

# MINUTES | Community Advisory Group | Meeting 10

## 12 November 2020

Meeting 5 pm – 7 pm

Location: Zoom Meeting

Present: Craig MacLean (Lower Mainland), Dan Braun (Lower Mainland), Gordon Rattray (Interior), Leanor Vlug (Lower Mainland), Monika Lane (Vancouver Island), Nancy Zavaglia (the North), Sarah Taylor (Lower Mainland), Kiran Malli (Provincial Language Services)

Facilitator: Scott Jeffery (Provincial Language Services)

Note-Taker: Judy Hsiao (Provincial Language Services)

Absent: Amar Mangat (Lower Mainland)

Guest Presenters: Angela Chirinian (Provincial Health Services Authority - Provincial Language Services), Emina Dervisevic (Vancouver Coastal Health Community Engagement), Keith Quon (Vancouver Coastal Health Digital Communications)

1. **Provincial Medical Sign Language Interpreting Service Request For Proposal**

* The roles of Community Advisory Group were reviewed in reference to two documents:
  + *Expression of Interest* from the beginning of Community Advisory Group formation – to review the deliverables for Request For Proposal for Provincial Medical Sign Language Interpreting Service
  + *Community Advisory Group Terms of Reference –* to provide input and feedback on planning and design of services
  + While the roles and responsibilities of Community Advisory Group are outlined as above, Provincial Health Services Authority makes the ultimate decision on how to best provide services
* 6 steps of Provincial Medical Sign Language Interpreting Service vendor selection were illustrated:
  1. Assemble Team – create a diverse team of experts from Provincial Language Services for objectivity
  2. Review Proponents – members of the Evaluation Committee individually reviewed responses in accordance with Request For Proposal criteria and requirements with specific focus on:
     + Interpreter credentials
     + Geographic reach
     + Quality assurance process
     + Administration ease
  3. Group Review – collectively discuss and rank proponents based on established criteria
  4. Demos – four proponents were selected to present to the Evaluation Committee
  5. Final Evaluation – final decision based on total points scored for:
     + Request For Proposal requirements
     + Pricing
     + Value add
  + Based on meeting requirements and the ability to immediately serve in British Columbia with minimal transition time, the Evaluation Committee considered two local proponents in the final analysis, who equally meet all Request For Proposal requirements
  + Final decision was made based on the proponent whose pricing model fell within Provincial Health Services Authority budge requirements
  + The evaluation of this Request For Proposal was conducted fairly and transparently according to established evaluation criteria. All processes are aligned with the most stringent policy.
  1. Award Contract – Provincial Health Services Authority will finalize the contract with the vendor in next few weeks and hold a Virtual Gathering to announce the Provincial Medical Sign Language Interpreting Service Vendor to the Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing community

* The Evaluation Committee recommended Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility as the successful proponent for Provincial Medical Sign Language Interpreting Service.

* Recognizing there are concerns with the choice of vendor, Provincial Language Services will implement more rigorous contract management strategies with the involvement of Sign Language Service Coordinator including:
  + More oversight from Provincial Language Services
  + More accountability from vendor – i.e. monthly meeting on service metrics which were contributed by Community Advisory Group

* Questions/Discussions
  + **Q:** One of the requirements for vendors states that all interpreters must be West Coast Association of Visual Language Interpreters (WAVLI) members however some are not. How to ensure interpreters adhere to Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Conduct? The grievance process of Canadian Association of Sign Language Interpreters (CASLI) is currently on hold. How does the complaint process work?

**A:** American Sign Language interpreters are required to be members of West Coast Association of Visual Language Interpreters, with Occupational Title Protection, whereas Deaf interpreters don’t fall within this group – they fall directly under Canadian Association of Sign Language Interpreters.

Provincial Language Services will look into proactively conducting audit checks on interpreter’s credentials.

Suggestion: vendor and Provincial Language Services should work together to establish a system to survey patients and Healthcare Provider immediately following appointments to conduct quality assurance checks.

**A:** Provincial Language Services already as survey in place for spoken languages, and is working toward having the same for Provincial Medical Sign Language Interpreting Service. Provincial Language Services is also seeking ways to better integrate Provincial Medical Sign Language Interpreting Service. For instance, spoken language requests come to Provincial Language Services on an online platform. The ultimate goal is to integrate Provincial Medical Sign Language Interpreting Service to that as well.

