




## Client – Use of Interpreters Policy

### STATEMENT

The Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association of South Australia Ltd trading as *estara* believes in the rights of all clients to access an interpreter should they wish and where one is required. *estara* will always ensure service delivery is transparent, fair, equitable and responsive to the needs of the client.

*This Policy is delegated for approval by the Chief Executive Officer*

Approved by:  Chief Executive Officer	Date of Approval: May 2021  Date of Next Review: May 2024
--	---

**In this policy, 'us' 'we' or 'our' refers to The Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association of South Australia Ltd ACN 644 670 977, which is a Company Limited by Guarantee and trading as *estara*.**

*Please note that printed copies are not able to be controlled and the Shared Drive should always be referred to for the most current version.*

## **SCOPE**

Compliance with this policy is a condition of appointment for all workers engaged to provide services on behalf of *estara*.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Refer to the *estara* Policy and Procedure Definition Glossary

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is our responsibility to communicate our policies and procedures to all workers on a systematic basis. Senior Leadership, Managers and Supervisors are responsible for monitoring their workers' understanding of their obligations and need for compliance with policies and procedures. Workers are responsible for complying with our policies and procedures.

It is the responsibility of *estara* to communicate the contents of this Policy to all clients on a regular basis.

## **POLICY**

Informal language interpreting assistance by family members and friends (who have a sufficient understanding of the client's language and dialect) may be used by service providers when a client is unable to communicate with a worker. and for simple day-to-day situations; however, use of family/friends to interpret a client's communication is generally inappropriate when:

- the family member/friend may have a poor understanding of the subject matter, such as medical terminology
- the client may wish to keep certain details confidential or private
- there may be a conflict of interest for the informal interpreter (e.g. discussing finances)
- the client is required to give formal consent (e.g. medical procedures for which consent has not been given previously)

The use of informal language interpreting assistance by family and friends may lead to the disempowerment of a client and/or the imparting of inaccurate information, so should be used with caution.

### **Why Use an Interpreter?**

- They facilitate effective communication between the individual and *estara*
- For compliance with equal opportunity legislation
- To ensure accurate conveyance of information in an informal manner
- Interpreters are bound by the need for confidentiality
- Use of an interpreter may promote individual clients' rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision making.

Each client will be informed of their right to terminate with the use of an interpreter if, at any stage, they feel uncomfortable with the interpreter or the process. *estara* workers may also terminate a meeting if they feel it is necessary.

It is recommended that interpreters be used for clients with a low level of English proficiency in the following circumstances:

- during a formal assessment process
- when there is a problem and the person is not responding to either family or staff
- when a medical professional is called for health problems
- when communicating with family members who have a low level of English proficiency regarding specific client issues.

### **RELATED LEGISLATION**

- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- National Standards for Disability Services
- Privacy Act 1988

### **SUPPORTING ESTARA DOCUMENTATION**

- Client – Advocacy Policy and Procedure
- Client – Use of Interpreters Procedures
- Code of Conduct and Ethical Behavior
- Complaint/Concern Management Policy (Client Complaint)
- Privacy – Private Information Statement
- Privacy – Private Information Procedures

### **BREACHES OF THIS POLICY**

A **breach** of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Ignorance of these procedures will not generally be accepted as an excuse for non-compliance. Only in extreme circumstances and where such ignorance can be demonstrated to have occurred through no fault of the individual concerned will *estara* accept such an argument.

### **DISTRIBUTION AND REVIEW**

*estara* will ensure all persons engaged to provide services either paid or unpaid will be aware of this policy and will have easy access to it in an appropriate format. All policies are to be reviewed on a periodic basis or when legislation or government policy determines.