

# Free Interpreting Service (FIS) for allied health professionals

Wednesday 7 December 2022



Australian Government  
Department of Health and Aged Care

[www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

# Our speakers today

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|----------------------|--|
| Dr Anne-marie Boxall | Chief Allied Health Officer,<br>Australian Government Department of Health and<br>Aged Care                  |
| Andrew Graham        | Manager - Free Interpreting Service (FIS),<br>Translating and Interpreting Service<br>(TIS National)         |
| Bronson Mace         | Account Manager - Free Interpreting Service<br>(FIS), Translating and Interpreting Service<br>(TIS National) |
| Gulnara Abbasova     | Executive Officer,<br>Migrant & Refugee Health Partnership   |

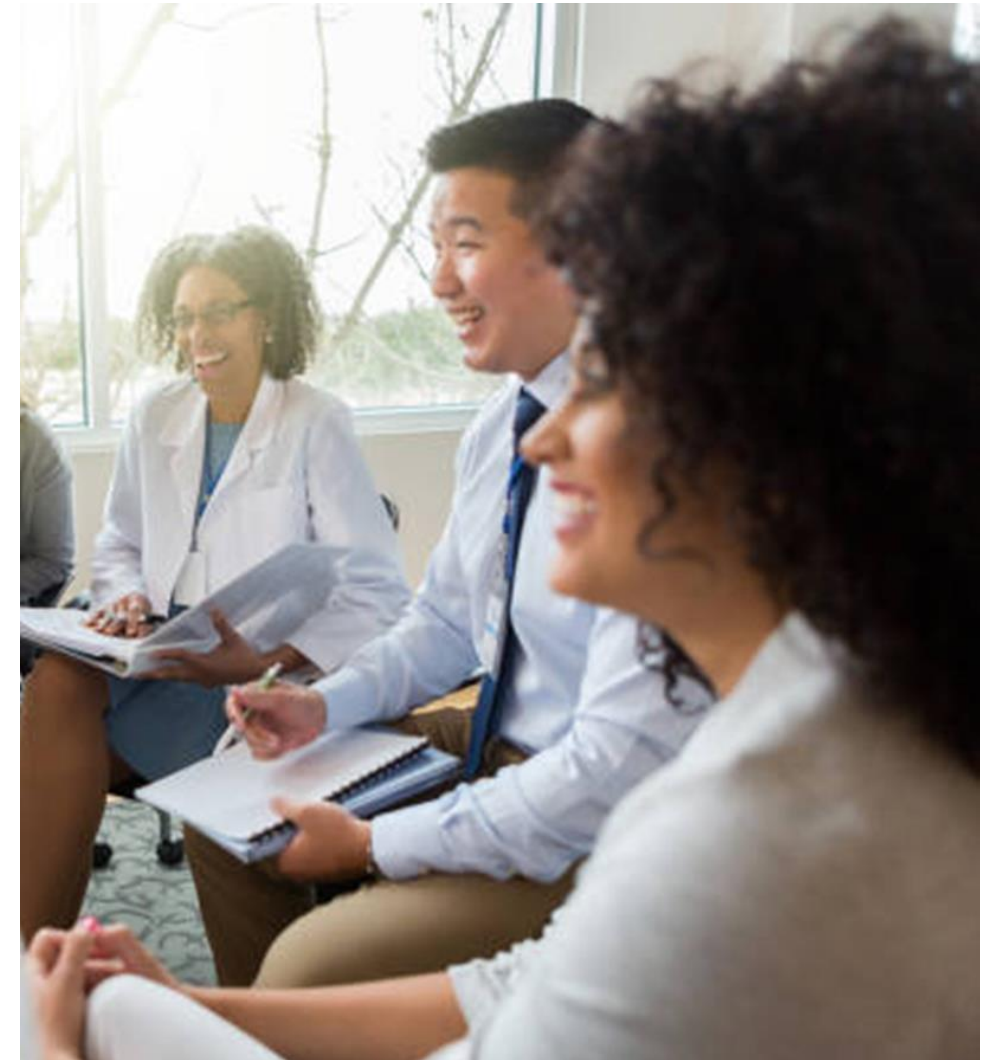
# Housekeeping

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- Webinar is being recorded and will be available at [health.gov.au](https://health.gov.au)
- Q&A
  - Slido will automatically appear
  - Submit questions via Slido at any time
  - Upvote questions you would like answered
  - Q&A session at the end of the webinar

