

Information sheet – Allied health professionals

Study title: Evaluation of the Free Interpreting Service for allied health professionals

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in this evaluation, which you are invited to take part in because you are an allied health professional. This information sheet provides an overview of the evaluation and how you can contribute. Please read it carefully and contact the project team at Australian Healthcare Associates (AHA) if you have any questions.

What is this evaluation about?

Good communication is critical to ensuring positive outcomes for both patients and allied health professionals during health appointments. To help improve access to private allied health services for CALD communities, the Australian Government has funded the program which provides access to the Free Interpreting Service (FIS) to populations with low English proficiency in 32 local government areas (LGAs).

To help understand how this program is progressing, the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (the department) has engaged Australian Healthcare Associates (AHA) to evaluate the current use of the FIS for allied health professionals.

As part of this evaluation, we are seeking input from a wide range of stakeholders, including allied health professionals – whether they are registered with FIS or not– representatives from the Department of Home Affairs, allied health peak bodies and associations, and consumers themselves.

Note: This evaluation is specifically examining the use of the FIS in private allied health services (i.e. non-hospital) settings. Access to translating and interpreting services in hospitals and other settings is very important but is not the focus of this evaluation.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to participate, we will need about 15 minutes of your time to complete an online survey about:

- your experience using the FIS
- your awareness of the FIS
- your views on the effectiveness of the FIS at improving health outcomes for consumers
- any gaps or areas of duplication
- any improvements to your patients' experiences.

The survey will be open until 31 October 2025.

At the end of the survey, you can enter a draw to win one of five \$100 gift cards. This is optional. If you choose to enter the draw, you will need to provide your name and contact details. We will contact winners in October.

If you are unable to complete the survey online but would still like to contribute, a member of our team would be happy to ask you the questions in a video or phone call. If you would like to take this option, please email FIS.evaluation@ahaconsulting.com.au to arrange a suitable time and date.

Completing any part of the survey tells us that you understand the information you've been given about the evaluation, you are willing to take part, and you agree to us using the information you provide. You are free to withdraw at any time. However, if you withdraw before the end of the survey or decide not to provide your contact details, we will not be able to identify and delete your responses. If you decide to withdraw from the project after providing your contact details, you can email FIS.evaluation@ahaconsulting.com.au and ask for your responses to be destroyed.

What are the possible benefits and risks?

We cannot guarantee that taking part in this evaluation will have any direct benefits for you or your organisation. We also do not anticipate any significant risks for you or your organisation. Your contribution may help inform future improvements to CALD communities accessing translating and interpreting services in private allied health settings.

What will happen to information I provide?

During the survey period, your responses will be stored on secure Australian-based servers held by the Qualtrics online platform. When the survey period is complete, we will securely transfer this data to a password-protected server at AHA where it will be stored for 5 years after we submit our final report. The data will then be destroyed.

All data will be kept strictly confidential, and our report will not present information in any way that allows an individual to be identified.

Will I hear about the results of this evaluation?

We expect to submit our findings to the department in November 2025. The department reserves the right to publish the findings on its website. If you choose not to provide your contact details, we will not be able to inform you if and when the findings are published. If you wish, you may contact us at FIS.evaluation@ahaconsulting.com.au and we will let you know if the findings are available.