

INTERDISCIPLINARY CLINICAL MANUAL

TITLE: Sign Language Interpreter Services – deaf, deafened or hard of hearing	NUMBER: 1-267
SECTION: Introduction	RESPONSIBLE DISCIPLINES: RN, RPN, Social Work, Speech Language Pathology
DATE: August 26, 1998	APPROVED BY: Director Surgical Programs
REVIEW FREQUENCY: Every 3 years	Policy X Standard: X
REVISED/REVIEWED: August 2002, December 2006, April 2018	Guideline: Procedure: X

Policy:

Cambridge Memorial Hospital is committed to establishing effective communication and ensure equal access to Hospital services for patients who use American Sign Language (ASL) – English, and la langue des signes Quebécoise (LSQ) – French, by providing professional sign language interpreter services.

Definitions:

Deaf: is generally used to describe individuals with a severe to profound hearing loss, with little or no residual hearing. Some deaf people use a spoken language and speechreading, combined with their residual hearing and hearing aids, communication devices, and/or cochlear implants to communicate. Others use a signed language, such as American Sign Language (ASL) or la langue des signes québécoise (LSQ).

Deafened: describes individuals who grow up hearing or hard of hearing and, either suddenly or gradually, experience a profound hearing loss. Deafened adults usually use speech with visual cues such as Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) or computerized notetaking, speechreading or a signed language.

Hard of hearing: is generally used to describe individuals whose hearing loss ranges from mild to severe, and occasionally profound. Hard of hearing people use speech and residual hearing to communicate, supplemented by communication strategies that may include speechreading, hearing aids, a signed language and communication devices. The term “person with hearing loss” is also used by this constituency.

Standards:

- Patients who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing will be offered the support of a qualified interpreter for consultation with medical personnel for detailed instructions or upon request.
- Units accessing Ontario Interpreter Services (OIS) service will be billed for the associated cost of the interpreter.
- Interpreters will refuse any assignment that is beyond their level of competence.

Procedure:

1. Booking a Sign Language Interpreter:
 - a) Determine if the patient who is deaf, deafened or hard of hearing wants an interpreter
 - i. Document if interpreter services are declined.
 - b) Contact The Canadian Hearing Society (CHS) to arrange for a qualified interpreter through the (OIS) program
 - i. Monday to Thursday, 0800 – 2000, Friday, 0800 – 1700 at 1 (866) 518-0000, TTY 1 (877) 215-9530 or fax 1 (855) 259-7557. Email interpreting@chs.ca
 - c) If possible, arrange the patient's hospital appointment time 3 days in advance with the interpreter in advance.
 - d) The associated cost of the interpreter will be the responsibility of the area that has accessed the CHS.
 - i. Interpreter will bring the authorization forms and accept responsibility for obtaining the signature and returning the form to CHS.
 - ii. CHS will mail this form with the invoice to the requesting area.
2. Emergency/Unexpected Visits:
 - a) Determine if the patient who is deaf, deafened or hard of hearing wants an interpreter
 - i. Document if interpreter services are declined
 - b) Emergency Interpreter
 - i. Emergency services are offered 24 hrs/day, 7 days/week, 365 days/year at 1(866) 518-0000 or TTY 1 (877) 215-9530. Email urgent@chs.ca
3. Information required:
 - a) Contact name and phone
 - b) Name and phone number of those requiring interpreter services
 - c) Date, time and location of appointment
 - d) Purpose of appointment
 - e) Number of people who will be present
 - f) Special circumstances i.e. technical vocabulary
 - g) Billing information
 - h) Language required (ASL English/LSQ French)
4. Cancellations
 - a) Notify OIS or cancellation or appointment time changes as soon as possible
 - b) Cancellations made less than 3 business days prior to the appointment time will be charged a fee for service.
5. Interpreting Process
 - a) Meet with interpreter approx. 15 min prior to appointment time
 - b) Ensure private area for communication
 - c) Provide introductions
 - d) Sit next to interpreter if possible
 - e) Speak at your natural pace, one person at a time
 - f) Look at and speak directly to the person who is deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

References:

Canada Health Act, Sections 8 –12.

Legislative Assembly of Ontario (2001). Bill 125.

Supreme Court of Canada (Oct. '97) ruling "Failure to provide Sign Language Interpretation during Medical Care Unconstitutional" – Charter of Rights.

The Canadian Hearing Society (2017). Ontario Interpreter Services

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)

Developed in Consultation with:

- Speech Language Pathology
- Canadian Hearing Society