



QUALITY ASSURANCE REMINDER

TELEPHONE INTERPRETING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Dear Interpreter,

We are writing to remind all remote telephone interpreters of the professional standards and procedures that must be followed when accepting and conducting interpreting assignments through Silent Sounds.

We have identified a number of areas where greater consistency is required in the delivery of telephone interpreting services. These include maintaining a suitable professional environment, protecting confidentiality, remaining fully focused on the assignment, interpreting accurately and completely, and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.

These standards are essential to maintaining confidentiality, accuracy, impartiality and the quality of service expected by our clients.

TO CONTINUE TAKING CALLS, PLEASE FOLLOW THESE REQUIREMENTS

1. Introduce yourself clearly

At the start of every call, clearly provide your **first name and Telephone Interpreter ID**. The same information should be communicated in the target language at the beginning of the call.

2. Accept calls only from a suitable private environment

Only accept and conduct assignments from a **private and suitable environment** where confidentiality can be fully maintained. Do not work while driving or travelling by car, using public transport, in public places, or in an environment where children, family members or other people are present and may overhear the call.

Before accepting a call, please make sure you are in an appropriate location where you can conduct the assignment privately and without compromising confidentiality.

3. Maintain full concentration and clear communication

Your full attention must remain on the interpreting session throughout the call. Do not converse with third parties, attend to other activities, or allow interruptions or distractions to interfere with the assignment.

The interpreting environment must be sufficiently quiet to allow all parties to hear clearly. Background conversations, television, radio, music, children, household activity, or other avoidable noise are not permitted during an interpreting call, as they interfere with communication and compromise the quality and accuracy of the interpreting.

Recommended: Use a noise-cancelling headset or suitable microphone to minimise background noise and improve line clarity.

ACCURACY, IMPARTIALITY & PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

4. Interpret accurately and completely

Interpret **everything that is said**, accurately and completely. Never add, omit, change, summarise or simplify information. Do not provide your own opinion, advice or explanation. Do not answer questions on behalf of either party. Even if you know the subject matter or believe you know the answer, interpret what is actually communicated.

5. Use first-person interpreting

Use "**first-person interpreting**" (I statements) consistently.

For example, if the patient says "I have been experiencing pain for three days," interpret it as "I have been experiencing pain for three days," rather than "He says he has been experiencing pain for three days."

6. Maintain professional boundaries

Do not engage in private or side conversations with patients, service users or family members, before, during, or after the call. Your role is to facilitate communication, not to have independent discussions with them.

If a patient or service user speaks to you before the call begins, limit your response to introducing yourself as the interpreter, and direct any questions about appointments, bookings, services or clinical matters to the relevant professional or administrative team. Do not discuss the content of any call with anyone outside the assignment.

7. Remain impartial — even when a call is difficult

Calls can sometimes become emotional, complicated or challenging. Regardless of the circumstances, remain **calm, professional and impartial**. Do not take sides, express personal views, attempt to resolve disagreements, or become involved in the discussion.

If either party requests clarification, interpret their request exactly, rather than answering it yourself or providing your own explanation. If you need clarification yourself in order to interpret accurately, step out of first-person mode by saying "the interpreter is asking for clarification," then continue interpreting as normal once resolved.

If a call has been particularly difficult, or circumstances may have affected the interaction, please let us know afterwards so we can provide support where appropriate.

If you believe a safeguarding concern has arisen during a call, please contact us via email to report it.

8. Protect confidentiality at all times

Confidentiality is a fundamental responsibility.

Do not access, discuss, or refer to any assignment details outside of what is required to deliver the service, in line with UK GDPR and data protection requirements.

BEFORE YOU ACCEPT A CALL

A quick professional check

✓	I am in a private, quiet and suitable environment.
✓	No other person can hear or participate in the call.
✓	There is no avoidable background noise or distraction.
✓	I can give the assignment my full attention.
✓	My headset or microphone is working clearly.
✓	I am ready to introduce myself in English and in the target language, including my first name and Telephone Interpreter ID.
✓	I am prepared to interpret accurately, completely and in the first person.
✓	I understand that I must remain impartial and maintain professional boundaries.

QUALITY ASSURANCE & COMPLIANCE

Our Quality Assurance process is used to monitor and maintain the standard of interpreting provided to our clients. Telephone interpreting calls may be subject to random QA monitoring, and all client feedback received is reviewed as part of this process.

These requirements are mandatory professional standards. Where repeated complaints, serious breaches or ongoing non-compliance are identified, the matter may be reviewed under our interpreter management and quality assurance procedures, and **further action may be taken where appropriate.**

We value the work our interpreters provide and recognise the important role you play in enabling communication between patients, service users and professionals. Maintaining a professional, confidential, accurate and impartial service is essential to protecting those who rely on our interpreting services and maintaining the trust of our clients.

If you have any questions about these standards, or any other query related to this document, please contact the Recruitment team at recruitment@silent-sounds.co.uk

Thank you for your cooperation and continued commitment to these standards.