

**Communicate easily  
with non-English  
speaking clients**



**A guide to free  
interpreter services**



***Did you know your workplace could be eligible for free interpreter services to help people with limited English language skills?***



***"Using interpreter services bridges the gap between us and our clients and makes them feel more confident that we can communicate together."***

***Janelle Stevens***



*The Greater Bendigo region has welcomed the settlement of increasing numbers of non-English speaking refugees in recent years. These residents are looking for a way to communicate with your business now. So take the lead in accessing this growing local market by registering with the Australian Government's Free Interpreting Service delivered by the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National).*

### **Why should I offer an interpreter?**

Interpreters can open up a whole **new clientele** for your business, and help staff engage appropriately and effectively. Using a TIS National interpreter on the phone, online or in person means you can navigate complex medical or legal issues and know that the information you exchange will be accurate and confidential.

There are many benefits of using a free TIS National interpreter:

- There is less risk of misdiagnosis, malpractice, legal action or complaints about your business.
- Your clients will maintain confidence in your service.
- You can support your staff and make it easier for them to do their work.
- It shows respect for diverse cultures, demonstrates inclusivity and connects you to refugee communities.
- It bridges the language gap and allows you to navigate cultural nuances.

### **Who is eligible?**

The following organisations can access the **Free Interpreter Service** for non-English speaking clients eligible for Medicare:

- General practitioners, medical specialists, nurse practitioners and pharmacies
- Real estate agents
- Parliamentarians
- Local government authorities
- Trade unions
- Non-government organisations for casework and emergency services

### **Why should I use a TIS National interpreter?**

- The Australian Government's Free Interpreter Service provides free interpreters for eligible organisations.
- Friends and family, staff or non-credentialed interpreters, can be well-meaning but are not an appropriate choice, and can expose your organisation to legal risks.
- TIS National interpreters are bound by a professional code of conduct meaning they:
  - Interpret information accurately and impartially
  - Maintain confidentiality
  - Act in a professional manner at all times

### **What services are available?**

The free services available to you are:

- Immediate phone interpreting
- Pre-booked phone interpreting
- Pre-booked on-site interpreting\*

(\*not available to pharmacies or real estate agents)

### **Getting ready is easy**

- Each eligible organisation needs to be registered with TIS National to be allocated its own unique client code before staff can use the Free Interpreting Service.
- To register with TIS National, fill in the form at <https://tisonline.tisnational.gov.au/RegisterAgency>
- Once you are registered and have your client code, you are ready to access an interpreter whenever you need one, 24 /7.



***"The interpreter service was so easy to set up and use."***

***Dr. Katie Snow***

### **How do I access an interpreter?**



Ask the client if they have a TIS National "I Need an Interpreter" card indicating their dialect, or show them the Language Card provided in this pack.



Call TIS National on **131 450**



Tell the operator the language and dialect you need.



Provide your client code and the name of your organisation.



Start communicating!

### **FAQs**

**What languages are commonly spoken in Bendigo?**

Dari – Farsi – Hazaraghi – Karen – Dinka

**Can I just use someone local who speaks the same language?**

In short, no. It is too risky. You may be held legally liable if injury, loss or damage is suffered because you failed to use a credentialed interpreter. Credentialed interpreters provided by TIS National are impartial and are bound by confidentiality.

**For more information on how to access or use the TIS National Free Interpreting Service call 1300 575 847 or email [tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tis.freeinterpreting@homeaffairs.gov.au)**



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