

supervision and guidance, the interviewer can recognize the blocks and consciously avoid them.

Communicating with Families through an Interpreter

Sometimes communication is impossible because two people speak different languages. In this case, it is necessary to obtain information through a third party: the interpreter. When using an interpreter, the nurse follows the same interviewing guidelines. Specific guidelines for using an interpreter are given in the Nursing Care Guidelines box.

Nursing Care Guidelines

Using an Interpreter

- Explain to interpreter the reason for the interview and the type of questions that will be asked.
- Clarify whether a detailed or brief answer is required and whether the translated response can be general or literal.
- Introduce the interpreter to family, and allow some time before the interview for them to become acquainted.
- Communicate directly with family members when asking questions to reinforce interest in them and to observe nonverbal expressions, but do not ignore the interpreter.
- Pose questions to elicit only one answer at a time, such as “Do you have pain?” rather than “Do you have any pain, tiredness, or loss of appetite?”
- Refrain from interrupting family members and the interpreter while they are conversing.
- Avoid commenting to the interpreter about family members, because they may understand some English.
- Be aware that some medical words, such as *allergy*, may have no