

December 2014

**ASL
INTERPRETER
PILOT PROJECT**

FINAL EVALUATION

Conducted for Corporate Human Resources
and Diversity Services Yukon Government

Prepared by Debra Russell, Ph.D.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This American Sign Language Pilot Evaluation was conducted to gather community based input from consumers who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, service providers, funders, and employees, in order to provide information to guide the Yukon Government in planning for service delivery to Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. I wish to thank Renee Paquin and Jay Greenaway for the excellent guidance and support offered at all stages of the evaluation. Thanks are also due to Amanda Smith for her exceptional work in ensuring the ASL Pilot Project was successfully launched and the evaluation conducted effectively. Her commitment to the Deaf community and building effective working relationships and ASL awareness with all stakeholders within the Yukon has been outstanding and her professionalism has added a great deal to the success of the pilot project.

I would also like to thank the many community participants from Whitehorse, along with the employees of the Yukon Government for their active participation in this process. It is their perspectives that will help the leadership of Yukon government to continue to enhance their efforts to provide effective services that meet the needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens of the Yukon Territory.

I wish the Yukon Government and CHRDS every success in addressing the needs identified in this study. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to work on this project with such a talented and dedicated group of employees, service providers, and community members who access the services.



Debra Russell, Ph.D.

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“ “The project has
been innovative
and remains the
only one of its kind
across Canada at
this time. ” ”

(Deaf community)

Executive Summary

This report contains the findings and recommendations of an evaluation of the American Sign Language (ASL) Pilot Project conducted by DLR Consulting for Corporate Human Resources & Diversity Services (CHRDS). The research was conducted between August 2014 and November 2014.

The scope of the project was to review the range of ASL interpreting services currently offered by the Yukon Government and to gather input from a broad base of consumers, services providers, funders and employees to determine its effectiveness, in order to identify program and service delivery gaps, and make recommendations for moving forward. Specifically, the research reflects the progress made since the *Dunkley Report* of May 2013, and addresses the identified success indicators established by the ASL Working Group and other stakeholders who use the interpreting services.

The ASL Pilot Evaluation stemmed in part from the desire of the Yukon Government to review the two-year program and to engage in a strategic planning process that is based on current evidence. The two-year pilot project was developed to target five main areas that would have the most impact in enhancing communication access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Yukon citizens, namely interpretation in medical contexts, training and employment, non-medical and non-government related events (Activities of Daily Living), and to provide ASL classes within Yukon government and for non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Jay Greenaway, Manager of Diversity Services, initiated the evaluation to gather current data about the needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people living in the Yukon currently accessing the interpreting services. An independent consultant was retained and Debra Russell completed the work.

The review included the following:

1 A review of documents which answered the following questions:

What are the current services and programs that are offered by the ASL Pilot Project? What are the current models of service delivery in other agencies that support Deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers?

2 Interviews with Yukon Government Employees.

Interviews were conducted with employees in order to gain an understanding of their perceptions about current successes and needs that exist in relation to interpreting services in the Yukon.

3 On-Line Surveys.

Eighteen people participated in an on-line survey providing input to CHRDS about the services delivered well, and opportunities to address gaps that exist in the service model.

4 Focus Groups and Interviews

A total of 23 stakeholders participated in the focus groups that allowed for input from Deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers, supervisors of Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing employees, SIL workers, and families with Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing members. Four focus groups were conducted in Whitehorse. In addition, nineteen interviews were held with identified stakeholders who could offer further in-depth feedback for this evaluation, such as doctors, therapists, dentists, community support workers, and NGO representatives. As well, interviews with three key staff members of the CHRDS were held.

5 Outcomes and Recommendations from the Needs Assessment

Participants identified several features that are successful within the ASL Pilot Project:

- ◉ Passionate and dedicated staff.

- ◉ Strong and effective leadership that has been able to extend the funding to maintain the services past the initial deadline.
- ◉ The provision of a range of services that are designed to meet the needs of youth, families and adults.
- ◉ Commitment to the communities served.

The opportunities for improvement that emerged from the review included:

- ◉ The demand for services has been demonstrated and there is a strong desire from all stakeholders that the project become a permanent program.
- ◉ The demand exceeds the capacity of Yukon Government to deliver the services, given its current human and financial resources.
- ◉ There is a need to enhance the relationships with the stakeholder groups that are served through the ASL

interpreting program, through effective communication.

- ◉ There is a need for increased advocacy and public relations work in order to raise the profile of ASL interpreter program and to lobby for communication access for Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing and Deaf Blind consumers.
- ◉ There is a need for collaboration and partnerships to be formed with other organizations in order to increase the services provided to the consumers.

Based on the data gathered in this needs assessment process, recommendations were made. The types of improvement opportunities noted in this review are dependent on the next stages of strategic planning and resources available to Diversity Services.

Purpose of Review

The American Sign Language (ASL) Pilot Project began in September 2012, as a two-year project designed to provide interpreting services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens living in the Yukon. The Yukon Government (YG), through the Corporate Human Resources and Diversity Services (CHRDS), hired an American Sign Language-English interpreter, and began delivering services in the areas of medical, employment and training and community activities designed to enhance the quality of life for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Yukon citizens.

The YG conducted an evaluation during the first year by hiring an external consultant, Dr. Jessica Dunkley, who filed her report in May of 2013. As the project neared the end of its second year, a second evaluation was undertaken in order to provide evidence upon which to build a strategic plan and base decisions. The task was to review the range of services offered within the project and to identify community needs and priorities to determine what the YG should focus on as they build their strategic plan and plan for service enhancement.

The review stems in part from the ASL Working Group who identified the need to examine services that are currently offered and to seek stakeholder input on the direction that the YG should take in the future. The current Director and Manager of CHRDS, along with the funders of program, supported the need for the evaluation.

The review was completed over four phases, and included the following activities:

Phase One:

Define project tasks; develop interview and focus group tools; conduct data collection; and conduct review of relevant documents.

Phase Two

Conduct interviews and focus groups with appropriate stakeholders and personnel directly involved in the provision of services and recipients of the services to identify current strengths and needs within the delivery model.

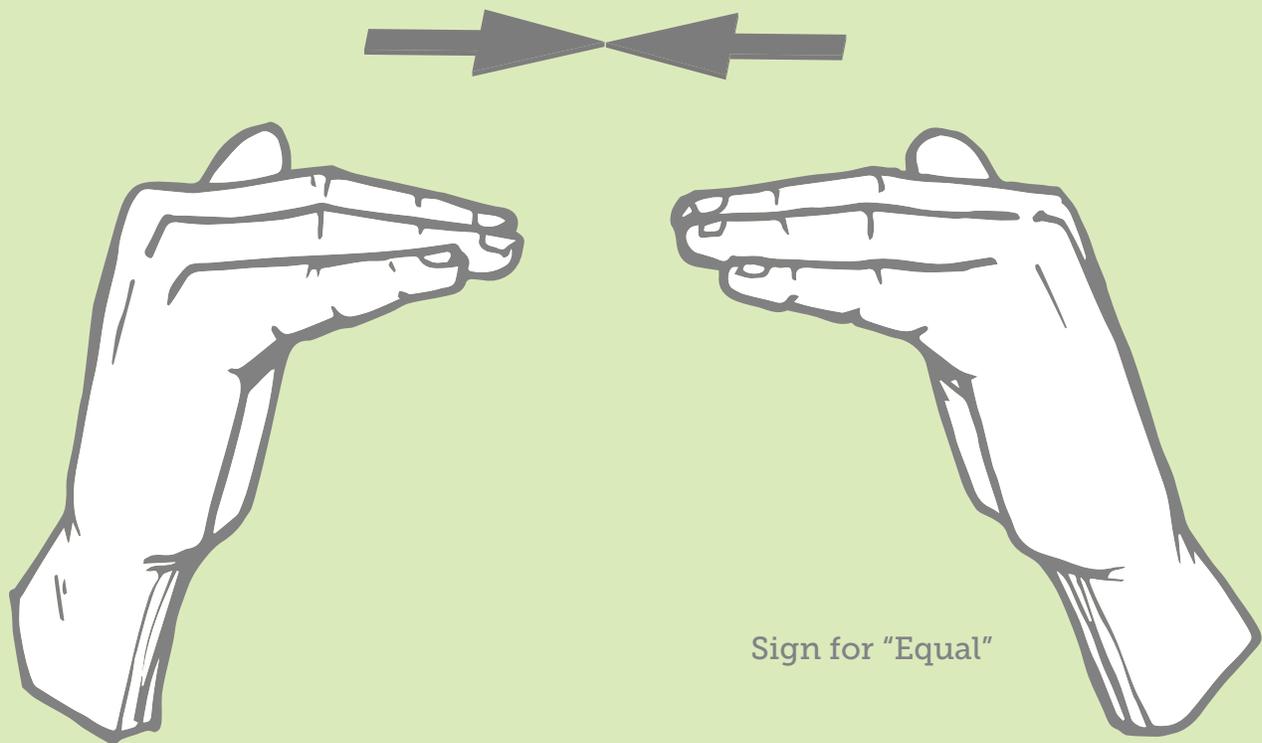
Phase Three

Analyze all data collected.

Phase Four

Produce Final Report and hold project closure meetings.

Jay Greenaway supervised all aspects of the work completed by Debra Russell.



“Quality of interpreting services is high, so now I actually understand what my medical situation is, and how to take care of myself.”

