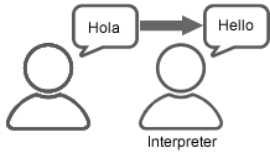


FUNDAMENTALS OF PROVIDING SERVICES TO SURVIVORS OF TORTURE: WORKING WITH INTERPRETERS

Lesson Summary

Interpreters take the spoken word in one language & change it into the spoken word in a another language. Interpreters are:



- A professional member of your team
- A bi-cultural resource
- A conduit, not a filter or spokesperson
- Not a translator

Considerations in Choosing, Training, & Retaining Interpreters



- Get to know your interpreter
- Remember some interpreters are also torture survivors
- Work as a team
- Check for conflicts
- Allow clients to express opinions
- Remember that the interpreter is never responsible for health care of client
- Protect interpreters from compromising situations including: fatigue and trauma, losing face, being used

Therapeutic Triangle



Pre-session Meeting with Interpreter

Discuss:

- Clinician's expectations
- Goal(s) of session
- Professional language or idioms
- Special circumstances
- Length of session



During First Session with Interpreter & Client

- Establish the rules
- Clarify expectations
- Lay a solid relational foundation
- Speak to the client, not the interpreter
- Do not use hand gestures
- Reduce jargon
- Plan for twice the time
- Learn about culture and country
- Pay attention to body language

How to prepare for special circumstances



Family & Group Sessions

- Prepare with interpreter that there will be multiple people present
- Give interpreter any handouts ahead of time
- Schedule longer session
- Consider using more than one interpreter
- Discuss relationships & alliances



Medication Management

- Don't assume client or interpreter knowledge of medicine or its proper use
- Give detailed instructions
- Translate instructions (ask your interpreter ahead if they can do this) or use pictures



Telephonic Interpretation

- There are pros and cons to this method
- Consider environment
- Determine if you can maintain confidentiality when using a speaker phone
- Practice conference calling before meeting



Interpreter as Survivor

- Anticipate triggers
- Prepare interpreter before every session
- Include post-session emotional support as appropriate
- Remind interpreter about confidentiality