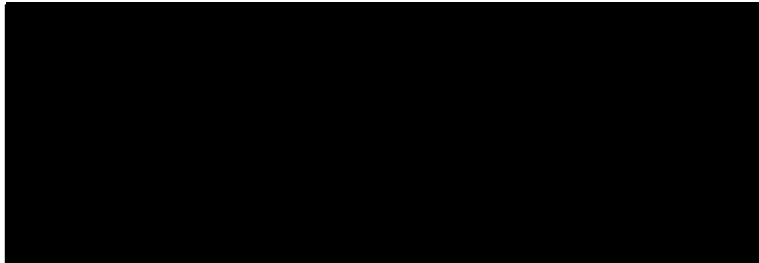


19 April 2021



Re: Official Information Act request - Sign language interpreter

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 31 March 2021, requesting the following information:

Please supply the following information under the Official Information Act (OIA):

- 1. All documents (including correspondence) that led to the decision to employ an in-house New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) interpreter at Auckland District Health Board, including a pros & cons consideration of such a decision.**

Please see attached.

Contact details of Auckland DHB staff and the name of the proposed employee have been redacted, applying OIA s9(2)(a) – to protect privacy. Details of supplier rates have been redacted applying OIA s9(2)(b)(ii) – to protect the commercial position of those suppliers.

- 2. Evidence of consultation with the Deaf community prior to this decision being made, and afterwards informing them of the changes; evidence the community's feedback was taken onboard; evidence of those consultations being NZSL-accessible.**

No evidence to provide. Auckland DHB Interpreting Services did not consult with the Deaf community as we were recruiting to meet demand for an interpreter while also spending public funds responsibly.

- 3. Evidence of communication with Deaf patients/clients, informing them they have a choice of NZSL interpreter. And, evidence these communications are NZSL accessible.**

No evidence to provide. The Auckland DHB booking system allows for the person making the booking to request a preferred Interpreter, but Auckland DHB Interpreting Services does not guarantee that this preferred interpreter will be provided.

4. What steps, if any, have been undertaken to ensure that booked NZSL interpreters have continuity of knowledge and background information with Deaf clients who have on-going appointments, and/or have specific language needs?

The ability to be able to provide the same interpreter over a time inherently supports a continuity of knowledge and background information for Deaf patients with on-going appointments. If there are specific language needs that cannot be met by the Auckland DHB NZSL Interpreter these are addressed and resolved on a case by case basis.

You are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Auckland DHB website.

Yours faithfully



Ailsa Claire, OBE
Chief Executive of Te Toka Tumai (Auckland District Health Board)

From: Vlera Kajtazi (ADHB)
Sent: Tuesday, 07 May 2019 2:21 p.m.
To: Kelly Teague (ADHB)
Cc: Sarah Danko (ADHB)
Subject: FW: Proposal for sign language.docx

Hi Kelly,

I have been approached by a Sign Language interpreter who would like to sign up with us through Alpha Recruitment. Sign Language interpreters are very hard to come by as they usually sign up with other agencies due to a higher hourly rate so I'm very keen to get him on our books before "Connect" or "Deaf Aotearoa" do. He's all ready to go with Alpha so are we able to take him on for a trial? We can then do a cost analysis to see if it would be worth keeping him on more permanently.

Thanks,

Vlera Kajtazi
Team Leader
Interpreting and Translation Services
[REDACTED]

Auckland District Health Board | Building 15 | Level 4 | Greenlane Clinical Centre

From: Sarah Danko (ADHB)
Sent: Friday, 03 May 2019 3:18 p.m.
To: Ian Costello (ADHB)
Cc: Leanne Gatman (ADHB); Kelly Teague (ADHB); Vlera Kajtazi (ADHB)
Subject: Proposal for sign language.docx

Hi Ian

Apologies for delay. This slipped off my radar until Vlera reminded me.
As per your request I have put a one-pager together to demonstrate the need to insource a sign language interpreter. You can see that even if we managed to cover half the jobs (I believe it will be a lot more, I've been conservative), we have the ability to save
Vlera and I spoke today about it and could potentially use someone via Alpha which means that we can test this quickly without committing to a fixed term or permanent solution.

Would welcome your thoughts

Thanks

Sarah

Sarah Danko
Operational Manager – Patient Services Centre
[REDACTED]

Auckland District Health Board | Rm 20954 | Level 5 | Building 4 | Greenlane Clinical Centre | [REDACTED]

Proposal to engage a Sign Language Interpreter (fixed term or via agency)

1) Background

Auckland District Health Board (ADHB) provides interpreting and translation services for over 75 languages for over 6000 sessions per month across the Auckland Central area.

