2 Interpreter Education, Training, Certification and Accreditation

Public service interpreter education and training are provided by a wide range of providers in the United Kingdom from introductory to advanced levels. However, as an unregulated occupation not all interpreters have qualifications and/or training, and may have learned skills on the job. Service providers therefore need to be aware of potential differences in the way in which interpreters approach their practice, handle ethical issues and engage with professional development.

Variability in the content of interpreter education and access to training also means that approaches to practice can differ even among trained interpreters. The following statements can help service providers understand the extent to which an interpreter has been trained (and hence what level of additional guidance they might need to give), and what may be considered (un)acceptable professional practice.

Untrained interpreters have been found to:

- provide unsolicited opinions on the content of meetings with service users;

- work from memory alone and take no notes (this may be a preference of the service provider in some situations and can be negotiated, but note-taking is a sign of professional practice);

- guess the meaning of a word or phrase instead of seeking clarification;

- form undue alliances with service users (e.g. be in contact with service users by mobile phone);

- display strong emotional reactions to information verbally and non-verbally;

- speak on behalf of a service user instead of interpreting what was actually said;

- take on assignments which are beyond their level of skill/knowledge.

Trained interpreters are known to:

- work from notes where necessary to optimise information recall and accuracy of message;

- seek clarification if any aspect of an exchange is not fully understood (keeping all parties informed about what is happening);

- provide unobtrusive cultural explanations where appropriate;

- keep emotions in check (as far as is humanly reasonable);

- correct any mistakes or misinterpretations as soon as possible;

- manage communication by coordinating the length of an exchange, stopping a speaker as needed to avoid undue paraphrasing ;

- are sensitive to the preferred seating arrangements of the situation;

- will withdraw from assignments they are not appropriately qualified to perform.

experience in interpreting is not always backed up with education and training, which can lead to bad habits and inappropriate behaviours

Also note:

- for some language combinations there is not enough work to sustain a regular income through interpreting and so it may be one of other occupations an individual performs (which can lead to patchy skills and professional development);

- interpreters may have started to interpret informally for friends and community events and gradually find themselves working in settings for which their skills and knowledge are insufficient;

- some interpreters do not consider themselves to be part of a profession and do not aspire to such a status; in such cases they are likely to view their role as a 'helper' to their local community which may impact on rapport building and interactions with service users;

- there may be no available qualification (or rather appropriate examining personnel) for certain languages.

Interpreter qualifications in the UK:

Community Interpreting certificates (levels 1-3) – offered by further education establishments.

Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (Chartered Institute of Linguists) – available in a wide range of languages at NVQ level 6. The exam covers **written translation** into and from English, **sight translation** into and from English and **dialogue interpreting.** The examination is available in 'Local Government', 'English and Scottish Law', and 'Healthcare'. Candidates may sit the exam without having undertaken a preparatory course but a number of preparatory courses are available around the country, including some online. All three subject areas could touch on issues of direct and indirect concern with domestic violence but dedicated training on preparatory courses is likely to be rare.

Diploma in Police Interpreting (formerly the Met Police Test, also offered by the Chartered Institute of Linguists) University level programmes – BA and MA level (issues: courses are typically available in a limited number of language combinations and lack specialisation).

1.3 Professional associations and regulation

Professional associations perform several supporting functions for language service providers and freelance professionals from advice on starting out to continuing professional development and Union representation (e.g. National Union of Professional Interpreters and Translators (NUPIT)).

Leading interpreting associations in England include:

Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIoL)

Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI)

Association of Police and Court Interpreters (ACPI)

The National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) is the UK's only independent voluntary regulator. Full status on the register requires proof of relevant education and professional training, and a minimum number of hours of experience. Membership renewal is subject to proof of continuing professional development and payment of an annual fee. The NRPSI investigates alleged breaches of the NRPSI Code of Professional Conduct and publishes results of industry trends and outcomes of disciplinary hearings on a regular basis.

1.4 Language identification and linguistic competence

Recruiting the right interpreter depends on being able to identify the correct language / dialect. **Language charts** through which service users can point to their language can be one approach to language identification, but be aware that not all service users will be able to read. Do not assume that a person's nationality will be a reliable guide to the language s/he speaks as s/he may have lived in different countries prior to coming to the UK. A service user may speak more than one language but competence in each is likely to vary. Encourage a service user to select their **best language** when interpreting is required.