# Agenda

| Items  | Presenter   | Approx. timing |
|--|---|----------------|
| 1. Overview of pilot program   | Anne-marie Boxall,<br>Chief Allied Health Officer<br>(CAHO)   | 10 minutes     |
| 2. How to access interpreter services through the new program                    | Andrew Graham and<br>Bronson Mace, Translating<br>and Interpreting Service<br>(TIS) National  | 25 minutes     |
| 3. Why use an interpreter and how to work effectively with them: Practice points | Gulnara Abbasova,<br>Migrant & Refugee Health<br>Partnership  | 20 minutes     |
| 4. Video: How to direct an interpreter session                                   | Excerpt from TIS National's<br>video 'Hints and tips for<br>working with interpreters'  | 5 minutes      |
| 5. Q&A   | Anne-marie Boxall, CAHO<br><br>Andrew Graham and<br>Bronson Mace,<br>TIS National<br><br>Gulnara Abbasova,<br>Migrant & Refugee Health<br>Partnership | 30 minutes     |



# Overview of the FIS expansion for allied health professionals

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- Announced in the March 2022 Budget - \$1.995 million over 4 years from 2022-23
- Eligible privately practising allied health professionals providing services in one of the 32 listed LGAs can access the FIS
- Commenced 24 October 2022
- Delivered by Department of Home Affairs' Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)

# Local Government Area (LGA) eligibility

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| Jurisdiction | LGA(s)   |
|--------------|--|
| ACT          | Canberra   |
| NSW          | Fairfield, Liverpool, Blacktown, Albury, Armidale, Coffs Harbour, Newcastle, Wagga Wagga, Wollongong             |
| NT           | Darwin   |
| Qld.         | Brisbane, Logan, Cairns, Gold Coast, Toowoomba, Townsville   |
| SA           | Adelaide, Mount Gambier  |
| Tas.         | Launceston, Hobart   |
| Vic.         | Casey, Greater Dandenong, Hume, Wyndham, Brimbank, Melton, Greater Geelong, Greater Shepparton, Mildura, Wodonga |
| WA           | Perth  |

Queries about eligibility, email [tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au)

# Allied health professional eligibility

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- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• art therapists</li><li>• audiologists</li><li>• audiometrists</li><li>• chiropractors</li><li>• Chinese medicine practitioners</li><li>• dieticians</li><li>• exercise physiologists</li><li>• genetic counsellors</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• music therapists</li><li>• medical radiation practitioners</li><li>• optometrists</li><li>• orthoptists</li><li>• orthotists / prosthetists</li><li>• occupational therapists</li><li>• osteopaths</li><li>• physiotherapists</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• podiatrists</li><li>• psychologists</li><li>• registered counsellors (levels 3 and 4)</li><li>• rehabilitation counsellors</li><li>• social workers</li><li>• sonographers</li><li>• speech pathologists</li></ul> |
|--|---|--|

- Can access the FIS when delivering services that are:
  - delivered in private practice
  - delivered by a suitably qualified professional
  - provided to a patient or client who has a Medicare card.
- Queries about eligibility, email [tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au)



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# Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)

*Connecting government, business and communities, through the provision of accredited, cost-effective and secure language services*

[Web: www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

[Phone: 131 450](tel:131450)

[Email: tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au)



# About TIS National

Has approximately 2700 contracted interpreters around Australia, speaking more than 150 languages

Is a well-established service with a long history of providing access to language services

Offers a range of interpreting services including telephone, onsite and video conferencing.

