

Talking Points

**This is not an exhaustive explanation. Interpreters may wish to add reasons to the list, but information included in this document is provided as a starting point.*

Waiting Room (Reasons not to sit in the waiting room with the client)

- 1) Interpreter needs to utilize time to review charts, consult with therapist, or otherwise prep for assignment.
- 2) Client may establish a therapeutic relationship with the interpreter due to shared language and cultural framework that may interfere with the therapist's ability to develop a therapeutic bond.
- 3) Client may utilize the time in the waiting room to discuss items of importance that should be shared in therapy.
 - a. This denies the therapist the opportunity to establish a baseline of client progress since last meeting.
 - b. The client may not repeat information shared with the interpreter when in therapy session.
 - c. The interpreter may be placed in a position to become a mandated reporter.
 - d. Depending on the diagnostic category, the client may utilize the interpreter's comments or responses (in the waiting room) as a reason to interfere with therapy.
 - e. The interpreter is often seen as the therapist.
 - f. The interpreter's mood impacts the mood of the deaf client (more so than the therapist).

Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) usage

- 1) Individuals who function in the role of a CDI or Communication Specialist are native users of sign language with skills in working with clients who are deaf who have language dysfluency related to psychosis or deprivation. They are competent in ASL/Gestural systems/alingualism and sometimes English.
- 2) The CDI/CS works in conjunction with a hearing interpreter who is competent in English and ASL.

Language Modalities

- 1) Normally the interpreter works in first person, simultaneous modality. When this occurs, the therapist should address the individual who is deaf directly. ("How do you feel?" rather than "Ask him how he feels.")
- 2) Occasionally when language or mood is altered, the interpreter may opt to utilize additional interpreting modalities, such as third person, consecutive, narrative or descriptive. This is done to provide a more accurate interpretation.
- 3) At times when language is not understandable, the interpreter may have to choose between form or content. The interpreter will discuss this with you when it occurs and possibly in a debriefing session.

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Testing

- 1) Some tests are not conducive to individuals who are deaf due to cultural and language differences and the ways that languages are received (visually vs. auditorially).
- 2) The therapist and interpreter will need to work together to determine which questions are or are not appropriate.
- 3) Tests commonly used with Deaf individuals: CID Preschool; WISC-III; WAIS-III; C-TONI; TONI-3; Leiter-R; UNIT; Woodcock-Johnson III, etc.

Auditory Hallucinations

- 1) Individuals who are deaf may respond to stimuli similar to individuals without hearing loss that would be categorized as auditory hallucinations. There are several research articles regarding the subject, if the therapist is interested in additional information.

Not Using Family Members as Interpreters

- 1) They are not neutral and will have fundamental biases that may interfere with treatment. (for or against)
- 2) Not all family members are sign fluent or even comprehensible.
- 3) Conversational skills (in sign language) do not equate to the ability to utilize technical jargon.
- 4) Knowing sign language fluently is not equivalent to the skill set required for interpreting.
- 5) Younger family members will not have the world experiences or knowledge base to appropriately convey information.
- 6) You are less likely to receive honest responses from your client. Especially areas of their life they may be embarrassed about.
- 7) You will have no measure to separate responses from the client from those of the family member.
- 8) Confidentiality is not guaranteed. Protected Health Information may be at risk.
- 9) You are legally responsible for the content of the message. Relying on family members who may be unskilled or biased may increase your liability.
- 10) The federal law, Americans with Disabilities Act, discourages the use of family members, even if they are qualified.