



# INforMHAA: Interpreter-mediated Mental Health Act Assessments

Best practices for Approved Mental Health Professionals and Interpreters working together

## Part 1. Introduction to the practice guidance

This document offers **specific practice guidance** for AMHPs and interpreters in working together in MHAAs informed by evidence from the research study.

It is divided into 13 topics beginning with overarching considerations then taking a temporal perspective of before the MHAA (preparation), during the MHAA, and after the MHAA. Links to other parts of the guidance and specific resources are also provided. You do not need to review the resource from start to finish in the order the parts are presented; each part stands alone.

Topic	What is covered
<b>OVERARCHING CONSIDERATIONS</b>	
<b>1.</b> Self-guided learning materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Background to development of the guidance and resources.</li></ul>
<b>2.</b> The context and key roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Statutory guidance on interpreter use and legal requirements.</li><li>• How work in MHAAs is outside usual mental health interpreting professional practice.</li><li>• What does it mean to keep the assessed person at the centre?</li><li>• Who is responsible for what?</li></ul>
<b>3.</b> Legal decision making in practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clarifying the place of the interpreter within legal decision making and the role of the interpreter (not as advocate).</li></ul>

Topic	What is covered
<b>BEFORE THE ASSESSMENT (PREPARATION)</b>	
<b>4.</b> When and why interpreters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AMHP responsibilities and practicalities in ensuring an interpreter is present.</li> <li>• When might it be acceptable not to have an interpreter?</li> <li>• What kinds of interpreters are required with what ranges of experience?</li> </ul>
<b>5.</b> Briefing between interpreters and AMHPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is briefing important?</li> <li>• What might be negotiated?</li> <li>• What might an AMHP want to ask?</li> <li>• What might an interpreter want to check?</li> <li>• What kinds of content will be included?</li> </ul>
<b>6.</b> Key concepts and terms for interpreters (and AMHPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory nature of the language used in MHAAs means some words and intentions may not be fully understood.</li> <li>• Why AMHPs need to know the meanings have been ‘properly’ conveyed by the interpreter.</li> <li>• Why interpreters can’t just translate verbatim.</li> </ul>
<b>DURING THE ASSESSMENT</b>	
<b>7.</b> Types of interpreting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kinds of interpreting might the AMHP want to ask for and why.</li> <li>• What interpreting approaches the interpreter may seek to offer and why.</li> <li>• Key considerations in the representation of the person being assessed through interpreter mediation.</li> </ul>
<b>8.</b> Stopping an interpreter-mediated assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can AMHPs say if they are not happy with an interpreter mediated MHAA?</li> <li>• When should a MHAA be stopped and why?</li> <li>• Pragmatic considerations in stopping linked to ethics, risk and harm.</li> </ul>
<b>9.</b> Cultural sensitivity and cultural brokering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What role if any does an interpreter have in cultural brokering?</li> <li>• Interpreting and advocacy.</li> <li>• What might be best practice in using cultural and community information and background that an interpreter may have and when this is not ok.</li> </ul>
<b>AFTER THE ASSESSMENT</b>	
<b>10.</b> The full patient journey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why interpreters are needed for continuity immediately after the MHAA and subsequently.</li> </ul>
<b>11.</b> Debriefing and care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What a good debriefing might look like.</li> <li>• How are interpreters looked after.</li> </ul>
<b>12.</b> Issues in recording	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recording language use and interpreter booking on systems.</li> </ul>
<b>13.</b> Governance, accountability and safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important issues in governance, accountability and safeguarding when an interpreter is part of the assessment.</li> </ul>

## Accompanying resources

Topic	What is covered
<b>R1.</b> Purpose of the resource	Description of why the resource has been created, including a disclaimer.
<b>R2.</b> Written interpreter-mediated MHAA scenarios	Four written MHAA scenarios with background of why they have been created and possible uses for training.
<b>R3.</b> Web links	Links to where the resources are hosted with descriptions of languages and formats.
<b>R4.</b> Training ideas	Guidance on how the video scenario versions might be used for training of AMHPs and interpreters.
<b>R5.</b> Developing debriefing skills	Training resource that can be used to follow up on the debriefing good practice.
<b>R6.</b> Curated reference list	A list of useful references with pointers for why they might be useful follow-up reading.
<b>R7.</b> Minimum best practice checklist for interpreters	Focus on specific practice in the MHAA interview.
<b>R8.</b> What to record	Aide memoire linked to the recording guidance section.
<b>R9.</b> Minimum best practice checklist for AMHPs	Focus on specific practice in the MHAA interview.
<b>R10.</b> Related guidance documents	Overview of related guidance documents with an introduction as to why each may be useful with live links.

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## Document Description

This document is an **extracted section** from **INforMHAA Project Guidance & Resources** for use as a handy reference.

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## Disclaimer

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