PRACTICAL GUIDE TO ORGANISING TRANSLATIONS

This Queensland Health guide describes the basic steps involved in translating written material. The *Queensland Health Language Services Policy Statement* states that health services should make written information on health service matters available in other languages, as appropriate.

> A **translator** deals with written text.
>
> An **interprete**r deals with the spoken word.

Step One: Planning & information gathering

- prepare an overall plan. The *Publication production schedule* (http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/media/publications.htm) is a useful guide

- establish your consultation group, preferably with representatives from each language group. See step three

- plan what you want to translate. Ensure that the language is clear, simple and unambiguous. The *Queensland Health Editorial Style Guide* has clear guidelines (http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/media/publications.htm)

- keep the information concise – this will keep costs down and increase the likelihood of an accurate translation. Avoid repetition – remember you pay for every word translated

- ensure you have written the information for the intended audience, eg. it is culturally respectful and relevant, the information is pitched to the audience

- identify the languages:

  - which ethnic communities exist in your catchment area?
  - which ethnic communities have a demonstrated need around this particular health issue?
  - what are the specific characteristics of the identified communities in relation to your target audience (eg. women, elderly, children, young people)?
  - what are the demographics? Is the community established or new? (see www.health.qld.gov.au/multicultural/health_workers/mc_profileHSD.asp for multicultural data by district);
  - what is the literacy level of each community?
  - what is the proficiency in reading English and own language in each community?
  - a consultation group will be able to help you answer the above questions

> The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) is the national standards and accreditation body owned by the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments of Australia. **You should ensure that your translator is NAATI accredited.** See www.naati.com.au. Alternatively, see the listing of nationally accredited translators who are members of the Australian Institute for Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) at www.ausit.org

- identify whether you require a written translation or an audio file. Audio files are used for groups with low literacy levels and can be supplied by the translation company on a CD or as an MP3 file

- obtain quotes for translation (average costs are around $30-$40 per 100 words). Provide a brief about the intended audience and the 'level of pitch' you are aiming to achieve. Ensure the following are included in your quotes:
  - translation by NAATI accredited translators. NAATI recommends using a translator at 'translator' level for general information with some specialised content and an 'advanced translator' for complex and technical information
  - new languages in Queensland may not have accreditation. In this case, ask agencies how they ensure quality
  - checking. There are two suggested ways to check the translated material. Firstly, another translator can check the work. However, this will increase your costs. Secondly, the consultation group can check the translation as

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detailed in step three of this guide

— proofreading (often included in the price)

— layout (often included in the price)

— specification of the file format of the final product eg. PDF file or MP3 file (be aware of file size if you are intending to publish on the Queensland Health website or QHEPS)

— itemisation so that you can compare quotes

— because Queensland Health does not automatically gain ownership of intellectual property rights created by external consultants/organisations, even though Queensland Health paid for it to be created, ensure the following text is inserted in the quote: *"ownership of intellectual property rights in all material created in this project vests in The State of Queensland (Queensland Health)"*.

Step Two: Selecting the translating company

■ choose a reputable, experienced company that uses NAATI accredited translators as this will save time and money

■ although you may obtain a cheaper quote from a company that specialises in computer translation, past experience in the health sector indicates that these translations are often not useable. This is because computer translation is often literal and can yield unintelligible results

■ the following companies have been used by different areas of Queensland Health in the past:

— Elite Language Services (tonytri@elite-languageservices.com)

— Institute of Modern Languages, University of Queensland (www.iml.uq.edu.au)

— Multimedia Languages & Marketing (www.2m.com.au)

— Precision Languages International (www.precisionlanguages.com)

— Translation House (www.translationhouse.com.au)

■ individual translators can also be contracted directly by consulting the NAATI and AUSIT websites and searching for translators in the language required

■ for some languages, NAATI accreditation is not yet available. In this instance, NAATI has a 'recognition' award. Therefore, NAATI recognised translators are the first preference for languages where accreditation is not available

■ assess the quotes. This can be a difficult process if the quotes are not itemised. The following criteria were developed and used by the HACC Multicultural Information Strategy (www.health.qld.gov.au/hacc/HACCMultiStandard.asp):

— NAATI accreditation of translators
— ability to translate all required languages
— translation costs per language
— typesetting costs
— cost of checking and proofing (including whether they check with more than one person to ensure the style of language used is aligned to the intended audience)
— cost of changes post-consumer focus testing
— cost of all translated files on CD-ROM
— estimated timeframe of translation from receipt of purchase order
— overall value for money

■ organise to hold a consultation meeting with the translators. The translation company can assist you to organise a meeting once translators are engaged for your translation job. Consultation meetings are effective in identifying vague and imprecise words. It will also be an opportunity to brief the translators directly about the intended audience. Your requirement for such meetings should be specified in the quotation.