Provided more than one million phone services and more than 115,000 on-site services in FY 2021/22 to government agencies and private companies across Australia

Has over 89,000 agency accounts including:

- local, state and federal government departments
- medical and health practitioners
- pharmacies
- utility and telecommunication companies
- emergency services
- legal services
- settlement and community service providers

# Immediate phone service – 131 450



## Immediate phone interpreting

- Our contact centre is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year.
- Immediate access to the highest (NAATI) credentialed interpreter available at the time
- Ability to choose gender of interpreter
- A unique job number is provided for each call.

## How it works

- Call 131 450
- Using the automated voice prompt provide the language you need, confirm you are an existing TIS National client.
- Once connected to a TIS operator provide your 6 digit client code.
- Advise the operator if you wish to conference in your client once the interpreter is allocated.
- Once everyone is connected to the call the operator will leave the call
- If there is a disconnection press \*0 to be reconnected with the TIS contact centre.



# ATIS – Automated Telephone Interpreting Service – 1800 131 450

ATIS uses an automated voice prompted IVR to connect agency staff to an interpreter immediately, bypassing the TIS National contact centre.

## ATIS benefits include

- Quick access to interpreters in the majority of languages provided by TIS National.
- Automatically connects to the highest (NAATI) credentialed interpreter available at that time
- Available 24hrs
- To be used when there is no need for an operator to assist connecting you to your client
- Potentially quicker connection times



|    |   |
|----|---|
| 1. | Call 1800 131 450.  |
| 2. | When prompted, say the language that you need.  |
| 3. | Choose the gender of your interpreter by pressing:<br><br>1. to select either gender<br><br>2. to select a female interpreter<br><br>3. to select a male interpreter. |
| 4. | Enter your ATIS account number, then enter your ATIS access number.   |
| 5. | Write down the job number provided.   |

# TIS Online – booking portal

TIS Online allows our agency clients to request, manage and monitor all of their TIS National interpreter bookings online and allows our interpreters to select the jobs they would like to complete.

Interpreters receive alerts for new bookings and are able to allocate themselves to your jobs

Agencies are able to book:

- Pre-booked phone interpreting
- On-site interpreting
- Remote Video interpreting



**Create standard  
on-site job**



**Create video  
remote job**



**Create pre-booked  
telephone job**



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# Accessing the Free Interpreting Service (FIS) for allied health professionals

# Accessing the Free Interpreting Service for allied health professionals

Dedicated webpage on TIS National Website ([www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)) :

- Up to date information including;
  - FIS allied health eligibility criteria (LGA's, professional disciplines)
  - link to dedicated FIS allied health application form
  - how to access available interpreting services,
  - resources to support promoting interpreting services at your clinic
  - contact details for support and enquiries
- [Website - Free Interpreting Service for allied health professionals | Translating and Interpreting Service \(TIS National\)](#)
- If you require further assistance, contact TIS National's Free Interpreting Service on 1300 575 847 or email [tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au)



# Accessing the Free Interpreting Service for allied health professionals

## FIS allied health professional application form:

- Each individual allied health professional must first apply for a TIS National account by completing the online [application form](#) located on the TIS National Website.
- Please ensure the following information is provided in your application;
  - allied health professional's full name and profession
  - evidence of current professional accreditation/certification (upload to form)
  - primary registered clinic address including local government area (LGA)
  - ABN and website address
  - secondary clinic location and LGA (if applicable)
  - acknowledgement of TIS National's terms and conditions of service, privacy and security statement.
- Submit application - acknowledgement email

# Accessing the Free Interpreting Service for allied health professionals

## Client code registration

- Upon approval for FIS you will receive;
  - an email containing your TIS National client code and a hyperlink to access the *TIS Online* interpreter booking system
  - a welcome email from the FIS team providing your account details and supporting information outlining how to access the service.
  - Client code will be available for immediate use.