(Deaf community member)

Project Scope and Methodology

Scope of the Project

- To review relevant documents about the provision of ASL Interpreting Services Pilot Project within the Yukon Government.
- To review current services and supports offered by the ASL Interpreting Services Pilot Project within the Yukon Government.
- To identify the strengths, gaps and needs from multiple perspectives of staff, consumers of the services, families with Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, service providers, etc.
- To summarize the data and produce a final report and recommendations as information to inform a strategic planning process and service enhancement.
- Service providers from the professional community (doctors, therapists, dentists, etc.) and community Non-Government Organizations;
- Consumers of the interpreting services (family members, government officials, etc.);
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community members;
- CHRDS personnel.

The methodologies chosen to complete this needs assessment included:

- A review of relevant historical documents provided by CHRDS, including statistics, reports, minutes, policy documents, and materials used to promote current services. This also included a review of other service agencies based on website information describing models of service delivery from a national perspective.
- On-line survey tools for service providers to complete.

Methodology

A process of stakeholder consultation was used in gathering information from a broad base of interested parties. Stakeholders that were invited to participate in the research project included the following:

- ◉ Focus groups with families that have Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing family members, organizations that use the services, consumers who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, government employees, government supervisors.
- ◉ Individual interviews of staff per area – Interpreter, Manager, Director.
- ◉ Targeted interviews with funders, community leaders and representatives from other organizations.

Participants were invited to complete the on-line survey and/or attend the focus groups via notices provided via email through CHRDS internal distribution lists and targeted emails to organizations and consumers known to have used the ASL interpreter services in the past. Participants received information describing the research project and information about the date and time of the focus group that most suited their area. A total of 63 people participated in the review.

Participants and organizations that provided feedback and input for this needs assessment included:

- ◉ Organizations and individuals that have accessed services (including doctors, therapists, dentists, community NGO's, family members with Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing relatives, etc.)
- ◉ The Interpreter who currently provides the service.
- ◉ Representatives from the Yukon Government.
- ◉ Medical and health care professionals.
- ◉ Deaf and Hard of Hearing community members.
- ◉ Deaf and/ or Hard of Hearing families with children and youth.
- ◉ Current staff members working with Diversity Services.

Research Results

Overview of the Research Project

This review process allowed for the experiences and views of 63 interested parties to be heard. There was tremendous interest from all stakeholder groups, and especially from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community and service providers. The review produced a great deal of data that will serve CHRDS in future planning. The report does not purport to be an exhaustive study, but rather presents data that is illustrative of the major needs to be addressed.

From September 2014 to November 2014 several focus groups and individual interviews were conducted as part of this research project. The participants included relevant stakeholders representing families, members of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing the staff interpreter, representatives from funding agencies, service providers, community organizations, and employers working with Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing employees. In addition, two on-line surveys were made available to stakeholders and interested parties.

A total of eleven Deaf or Hard of Hearing people participated in this review. Ten Deaf or Hard of Hearing community participants attended a focus group held in the Whitehorse Public Library Meeting Room. In addition, two Deaf individuals chose to have private interviews.

The 3 female and 8 male Deaf or Hard of Hearing participants represented the following age ranges:

Under 30 years	1
40-45 years	1
46-50 years	1
51-56 years	3
56-60 years	3
60+ years	2

All but one participant had used the interpreting services extensively over the past two years in the areas of medical and health care, social services, employment, and non-medical and non-governmental events and community events.

“ All but one participant’s had used the interpreting services extensively over the past two years in the areas of medical and health care, social services, employment, and non-medical and non-governmental events and community events. ”

A total of eighteen stakeholders participated in the on-line survey. Seven respondents represented the medical stakeholder group, six respondents represented employers, and five respondents represented other organizations such as Municipal Government, the United Church, and the Grand ‘ol Northern Opry. All respondents indicated that they had worked with CHRDS Interpreter Service on several occasions. Three of the respondents had experience working with another sign language interpreter prior to working with the CHRDS ASL Interpreter Pilot Project.

In addition, a total of 42 stakeholders (families, Deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers, employers, Deaf and Hard of Hearing employees, Supported Independent Living [SIL] workers, staff

within CHRDS, health care providers, and community organizations) participated in the focus groups and interviews held in Whitehorse. The focus group participants were allowed to hear each other’s answers and to make comments and participate at their own discretion. No staff or contract personnel associated with CHRDS were present during the groups so that stakeholders could answer honestly without fear of giving offence and to ensure confidentiality of responses. Finally, three interviews with key CHRDS personnel were conducted. Debra Russell, the external consultant, was contracted to facilitate the interpreter focus groups and interviews.

The information was collected over a six-week period, and analysed for themes and patterns.

ASL Statistical Data

Review of Existing ASL Program Statistical Data Provided by Diversity Services

Over the course of the evaluation detailed statistical data was collected to measure progress of the pilot program’s three primary objectives:

- ◉ Enhanced access to Medical / Health related Services;
- ◉ Enhanced access to Employment and Training Opportunities; and
- ◉ Activities of Daily Living.

This data also includes: identified consumers who utilize the service, number of assignments, and hours spent interpreting.

Moreover, as per the original proposal requirements, two other success indicators were also identified to track and measure program effectiveness, and included:

- ◉ ASL Interpreter will provide direct interpretation services at least 80% of the time.

- ◉ ASL Interpretation services will be used by the majority of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

The records maintained by Diversity Services reveal a steady increase in the hours of direct and indirect ASL interpreting services. Other interpreter duties such as travel (to and from assignments), assignment preparation, and YG/NGO ASL training, including education and awareness have also been included in the overall ASL hours and appointments.

Year One

(September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2013)

Hours	Appointments
959:40	517

Year Two

(September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2014)

Hours	Appointments
1302:50	789

ASL Pilot Total

(September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2014)

Hours	Appointments
2262:30	1306



American Sign Language Alphabet

“ Quite simply, I couldn’t do my job without the interpreter. The kinds of issues to be discussed and worked through would be impossible in writing. ”

(Medical professional)

The following tables and charts indicate the statistics gathered through the pilot project. There are other statistics available, however these tables illustrate

the overall use by the project’s three main objectives (Medical/ Health related, Employment and Training, and Activities of Daily Living).

Medical/Health Related						
Category	Year One		Year Two		Total	
	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts
Health & Social Services	79:30	47	133:00	75	212:30	122
Whitehorse General Hospital	54:30	25	110:25	48	164:55	73
Doctor Appointments	42:00	27	62:00	39	104:00	66
Other health appts not provided by YG	42:40	15	53:40	34	96:20	49
Total	218:40	114	359:05	196	577:45	310

- **Health and Social Services** includes: all appointments and time spent interpreting for several branches/units of the department. This may include adult service (SIL worker consultations), home care consultations, health centres, Family & Children’s Services, Senior Services, Social Services, Drug & Alcohol Services, audiologists, and foot care specialists.
- **Whitehorse General Hospital** includes: all appointments in which a client required interpreting for any service delivered by the Hospital. This may include emergency services, medical testing, therapies, any specialist consultations and surgeries (pre/post-operative care).
- **Doctor appointments** includes: all appointments, consultations, check-ups/follow-ups and therapies.
- **Other health related appointments not provided by YG** includes: all appointments and time spent for other healthcare providers including optometrists, dentists, physiotherapists and counselling.

Note: Between year one and year two there has been significant increase in interpreter usage.

“ It can take the time to work through complex medical and/or emotional issues – without an interpreter that would be impossible. ”

(Medical professional)

Employment/Training						
Category	Year One		Year Two		Total	
	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts
Highways and Public Works*	162:15	119	306:45	243	469:00	362
Education*	48:00	19	65:30	33	113:30	52
Public Service Commission	169:15	100	194:25	114	363:40	214
Total	379:30	238	566:40	390	946:10	628

* Various interpreting assignments for these departments also support "Activities of Daily Living" and have been included in the total hours and number of assignments.

○ **Highways and Public Works** assignments includes: all appointments and time spent interpreting for multiple branches. This department has two Deaf employees who utilize the service for unit and all staff meetings, one-on-one supervisor meetings, daily stand-ups (colleague

interactions) including other training and employment related issues.

Other interpreter services utilized by HPW (unrelated to employment) have also been included in these stats and include consultations with motor vehicles, property management etc.

“ As mentioned before, interpreting services are absolutely essential. It makes our Deaf employee feel included. Keep it free of charge. It should be embraced. ”

(Supervisor)

- ◉ **Education** assignments includes: providing services for the Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, participating in Individual Education Plans (IEPs), parent teacher interviews (three teens with Deaf or Hard of Hearing parent/s), and other similar activities. This department has one Deaf employee and also utilizes this service to assist with other employment related issues such as, board meetings, parent groups, staff meetings, training and workshops.
- ◉ **Public Service Commission** interpreting for those looking to gain employment with the Yukon public service, providing ASL/Deaf culture awareness, education/presentations, co-facilitating sign language classes (YG employees), creating promotional

materials, and liaising between departments and the Commission. The Diversity Office is also open for members of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community for business related communications (i.e. phone calls, emails, and Skype conversations).

Note: ASL interpreting for these departments has steadily increased since program inception. It is fully anticipated that these statistics will continue to rise as these departments have permanent, full-time, Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing employees.

Activities of Daily Living						
Category	Year One		Year Two		Total	
	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts
Community Services	7:30	3	10:30	4	18:00	7
Yukon Housing Corporation	17:00	11	0:00	0	17:00	11
Appts not related to health or YG	337:30	165	377:05	203	738:35	368
Total	361:30	165	377:05	203	738:35	368

- **Community Services** includes: interpreting assignments primarily with Sport Yukon. These appointments revolved around referee clinics (hockey), umpire clinics for summer softball games, and re-certification testing.
- **Yukon Housing Corporation** includes: appointments relative to low income housing needs, senior housing, renovations, consultations and placements.
- **Other appointments not related to health or YG** includes: a vast amount and array of consumers from both public organizations and private businesses in Yukon (i.e. Community events, City of Whitehorse, paying bills, etc.).