How to establish a consultation group

- consult a CALD consumer participation guide (eg. www.ceh.org.au/resources/resbyceh.html)
- make contact with multicultural agencies in your area. Consult the *Queensland Multicultural Resource Directory* for a complete and up to date listing (www.multicultural.qld.gov.au/media/maq_resource_directory.pdf)
- check if your health service district already has a multicultural group or network
- if required, seek advice from Queensland Health employees with expertise in this area. See www.health.qld.gov.au/multicultural/contact_us/contact_us.asp

Step Three: Consultation and checking

- your consultation group of bilingual consumers and/or service providers from each language group can assist in reviewing the translated draft for suitability. This is an important step that allows you to 'test run' your translations with a sample of the intended audience. Alternatively, you may consider sending the translation to a number of bilingual health or community workers for checking:
  - ask your consultation group the following questions:
  - is the language pitched at the right level of understanding? Can it be understood by ordinary people?
  - is the language too academic, colloquial or old fashioned?
  - are generic terms used ie. not from specific dialects?
  - are words that do not exist in the other language, appropriately explained?
  - is there anything that may offend the client group?

- remember to choose your edits carefully as these will be charged as 'extras' if the translation was technically correct but you are making style edits

- the following template can be used to guide the consumers through the feedback process:

Template for consulting with consumers from multicultural backgrounds on suitability of translation

Aim: to ensure that translated information achieves best understanding from people from multicultural backgrounds
Instructions: only mark **incorrect** and **very difficult** information. We are not looking for style changes.

First step	Second step	Third step
1. Highlight (on the translation) the words and phrases that are **incorrect** or **very difficult** to understand 2. Number the highlighted word or phrase	3. In this column describe in English your concern next to the numbers.	4. Write your suggestion that will improve the word or phrase **in your language** as clearly as possible.

- when the edits have been done by consumers, a meeting with the translation company will need to be organised to discuss the feedback and to negotiate which edits will be adopted.

Step Four: Communication & dissemination strategy

The dissemination of the translated materials should be considered within the context of the overall communication strategy of the project or service. Some additional pointers:

- the consultation group may assist to disseminate the translated materials and can provide important information about potential dissemination points eg.:
  - use of mainstream and/or ethnic media
  - information flows within the community
  - key gate-keepers and leaders
  - peak or key associations

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— popular ethnic businesses   — religious organisations.

- key community groups speaking the target languages can be found via the *Queensland Multicultural Resource Directory* (www.multicultural.qld.gov.au/media/maq_resource_directory.pdf)

- remember, information will be better received in the context of an ongoing relationship, rather than a one-off mail-out

- bilingual health workers may also disseminate the materials – refer to *Queensland Multicultural Resource Directory* (www.multicultural.qld.gov.au/media/maq_resource_directory.pdf)

Step Five: Evaluation

Depending on what you have translated, your evaluation questions may differ. You may wish to consider:

- has demand for your service increased from people in that language group?
- do bilingual/bicultural health workers ring or refer to your service?
- do people use the translated materials?
- what feedback have you received about the information and the communication strategy?

Summary checklist

Step 1 ☐ Project plan completed

☐ Consultation group established

☐ Publication materials finalised in English

☐ Languages identified

☐ Formats identified (written/audio)

☐ Brief for translating companies prepared

☐ Quotes obtained

Step 2 ☐ Quote accepted from translation company that uses NAATI accredited translators

or

☐ Individual NAATI accredited translators contracted

☐ Meeting with translators

Step 3 ☐ Translation checked and approved by consultation group

☐ Edits made (if any) & publication finalised

Step 4 ☐ Communication & dissemination strategy developed

☐ Communication & dissemination strategy implemented

An electronic copy of this document is available at:

www.health.qld.gov.au/multicultural

Step 5 ☐ Evaluation plan developed

☐ Evaluation completed

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