



Doctors Priority Line

1300 131 450

Free interpreting service for private practice

24 hours 7 days a week

Who can use the Doctors Priority Line?

General Practitioners and approved Medical Specialists can use the Doctors Priority Line when providing services that are:





- Medicare-rebateable
- delivered in private practice
- provided to non-English speakers who have a Medicare card.

Nursing and practice support staff working with a Medical Practitioner registered with TIS National can also access the service using the same client code.



How to use the Doctors Priority Line

To access an immediate phone interpreter:

-  1. Call the Doctors Priority Line on 1300 131 450
-  2. Provide the operator with the language of the interpreter that you need
-  3. Provide your client code* and the name of your agency to the operator
-  4. Ask your patient if they wish to request an interpreter of a particular gender (subject to availability)

We recommend practice support staff call and set up the interpreting session a few minutes prior to the patient's appointment.

*To register for a client code, complete the online client registration form on the TIS National website available at: www.tisnational.gov.au/register or allow a few extra minutes the first time you use the service.

Why use the Doctors Priority Line?

The Doctors Priority Line is easy and convenient to use.

Your call will be prioritised over other callers in the queue and a phone interpreter will usually be provided within a few minutes.



Why use an interpreter?

The role of an interpreter is to facilitate accurate communication with people who have low English language proficiency.

TIS National interpreters are bound by a professional code of ethics which requires them to:

- interpret information accurately and honestly
- maintain confidentiality
- be impartial and objective
- act in a professional manner at all times.

TIS National's policy is to use the highest credentialed interpreter available. Requests for specific interpreters are not encouraged for this reason.

Using interpreters is important for practitioners as well as patients. It helps to protect practitioners from professional risk and is particularly important when:

- seeking informed consent
- in a crisis
- dealing with complexity
- assessing patient competence.

Questions or more information

If you need more information or have any questions about the service you can:

- phone TIS National on 1300 575 847
- visit the Department of Social Services' website: www.dss.gov.au/free-interpreting.

Hints for using a phone interpreter

Consider the type of phone:

- use a hands-free phone for regular use
- use a standard phone only for emergencies or occasional use.

Before beginning the consultation:

- introduce yourself to the interpreter
- describe the phone you are using and where you are calling from
- introduce the interpreter to the patient
- ask the patient if they understand the interpreter.

During the consultation:

- sit facing your patient
- speak clearly so the interpreter can hear you
- pause often to allow the interpreter to speak
- talk to your patient, not to the interpreter
- use non-verbal reassurance
- take a short break after 30 minutes if the consultation takes a long time
- clearly indicate when the session has ended.

