

Quick reference guide - Interpreter exemption process

Eligibility

An interpreter for a person accessing voluntary assisted dying **must**:

- be accredited by the National Accreditation Body for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), or
- have been granted an exemption from the accreditation requirements by Queensland Health.

An interpreter **must not**:

- be a family member of the person
- know or believe they are a beneficiary under the person's will, or that they may benefit financially or in any other way from the death of the person, except for receiving reasonable fees for providing services as an interpreter
- be an owner of, or responsible for the management of, any health facility at which the person is being treated or resides
- be someone who is directly involved in providing a health or personal care service to the person. This includes staff at QVAD SPS, HHS VAD services or the VAD Unit.

NAATI Accreditation

To interpret for a person accessing voluntary assisted dying an interpreter must hold a certification at one of the following NAATI levels:

- Certified Provisional Interpreter
- Certified Interpreter
- Certified Specialist Health Interpreter
- Certified Specialist Legal Interpreter
- Certified Conference Interpreter.

Prior to applying for an exemption

It is recommended an authorised voluntary assisted dying practitioner, healthcare worker, administration staff member or any other person involved in providing voluntary assisted dying services, engage an interpreter through their local processes.

Queensland Voluntary Assisted Dying Support and Pharmacy Service (QVAD SPS) care coordinators can assist in engaging an accredited interpreter, if required. You can talk to a care coordinator Monday to Friday, 8.30am-4pm, (excluding public holidays).

- **Phone:** 1800 431 371
- **Email:** QVADSupport@health.qld.gov.au

The person organising the interpreter service should request a NAATI accredited interpreter in the required language or non-spoken communication.

Application process

Step 1 - Identifying the need for an interpreter

- A person may, at any stage in the voluntary assisted dying process, indicate the need for communication assistance from an interpreter, or
- A practitioner or staff member involved in voluntary assisted dying may identify that the person seeking access may require an interpreter to complete the process.

Step 2 - Organise an interpreter

- It is recommended an authorised VAD practitioner, Hospital and Health Service (HHS) VAD coordinator, healthcare worker, QVAD Support and Pharmacy Service (QVAD SPS) worker, administration staff or any other person involved in voluntary assisted dying, organise an interpreter through their local processes and request an interpreter with a NAATI certification in the required language or non-spoken communication.
- If a NAATI accredited interpreter is not available but there is another person appropriately qualified to provide interpreting services, the healthcare worker or practitioner should seek an exemption for an available interpreter who does not meet the interpreter accreditation requirements.

Step 3 – Submit Application

The practitioner or healthcare worker will need to fill in and submit an application to Queensland Health, by emailing the following items to VADEXEMPTIONS@health.qld.gov.au:

- **a completed *Interpreter Exemption Application Form***, you can get a copy of this form by emailing VADEXEMPTIONS@health.qld.gov.au. This form must be signed by the coordinating practitioner.
- **Supporting documents** that demonstrate the proposed interpreter's understanding of the language or non-spoken communication and ability to provide an accurate interpretation.
- To ensure that there can be no perceived conflict regarding the requirement that an interpreter must not be directly involved in providing a health service or personal care service to the person, interpreter exemptions **will not** be granted to any person working within the Office of the Review Board, VAD Unit or QVAD SPS.

Step 4 – Assessment

- As provided for in the Act, applications will be assessed on whether:
 - there are **no accredited interpreters available** in a particular case, and
 - there **are exceptional circumstances** for granting the exemption.
- Applications are reviewed and presented to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for approval.

Step 5 – Outcome

- Following assessment of the exemption application, you will be notified of an outcome within five business days. The exemption outcome letter will be emailed to the practitioner or healthcare worker advising them of the decision.
- An interpreter who receives an exemption approval may only provide interpreting services for the specified person seeking access to voluntary assisted dying. This will be communicated to the applicant in the response.