For some languages, **dialect** can prove problematic, as not all dialects are mutually intelligible within and across a geographical area and not everyone may speak the standard variety of a language. Your **Language Service Provider** will be able to advise on how to communicate language needs and resolve uncertainties when requesting an interpreter.

Do not assume that an interpreter who shares a language with a service user also shares a cultural background or can comment on culture-specific issues relating to that service user. There is a risk of **cultural stereotyping** if interpreters are asked to comment without having the appropriate background.

1.5 Communicating interpreter needs

What to communicate to the **Language Services Provider:**

- language / dialect;

- gender (if preferred);

- if concerns arise with regard to the interpreter being from the same community and local area as the service user, request an interpreter from outside the area;

- time / date / estimated length of meeting;

- request the same interpreter if the outcomes for the service user are likely to be better supported.

a successful interpreter-mediated meeting depends as much on the service provider as it does the interpreter

What to [ask the LSP to] communicate to the **interpreter:**

- time/date/estimated length of meeting;

- location of meeting and related needs (e.g. confidentiality in relation to refuge location);

- nature of meeting (in outline terms, e.g. housing, counselling session) and position in the service provider's relationship with the organisation (e.g. new service user, coming to the end of time in refuge, group work, etc);

- practical issues such as parking facilities, personal ID, etc.

1.6 Quality monitoring

Formal quality monitoring processes will be implemented as part of contractual arrangements with LSPs. Individual staff members, however, will find it useful to informally evaluate the quality of interpreter-mediated meetings and share experiences with co-workers. The National Occupational Standards in Interpreting (revised 2016) can help to structure reflection on the quality of interpreting service.

a quality briefing will go a long way to managing expectations and ensuring optimum communication

What to look out for:

- how well does the interpreter respond to your instruction and guidance (in the pre-brief and during the meeting)?

- how well does the interpreter express her/himself in English?

- how does the interpreter manage long turns in the conversation?

- is the interpreter familiar with domestic violence-related vocabulary and pick up / re-use words that you use?

- does the interpreter check with you and/ or the service user if any uncertainties arise as to word choice or ambiguity in meaning?

- does the interpreter show any impatience with the service user if responses are slow, the service user seems indecisive, or if things are repeated?

- how well did you manage the briefing and the interpreted meeting?

1.7 Developing good practice in your organisation

- speak to fellow staff about the issues that have arisen in interpreting assignments in order to achieve a consistent response across the organisation;

- arrange periodic discussion forums to share experiences and review approaches to interpreter briefing (see section 2.2) and if possible, invite interpreters along to develop inter-professional understanding;

- arrange to speak to the language service provider (LSP) periodically to feed back on matters that have arisen (the LSP can then incorporate these into communications with interpreters and relevant CPD events).

2. Working with interpreters in specific modes and settings

2.1 Modes of interpreting

Most interpreting at Women's Aid will involve bilateral short **consecutive interpreting**, also known as **liaison interpreting**, whether face-to-face, over the phone or through video-conferencing. Some interpreters are trained to work **simultaneously**; however, is not advised in meetings on issues of domestic violence. In meetings where a form needs to be completed or a document discussed, the interpreter may be asked to perform an **on-sight translation**. In other circumstances a **written translation** will be required.

Spoken interpreting, on-sight translation and written translation are very different skills. Written documents requiring sight translation in meetings can be complex and involve terminology that an interpreter might not be able to find or retrieve from memory easily.

Allow the interpreter plenty of time to read the document either ahead of the meeting or on the day of the meeting so that appropriate resources may be consulted. If a written version is required for a service user to take away, a professional translator must be contacted separately; an interpreter should not be asked to complete a written translation as part of an interpreting assignment.