Public and Non-Governing Organizations include:

- City of Whitehorse
- Yukon Council on Disabilities
- Chamber of Commerce
- Yukon Employees Union
- Service Canada
- Public Service Alliance of Canada
- Employment Central
- Yukon First Nations
- Canadian Housing & Mortgage Corporation
- Northwestel
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Yukon College
- CHALLENGE - Disability Resource Group
- Yukon Energy Corporation
- Yukon Association for Community Living
- Yukon Public Legal Education Association
- Golden Age Society
- Yukon Arts Centre

Private Businesses include:

- Air North
- Arts Underground
- Real Canadian Superstore
- Banking Institutions
- The Co-operators

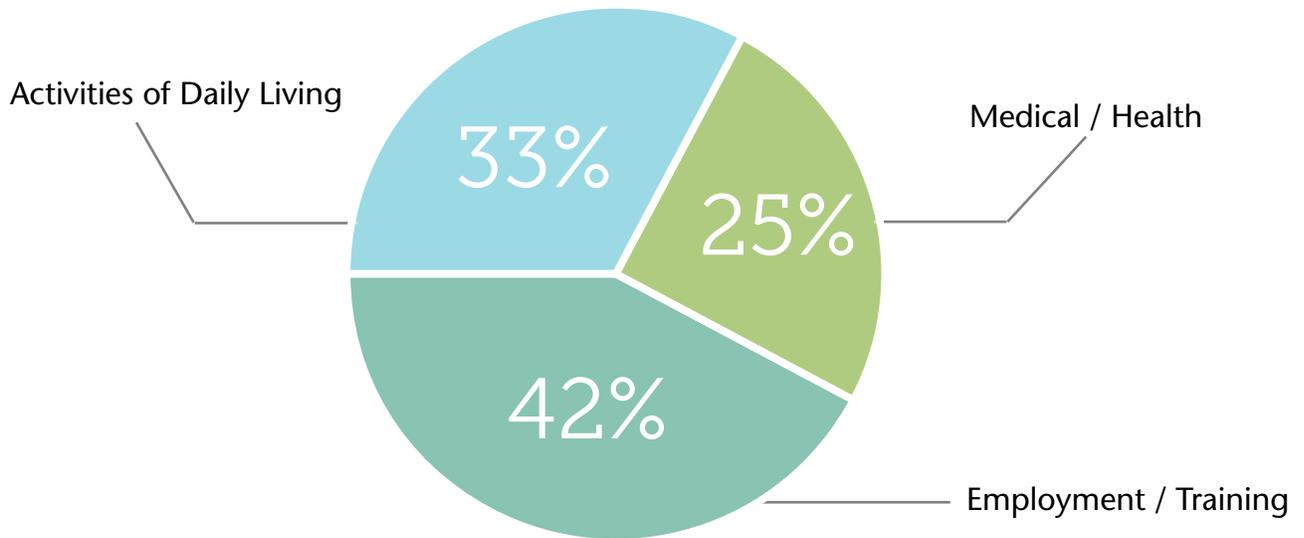
- Walmart
- Chrysler
- Westmark

Note: Similar to the other two categories (Medical – Health Related/Training and Employment) hours and assignments between years have steadily increased. Similar to those categories, these interpreting assignments have substantially increased communications between the Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing and local businesses and improved service delivery of these establishments.

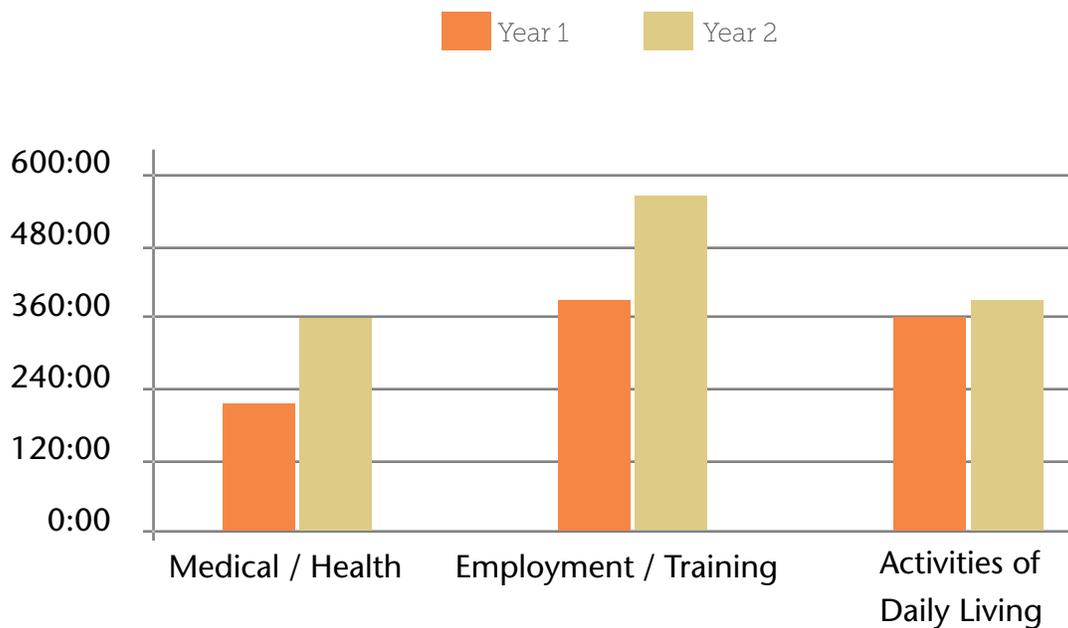
Interpreter and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community Usage

The data also revealed that the interpreter is providing over 80% of direct service provision (Note: 25/37.5 hours of direct service is considered full time interpreting capacity; 960 hours per year would be 80% of the allocated time). It is also clear that there are 10 out of 11 Whitehorse-based Deaf and Hard of Hearing people that regularly use the interpreting services, thus meeting the two success indicators listed in the original ASL Pilot Project Proposal.

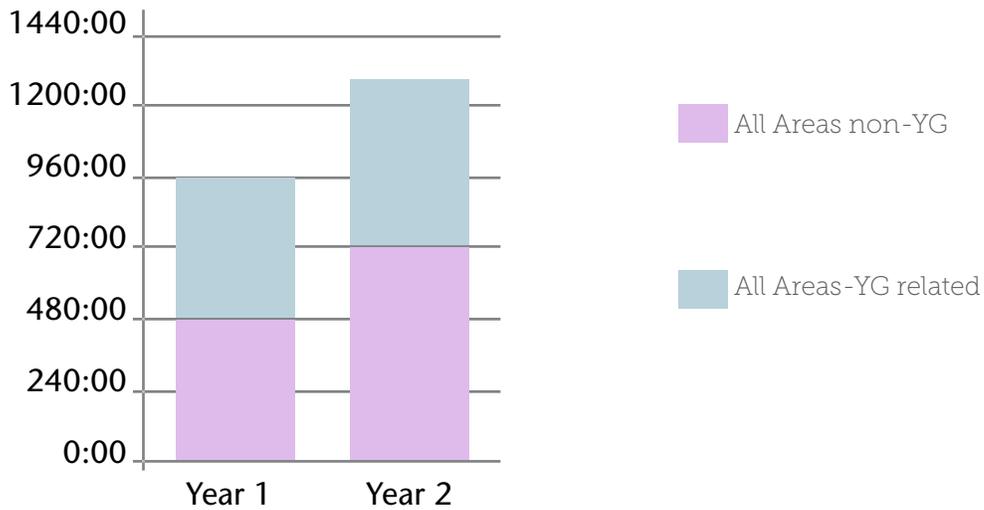
Overall breakdown of the ASL time allocation (hours) for primary objectives:



Year-to-year comparison of primary objectives:



Comparison of the total hours by YG-related areas vs. non-YG related areas



YG related areas include the following categories:

- Medical/Health related – Health and Social Services
- Employment/Training – Highways and Public Works
- Education
- Public Service Commission
- Activities of Daily Living – Community Services
- Yukon Housing Corporation.

ON-LINE SURVEY, FOCUS GROUP, INTERVIEW DATA

Medical and Health Related Interpreting

The following section integrates the findings from the on-line surveys, focus groups and interviews. The data were analysed for themes and common patterns.

All of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing participants have accessed interpreting in health and social services related settings, and they report using the interpreter in the following types of appointments: doctor appointments, medical emergencies, hospital procedures, dental appointments, eye

care, physical therapy, chiropractor, dieticians, and mental health support services such as counselling. All of the consistent users of the service expressed that they were very satisfied with the service. One interview participant was less satisfied with the service, however this participant had only accessed the service on two occasions.

Satisfaction Level Reported by On-Line Survey

Respondents to the on-line survey were asked to rate their satisfaction with

Satisfaction Levels: Table 1	# of Responses	# of Respondents
Booking processes - Satisfied	18	100%
Quality of interpreting services – Satisfied	18	100%
Professionalism of interpreter – Satisfied	18	100%
Ability to communicate effective – Satisfied	18	100%
Ability to have interpreter for emergency appointments – Satisfied	15 3- Not Applicable	100%
Overall satisfaction level with the interpreting services – Very Satisfied	17 - Very Satisfied 1 - Satisfied	100%
Total	18	100%

booking processes to secure the interpreting services, the quality of interpreting services, and the professionalism of the interpreter, the ability of the interpreter to communicate effectively with the Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing consumer and the ability to have an interpreter in a medical and/or health care related emergency. Responses are presented in Table 1.

