

# Working with Interpreters

Clear and effective communication underpins every aspect of optimum clinical practice. Good 'clinician-person' communication is linked to client satisfaction, adherence to clinical instructions and better health outcomes. Ineffective communication between clients and the clinician can result in limited, delayed, inefficient and unsafe care.

*Competency Standards Framework – Guide for Clinicians working with Interpreters in a healthcare setting 2019.*

## Key points

- All doctors and some allied health workers providing Medicare services can access free interpreters through the free Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)
- Free phone interpreting is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- On-site (face-to-face) interpreting is available during business hours
- Always use professional accredited interpreters
- Respect client preference for specific gender and ethnicity
- Explain your role and the interpreter's - including confidentiality
- Speak directly to the client
- Use clear language, short sentences and clarify information if needed
- Plan ahead and consult with your practice, organisation or LHN procedures for booking and using interpreters

**Medical practitioners and eligible Allied Health Professionals can register for free interpreters on the TIS National website**

<https://www.tisnational.gov.au/>

Free Interpreting Service extended to eligible allied health professionals in private practice

[Translating and Interpreting Service \(TIS National\)](#)

**For immediate telephone interpreters call the Doctors priority line – 1300 131 450**



Government  
of South Australia

**Health**

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## Important Links

- [Interpreting and Translating Centre - Guidelines for working with interpreters \(translate.sa.gov.au\)](#)
- [Competency Standards Framework Culturally responsive clinical practice: Working with people from migrant and refugee backgrounds](#)
- Teach Back Method: [SA Health Fact Sheet](#)
- [SA Health Interpreting and Translating Policy](#)

## For more information about best practice care for refugee background clients

Refugee Health Service  
21 Market Street Adelaide  
T: 7133 9996

E: [health.adminmhs@sa.gov.au](mailto:health.adminmhs@sa.gov.au)  
[health.CALHNICRHSNurses@sa.gov.au](mailto:health.CALHNICRHSNurses@sa.gov.au)  
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