

## DEAF INTERPRETER-HEARING INTERPRETER TEAMS

### Instructor Guide Student Activity: Social Services Settings

The purpose of this activity sheet is to provide students with the opportunity to assess and justify the use of DI-HI teams. This Instructor Guide includes reading materials that provide a foundation for discussions, considerations, and responses to the Student Activity Guide.

**Directions:** When answering the following questions, be sure to consider various factors and provide justification for each of your answers.

#### Scenario:

Jon holds his NIC:Master and has been interpreting for 15 years. Jon was contacted by Vocational Rehabilitation office to provide interpreting services for an appointment with the hearing VR counselor and Maeve, a Deaf 16 year old bilingual native ASL user who has recently lost most of her vision. This is Maeve's first visit to VR and the counselor will be explaining qualification criteria, job training, job placement.

(This particular scenario was written with the decision to recommend or not recommend a DI-HI team being acceptable so long as the justification is thorough.)

#### Assessing the need for a DI-HI team

1. Would you recommend a DI-HI team for this scenario?  
If yes, continue to #2 if no continue to question #7.

**ANSWER:** Yes.

2. What about the consumers and their anticipated language use in this scenario would warrant the use of a DI-HI team?

**ANSWER:** Maeve is a bilingual, fluent ASL user. However, she has recently lost her vision and we do not know how this impacts her receptive or expressive language. Also, she is a 17 year old female. The age and gender difference may significantly impact signing variation. As native users of ASL, DIs have had lifelong experiences and exposure to Deaf people with different

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language backgrounds and with varying cognitive abilities. These experiences have afforded them opportunities to be exposed to and interact with individuals using countless variations and dialects of ASL. From this foundation of language variation and exposure, DIs are able to recognize educational, cognitive, physiological, and sociolinguistic factors and communication needs likely to influence interpretation. Also, DIs can draw from this acquired language base to come up with alternative communication strategies that are creative and flexible enough to meet a variety of consumers' needs.

3. What about the interpreters' language competency present in this scenario would warrant the use of a DI-HI team?

**ANSWER:** Jon has 15 years of experience and is well credentialed. However, we do not know his training or experience with Deaf-Blind or low vision individuals. Regardless, a DI would still enhance the team and access because DIs have had lifelong experiences and exposure to Deaf people with different language backgrounds and with varying cognitive abilities. These experiences have afforded them opportunities to be exposed to and interact with individuals using countless variations and dialects of ASL. From this foundation of language variation and exposure, DIs are able to recognize educational, cognitive, physiological, and sociolinguistic factors and communication needs likely to influence interpretation. Also, DIs can draw from this acquired language base to come up with alternative visual communication strategies that are creative and flexible enough to meet a variety of consumers' needs.

4. What setting considerations are present in this scenario that would warrant the use of a DI-HI team?

**ANSWER:** This is a Social Service Setting: Vocational Rehabilitation. Understanding what is expected from VR is paramount; services will be denied or delayed if forms are not properly filled out or regulations, rules, or criteria are not satisfied. Due to the potential significance of this meeting, a DI-HI team should be secured.

5. Using the CPC for justification, please explain your decision to secure a DI-HI team:

**ANSWER:** The RID/NAD Code of Professional Conduct states that interpreters must assess "the consumers' needs and the interpreting situation before and during the assignment and make necessary adjustments as needed," and furthermore, to "request support (e.g., certified deaf interpreters, team members, language facilitators) when needed to fully convey the message or to address exceptional communication challenges." Given the fact that this interpreter does not have the same level of native fluency and insider acceptance in the Deaf community as would a DI as well as the Deaf person's loss of vision, an ethically sound decision would be for her to secure a DI to work with her in this scenario.

6. Upon completion of your assessment and your determination of needing a DI-HI team, what information would you include to make your case to the requestor that a DI-HI team is necessary?

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## **ANSWER:**

### *Summary:*

Communication will be accurate and clear resulting in optimal understanding.

There is greater efficiency of language access resulting in a more cost effective exchange.