# Accessing the Free Interpreting Service for allied health professionals

- Things to remember:
- Keep your client code and ATIS account details secure and private
- Pre-book, Onsite and Remote Video bookings are made via the TIS Online booking system. You will be required to log in to TIS Online to make bookings with your;
  - User ID (email)
  - Client code
  - Unique password
- Booking cancellations / changes - Bookings cannot be transferred and must be cancelled more than 24hrs from booking start time to avoid cancellation costs.
- Add any specific information or job requirements in the required information field on the booking form.



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# Resources available to promote interpreting services at your clinic



# Resources available to assist AHPs promote language services via TIS

**Read:** access the agency help and support section of the TIS National website to obtain current information including user guides on available interpreting services: [Help using TIS National services | Translating and Interpreting Service \(TIS National\)](#)

**Watch:** videos including an educational video for allied health professionals: [Educational video for allied health professionals | Translating and Interpreting Service \(TIS National\)](#)

**Order:** free promotional materials from the online TIS National catalogue: [TIS National promotional materials catalogue | Translating and Interpreting Service \(TIS National\)](#)

**Contact:** If you require further assistance, contact TIS National's Free Interpreting Service on 1300 575 847 or email [tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au)



# When to use an interpreter



## Immediate phone interpreting or ATIS

- Best for unplanned or short appointments
- Or when an immediate message needs to be conveyed to a client
- (ATIS only) Use when you are able to conference your client yourself or if they are with you



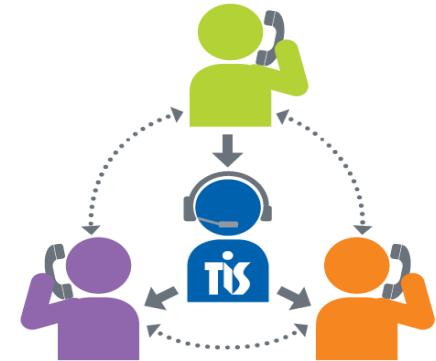
## Pre-booked phone interpreting

- You have a scheduled appointment with the client
- The assignment is complex and may take time
- You require specialist knowledge or
- Where the availability of interpreters in a particular language is limited



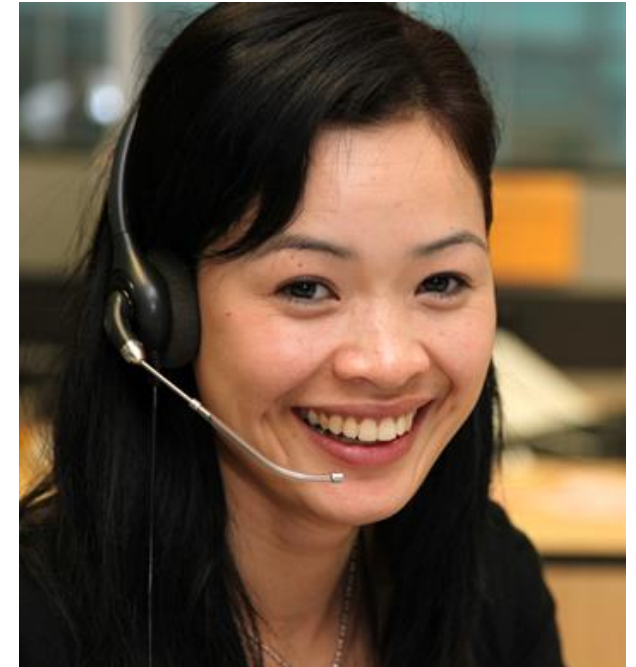
## On-site and Remote Video interpreting

- Important when you have a group of people needing the same language interpreter,
- When discussing complex ideas
- Long or consecutive appointments



# TIS National client support and feedback

- Dedicated FIS Account Managers – FIS Allied Health
  - supporting access and queries
  - staff presentations/ training
- Front line phone /email enquiry support
  - Monday/Friday 9-5pm
  - [tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au)
  - 1300 575 847
- Provide feedback via our website
  - [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)
  - Compliments, complaints and suggestions.
  - Each case of client feedback is registered, investigated and responded to within 15 business days.