Impact of Service on the Relationship with Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing Patient Reported by On-line Survey

Respondents who provide medical care to Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing patients were asked to identify the ways in which the service may have impacted the patient relationship. The following summarizes the responses:

Impact: Table 2	# of Responses	# of Respondents
Quicker to solve health problems	7	100%
Ability to diagnose/treat quicker	7	100%
Improved patient comprehension	7	100%
Improved patient compliance w/ health plan	7	100%
Shortened length of appointment	7	100%
Lessened frequency of return visits	7	100%
Strengthened relationship with patient	7	100%
Overall satisfaction when working with an interpreter – Very Satisfied	7	100%
Total	7	100%

What's working well?

All focus group and interview participants (n= 42) reported being very satisfied with the service, which is consistent with the on-line survey data. Deaf and Hard of Hearing respondents report that they now realize how much more health related information they can gain from a health care provider when an interpreter is present, versus trying to communicate in written English or via lip-reading.

All respondents indicated that they now understand instructions and the nature of their health issues in ways that they simply did not prior to having communication access.

Overall Communication Access: "Equal Access is Equal Health Care"

- ◉ *"I can go to the Doctor and not have to worry that they will misdiagnose me or that I will misunderstand medical instructions based on the lack of communication."*
- ◉ *"Far less frustration in managing my life, especially with health related matters."*

- ◉ *"Quality of interpreting services is high, so now I actually understand what my medical situation is, and how to take care of myself."*
- ◉ *"Access to interpreting services has meant I now can have regular check-ups with my Doctor, Optometrist, and Dentist just like everyone else."*
- ◉ *"Clear communication in all my life, beginning with good health information."*
- ◉ *"Having access to a professional interpreter has simply been life changing – before we couldn't afford to hire an interpreter and it was really stressing me out to interpret for medical appointments when I am not an interpreter."*

(Deaf community)

Better Health Outcomes

The data from the on-line survey and interviews with health care providers and administrators were consistent in the view that there are two major advantages of using a professional interpreter:

- ◉ It is cost effective; and
- ◉ leads to better health outcomes.

For example:

- Using an interpreter allows for a medical diagnosis to be relayed accurately versus using a family member that may not even understand the medical terms, let alone have the communication skills to explain it to their loved one. Using a professional interpreter means the family can take the role of supporting their family member, which is the desired outcome. When the patient understands their health issues, compliance with treatment plans is also better.

(Medical professional)

Doctors, dentists, optometrists, chiropractors, physical therapists, and mental health and clinical therapists report that using an interpreter saves them appointment time, and that they are able to provide more in-depth health related information and/or therapeutic approaches compared to when an interpreter is not present. The doctors believe that this reduces patients having to return to the office to go over instructions that were not understood, and prevents misdiagnosis and/or misunderstandings that could lead to grave consequences.

- “Quite simply, I couldn’t do my job without the interpreter. The kinds of issues to be discussed and worked through would be impossible in writing.”*

(Medical professional)

Several health care professionals identified that they believe they have a more personal connection to their patient now, which allows patients to open up to their health care providers, leading to better health-related service provision.

- “It can take the time to work through complex medical and/or emotional issues – without an interpreter that would be impossible.”*
- “Having an interpreter can lower anxiety of the patient and family members, and results in a better health care outcome.”*

(Medical professional)

What is not working well?

The following concerns emerged from the focus groups and interviews:

YG Capacity to Respond:

There is a major concern that should any one of the Deaf or Hard of

Hearing community members be diagnosed with a chronic or terminal illness, that will dramatically increase the demand for interpreting services, which could not be met by having only one staff interpreter.

Direct Contact with Health Care Providers:

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing respondents expressed frustration that health care providers will not accept email and/or text as a way to verify appointments in the office, and instead rely on the interpreter to pass on information to the Deaf or Hard of Hearing community member. They would like to communicate directly with the office to make appointments as any patient does.

Remote Video Interpreting (RVI):

Both Deaf and health care respondents expressed concern about the lack of provision of RVI during medical emergencies, or when the local interpreter is not in Whitehorse. While they all indicated that they prefer an interpreter on site, they realize that sometimes they may need to access interpreting

services remotely and the health care system does not seem to have implemented any process to date to cover this aspect of service delivery.

- *"I was hospitalized for three months and not once did they use remote video interpreting even though it was supposed to be an option..."*

(Deaf citizen)

Access to Interpreting Services outside the Yukon:

One of the challenges of service delivery has been how to provide communication access to Yukon patients that have medical care provided in Vancouver, Edmonton or Calgary.

Note: Insured Health & Hearing Services is currently exploring these options as well as 911 communication capabilities.

Booking Processes and Priorities:

Deaf and Hard of Hearing respondents expressed some frustration with the booking processes to get an interpreter, although this has improved for some people with the addition of text messages, emails and FaceTime between consumers

and the interpreter. However it is not clear to the community how priorities are managed and why their assignments get cancelled at the last minute. As well, the interpreter is often fully booked which prevents Deaf consumers from having their appointments when they need them.

Deaf Blind Services:

Given the number of Deaf senior citizens and some of the specific health related conditions of some of the local Deaf community, there was also mention of the need to examine accommodation and supports for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people who are developing serious eye conditions that can lead to Deaf-Blindness. Health care access for Deaf Blind citizens requires additional services, supports and training for all involved.

Vicarious Trauma:

The families and health care providers expressed concern that the interpreter is at risk of “burn out”, given that she is working 24/7 and that she is at risk of “vicarious trauma” when working with some

very emotionally difficult situations. There is a need for on-going support for the interpreter in order to keep them healthy and able to do the interpreting work well.

Hearing Services:

Two interviewees had comments on Hearing Services, indicating that there is much more work that could be done to balance the information offered by Hearing Services to include sign language as a language option for Deaf or Hard of Hearing children, and to serve Deaf or Hard of Hearing people in more appropriate ways, including using the interpreter versus trying to communicate on their own without knowing ASL.

- *“I asked them to request the interpreter, but the staff refused, saying that we could understand each other just fine. I don’t think they know how badly they sign and I cannot understand them. It would be easier to use the interpreter and that is my right – how do they get to decide?”*

(Deaf citizen)

Social Services

Among the Deaf and Hard of Hearing participants who have accessed interpreting in social services related settings, they report using the interpreter in the following types of appointments.

- Accessing support & services from Supported Independent Living (SIL) workers;
- attending treatment and/or counselling;
- learning about the legal system;
- using banking services;
- actively participating in family meetings;

- filing government documents; and
- obtaining government records, and dealing with government departments such as Education, Yukon Housing, and Highways & Public Works.

All report being very satisfied with the quality of service, however their concern is how limited the service is at times.

Satisfaction Level Reported by On-Line Survey

Respondents in the on-line survey were asked to rate their satisfaction with

Satisfaction Levels: Table 3	# of Responses	# of Respondents
Booking processes - Satisfied	18	100%
Quality of interpreting services – Satisfied	18	100%
Professionalism of interpreter – Satisfied	18	100%
Ability to communicate effective – Satisfied	18	100%
Ability to have interpreter for emergency appointments – Satisfied	15 3- Not Applicable	100%
Overall satisfaction level with the interpreting services – Very Satisfied	17 - Very Satisfied 1 - Satisfied	100%
Total	18	100%

booking processes to secure the interpreter's services, the quality of interpreting services, the professionalism of the interpreter, the ability to communicate effectively with the Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing consumer, and the ability to have an interpreter in a social services related emergency. Responses are presented in Table 3.

What's working well?

All focus group and interview participants reported being very satisfied with the service, which is consistent with the on-line survey data. The following comments summarize the themes:

Overall Social Services Communication Access:

- ◉ *"I had no idea what any of the First Nations customs meant until an interpreter started to attend those events with me – I am learning about my cultural heritage finally and it is helping me to connect to the strength of my culture."*

- ◉ *"Relationships with family have improved since using interpreter for family meetings, supervised visits with children, and family counseling."*
- ◉ *"I am learning to deal with my addiction issues with access to communication in treatment and counseling."*
- ◉ *"I am able to enjoy far more independence – I can manage my life without others in my family controlling my decisions on everything from health to finances."*

(Deaf community)

Family Insights

All of the family members who participated identified that the quality of interpreting provided was exceptional and it has made a difference in the clarifying past misunderstandings, healing relationships and ensuring families can support their Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing family members in ways that are appropriate and useful.

◉ *“We used a community member who purports to know sign language but unfortunately they use Signing Exact English¹ not ASL. It was like sending a Cantonese interpreter for someone who speaks Mandarin. We couldn’t communicate. With the current interpreter we get professional ASL services, impartial interpreting, and we know that our business stays our business – she is confidential and appropriate for every setting we use her in”.*

(Deaf citizen)

◉ *“Having access to a professional interpreter has simply been life changing – before we couldn’t afford to hire an interpreter and it was really stressing me out to interpret for medical appointments when I am not an interpreter. By participating in all aspects of life and being included in ways they couldn’t have been before – from work, to church, to taking an evening recreation course...it’s really amazing. We are so grateful!”.*

(Deaf citizen)

The biggest advantages to having interpreter services as cited by families is that now the families members have access to information, it is easy to make contact with the interpreter to determine availability, and there is a growing positive awareness among the hearing/non-Deaf community about the capabilities of Deaf people.