The department employs 13fte substantive interpreters (\$55-\$65k each per year) and over 160 interpreters on a contractual basis. Sign language is also a service offered to ADHB patients however this is outsourced to 2 external companies, Isign and Connect.

The Interpreting Service has just implemented a new system for booking and scheduling interpreting resource which results in better allocation of the permanent interpreters, ensuring that we maximise their time before allocating jobs to contract interpreters.

2) Current issues

Listed below are the issues that the service is currently experiencing:

- Unable to auto-route sign language jobs as the service is provided by external companies, this means we cannot guarantee a sign language interpreter
- Costs for outsourcing this service are extortionate, ranging from \$100 per job to \$350 (depending on duration)

3) Proposal

Recruit 1fte sign language interpreter on a fixed term basis or via agency for 1 year as a pilot on a fixed salary of \$65,000 (as per current permanent interpreters)

4) Measures of success

- Improves the patient experience as we can route jobs and provide better availability
- Reduction in costs

5) Data – 2018 sign language data and costs

Month	Jobs	Total	Average Cost per job	Monthly Cost of insource	Monthly total cost (outsource + insource)	Potential monthly saving
Jan-18	52	\$8,665.30	\$166.64	\$1,250	\$5,582.65	\$3,082.65
Feb-18	77	\$7,654.44	\$99.41	\$1,250	\$5,077.22	\$2,577.22
Mar-18	103	\$12,952.96	\$125.76	\$1,250	\$7,726.48	\$5,226.48
Apr-18	54	\$7,168.29	\$132.75	\$1,250	\$4,834.15	\$2,334.15
May-18	71	\$10,215.30	\$143.88	\$1,250	\$6,357.65	\$3,857.65
Jun-18	80	\$13,314.69	\$166.43	\$1,250	\$7,907.35	\$5,407.35
Jul-18	80	\$14,401.04	\$180.01	\$1,250	\$8,450.52	\$5,950.52
Aug-18	63	\$9,891.73	\$157.01	\$1,250	\$6,195.87	\$3,695.87
Sep-18	52	\$10,226.28	\$196.66	\$1,250	\$6,363.14	\$3,863.14
Oct-19	68	\$11,950.59	\$175.74	\$1,250	\$7,225.30	\$4,725.30
Nov-18	125	\$20,663.29	\$165.31	\$1,250	\$11,581.65	\$9,081.65
Dec-18	118	\$20,312.17	\$172.14	\$1,250	\$11,406.09	\$8,906.09
Total		\$147,416.08			\$88,708.04	\$58,708.04

All jobs would potentially not be undertaken by our insourced interpreter therefore we would still need to use the external companies, however, this need would be significantly reduced.

From: Kelly Teague (ADHB)
Sent: Thursday, 23 July 2020 2:27 p.m.
To: Sarah Danko (ADHB)
Subject: Interpreter FTE

Hi Sarah

On further review of the paper that you submitted can you please answer the following questions:

1. Why would we appoint to a fixed term 30 hour contract when based on the number of jobs per year it does not appear that 30 hours' work is being undertaken currently?
2. Why would we not undertake a joint appointment with WDHB?

Thanks

Kelly

ADHB6687	BAU	Interpreter (New/Increased FTE), Sign Language	15/05/2020	[REDACTED]	Permanent	Interpreter Service	Draft	23.07.2020: KT to discuss further with Sarah Danko.	1	New / increased FTE	NA	Currently have budget available to appoint a permanent interpreter, role has been discussed with Sarah Danko before putting the ATR through. I currently have an Alpha temp, [REDACTED] who is an interpreter for Sign Language. I would like to make him a permanent member of staff as he has helped us save a lot on using external agencies. Currently we are paying Alpha [REDACTED] an hour and if we use external agencies for Sign Language interpreters they cost between [REDACTED] 0 an hour. Last year we spent \$125,700 on Sign Language interpreters alone.
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General Manager for Clinical Support [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Kelly Teague (ADHB)
Sent: Tuesday, 22 September 2020 2:28 p.m.
To: Ian Costello (ADHB)
Cc: Leanne Gatman (ADHB); Sarah Danko (ADHB)
Subject: RE: Sign language interpreter

Thanks Ian

From: Ian Costello (ADHB)
Sent: Tuesday, 22 September 2020 1:42 p.m.
To: Kelly Teague (ADHB)
Cc: Leanne Gatman (ADHB); Sarah Danko (ADHB)
Subject: RE: Sign language interpreter

Thanks Kelly

Case looks good. I suggest keeping the finance impact simple as the real cost savings against current expenditure, and what is cost avoidance if we don't secure Keith.