2.2 Working with interpreters in one-to-one meetings (face-to-face)

Pre- briefing

A pre-brief with the interpreter is the foundation for successful communication with service users. Remember that the lack of training in domestic violence issues means that you will need to provide clear guidance on what interpreters should expect in a given assignment and your preferred approach to communication. The pre-brief does not need to take long.
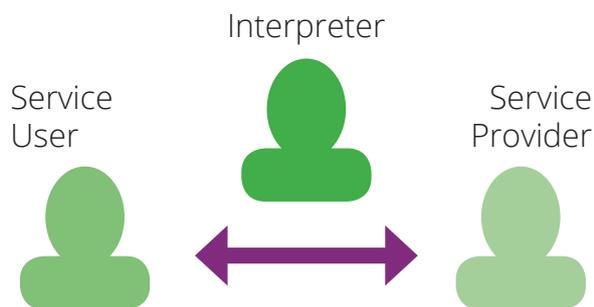
a) **establish** whether the interpreter has prior experience in your organisation;

b) **remind** the interpreter of the ground rules of communication:

- interpret everything that is said as it is said and in the first person

- do not pass comment on the content of the meeting (unless to clarify a point or highlight a potential cultural misunderstanding)

- maintain confidentiality and impartiality

c) **set the scene by outlining** the aims of the meeting, **providing** any technical terms that are likely to arise, **warning** of potentially disturbing or difficult information, and **guiding** how best to respond in terms of body language so that the service user is minimally impacted;

d) **ask** the interpreter to **disclose** any prior contact with the service user (in this or other organisations, or in the wider community);

e) **invite** the interpreter to **tell** you of any potentially difficult linguistic or cultural issues that may arise in the meeting so that you can decide how you will handle these once the meeting has started;

f) **inform** the interpreter of any issues concerning the service user that might impact on the communication (e.g. speech problems, potential for violent outbursts, PTSD, etc);

g) **agree** on what action to take if during the meeting the interpreter encounters unforeseen communication problems (e.g. the service user's language is not fully understood) or issues of rapport (e.g. the service user considers the interpreter as a friend/enemy/therapist).
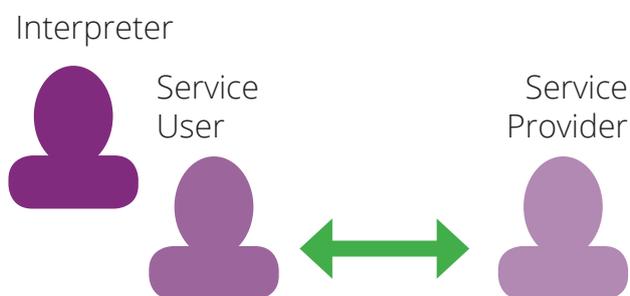
Seating arrangements

There are various possible seating configurations for interpreter-mediated meetings. The choice will often depend on the size of the room, the type of seating and other furniture in the room (e.g. tables).

a) seating arrangement 1 (triangle with service user and service provider sitting opposite each other)

Interpreter

Service User   Service Provider

b) seating arrangement 2 (interpreter is sat just behind the service user)

Interpreter

Service User   Service Provider

Seating arrangement (2) may not be preferred for reasons of rapport building and trust in the consecutive mode. This arrangement is useful if **whispered simultaneous** interpreting is provided.

Introductions

It is good practice for the interpreter to be formally introduced at the start of a meeting. This can be performed by the interpreter her/himself or by you as the service provider.

Sample wording for the service provider:

This is our interpreter today. S/he is a professional interpreter and is here to help us both communicate. S/he will not take sides. Anything that is said in this meeting will be kept confidential.

I have asked the interpreter to interpret everything that you say and exactly as you say it. The interpreter will interpret everything said in the room. If there is something you do not understand, please stop me and ask.

The interpreter will not comment on anything you say and will only translate your words.

The interpreter may need to take notes to support the interpreting process. These notes will be destroyed at the end of the meeting.

The interpreter is not here to provide you with advice and if s/he sees you in the street or in a shop after this meeting s/he will not acknowledge you or approach you.

If you have met this interpreter before please let me know.

I would like to firstly make sure that you and the interpreter can understand each other and that you are happy to continue.