* + **Q:** How does the integration of online request system work in situation like Emergency Room?

**A:** Provincial Language Services has different modalities of spoken language delivery. Most of time in Emergency Room they use phone Interpreter or Video Remote Interpreting for immediate access to interpreter, which has proven result of reduced length of stays for patients.

* + **Q:** There were some traumatic experiences with this agency. Perhaps the counselors from the Vancouver Coastal Health’s Deaf Well-Being Program should stand by during the Town Hall in case there are emotional moments.  
    **A:** This is a good suggestion. Scott will explore it further.

* + **Q:** The community on the Island has felt excluded in the past. How will Wavefront serve the entire British Columbia moving forward?  
    **A:** Provincial Language Services will ensure Wavefront to be able to provide service across British Columbia with the new contract. The vendor is also making changes in services as well. Provincial Language Services will set forth future plans after announcement.
  + **Q:** This agency is not a community-sensitive organization and has created more barriers in terms of attitudes and behaviours. There is no diversity in the staffing and interpreter population. We have the right to access the Sign Language interpreter but they act like they are the gatekeepers. Wavefront should have all staff take anti-audism and anti-racism trainings.

**A:** Provincial Language Services understands the perspectives from the community and expects disappointments from Community Advisory Group. However the fact is that there were extremely limited options of vendors to choose from in the Request For Proposal[ process especially from British Columbia. As a public sector providing services, Provincial Language Services / Provincial Health Services Authority outlines requirements/criteria gathered from Community Advisory Group and selects from vendors who meet them. There are aspects not listed in the criteria, however Provincial Language Services will do its best to take feedback from Community Advisory Group to vendor for better systemic changes.  
Looking ahead, having Sign Language Service Coordinator and Community Advisory Group now will make things more transparent.

* + **Q:** Is it possible to make the contract to be a trial basis for 6 months?

**A:** There were really limited options of eligible vendors who are readily able to provide services across British Columbia. Alternatively, Provincial Language Services can discuss internally to add regular assessments every 6 months to the contract. We can make more systemic changes to how we manage the contract to allow more formal channels to communicate feedback.

* + **Q:** Can Wavefront guarantee that they can provide interpreter if a patient requests for a Black, Indigenous, People Of Colour (BIPOC) interpreter for example?

**A:** It was not part of the requirement, however we can discuss with the vendor to set expectations for them to expand pool of diverse interpreters to promote inclusiveness.

* + **Q:** Wavefront may have the resources to provide services. But how can we fix the systemic issue that there are family members in a same business which interferes confidentialities or breaches ethics etc.?

**A:** Provincial Language Services will ensure the operations of the vendor adhere to established policies and procedures and will take action should issue arise.

* + **Q:** Will the Provincial Health Services Authority courses on confidentiality and Code of Ethics be required for vendors and interpreters?

**A:** The vendor has its own protocols for interpreters, however we can look into adding them as part of requirements in the contract if Community Advisory Group feels strongly about it.

* + **Q:** Is the vendor going to improve services at the Northern British Columbia?

**A:** The need to increase number of interpreters in the Northern and Central British Columbia is acknowledged. Nowadays there are Video Remote Interpreting set up in some areas as well as increasing usage of virtual interpreting. Provincial Language Services will encourage more Healthcare Provider to utilize different interpreting modalities e.g. phone or video interpreter.

* + **Q:** There have been cases that interpreter take control over – Code of Ethics may not be enough to cover these behaviours.

**A:** While we are trying to increase more transparency, any complaints towards interpreter should be directed to West Coast Association of Visual Language Interpreters.

* Angela and Kiran thanked all Community Advisory Group members for the feedback and insight, considering many of them are logical and feasible. Provincial Language Services will work to address the concerns and make positive progress strategically as to what to be formulated in the new contract.

1. **Vancouver Coastal Health Engagements**

* Emina Dervisevic from Vancouver Coastal Health Community Engagement and Keith Quon from Vancouver Coastal Health Digital Communications would like to seek inputs and opinions from Community Advisory Group members on the project of re-developing Vancouver Coastal Health website to increase more accessibility for different communities inclusively.

1. **Wrap-up**

* It is important to keep in mind that all contents in Community Advisory Group meetings are confidential.

*Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.*