

The interpreter : An essential actor

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Accessibilité aux services d'interprétariat pour les femmes immigrantes, réfugiées et à statut précaire project



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des organismes au service
des personnes réfugiées
et immigrantes





Interpreting services in Quebec: The context

Public interpreting services

- The *Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux* (MSSS) manages two banks of interpreters through the CIUSSSs
 - *Banque interrégionale d'interprètes (BII) managed by CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal*
 - *Banque d'interprètes de la Capitale-Nationale managed by CIUSSS de la Capitale Nationale*
- As of June 2021, the BII fulfills only requests made by institutions and organizations that are part of the health and social services network.
- Other ministries and public organizations use other solutions such as community-sector banks of interpreters or private-sector services.



Interpreting services in Quebec: The context

Community-sector banks of interpreters


- Various models of financing (government grants, self-funding, etc.)
- Diversity of management practices and relationships with interpreters
- Uneven training: Most interpreters have not received college or university training in translation and are not members of the OTTIAQ.
- Some community-sector banks of interpreters are specialized, for example in work with women in situations of violence, work with refugees, etc.



Interpreting services in Quebec: The context

Private-sector interpreters

- The *Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec* (OTTIAQ)
- Translation and interpretation services companies
- Private firms
- Interpretation within corporations, at conferences, in diplomatic contexts, etc.



Resources and strategies for overcoming linguistic barriers

People who are not fluent in French use various methods of accessing services and dealing with the government. For example:

- Calling upon an informal interpreter: a friend, family member or even a minor.
- Asking for support or accompaniment from a worker from a community organization.
- Using simple language.
- Using hand motions.
- Computer tools: Google Translate or others.



Advantages of using interpretation services

- Allophones can undertake their dealings with the government autonomously, without having to rely on an informal interpreter or ask to be accompanied by a worker from a community organization.
- More neutrality and respect for confidentiality than with informal interpreters.
- Better understanding of intercultural aspects of the intervention. Trained interpreters can better explain details in ways that take into account the different cultural contexts of the government worker and the allophone client.
- Interventions with formal interpreters allow for greater comprehension and reduce the number of follow-up interventions with the same person.
- Improved relationship between the allophone person and the government worker.