During the meeting, you should:

- avoid idiomatic language / jargon;

- speak at a reasonable pace, use short sentences, avoid multiple questions, and leave pauses for interpretation;

- allow time in the meeting to periodically summarise what has been said (it can be easy to lose track when conversation is fragmented due to the interpreting process);

- be aware of cross-cultural issues in non-verbal communication (e.g. lack of eye contact does not mean a person is not listening or does not trust you);

- check the service user's understanding regularly;

- ensure appropriate breaks are included for the interpreter and service user, especially if the information being discussed is traumatic;

- avoid making asides to the interpreter;

- don't interrupt the interpreter mid flow, wait until the interpretation is finished;

- do not leave the interpreter and service user in a room alone together;

- ensure that the meeting is closed in a very clear way with a summary of key points, an indication of what will happen next and when, and whether and when a follow-up meeting will be held and how this will be communicated.

Specific considerations for different types of meeting with service users

a) general meetings

A general meeting is described as a meeting that concerns very practical issues such as housing, immigration and schooling. In these types of meeting interpreters are more likely to be asked to do on-sight translations of documents. If the interpreter is familiar with a particular document s/he may feel happy to do the on-sight translation on their own and for the service user to ask questions to the service provider at the end. In other circumstances, the service provider will take the lead and ask the interpreter to work through sections of the document, stopping for the service provider to explain terminology and provide contextual information.

b) risk assessments

Assessing risk when an interpreter is involved can be particularly challenging. The pre-brief can help interpreters to have an idea about how you will approach the task. For example, some service providers may go through the questions quite mechanically in chronological order, whereas others adopt a more narrative approach and elicit the service provider's story in ways that ensure that the questions are covered. The latter approach is better suited for interpreter-mediated meetings as the interpreter will benefit from the greater amount of context provided.

Note: the Guide for Interpreters that accompanies this document includes information for interpreters on the type of questions asked during risk assessments and why.

Be aware that some questions are likely to be culturally more problematic than others. Discuss these with your interpreter in the pre-brief so that a clear approach is established. It is important that the severity of risk is not underplayed in cross-cultural and bilingual meetings. For example, reference to mistreatment of animals or family pets during a risk assessment may seem absurd to individuals from cultures where animals are not kept in the home.

Interpreter decisions over word choice can lead to the severity of a situation being downplayed. In some cases, references

to sexual activity may be expressed in vague or euphemistic terms: e.g. 'did he have sex with you last night' may be interpreted as 'did anything happen last night?' Interpreters may alter meanings deliberately or inadvertently because they are embarrassed at using particular language or because they misinterpret the potential severity of sexual activities (e.g. not understand the difference between 'rape' and 'sexual assault').

A study by Pande (2013) explores difficulties in naming and disclosing sexual violence in Hindi. Participants in the study who spoke both Hindi and English were asked to provide translations for key words in English linked to sexual violence.

The examples show how some individuals use circumlocution in their translations. Some interpreters may impose their own logic on the term a service user says in ways that can hide the service user's understanding. This is something to discuss in the pre-brief, e.g. make it clear that you want to hear exactly the words used and not an approximation.

Finally, do not assume that interpreters are familiar with police or court-related terminology such as 'non-molestation order'. Terms like 'safeguarding' and 'stalking' are also unlikely to exist as a one-to-one equivalent in another language. Descriptive approaches are useful the first time a term is used in a meeting.

Table 9.1 Translation for Sex, Sexual Gratification, Sexual Feeling, Sexual Act

Word in English	Word in Hindi	Back Translation	Number of Participants
Sex	Pyar	Love	3
	Miya Beewee ka rishta	Relationship between husband and wife	1
	Admi aurat Ka rishta	Relationship between man and woman	1
Sexual Gratification	Anand	Pleasure	2
	Sharirik Sookh	Bodily pleasure	2
	Maza	Fun	1
Sexual Feeling	Akarshan	Attraction	3
	Chah nahi hai	Does not want	2
	Pyar nahi korti	Does not love	1
	Letne ka jee nahi karta	Does not want to lie down	1
	Yaun sambandh nahi chahti	Does not want sexual relationship	1
Sexual Act	Gande Kaam	Bad/dirty act	1
	Blue film	Blue film	1
	Ashleel Sambhog	Obscene sex	1
	Sambhog karte hue dikhaya	To show someone having sex	1
	Bacche ko nanga film dikhaya	Show naked film to a child	1
	Sambhog dikhaya	To show sex	1

Table 9.6 Shame and Honour in Translating Child Sexual Abuse and Rape

Word in English	Word in Hindi	Back Translation	Number of Respondants
Rape	Izzat loot le	Robbed one's honour	4
	Sharam ho gayi	Brought shame	1
Child Sex Abuse	Baccho ki Izzat Lootna	To rob a child's honour	1
	Baccho ke saath Besharmi Kama	To do something shameful to a child	1

(pp. 159, 163)

c) at refuge

Ask interpreters to turn off their mobile phone location settings prior to arrival at refuge and turn off their phone during assignments. Many interpreters like to remain contactable about future assignments and sometimes do not realise it is inappropriate to take calls in meetings.