One youth who has Deaf parents said that it has been amazing to have an interpreter at the school meetings, where s/he can simply participate and not worry about what the teachers will say to the parents. S/he has seen that the parents are happier with the service and s/he also feels far less pressured to be the “interpreter” for their parents when meeting about school performance.

¹ Signing Exact English is an artificial code created to represent English via sign language and it is used sometimes with Deaf children in school settings. It is not a complete or natural language and it is not the language of the Deaf community.

- ◉ *“Before I didn’t want to say what my Dad said, and I sure didn’t want to tell my parents what the teacher said about me! It was embarrassing. Now the interpreter comes, says everything and I just get to do what all kids do at meetings - give my side of the story!”*

(CODA – Child of a Deaf adult)

What is not working well?

The respondents identified several challenges including that the interpreter is sometimes not available, and that there is no coverage for holidays or emergencies. The other challenge is that hearing people don’t often understand the role of the interpreter, and they minimize the need for quality communication, which increases frustration and misunderstandings across a range of services that are key to a person’s life.

- ◉ *“They say things like – oh we get along just fine. He understands everything I say. Or, I know some sign language – she (the Deaf person) can help me learn some more. This is not communication access and it is not about the hearing person’s desire to learn a few more signs. Deaf people have a right to full adult communication, not being forced to put up with someone spelling out each word or signing every 5th word, or using ‘baby sign’ in a legal interaction.”*

(Deaf citizen)

Medical/Health Related						
Category	Year One		Year Two		Total	
	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts
Health & Social Services	79:30	47	133:00	75	212:30	122
Whitehorse General Hospital	54:30	25	110:25	48	164:55	73
Doctor Appointments	42:00	27	62:00	39	104:00	66
Other health appts not provided by YG	42:40	15	53:40	34	96:20	49
Total	218:40	114	359:05	196	577:45	310

“ “ One youth who has Deaf parents said that it has been amazing to have an interpreter at the school meetings, where s/he can simply participate and not worry about what the teachers will say to say to the parents. ” ”

Employment / Training Related Interpreting

The following section integrates the findings from the on-line surveys, focus groups and interviews. The data were analysed for themes and common patterns.

Among the Deaf participants who have accessed interpreting in employment related settings, they report using the interpreter in the following types of appointments: looking for employment, resume writing support, job interviews,

workplace staff meetings, presentations, training, and on-going supervision. All report being very satisfied with the quality of service; however their concern is how limited the service is at times.

Note: Currently Yukon Government has three Deaf employees (HPW, EDU) and it is not known how many Hard of Hearing employees in the organization use ASL.

Satisfaction Levels: Table 4	# of Responses	# of Respondents
Booking processes - Satisfied	18	100%
Quality of interpreting services – Satisfied	18	100%
Professionalism of interpreter – Satisfied	18	100%
Ability to communicate effective – Satisfied	18	100%
Ability to have interpreter for emergency appointments – Satisfied	15 3- Not Applicable	100%
Overall satisfaction level with the interpreting services – Very Satisfied	17 - Very Satisfied 1 - Satisfied	100%
Total	18	100%

Satisfaction Level Reported by On-Line Survey

Respondents to the on-line survey were asked to rate their satisfaction with booking processes to secure the Interpreter's services, the quality of interpreting services, and the professionalism of the interpreter, the ability to communicate effectively with the Deaf or Hard of Hearing consumer, and the ability to have an interpreter in an employment related emergency. Responses are presented in Table 4.

Impact of Service on the Relationship with Deaf Employee

Respondents who worked with Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing employers were asked to identify the ways in which the service may have impacted the employee-employer relationship. The following Table 5 summarizes the responses:

Impact: Table 5	# of Responses	# of Respondents
Quicker to solve health problems	6	100%
Ability to diagnose/treat quicker	6	100%
Employee compliance with workplace policies/rules	6	100%
More efficient and effective communication than writing	6	100%
Co-workers show more respect for Deaf employee	6	100%
Strengthened workplace relationships	6	100%
Total	6	100%

As well, six out of six employers suggested that if they were charged a fee for the service they would be willing to pay for the service. In their words:

- ◉ *“We paid for interpreter services in the past from the private sector but eventually the cost became very prohibitive and then became unavailable. Having access to current good interpretive services is an improvement over the previous alternative. Having the Yukon Government pay for interpreter services for both employees and the public allows the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community the ability to communicate in so many ways. This does provide a marked quality of life improvement. Please consider continuing this service.”*

What is working well?

Participants in the focus groups and interviews identified the following strengths that are reported as themes:

Overall Employment

Communication Access

All of the employees noted that interpreting services access has

meant that they really are part of the work team and that they have been able to take on more responsibilities at work as supervisors get to know their strengths and motivation via interpreted meetings.

- ◉ *“I feel like I am equal in the workplace and in my community.”*
- ◉ *“I can get to know my colleagues and see how my work fits in with the bigger picture of my work.”*
- ◉ *“I had worked for 15 years doing something that I wasn’t supposed to be doing and in a 90-minute meeting with an interpreter present we were able to clarify the whole thing...”*

(Deaf employees)

- ◉ *“As mentioned before, interpreting services are absolutely essential. It makes our Deaf employee feel included. Keep it free of charge. It should be embraced.”*

(Supervisor)

Now I can do my job

Respondents report that they are more productive and happier at

work given that they have access to meeting information that is provided to all staff; they understand more about their workplace culture and expectations, and are feeling more respected for their contributions.

- *“I now have more involvement in my meetings – I can follow and I can participate like a valued employee.”*
- *“I can take training and maybe apply for a promotion in government.”*
- *“I am very happy to have the interpreting service – it was a rocky start – but it is getting better and it seems like the government is really respecting our rights and our needs.”*

(Deaf employees)

Employer Perspectives – “It’s like Night and Day”

The supervisors reported that it is like “night and day” when thinking about the communication clarity that they now have by using an interpreter. They indicate that having the interpreter has saved them time and allowed them to ensure job instructions are

understood. It has also allowed Deaf and Head of Hearing employees to contribute to the planning in the workplace, and it creates awareness of the “bigger picture” at work.

All of the supervisors reflected on their staff meetings without an interpreter, indicated that they would cut them short and end up giving the “gist” of the meeting to the person, without realizing how frustrating and unfair it was to the Deaf employee.

The employers also indicated that prior to the ASL Interpreter Pilot Project they had used a private contractor to provide services, however the cost was so prohibitive that they stopped using the service.

Employers reported that it was easy to work with the interpreter and that the trust was fostered easily as the person has professional training and is a member of a national professional organization, and therefore must abide by a Code of Conduct that

ensures confidentiality and privacy. They indicate that they are getting to know their long-term employees in ways that were not possible before.

If you build it they will come

Several of the participants in the interviews and focus groups addressed the idea that the Yukon Government is constantly trying to attract talented, educated and skilled people to work in Whitehorse. The theme here is that if the services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people are equitable, this can be a feature that is attractive to families with Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing children and/or adults who might consider relocating to the Yukon for work.

training has made a major impact on their job performance and satisfaction. However, the employees also note that it is an on-going challenge to educate co-workers and supervisors about the need to use the interpreter.

- *“It is confusing to my boss as I can get by with some lip-reading abilities in order to manage a one-to-one social situation, however I am completely left out in a small group or large groups. I don’t hear, and I cannot follow the conversation, so a small or large group meeting requires an interpreter. My boss doesn’t understand that and doesn’t want to use the interpreter.”*

(Deaf employees)

What is not working well?

Helping the Workplace to Understand Communication Access is a Right

The employees of the Yukon Government and employees working in the private sector report that having access to full communication in the workplace for staff meetings and

All employees from both the public and private sectors report that they want to take additional training and that this needs to be planned in advance to secure interpreting services that can manage all day or multiple day training events, however they sense that the employers do not want to cover the costs of the second interpreter.

The employees suggested that there is much more that could be done to improve access, for example, making sure all newly created government videos are opened captioned, which makes the information more accessible for all, not just Deaf or Hard of Hearing viewers. As well, there is a need to provide sensitivity training so that co-workers can get a sense of what it means to be Deaf or Hard of Hearing. Further suggestions included: captioning services for large public or government events such as the Legislative Assembly, providing ASL instruction for co-workers, arranging job shadowing opportunities for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to know what jobs are possible for them within the Yukon Government, and highlight the accomplishments of Deaf and Hard of Hearing employees to encourage other departments to hire Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing people.

Limited Access

The respondents expressed frustration that they can only access the interpreter for short time frames, which then impacts their career

development. When the appointment is an entire day (example: professional development or employment training), there is a need for two interpreters, and Whitehorse only has access to one qualified interpreter.

- *“If the interpreter could do all day work, then I could take further training and advance in my job. However, we only have one interpreter, so as a result I cannot access any training and cannot move to other positions.”*
- *“I would use the interpreter for all kinds of parent meetings, individual educational planning staff meetings, consultations with teachers, etc. they were more available, it would likely make communication better for me in my job. That way I could provide better service to the sixty-four children and families on my caseload as they could understand me more easily”*
- *“Interpreter will have to leave if there are emergency appointments that take precedence and that means my appointment gets cancelled or rescheduled which feels very unfair to me.”*

(Deaf employees)

K-12 Education

Several participants suggested that there are additional educational barriers (Kindergarten to Grade 12) that could be addressed in the Yukon, from reviewing the program options for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, including examining the educational services provided to Deaf and Hard of Hearing children living in communities outside of Whitehorse.

Another suggestion that was made several times was to offer ASL as a language option in the schools, similar to options like Spanish, French, etc. as credit courses. These options have been very popular in other Canadian school districts and they also serve to promote awareness and interest in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community and the potential of interpreting as a career option.