# Engaging and working effectively with interpreters: Best practice guidance

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7 December 2022

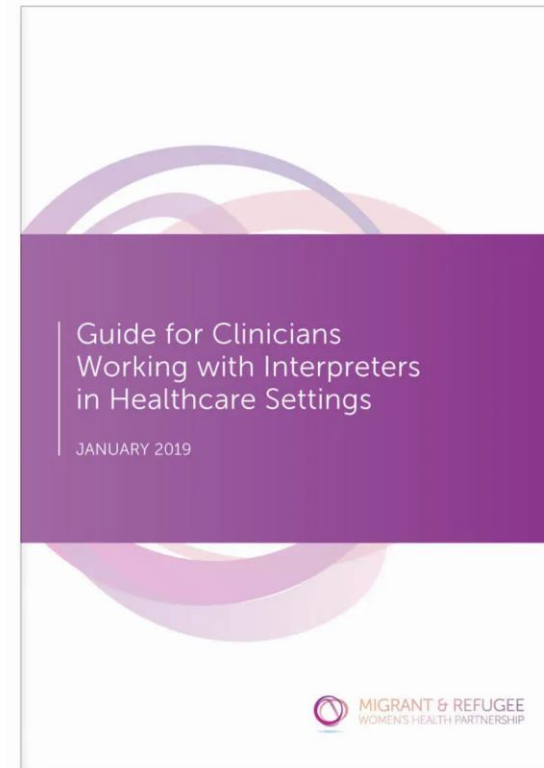
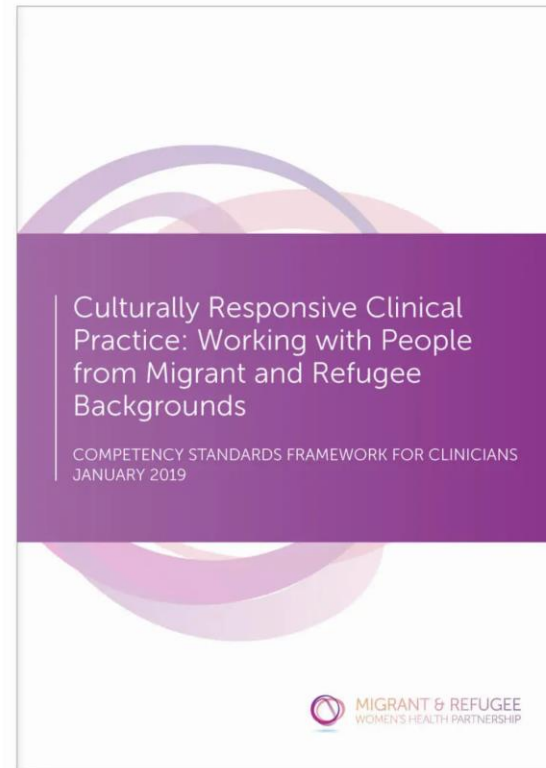
Gulnara Abbasova (she/her)

Executive Officer, Migrant and Refugee Health Partnership  
Head of Strategy, Social Policy Group



# Competency Standards Framework

- The Standards and Guide were developed in order to:
  - Establish recommended optimal **standards** for all health practitioner working with people from migrant and refugee backgrounds
  - Inform the development of **training** and professional development
  - Apply across **diverse healthcare settings** and environments



Competency Standards Framework



# Why engage an interpreter?

- Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity: 27.6% of the Australian population was born overseas and 22.8% of the population (**5.8 million people**) reports speaking a language other than English at home (ABS 2021)
- Impact of language barriers on healthcare access and experience is the **most common challenge** faced by migrants and refugees with low or no English proficiency
- Clear and effective communication is key to quality and safe health practice
  - Not engaging an interpreter can lead to:
    - **Medico-legal** consequences of inaccurate diagnosis or inappropriate care
    - Delayed or **ineffective care**
    - Increases in **cost** and intervention
    - **Reduced trust** in the healthcare system