Interpreters are not usually paid travel time between assignments which often means that they will need to leave immediately as the allotted time comes to an end in order to reach their next assignment. Check with your interpreter at the start whether this is the case and keep an eye on the time. Sometimes interpreters can feel distracted and lose concentration if they think a meeting is going to go over the scheduled time.

In the pre-brief at refuge, it can be helpful to alert the interpreter to any issues of service user mood, rapport, feelings of isolation etc. so that any responses can be put into perspective.

d) counselling

Not all Women's Aid organisations provide counselling as part of their services. For those that do, special consideration needs to be given to interpreting provision for therapeutic purposes. Again, little specialist training is available on interpreting in counselling sessions but there is a growing body of research to support good practice.

Examples of good practice in counselling meetings:

Pre-brief

The pre-brief will follow the pattern outlined above; however additional guidance is needed for the interpreter. The interpreter needs to be aware that in counselling / therapeutic sessions the focus needs to be on both what is being said *and the way it is being said*. This means that false starts, hesitation, even garbled language use needs to be reflected in the interpreter's output as close to the original as possible, as this will help the counsellor make an appropriate assessment of the state of mind, mood, and other elements that will influence the counsellor's approach.

Counsellors and therapists who work with survivors of domestic abuse may adopt different approaches to interpreter-aided sessions with service users. Work by Hanneke Bot (2005) on *Dialogue Interpreting in Mental Health,* can help to understand the different approaches according to which some view the interpreter as:

1) an 'instrument'

2) someone that 'helps to form a therapeutic reality'

In the case of (2):

- the interpreter is viewed as someone that has influence on the treatment;

- self disclosure by the counsellor/ therapist and (in some cases) the interpreter may be used as a technique;

- the spontaneity of both the therapist and the interpreter are considered to have a place in the therapeutic relationship.

The involvement of the interpreter in sessions under approach (2) above is likely to be very different to interpreting in other settings. It requires careful planning and negotiation of role boundaries and expectations with the therapist/counsellor.

Maintaining the 'therapeutic perspective' in counselling sessions:

According to Bot (2005: 148) the therapist/ counsellor is likely to adopt several approaches to the session with service users that collectively can be described as the 'therapeutic perspective'. These

include: being a minimal encourager, using silence, approval-reassurance, giving information, direct guidance, using closed and open questions, restatements, reflection, interpretation, confrontation, and self-disclosure.

Bot's study shows that sometimes interpreters approach their practice in ways that do not help to maintain the 'therapeutic perspective'. This can happen in cases where the therapist refers to her/himself as a means of showing sincerity and commitment to listening. An example:

The therapist says 'but I am here for you' Interpreted as (back translation): 'but I want to talk about your problems'

It may appear that the interpreting is sincere and conveys a similar message, but in this case the therapist's expertise in framing her/his role is altered.

Another example of the impact of the interpreter concerns the omission of phrases that help to establish the relationship between the patient and the therapist, such as 'as I told you before'.

Accuracy and manner of delivery are important in all assignments, but these seemingly smaller details can impact on the success or otherwise of the therapeutic intervention and need to be given particular consideration by interpreters. A simple reminder during the pre-brief can support effective communication.

What have Women's Aid staff reported as particularly challenging in (professional) interpreter-mediated meetings?