Employment/Training						
Category	Year One		Year Two		Total	
	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts
Highways and Public Works*	162:15	119	306:45	243	469:00	362
Education*	48:00	19	65:30	33	113:30	52
Public Service Commission	169:15	100	194:25	114	363:40	214
Total	379:30	238	566:40	390	946:10	628

“It is confusing to my boss as I can get by with some lip-reading abilities in order to manage a one-to-one social situation, however I am completely left out in a small group or large groups. I don't hear, and I cannot follow the conversation, so a small or large group meeting requires an interpreter. My boss doesn't understand that and doesn't want to use the interpreter.”

(Deaf Citizen)

Activities of Daily Living Interpreting

The following section integrates the findings from the on-line surveys, focus groups and interviews. The data were analysed for themes and common patterns.

Satisfaction Level Reported by On-Line Survey

All of the participants have accessed interpreting in events that are community related and provide access to quality of life indicators such as community engagement opportunities to attend arts, cultural and/or religious

events, engage in learning new hobbies, participate in community public consultations, place a complaint with the RCMP, attend presentations given by the Yukon Public Legal Education, attend Yukon Council on Disabilities (YCOD) events, etc.

Respondents from the on-line survey were asked to rate their satisfaction with booking processes to secure the interpreter's services, the quality of interpreting services, and the professionalism of the interpreter, the

Satisfaction Levels: Table 6	# of Responses	# of Respondents
Booking processes - Satisfied	18	100%
Quality of interpreting services – Satisfied	18	100%
Professionalism of interpreter – Satisfied	18	100%
Ability to communicate effective – Satisfied	18	100%
Ability to have interpreter for emergency appointments – Satisfied	15 3- Not Applicable	100%
Overall satisfaction level with the interpreting services – Very Satisfied	17 - Very Satisfied 1 - Satisfied	100%
Total	18	100%

ability to communicate effectively with the Deaf consumer and the ability to have an interpreter in a situation that is categorized as activities of daily living and/or a non-medical and/or non-government sponsored event.

Responses are presented in Table 6

The following quote illustrates the overall satisfaction with the Interpreter Services:

- “I appreciate these services very much. They have not only been a blessing to the people from our church family who are hearing impaired, but to the whole congregation. The services have opened up relationships within our church in a way that could never have happened otherwise.”

(Deaf citizen)

When asked if there was anything that would prevent an agency from using the interpreting services, the following quote speaks to the value that the Yukon Government is providing to organizations that would not be in a position to fund services themselves:

- “No, [nothing would prevent us] from using the Yukon Government hired staff; we simply could not afford to hire an interpreter, let alone a second interpreter from outside due to costs.”

(NGO)

- “Having interpreters for the performances at the Grand Ole Northern Opry was wonderful for both Deaf people and the rest of the audience.”

(Community organizer)

What is not working well?

Activities of Daily Living and/or Non-medical/Non-government Communication Access

- “Access to learning - I can go to a seniors meeting and learn like all the other seniors, so I am healthier and happier as I am not isolated anymore.”
- “Not having to rely on my child to interpret at school; greater respect now from teachers for me as a parent.”

- ◉ *“Able to attend church and special events – means I am part of the community.”*
- ◉ *“I can engage in hobbies like sports as an umpire or referee. I can go to an art event like everyone else in the community.”*
- ◉ *“I am making friends now with people I have never had a chance to know before – that improves my quality of life. I was depressed before.”*

(Deaf community)

Being a part of the community

Respondents report that they feel that they can enjoy all of the same activities of daily living in Whitehorse as people who can hear. The participants indicated that they have been included in the diversity of community events; they feel happier and more intellectually stimulated. They also feel that for the first time their human rights are being respected in that there are no barriers now to their participation.

Building relationships with others

The respondents identified that by attending various community events they are beginning to build a larger circle of connections within the community, which again lessens the feeling of isolation when there is no community access.

Perspectives from Supported Independent Living (SIL) Workers

The SIL workers report that there has been a significant shift since the ASL Interpreter Pilot Project began in that now the workers are able to focus their work with Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing clients at the system level and help their clients navigate the programs needed, versus the SIL worker trying to “stumble through communication with the client”. The shift has also involved supporting the Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing community to have their rights supported because the financial barrier has been removed.

- ◉ *“We no longer have to fight with others about who is going to pay for the interpreter – now we can just focus on what the client needs.”*

(SIL worker)

The SIL workers also recognize that the service is delivered professionally, and that the trained professional interpreter will accurately convey the meaning of their words “in an impartial manner”. There was unanimous agreement that there is a growing broader awareness and understanding about the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community based on the 10 week training that the ASL Pilot Project delivered with members of the Deaf community, teaching aspects of their language (ASL) and experience, in ways similar to how a community can learn about First Nations languages and cultures.

The SIL workers report that there are seeing clients become empowered in new ways, recognizing that they can have access to full information in medical and legal appointments that will allow them to make better decisions.

- *“By offering interpreting services, we are seeing the vulnerability and risk to our clients is reduced – whether that be financial abuse, physical, sexual, etc. We are also seeing the legal liability being addressed in that informed*

consent can now be given whereas in the past we were never sure the person understood with our use of very limited sign language.””

(SIL worker)

Finally, there was widespread agreement that family relationships are being repaired, rebuilt, or built for the first time, based on interpreting services, which is then creating healthier communities.

Views from Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

Across the focus groups and interviews with NGOs, all of the stakeholders had high praise for the current service, believing that it makes a positive statement that people with disabilities can and should participate in all aspects of life. The representatives see the value of the service, and said that the previous private contracting arrangements were cost-prohibitive for non-profit organizations and became a deterrent to supporting Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing people’s human rights.

Several participants commented on how the very presence of an interpreter at a community or public event serves to educate the community and brings an energizing aspect to the public forums when Deaf and Hard of Hearing people can participate. The organizations are seeing greater numbers of Deaf people choosing to be active in the community now and as a result of interpreting services they are acquiring more knowledge about public events that impact their lives. This knowledge feeds interest and engagement.

- ◉ *“The right to language is a societal norm – so apply that same norm to our Deaf community.”*

(NGO)

Several NGO’s also suggested that there is a need for a Policy Review within the Yukon Government in order to look at what it means to be inclusive, when and where interpreting and/or captioning services should be delivered, and how to actively recruit Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing people to the public service. Universal Design principles need to be used in order to promote greater accessibility for all citizens regardless of disability or language community.

- ◉ *“Government must be the champion on this – and to see the richness of collaboration with the NGOs and the Deaf community, First Nation communities and the City of Whitehorse in order to build an inclusive society...”*

(NGO)

Several NGOs reported that the access to interpreting services is allowing Deaf people to show their talents, and to find employment and career opportunities, as well as new ways of advocating for themselves.

The NGOs also commended the interpreter for her contributions to the inter-agency committee which have been insightful and helpful to those who have never had an understanding of how best to work with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. The interpreter has helped them to see gaps and systemic barriers that can be addressed from a human rights perspective, not a charity perspective.

What is not working well?

Equal Rights – “Actions Speaker Louder than Words”

Respondents expressed concern about whether the services will always be

available or if the government will cut the services. The community feels tired of having to lobby for their human rights to be met, or for it always to be a financial argument about who will pay for interpreting services. They want plans to be built at all levels in order to include people with disabilities and to include the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community in meaningful and sustainable ways.

- “I think they (YG) should create a reserve fund of \$20-30,000.00 in order to cover unexpected services that maybe outside of the regular interpreting services.”

Program Sustainability and Permanent Service:

Respondents stressed the need for the program to be maintained given the limited resources that small NGOs have.

- “I had tried to get additional funding from the government for the ASL services and the costs around it at the Opry but with no avail. Without the government interpreting service we would be completely inaccessible to local citizens and tourists.”

Activities of Daily Living						
Category	Year One		Year Two		Total	
	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts	Hours	Appts
Community Services	7:30	3	10:30	4	18:00	7
Yukon Housing Corporation	17:00	11	0:00	0	17:00	11
Appts not related to health or YG	337:30	165	377:05	203	738:35	368
Total	361:30	165	377:05	203	738:35	368

Corporate Human Resources & Diversity Services Perspectives

Corporate Human Resources & Diversity Services (CHRDS) Perspectives

The staff members providing the service were also interviewed and the themes that emerged in those interviews are summarized below:

Unique Service that Makes a Difference

The interpreter and the managers of the service see the ways in which the program is supporting the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. Similar to the findings of the Deaf Focus Group, the staff identified milestones where Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing community members are accessing a seamless service delivery model and finding new ways to engage with others in their workplaces and communities. The model is creating opportunities to respect the diversity of the community, and to bring that diversity into the workplace thinking and planning.

What appears to be working very well is the fact that it is a Barrier-Free Service. One of the major differences of the model is that the interpreter does not have to negotiate payment prior to the delivery of the service, given that it is a staff position. This is different than a freelance model of service delivery, and it has many advantages, in that the negotiating of payment can be an immediate area of resistance for some companies, organizations or institutions. Being able to simply provide the service in a way that meets the needs of the Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing and non-Deaf persons involved, without any discussion prior to the appointment about the interpreter's payment, places the service delivery in a positive light and people are then open to having an interpreter present.

