

Submission Template

Proposed changes to the NZSL Video Interpreting and Relay Services

We want to know what you think

We want to get your feedback about the proposed changes to the NZSL Video Interpreting and Relay Services.

What do you think about the proposed changes?

Do you have any concerns about them?

Here is a recap on the proposed changes:

- **Change 1:** Get you to register as a user
- **Change 2:** Make the video interpreting service more available
- **Change 3:** Move to digital text-based relay services
- **Change 4:** Phase out CapTel equipment
- **Change 5:** Stop using Teletypewriter (TTY) equipment
- **Change 6:** Stop speech-to-speech services

How you can have your say

- You can tell us what you think by writing in the form below and can then either **email** us your feedback, or print it out and **post** it to us:

Email: relayconsultation@mbie.govt.nz

Post: Communications Policy
Building, Resources and Markets
Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment
PO Box 1473
Wellington 6140
New Zealand

- If you use New Zealand Sign Language you can also send in a video of your signed response. Go to the website www.seeflow.co.nz/direct where you will be able to create your video message.

Closing date: We need your feedback by **9am, Monday 15 April 2019**

Please tell us about yourself

Name:

Celia

Email or Address:

deafcounsellor@gmail.com

Do you use any of the services?

VIS

Is there anything else you would like us to know?

Please tick ✓ if you **do not** want us to publish information about you.

We will publish some feedback

We intend to publish some of the feedback that people send us.

Please let us know if you do **not** want us to publish your name, or to publish any particular part of your feedback.

Any information you give about yourself will only be used to help us make decisions about the proposed changes.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment are part of the government, people will be able to use the Official Information Act 1982 to ask us to show the feedback we get.

When responding to these requests we will take into account those who did not want their personal information published.

Questions

Change 1: Get you to register as a user

Q: What do you think about requiring users to register to use the services? Do you have any concerns about this?

I understand the reason for this, but feel there should also be a register of the NZSL interpreters who will be providing the service. To be included in such a register would be the names of the interpreters, their qualifications, year graduated, geographical area they work in and their specific interpreting skills with any professional development done and proof that they belong to a professional body that is able to process complaints.

Deaf people do not often have a say in the choice of interpreter they are assigned. This can cause anxiety and if personality or signing skill clashes occur it may cause a person to avoid using a service that is supposed to make things easier and enhance their well-being.

It would create equality if there was a register of users plus a register of providers/interpreters.

There also needs to be a disclosure about how information is stored and who can access it e.g. third parties

Change 2: Make the video interpreting service more available

Q: What do you think about our proposals for making the video interpreting service more available? Do you have any concerns about them?

Great idea. I would like the service to be extended to weekends and evenings up till 10.00pm and also a way out of hours to enable emergency calls to be made.

Eventually I would like to see this service 24/7 and available nationally – even in rural areas.

I understand there would be advantages from allowing interpreters to use a home office instead of a call centre, but this would need to be monitored.

- **calls being recorded and stored in a central computer system for a defined period of time.**
- **A secure system installed in home computers (similar to what ACC uses for provider and client information) that cannot be accessed by other members of the family.**
- **A way of monitoring standards of behaviour and dress while working from home**
- **A secure log in so that people cannot contact interpreters outside of “work hours” – these hours may vary for each interpreter so need to be clearly stated.**
- **A guarantee of privacy – that other household members cannot hear or see the conversations taking place**

Change 3: Move to digital text-based services

Q: What do you think about moving to digital text-based relay services? Do you have any concerns about this?

Good idea – but maybe some older people would need tuition or one on one help to understand this.

Change 4: Phase out CapTel equipment

Q: What do you think about stopping the use of CapTel equipment? Do you have any concerns about this?

Change 4: Phase out CapTel equipment

Q: What do you think would be a reasonable length of time to allow existing CapTel users to change over to new digital relay services?

Change 5: Stop using Teletypewriter (TTY) equipment

Q: What do you think about stopping TTY services? Do you have any concerns about this, including the timing for doing this?

I know only a few Deaf people still use TTY, but they are older Deaf people. This is a system that has worked well for them for years. They not only use TTY to access the relay service, but also to communicate with each other.

To rob them of a vital communication link would be to put them in “solitary confinement”.

I’m not sure what the answer to this is – most of these older Deaf people do not have computers or smart phones so would be unaware of the changes taking place or how to give feedback. There needs to be someone who can go to older people and explain things to them slowly one on one and coach them through the changes.

As a counsellor for Deaf people, I would be prepared to do this work under contract to MBIE.

Change 6: Stop speech-to-speech services

Q: What do you think about stopping speech-to-speech services? Do you have any concerns about this?

Final thoughts

Q: Do you have any final thoughts, comments or feedback?

Please don't overlook the older Deaf and the disabled Deaf or those with a mental illness. They all need time to understand why the changes are necessary, support to cope with the change and mentoring to be able to use new systems. Conducting workshops will not work for these groups of people –it needs to be done one on one.

Again, I am willing to do this work under contract to MBIE