- interpreters breaking off from their interpretation to answer the phone about future job opportunities;

- interpreters reacting strongly to certain disclosures in ways that impact the service user;

- interpreters make non-verbal signs (e.g. roll their eyes) on hearing the same question being repeated;

- interpreters commenting on individual circumstances in an inappropriate manner ('I can't believe s/he did that to you', 'I don't understand how you took it for so long'). This is also reported by other agencies in Manchester:

"There was a lady doing the interpretation. She accused me, she said, 'Are you making fun of the police. You are making their job difficult. Your husband is here, he has been arrested. They need your friend's statement. Why are you telling them something that you cannot prove?' … I told her that I was not lying. My friend, she was afraid, what could I do? The police were telling me not to worry but she was accusing me of lying. She really upset me."

Source: http://www.manchester.gov.uk/rsmp4/info/45/roma/371/empowering_women_or_perpetuating_victimhood_minority_ethnic_and_roma_womens_experiences_of_domestic_violence_policy_and_service_provision

Communicating with the interpreter about language issues during the meeting:

Professional interpreters are taught not to guess what a word or expression means and always seek clarification. They are also encouraged to keep the lines of communication open with the service provider at all times and let you know if a close equivalent to a term or phrase does not exist so that the idea can be re-phrased. Example phrases for interpreters:

- 'in (x) language a clear distinction is not made between (x word) and (x word), which is why I have said (x)'

- 'in (x) culture (x) expression would not be easy to contextualise for the service user'

- 'in order to express (x) I need to say (xxx); is there anything you would like to add'?

After the interpreter-mediated meeting:

It is important to allow some time after the meeting for the interpreter to share his/her feelings about how things went and for you to both consider what went well and what could be improved in terms of both of your approaches to communication in in terms of the communication process.

2.3 Working with telephone and video-conference interpreting services

Telephone and video-conference interpreting is useful in emergency situations where an interpreter is needed, but it has shortcomings in terms of rapport building. The time for pre-briefing can feel more limited when using the telephone and video-conferencing but it is still important.

What to prioritise:

- if you unexpectedly hear a male voice and not a female, you will need to ensure attention is paid to the rapport building process and trust established (emergency situations may mean that gender-specific interpreting requests cannot be accommodated);

- tell the interpreter very briefly something about the service user (e.g. just arrived, unfamiliar with the organisation, emotional state, etc) and state the aims of the phone call and the different stages you are likely to go through during the call.

Example:

Hello this is Women's Aid, I have a female service user with me who has just been referred. She is clearly very nervous and frightened. I have not met her before. I will be carrying out a risk assessment after I have introduced everyone and explained the purpose of this conversation. Have you interpreted for this type of service user or this type of assignment before?

If 'no', provide a brief description of what the interpreter can expect (e.g. 'I'll be working through a form with set questions if I go quiet it is because I am making notes') and what you expect of the interpreter (see list above).

Common issues in telephone interpreting and video-conference interpreting:

- unreliable technology, e.g. poor quality line / video 'freezes';

- position of the video means that only the top of the interpreter's head can be seen;

- the need to pass a phone around if conference call facilities are not available;

- the need to 're-establish' the narrative and summarise what has gone on up to that point more regularly than in face-to-face communication;

- the need to check that the interpreter / service user have understood more frequently than face to face (in case of any inadvertent sound problems);

- difficulty for the interpreter to alert a service provider to the need to clarify something;

- risk that the service user feels alienated if there are lengthy conversations between the interpreter and service provider.

What do Women's Aid staff think about working with interpreters over the phone?

- no significant issues reported

- for some it can help to focus the risk assessment more clearly and directly than in face-to-face mode

2.4 Working with interpreters in group meetings

Women's Aid offers a wide range of courses to support survivors in coping with the consequences of abuse and building a new life. Interpreters can be called to support service users attending courses and achieving the desired outcomes through participation in group work.

In this type of work, the most effective mode of interpreting is **whispered simultaneous interpreting**. It means that the facilitator does not need to pause for interpretation after a few sentences, which should mitigate the impact on the other group members. Interpreters who have passed the Diploma in Public Service examination will have been tested in simultaneous mode, but not all interpreters will have these skills.

The facilitator needs to inform the group at the start that an interpreter is present (they might wonder why someone is talking at the same time and find it a distraction). Attention is needed to seating – it is more comfortable for the interpreter to sit slightly behind the service user in order to whisper. Whispering places strain on the voice and so regular breaks / water should be factored into the session.