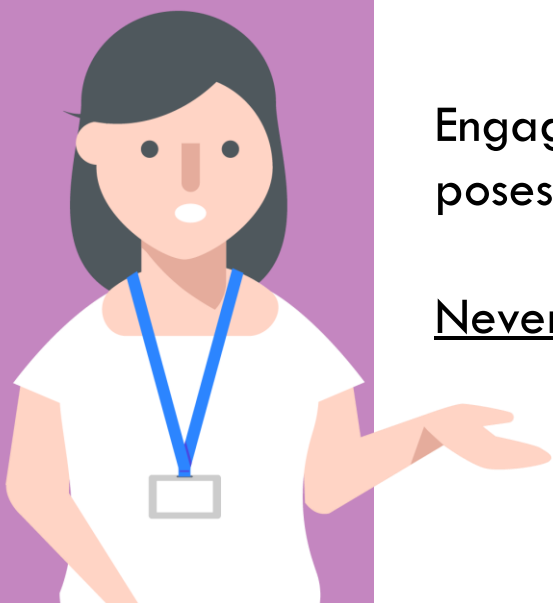
# Why engage an interpreter?

Interpreters hold NAATI credentials and are bound by the AUSIT Code of Ethics (includes principles of confidentiality, impartiality and boundaries).



Engaging **personally involved individuals** (such as family members or community members) poses risks as they may not be impartial or accurate.

Never ask a minor to facilitate interpretation for a family member.



# Assessing English language proficiency

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- Do they articulate back what you said to them?
- Do they speak in short or long sentences?
- Do they agree with anything you say?
- Do they give inappropriate responses to questions?
- Do they contradict themselves?
- Do they rely on using words and phrases you introduced?
- Do they mix tenses or pronouns?

This assessment can take place during **booking or triage**; ensure that administrative staff and colleagues understand the process.

Even when a person has a working level of English language proficiency, an interpreter can be essential for **gaining informed consent** for procedures and addressing complex care needs.



# Practice Points (Part 1)

1. **Brief** the interpreter on the consultation, where possible
2. Introduce the interpreter to the person and explain their role in the consultation, including maintaining **confidentiality and impartiality**
3. **Debrief** with the interpreter, if necessary and where possible
4. Address the person **directly** and maintain body language/eye contact.  
*‘How long have you had this pain?’ instead of ‘Interpreter, ask her how long she has had this pain.’*
5. Use a **speakerphone** or hands-free phone in a private room



## Practice Points (Part 2)

6. Manage **turn-taking** and use **descriptive language** to assist the telephone interpreter

*‘May I touch your shoulder where I am pointing?’*

7. Speak **clearly**, use **plain English**, and explain **complex terms**

*‘You have arthritis in your wrist. This is a condition that many people get as they age. It can make the wrist difficult or painful to move.’*

8. Speak at a reasonable **speed**, pause often to separate your speech into ‘chunks’, avoid **overlapping** speech

*‘I’ve given you a lot of instructions for treating this at home. Can you explain to me what you are going to do?’*

9. Help others in a **multidisciplinary** team to manage their speech and turn-taking. *‘Can you please pause so that the interpreter can relay that to the patient?’*



# Key considerations

If someone **refuses** to have an interpreter present:

- Remember the interpreter is there for you, not only for the patient - explain that it is for both **your benefit** and that of the patient
- Weigh the **risks** of not engaging an interpreter with the quality and safety considerations, and outcomes for the patient
- Explain that family can still be present as **support** and focus on what is being said, rather than facilitating interpretation
- **Document** refusal

If the patient will be coming back **regularly**:

- **Document their preference** and ensure an interpreter is booked before the appointment
- Consider finding **in-language resources** for them to take home





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& REFUGEE  
HEALTH PARTNERSHIP



[secretariat@culturaldiversityhealth.org.au](mailto:secretariat@culturaldiversityhealth.org.au)  
[www.culturaldiversityhealth.org.au](http://www.culturaldiversityhealth.org.au)

# Watch: How to direct an interpreter session

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4voquDnkbM>