



## RESOURCE R7: Minimum best practice checklist for interpreters in MHA assessments

This checklist has been created to focus on specific practice in the MHAA and aims to assist interpreters when mediating an interview between an AMHP and a person who uses a language other than English. It is a summary of the information available in the previous parts of the guidance. For a full explanation of why these headings are important and what should be included, see relevant parts as indicated.

Heading/topic	Brief explanation	Relevant part of this guidance
Things to check when job request to interpret MHAA is received.	<p>MHAAs are highly sensitive situations so think carefully about whether you have the right skills and experience.</p> <p>Confirm language combination and if you have the appropriate combination/ dialects.</p> <p>Request any information that might indicate a potential conflict of interest.</p> <p>Check the amount of time that has been allocated and whether you would be able to stay longer as complex assessments sometimes need more time.</p> <p>Information can be requested under GDPR guidelines that are essential to the job, but information received must be destroyed as soon as the job is complete.</p> <p>Minority language communities are small, so it could be uncomfortable for the person being assessed if they are familiar with you.</p>	<p>Part 2: Context and key roles</p> <p>Part 3: Legal decision making</p> <p>Part 4: When and why interpreters are booked</p> <p>Part 7: Types of interpreting</p>
Booking confirmed	<p>Establish whether attendance is in person or remote and consider interpreting strategies accordingly.</p>	<p>Part 4: When and why interpreters are booked</p> <p>Part 12: Issues in recording</p> <p>Part 13: Governance, accountability and safeguarding</p>

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Request a briefing with the AMHP	To ensure best joint working practice - check AMHP understanding of role of interpreter, how best to work with an interpreter and any other information they can share so that you understand the nature of interview to come and any aspects of the person's behaviour that you should be aware of.	Part 5: Briefing Part 6: Key concepts and terms Part 7: Types of interpreting
Address any safety concerns	For example, you may need to check seating arrangements, what to do if you feel uncomfortable or distressed at any time.	Part 13: Governance, accountability and safeguarding
Check language understanding	Ask the AMHP if you can check that you understand the language of the person being assessed (and vice versa) before the interview commences. Communicate with the AMHP why this is necessary due to potential dialectical variation.	Part 5: Briefing Part 6: Key concepts and terms Part 7: Types of interpreting
Disclose familiarity	As soon as any familiarity between interpreter and person being assessed is identified, inform the AMHP and then a discussion can be had about whether to continue with the assessment.	Part 9: Cultural sensitivities and cultural brokering
Interpret the interview	It may be necessary to consider stopping the interview if you do not feel comfortable or changing the approach to interpreting – especially if you think that the person being assessed does not understand you. For sign language interpreters simultaneous interpreting is standard practice but due to the sensitivities of MHAAs it may be appropriate to switch to consecutive mode at times to help manage the flow of information. Alternatively, spoken language interpreters should work consecutively as standard practice in this context. Simultaneous interpreting may not be appropriate, but whispered simultaneous could be considered if there is a time pressure and it will not create more distress for the person being assessed.	Part 8: Stopping the assessment
Linguistic and cultural sensitivities	Consider sharing any information with the AMHP about linguistic or cultural information that might be helpful to them in conducting the assessment.	Part 9: Cultural sensitivities and cultural brokering
Request a debrief with the AMHP	So that you can discuss your role as interpreter in the assessment (but not the assessment itself) and to learn for future joint practice.	Part 11: Debriefing
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Note issues of good practice and/or concerns	Lessons learned and shared.	Part 10: The patient journey

# INforMHAA: Interpreter-mediated Mental Health Act Assessments

Best practices for Approved Mental Health Professionals and Interpreters working together

## 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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