The interaction will be monitored to determine whether interpreting is effective and when it might be appropriate to stop the proceedings and offer appropriate alternative resources ensuring clarity of communication. (NCIEC Deaf Interpreter Work Team (2010). Toward Effective Practice: Competencies of the Deaf Interpreter. National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers, page 6)

Appropriate clarification of culturally based information will occur and will result in a reduced number of cultural misunderstandings that occur.

Due to the serious nature of this settings and the potential for life-altering outcomes, interpreters working in Social Service environments must be confident that their work and conduct is effective, accurate and ethically sound. For this reason, it is considered best practice to collaborate with DIs in legal settings.

### *Detailed answer:*

The formative skills and experiences described above provide a number of attributes that DIs bring to the interpreted event. These attributes benefit all parties involved. Some benefits are specific to the Deaf consumer. There are also a number of ways that a DI can benefit both the hearing and the Deaf consumer. But, it's not just the consumers who benefit from a DI. The HI also benefits from their work with a DI. Here are some ways DIs enhance the communication and overall experience for all participants involved.

Deaf consumers can be confident that:

His/her language use will be accurately assessed to determine a target language/communication form.

The DI will use variety of strategies to draw out information and seek clarification of meaning.

Potential gaps (e.g. informational, experiential, educational, visual, protocol, cognitive, memory, cultural, or frame of reference) relative to the particular interaction or setting will be identified in order to determine a target language/communication strategy consistent with the experiential and linguistic framework of the Deaf consumer and appropriate to situational protocol. (NCIEC Deaf Interpreter Work Team (2010). Toward Effective Practice: Competencies of the Deaf Interpreter. National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers, page 5)

S/he will be able to express themselves more freely without concern for misunderstanding and/or misinterpretation.

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S/he can be less concerned about cultural misunderstandings knowing that the DI shares his/her culture. The DIs' mere presence will curtail a potential feeling of isolation.

S/he may experience less stress from the positive psychological impact of DI's presence due to a sense of sameness they share.

The DI will act as a communication advocate to ensure understanding and communication

The DI will apply his/her understanding and life experience of the history and significance of oppression in the Deaf community in analysis of power relationships among participants within the interpreted interaction in order to determine how the consumer's position within the power dynamic might influence interpreting decisions or strategies. (NCIEC Deaf Interpreter Work Team (2010). Toward Effective Practice: Competencies of the Deaf Interpreter. National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers, page 5)

Both hearing and Deaf consumers can be confident that:

Communication will be accurate and clear resulting in optimal understanding

There is greater efficiency of language access resulting in a more cost effective exchange.

The interaction will be monitored to determine whether interpreting is effective and when it might be appropriate to stop the proceedings and offer appropriate alternative resources ensuring clarity of communication. (NCIEC Deaf Interpreter Work Team (2010). Toward Effective Practice: Competencies of the Deaf Interpreter. National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers, page 6)

Appropriate clarification of culturally based information will occur and will result in a reduced number of cultural misunderstandings that occur.

The hearing interpreter can benefit:

From seeing their interpretation re-interpreted by the DI and thereby having an immediate opportunity to see a different way to construct the English message, learning new vocabulary and grammatical features of ASL.

From having a second opportunity to view the source information to ensure conveyance of the full integrity of the message.

By having more confidence in the interpreting work being effective and equivalent.

From being part of a team where both interpreters bring their essential skills and experiences to the work to verify meaning, gather clarifying information, manage information flow within the team, and effect a mutual monitoring process in the co-construction of complete and accurate interpretation for all consumers involved.

From learning new culturally normative ways to construct ASL messages.

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### **DI-HI Team will not be utilized**

7. What about the consumers and their anticipated language use in this scenario led you to your decision to not recommend a DI-HI team?

**ANSWER: N/A**

8. What about the interpreter's language competency present in this scenario led you to your decision not to recommend a DI-HI team?

**ANSWER: N/A**

9. What setting considerations in this scenario led you to your decision not to recommend a DI-HI team?

**ANSWER: N/A**

10. Using the CPC for justification, please explain your decision to not secure a DI-HI team:

**ANSWER: N/A**