Another aspect that is working well is interpreting services for medical, employment, social services, community engagement and activities of daily living. By offering

the service in such a way, Deaf and Hard of Hearing people are participating as full citizens in their community and building awareness in the greater community about the need to be accessible. The ease in which the service can be delivered across a number of events is also a benefit to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

The following recommendations can be used to enhance service delivery:

- There are Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in other communities in the Yukon who may have limited awareness of the program and could benefit from knowing it is available, i.e. Old Crow, Dawson City and Watson Lake.
 - Consider building upon additional interpreting capacity in order to address ASL priority areas (Medical / Training and Employment / Activities of Daily Living).
 - Continue to support Deaf and Hard of Hearing People in obtaining employment within both the public and private sectors.
- Continue to provide on-going mentoring, training and capacity development for the staff interpreter.
- Define policies and structures to guide the program planning, decisions and priorities.
- Continued collaboration and education of community partners on communication accessibility for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.
- Explore additional technology (software/hardware/services) that could further support greater communication access (for example: Video Relay Services, Ipad – FaceTime, Glide, etc.)
- Reinvigorate the ASL Working Group to insure all communications relative to the ASL program and service delivery remains consistent for all stakeholders.
- Provide more education and awareness to employers and other consumers of the service, including options for accommodations and the role of the interpreter.
- Align ASL service delivery model with the YG Collective Agreement.
- Establish a more effective tracking system.

- ◉ As demand for services increase, consider second interpreter to assist with multi-day assignments, sick and vacation leave etc., and create a more transparent and effective scheduling system.
- ◉ Transition ASL program from a pilot project into permanent programming.

Interest in learning ASL

Respondents in the on-line survey, as well as focus groups and interviews were asked if they knew any sign language and if they would be interested in learning American Sign Language. Five non-Deaf people reported knowledge of sign language. However, the majority of respondents do not know any sign language and would be interested in learning ASL in order to serve Deaf and Hard of Hearing people better in the areas in which they provide services.

- ◉ *“Offer sign language training for companies and/or government departments who have Deaf employees working for them.”*
- ◉ *“Our receptionist took ASL in order to support my Deaf clients but she needs to be able to keep it up – some regular tutoring would be helpful.”*

(Interpreting Service Consumers)

Over 22 people identified that they would appreciate the opportunity to learn some basic ASL in order to communicate social greetings to Deaf and Hard of Hearing people when serving them in a government service and/or in the private sector.

Respondents suggested some sort of partnership approach to hire an ASL instructor who can provide instruction during business hours work across the numerous organizations, institutions and government departments, strengthening the communication abilities of those who need to use ASL in their jobs, and orienting those who would like to make their work places more “Deaf-friendly”.

Several NGOs also noted the need for family-focused ASL classes so that families can learn to communicate more effectively with their Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing family member(s). These classes need to be tailored to the needs of the families, depending on the age and stage of development of the Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing family member(s).

Scheduling Challenges

Across all of the interviews and focus groups, participants indicated that there are challenges with booking the interpreter, given that medical appointments take priority and that pre-scheduled meetings are subject to cancellation with very little advance notice.

There is also a desire for Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing employees to take on-going training, which is delivered in all day sessions. The current model does not support this as the interpreter is unable to do all day appointments alone. These scenarios create frustration for all, and there doesn't appear to be any plan for team interpreting coverage or a back-up plan when the interpreter is unavailable.

Finally, as the demand for services increase, having someone assist with interpreter's scheduling would allow the interpreter to focus on more interpreting and education assignments.

Scheduling Challenges

Respondents were asked about how the interpreting services should be funded in order to meaningfully include Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens in the community. All participants except one believe that the funding for a permanent program should come from the Yukon Government, and one respondent felt that the Federal Government should support the program.

- ⦿ *"I have no wisdom on this other than to say it seems that it should be a basic right for the hearing impaired; funded by all of us, that is to say, government."*
- ⦿ *"Interpreting is very much an added cost to the Grand Ole Northern Opry. We hire the second interpreter and pay their way up and accommodation in a hotel, plus pay their professional fees and per diems. We also provide free tickets to the members of the Deaf Community. We are so happy to do this. But we need to find ways of making it affordable and so cost-sharing with YG makes it possible."*

- ◉ *“If the service is for government use then it should be funded by the government.”*

(Multiple stakeholders)

While the participants all believe that ultimately government (Municipal, Yukon, Federal) should be responsible to cover the costs, it appears that some government departments may be open to paying a percentage for the service especially if that means that the service can be expanded.

- ◉ *“We strongly, strongly, strongly support the interpreter service – it should have come a long time ago! Our government says we want to foster a culture of inclusivity – to not fund this is to take a huge step backwards. It would be like returning to telex machines after having computers.”*
- ◉ *“We paid for private interpreting services before, so we could help pay again, but there needs to be planning processes in place for that to happen.”*

(YG Departments)

However, NGO and private sector organizations that are non-profit entities are not in a position to offer financial support for the program, and if required to do so, would struggle to make themselves accessible.

Marketing of the Services

There are increased opportunities for CHRDS to market the services and to help government departments see the value in hiring Deaf and Hard of Hearing people and that services are confidential and provided by a person with professional accreditation and training. The employers and employees agree that there are numerous success stories that could be celebrated on the government website that would enhance awareness of the program and the benefits to using interpreter services.

The NGO sector also suggested that there is need for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to be actively involved in educating the community about the services in order to support the philosophy of “**nothing about us without us**”. Such a government role

that focuses on community development should be done by a Deaf person with the skills to educate the Deaf and non-Deaf community about working with an interpreter, human rights, language, culture, and so on.

The Biggest Impact of Having the Service

The respondents identified the biggest changes in their life since the program was implemented:

- ⦿ Economic well-being via employment and training;
- ⦿ Overall health improvements;
- ⦿ Access to government services and community supports that in the past were inaccessible;
- ⦿ Able to deal with difficult life experiences – abuse, addictions – for the first time through counseling ;
- ⦿ Community participation and less isolation.

Fear of Losing the Service

There is a strong fear among Deaf and Hard of Hearing community members

that the service won't continue and that they will be forced to return to having no interpreting access.

All participants in the focus group and interviews indicated that their quality of life would diminish rapidly without access to communication, and the consequences would likely include medical errors, more frustration at the workplace, unresolved mental health issues and to a sense of being cut off from others that would lead to feelings of depression and isolation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations came forward from the participants:

- ⦿ *“Make the program permanent and staff it appropriately.”*

There is a need for two interpreters in order to provide the level of service required by the community and to address holiday and weekend/evening coverage, as well as to provide support to other Deaf and Hard of Hearing people who live in communities outside of Whitehorse.

Other aspects to consider:

There are several Deaf and Hard of Hearing community members who have First Nations ancestry, and the majority of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community is male. Matching those demographics features would be exceptionally helpful if possible.

- ◉ *“It’s a vital service. It’s not an optional extra. Please keep it, and fund it in whatever way makes it clear that this is part of quality of life for the hearing impaired.”*
- ◉ *“I would like to take an evening class at Yukon College but they said they would not provide an interpreter at all. I don’t think that is legal but I am tired of the fight.... I just gave up!”*

Booking Processes

As the demand for services increases, having someone assist with interpreter’s scheduling would allow the interpreter to focus more on interpreting and education assignments.

Mentoring for the Interpreter

There is widespread agreement among the Deaf community that the interpreter is satisfactory and the service exceptional. Two Deaf community members expressed views that were different than that of the focus group. For example:

- ◉ Some indicated that they are not satisfied with the interpreter’s skill level and they would recommend interpreter mentoring to be provided by an experienced and certified interpreter, and ASL tutoring be provided by a Deaf person, in order to increase the range of work the interpreter can do.
- ◉ Both parties indicated the interpreter is more successful in one-to-one meetings but appears to struggle and lack strategies when dealing with formal presentations or large group interactions.

Note: One of these participants has only accessed interpreting services on two occasions.

Market the Program Effectively

- Make people aware of the program and what it can do. Provide information on the CHRDS website in English and in ASL.
 - Educate others how to work effectively with an interpreter.
 - Hold regular town hall meetings with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community to update them on goals set/progress made.
 - Use video messages in ASL to provide community updates.
 - Employ an ASL instructor who can work with organizations and teach them basic sign language at the workplace during regular working hours.
 - Do community outreach for Deaf people living in Old Crow and other communities – send an interpreter and Deaf person to the communities to identify those who would benefit from knowing about and using the ASL Interpreting services, 911-text, and video relay services.
- Other provinces can now text 911 in an emergency and this should also be something that is also possible in the Yukon (Insured Health & Hearing Services is currently exploring this option).
 - Recently, the Canadian Radio-Television & Telecommunications Commission CRTC has mandated that all Canadian jurisdictions across the country implement Video Relay Services (VRS) for Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens beginning in Sept 15, 2015. VRS allows for more communication options for this demographic. Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens will be able to access an ASL interpreter call centre to assist with activities of daily living (e.g. to book an appointment with a Doctor; telephone banking; order a pizza, etc.) however this service is designed for very short assignments, and will not replace for face-to-face appointments or other lengthy assignments. Therefore, there will still be the on-going demand for interpreting services.

Access to Government Information

- ◉ Yukon Government and Federal Government announcements, press conferences, proclamations, etc., should all be interpreted into ASL.
- ◉ Create policies for when and what ASL interpreting should be provided for government matters:

“When Prime Minister Harper is here, why is there no ASL interpreter for his public speeches? Where is the access for all and inclusive society in that?”

“I think it is interesting that City Hall provides close captioning for their meetings – why doesn’t the Yukon Government do the same?”

(Deaf Citizen)

Education – K-12

- ◉ Yukon has very few opportunities for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children to be educated effectively (currently, this demographic is unknown – YG should look at a mechanism to gain this information). Moreover, YG could consider creating a strategy that provides a bilingual education for all

Deaf and Hard of Hearing students (ASL and English).