As it's new FTE will need Jo's approval- perhaps raise at quarterly review next week?

Thanks

Ian

From: Kelly Teague (ADHB)
Sent: Friday, 18 September 2020 8:50 a.m.
To: Ian Costello (ADHB)
Cc: Leanne Gatman (ADHB); Sarah Danko (ADHB)
Subject: FW: Sign language interpreter

Hi Ian

Attached is the Sign language interpreter case for your discussion with Jo.

This case is to transfer from agency to 6 months fixed term, 30 hours to reduce cost but will be new FTE .

Thanks

Kelly

From: Sarah Danko (ADHB)
Sent: Friday, 18 September 2020 8:34 a.m.
To: Kelly Teague (ADHB)
Subject: RE: Sign language interpreter

Hi

Here you go

Thanks

Sarah

Sarah Danko
Operational Manager – Patient Services Centre

[REDACTED]



The information contained in this email and any attachments is confidential and intended for the named recipients only. If you are not the intended recipient, please delete this email and notify the sender immediately. Auckland DHB accepts no responsibility for changes made to this email or to any attachments after it has been sent.

From: Kelly Teague (ADHB)
Sent: Friday, 18 September 2020 6:37 a.m.
To: Sarah Danko (ADHB)
Subject: Sign language interpreter

Hi Sarah

Please forward me a copy of the final paper re sign language interpreter so that Ian can forward to Jo.

Thanks

Kelly

Request to appoint a Sign Language Interpreter FTC for One Year

Introduction

Sign Language interpreters must be provided to the deaf community and it is one of our top 20 languages.

The table below shows the number of appointments that we cover for Sign Language annually:

Year	Number of Appointments
2018	947
2019	931
2020 from Jan to end of May	258

I have struggled to find Sign Language interpreters to contract with us directly for the last 5 years. I have approached the universities to try and recruit their graduates but with no luck so we have had to use external agencies such as Connect Interpreting and Deaf Aotearoa. [REDACTED] started working with us in June 2019 and the savings that we have made are quite significant.

The table below shows the amount that has been spent on external agencies for Sign Language interpreters annually:

Year	Amount
2018	\$169,528.49
2019	\$125,690.70
2020 from Jan to end of May	\$25,205.56

Proposal

I would like to offer a Fixed Term Contract to [REDACTED] who is currently temping with us [REDACTED] on a 30-hour a week contract as a Sign Language interpreter.

The following calculations show the amount that each external agency charges per hour and the difference in percentage of to the amount that it would cost for [REDACTED] services [REDACTED]



The table below shows the monthly spend for Sign Language interpreting:

	Jobs	Cost of █████	Cost if we had outsourced
Jun 19	28	█████	\$4,200
Jul 19	58	█████	\$8,700
Aug 19	22	█████	\$3,300
Sep 19	68	█████	\$10,200
Oct 19	25	█████	\$3,750
Nov 19	37	█████	\$5,550
Dec 19	35	█████	\$5,250
Total Savings			█████

The difference in the amount spent on external agencies in 2018 as opposed to 2019 is quite significant with a difference of \$43,837.79 despite █████ only starting half-way through 2019.

If we take 2019 as an example with 931 requests for Sign Language interpreters, should these jobs have been covered by █████ we would have saved \$122,728.49 per year.

Risks & Benefits

Benefits

Consistency – Having █████ on board ensures that we have a consistent member of staff to provide continuity of care for our patients. If we go back to outsourcing we are not guaranteed to have the same interpreter for each patient, nor do we really know the standard of interpreter we are providing.

Cost Savings – see above for cost saving details

Risks

Waitemata DHB is currently advertising for a full time Sign Language interpreter. If we don't offer █████ a full time position he will apply for the role at WDHB

New triangular employment legislation – where we must take on more responsibility as an employer as opposed to █████ t. Recent Consumer Liaison query about the lack of availability of Sign language interpreter for Renal ward highlights the need for a more consistent approach

Quality and Safety

Having a full time interpreter who is employed directly by us ensures quality and consistency

Onboarding – allows us to go through appropriate screenings such as VCA

Mandatory Training – as ADHB staff he will be able to complete the mandatory training through KoAatea