

# TIS National Quick Guide for CESPHN Mental Health Providers

## Purpose

Use this guide when arranging spoken or signed interpreting for clients receiving a CESPHN funded mental health service.

This guide should be read in conjunction with your organisations clinical governance, privacy, risk management and incident policies and procedures.

The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) supports communication. It is not a clinical triage, emergency or crisis service. For immediate danger call triple zero (000). For urgent mental health assistance call the NSW Mental Health Line, 1800 011 511.

## Key Contacts

Need	Contact details
Immediate interpreter	TIS National: 131 450 – available 24 hours, 7 days
ATIS immediate interpreter	ATIS: 1800 131 450 – only if your service has ATIS enabled
TIS account/booking support	Client Engagement: 1300 655 820, <a href="mailto:tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au">tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au</a>
PHN support	PHN Mental Health TIS: <a href="mailto:TISmentalhealth@health.gov.au">TISmentalhealth@health.gov.au</a>  CESPHN: 1300 170 554 <a href="mailto:mentalhealth@cesphn.com.au">mentalhealth@cesphn.com.au</a>

## Eligibility and Information Checklist

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing-funded interpreting service is available only for clients receiving care under an eligible CESPHN-funded mental health program. Use the free interpreting service through TIS for clients who need an interpreter for care activities such as intake, assessment, treatment, review, safety planning, discharge, referral, appointment coordination or follow up.

Before booking, confirm:

- Client's preferred language and dialect
- Whether the client prefers a woman, man or no preference for the interpreter
- Any community, safety, privacy or conflict concerns
- Whether phone, video or onsite interpreting is clinically suitable
- Whether the client uses Auslan or another signed language
- Confirm your client code

Do not use children under 18 as interpreters. Do not use family, friends or bilingual workers for clinical, consent, risk, trauma, domestic/family violence, safeguarding, medication or diagnosis discussions.

## Registering for TIS National

To access free TIS services, you will need to register for a client code via the TIS National Website.

1. Use the [TIS Online agency registration form](#)
2. Select registration category: **Commonwealth Government Agency**

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3. Select sub-category: **Other Commonwealth Government Agency**
4. Enter name of organisation: **Central and Eastern Sydney PHN**
5. Enter section name: **PHN Funded Mental Health Program**

## How to Book an Interpreter

### Immediate phone interpreter

1. Call 131 450.
2. State the required language
3. Provide the name of your organisation/service, your name and phone number.
4. If TIS is to conference with the client, provide the client's name and phone number.
5. Record the TIS job number, language/dialect, modality, interpreter name/ID if provided, duration and any safety or communication issues.

### Pre-booked phone, video or on-site interpreter

1. Book through [TIS Online](#)
2. Enter required details – language/dialect, date/time, expected duration, clinician contact, gender/credential needs if clinically required, and any briefing or access requirements.
3. For video bookings, include the meeting link, password, platform, contact and contingency phone number.
4. For on-site bookings, include full address, access/parking instructions, start/end times and clinician contact.
5. Monitor TIS allocation emails and follow connection instructions at the booked time.

If you don't have TIS Online login details and need to book using a registered agency account, please email [tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au) with the following details:

- Name of organisation: Central and Eastern Sydney PHN
- First and last name
- Contact number
- Email address
- Job title
- Section/branch/department/area name

## Recommended Modality

Modality	Used For	How to Book
<b>Immediate Phone</b>	Short, urgent or operational calls where the client is present and the language is confirmed	Call 131 450 and provide language, agency name, client code, your details and client phone if conferencing
<b>ATIS</b>	Immediate interpreter without operator assistance, where the account is set up and staff are trained	Call 1800 131 450 and ATIS is enabled, otherwise use 131 450.
<b>Pre-booked phone</b>	Scheduled sessions, rare languages, complex or sensitive content, known gender/credential preference, or need for interpreter briefing	Book in TIS Online and monitor allocation emails.
<b>Video remote</b>	Telehealth or where visual cues improve engagement.	Book in TIS Online and enter meeting link, password,

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	Useful for Auslan/signed language or spoken language where video assists communication	platform, contact and contingency phone.
<b>On-site</b>	Complex or high-risk sessions, significant disability, trauma-informed work, or clinically necessary visual/relational work	Book in TIS Online with address, access/parking, times, language, gender/credential needs and clinician contact

## Common problems and solutions

Problem	Action	Follow up
<b>Disconnected</b>	Call TIS and quote the job number. Re-establish connection with the interpreter and summarise the last agreed point before continuing.	Record interruption/disconnection and any clinical impact it had on the session/client.
<b>No interpreter allocated</b>	Check TIS Online status. Try another time or modality if practical and safe.	Record the attempt and alternative plan.
<b>Interpreter client conflict</b>	Pause the session. Ask if either party is comfortable continuing. Rebook with another interpreter if needed.	Record preference/conflict without unnecessary detail.
<b>Quality concern</b>	Stop and reset ground rules. Ask for clarification. End and rebook if accuracy or safety is compromised.	Report through TIS/Service feedback pathways.
<b>Client refuses interpreter</b>	Explain that the interpreter supports both the client and clinician, is confidential, and is free under the program. Explore concerns further if necessary.	Record refusal, explanation, risk assessment and mitigation strategies developed and utilised.

## Specific interpreter requests

Only request a specific interpreter where there is a clear clinical reason, such as continuity of care, client safety, therapeutic engagement or disability access. Specific requests can reduce availability and may not result in the highest credentialed available interpreter. If the request is not essential, ask for the required language/dialect, gender or credential level instead.

## Clinical Practice Reminders

- Brief the interpreter before the client joins: purpose, sensitive content, first-person interpreting, interpret everything and pause for clarification.
- Explain the interpreter's role and confidentiality at the start of the session.
- Speak directly to the client in first person. Use short sentences, avoid jargon and pause often.
- The clinician retains clinical responsibility. Do not ask the interpreter to assess risk, explain symptoms, judge credibility or provide cultural conclusions.
- Use teach-back at the end: ask the client to explain the plan moving forward in their own words through the interpreter.
- Document the job number, modality, language/dialect, interpreter details, duration, teach-back, refusals, conflicts, quality concerns, and follow ups.