It is important that the limited English language proficient speaker feels part of the group but s/he may feel uncomfortable asking a question through the interpreter. Small group activities can mitigate such feelings and ensure that the limited proficiency speaker communicates others. A different interpreter may be involved in future sessions and building friendships within the group will be important for confidence building and also English language use.

What do service users think about interpreter mediation in group activities?

- some service users find the involvement of an interpreter an unnecessary distraction;

- if the consecutive interpreting mode is used, service users can find it slows the meeting down to the point that they feel they are not getting as much out of it as they should.

2.5 Working with volunteer interpreters (in-house schemes)

Some Women's Aid organisations have developed volunteer schemes that involve former service users and interested members of the public in different aspects of the organisation's work. Not everyone who puts her/himself forward as a volunteer and who has language skills wishes to use them. Instead s/he may volunteer to develop other skills and may resent being used to support communication activities on an ad hoc basis.

A volunteer scheme specifically for intercultural communication can provide effective support in areas where professional interpreting is not needed but where interlingual communication can support resilience building and social interaction. Examples include: interpreting for attendees at discussion forums, arts and crafts events, gardening, drop-in sessions, social events and visits.

Key points:

- volunteer interpreters must receive guidance on basic principles of interpreting. Such guidance should stress the differences between interpreter-mediated conversation and general conversation that may occur in other volunteer activities. In other words, volunteer interpreters need to get into good habits of interpreting what someone actually says and not what they think they want to say, refraining from intervening in the substance of a conversation (e.g. acting as an advocate);

- volunteers should not be asked to interpret at meetings that only professional interpreters are qualified to interpret under any circumstances;

- information should be made available on how volunteers might move into interpreting as a professional career and develop skills through education;

- volunteers should receive specific guidance on interpreting in circumstances where children are present;

- a volunteer scheme needs to be appropriately managed and mentoring offered (e.g. by experienced interpreters) to establish good practice.

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Pande, S. (2013) 'Lost for Words: Difficulties in Naming and Disclosing Sexual Violence in Hindi', in Y. Rehman, L. Kelly and H. Siddiqui (eds) *Moving in the Shadows: Violence in the Lives of Minority Women and Children*, Farnham: Ashgate, pp. 155-168.

Vidales, G.T. (2010) 'Arrested Justice: The multifaceted plight of immigrant Latinas who faced domestic violence', *Journal of Family Violence* 25: 533-544.

Women's Aid (2018) National Quality Standards (revised 2018). Available at: https://www.womensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/national-quality-standards/ [accessed 31 March 2020].

4. Recommended Reading / Useful Resources

Fernández, M. (2006) 'Cultural Beliefs and Domestic Violence' *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences,* 1087(1): 250-26.

National Network for Interpreting: http://www.nationalnetworkforinterpreting.ac.uk

National Occupational Standards in Interpreting (currently being revised): http://wiki.settlementatwork.org/uploads/UK-National_Occupational_Standards_for_Interpreting.pdf

ISO Standard 13611, Guidelines for Community Interpreting (2014): http://www.iso.org/iso/catalogue_detail.htm?csnumber=54082

Tipton, Rebecca and Olgierda Furmanek (2016) *Dialogue Interpreting: A Guide to Interpreting in Public Services and the Community*, London and New York: Routledge

Glossary of Terms

Best language – the language that a service user feels most comfortable using in conversation that involves complex and sensitive topics and emotions

Consecutive interpreting – mode of interpreting where the interpreter listens to a stretch of discourse and waits for the speaker to stop before interpreting

Cultural stereotyping – a fixed belief or impression about an individual from a particular cultural background, which may have little basis in fact

Dialect – a specific form of a language (i.e. specific grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation) spoken by a particular group or community in a specific geographical location or region

Dialogue Interpreting – also known as bilateral or liaison interpreting, it involves working to and from English in a conversation between two or more people who do not speak each other's language

Language chart – a free downloadable chart created by the Refugee Council is available

On-sight translation – the oral translation of a written document

Rare languages – languages spoken usually by newly arrived communities for which limited or no qualified interpreting provision is available

Remote interpreting – interpreting services provided at a distance from the point of need and delivered using various means such as the telephone, internet or video conference equipment

Whispered simultaneous interpreting – interpreting performed at the same time as the original speaker usually for one person, requiring specialist skills and training