- ◉ Children’s camps and other programs also need to be accessible for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children.
- ◉ Deaf and Hard of Hearing employees working for government departments (HPW / EDU) require access to satellite telephones that are capable of texting in order to ensure safety if and when traveling outside of Whitehorse.

Building Long Term Capacity:

As the program takes root, it would be helpful to look at all aspects of accommodation that could support the community, from captioning of the Legislative Proceedings, to examining the universal design on website materials (e.g. videos to be captioned if displayed publicly).

There may be ways to build capacity within the interpreting services by identifying local people with ties to the North who would be interested in pursuing a career

“ I think it is interesting that City Hall provides close captioning for their meetings – why doesn't the Yukon Government do the same? ”

(Deaf Citizen)

as an interpreter. For example, candidates could be financially supported to take interpreter training (3-4 years of full time

study) and to return to the Yukon upon graduation to work as interpreters.

Discussion of Findings

The following section provides a discussion of the common needs that emerged within this evaluation. This includes the themes from the on-line surveys, focus groups, staff focus groups and individual interviews. The success indicators in the original ASL Interpreter Pilot Project Proposal were:

- ◉ ASL Interpreter will provide direct interpretation services at least 80% of the time.
- ◉ ASL Interpretation services will be used by the majority of the Deaf community.

The data gathered in this review provides clear evidence that the interpreter is providing interpreting services at least 80% of the time allocated to her workload and it is also clear that there are 10 Whitehorse-based Deaf people who regularly use the interpreting services. There are other Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens (children and adults) who live outside of Whitehorse who have not accessed the services (e.g. Watson Lake) that would likely use the service if they knew about it, and had access to it.

The review reveals that the pilot program has addressed a previously unmet legal and human rights obligation to provide access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to government supports and services.

The project has been highly successful in providing interpreting services in medical and mental health settings, employment and training, and in community settings that are positively impacting the quality of life for Deaf citizens of the Yukon.

The project has been innovative and remains the only one of its kind across Canada at this time. It is also clear from the data gathered across all stakeholder communities, be they employers, employees, doctors, health care providers, therapists, and social workers there is resounding support for the ASL Pilot Project and the unanimous view that the service model become a permanent program.

The pilot project has demonstrated the increased demand for service, and it is anticipated that the volume of interpreting service hours will continue to rise as awareness of the program and capacity grows.

One of the issues that arose in the review is how the demand for service is tracked. For example, there appears to be a perception that the services are only for Deaf people when, in reality, it is both Deaf and hearing people who equally need the service, as they do not share a common language. In this way the tracking of statistics needs to include how many hearing people are using the service.

The pilot project has also demonstrated the ways in which the linguistic human rights of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people can be effectively addressed by government, while reducing the risks associated with serious health consequences that could arise from not providing interpreting services in medical and health care settings. More than meeting the legal obligations to be

accessible, the Yukon Government has approached service delivery from a frame of celebrating diversity and capitalizing on meeting the needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in order for them to enjoy the same quality of life and rights as any other citizen.

The following success indicators for the project (based on the original project proposal), including the provision of direct services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, include:

- ◉ ASL interpretation services are being utilized by all members of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community;
- ◉ services have exceeded the 50% target for improved medical services;
- ◉ services have also increased employment opportunities; and
- ◉ enhanced quality of life.

These success indicators have been not only met, but have exceeded all expectations.

The strengths of the current model include:

- Barrier-free service delivery;
- Accessibility of the service – 24/7 model;
- The ownership that the Deaf community feel for the success of the program;
- Committed staff and leadership in the Yukon Government;
- The support from external community partners such as NGOs.

The perceived concerns and needs that were identified in this review included:

- Consumers are very concerned that the project will not continue and progress will be lost, or that the program will not evolve into a permanent service (either due to lack of funding or commitment).
- The need to increase the capacity of the program by including a second interpreter in order to address the training and development needs of employees, coverage in the case of

medical emergencies, coverage for when one interpreter is away, etc.

- There is the potential for the demand for services to exceed capacity. If any one of the local Deaf or Hard of Hearing community members were to be diagnosed with a chronic/terminal illness, the demand for an interpreter would drastically rise and would severely impact other clients and their interpreting assignments.
- The need to address structural aspects of the program that would allow for larger systemic planning for accommodation within YG (for example: policy review to determine how accommodation and access occurs throughout all levels and departments, implementing of procedures for determining scheduling and prioritizing assignments, effective schedule and tracking processes).
- The need for effective tracking and monitoring systems to ensure maximum use of the services and to report on future progress.

- Opportunities for enhanced programming that would strengthen the diversity programming and continue to build capacity as a government that addresses language planning and linguistic services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens in ways consistent with other Aboriginal languages.

There is strong interest across all stakeholders in learning ASL, especially if the staff role involves greeting the public and acting as a point of first contact. If YG partnered with a local NGO and offered ASL instruction across government departments and to external organizations during daytime hours, this would meet this need and increase capacity in the long term for inclusion of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in the Yukon.

Based on the data, there appear to be five main options available to the Yukon Government:

1. Dissolve the service, which would lead to potential human rights complaints and potential legal action, especially in medical related contexts. This would not be consistent with the mandate and direction of Diversity Services or the Yukon Government.
2. Continue with the “Status Quo” for ASL program and service delivery.
3. Move to a contracted model of service delivery that may reduce staffing costs. It may also mean the work would be less attractive and difficult to recruit a service provider.
4. Streamline the services so that it is in line with regular business hours (Monday-Friday, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm) and restrict the services to medical and employment areas only. This removes the access for activities of daily living types of interpreting which has been a very successful element of the program. NGOs reported that they couldn’t fund this aspect.
5. Create a permanent service with a staff interpreter model, building in financial stability based on cost-shared contributions from multiple departments, and potential fee for service structure for NGOs and community organizations.

“One of the issues that arose in the review is how the demand for service is tracked. For example, there appears to be a perception that the services are only for Deaf people when in reality it is for both Deaf and hearing people who equally need the service, as they do not share a common language.”

Other service models that exist in Canada are described in Appendix A, which may be a useful starting point for examining the kind of model to be finalized for the Yukon Government.

Recommendations

The following recommendations stem out of the findings of the focus groups, individual interviews, and on-line surveys.

The recommendations have been organized in sections and themes.

1. Strategic Planning Processes

- 1.1 By reviewing this evaluation data, determine the ASL Interpreting Program priority services and short and long-term priorities. Create a comprehensive strategic plan that builds permanence and capacity and is shared with the stakeholder communities.
- 1.2 Development of a coordinated service model must be planned and evaluated in consultation with major stakeholders, including but not limited to medical and health care providers, employers, consumers, NGOs, professionals, and government departments in order to address services already provided and unmet needs.

1.3 Consider the base budget required to operate the program and partnership contributions that are proportionate to use. For example, a large portion of service delivery supports health and social services related appointments including Insured Health Benefits, and as such funding should be requested from their budget.

2. Organizational Structure and Capacity

2.1 Examine the opportunity for the scheduling of interpreting appointments to be managed through existing staff in Diversity Services and create easy access for consumers via text, email, video messages, and telephone. Determine the basic ASL and English language fluency required for this role and assist staff in meeting the language requirements.

2.2 Create a service standard that is explicitly stated for the community regarding the hours of service, how competing appointments are handled, the priorities that are

placed on the services by the funders, and a client code of conduct (for example, zero tolerance for abuse).

2.3 Explore how a second interpreter can be hired in order to address unmet needs and demands. There are several options available in terms of using a staff model or a contractor. However, given the demographics of the identified Deaf community, consideration could be given to securing the services of an interpreter with First Nations or Metis heritage. Hiring a second staff person would strengthen the service and ensure that all appointments are covered, including holidays and/or emergencies.

2.4 YG could consider a contractor model, similar to other northern Canada solutions. For example, two contractors who come in on a 4-week rotation replace each other and provide stable and consistent interpreting services in the community. While this comes with costs for transportation and

accommodation, it may be a viable option when contrasted with the costs of another staff interpreter.

- 2.5 Create capacity by partnering with an NGO to offer ASL instruction to government departments and external organizations.
- 2.6 Implement technology solutions for using remote video interpreting when a second interpreter is required or in the case of a hospital emergency when the interpreter cannot be on site.
- 2.7 Create standard marketing materials and presentations that can highlight the program and promote Deaf people as future employees.
- 2.8 Examine recruiting strategies for Yukon youth who are looking at careers and training in the area of signed language interpretation. Attending career fairs at high schools and advertising within the First Nations communities may attract interest. Sponsoring one or two local citizens to take a

three-year interpreter program and then return to the Yukon would also build capacity and may allow for the recruitment of candidates with First Nations or Metis heritage.

3. Relationship building with Stakeholder Communities

- 3.1 Continue to nurture the relationships with the consumer communities, reaching out to consumers who are Hard of Hearing, Deaf Blind, Deafened and Deaf. This can occur through activities such as having the staff attend regular meetings of the consumer organizations, providing opportunities for communication through town hall meetings, and creating consumer advisory committees for program/service areas, etc.
- 3.2 The relationships need to be maintained through regular and effective communication approaches with each of the constituent communities. This could include sponsoring shared events, providing announcements in ASL through the website,

sending updates via a short email to link to changes on the website.

4. Partnerships with other Organizations

- 4.1 Explore strategic alliances and formal partnerships with municipal and Federal governments, external organizations outside of the Yukon, and others organizations in the community to determine how unmet needs can be addressed. Determine what programs can be jointly delivered or how organizations can meet unfulfilled requirements by collaborating.

5. Services and Programs

- 5.1 Address the key program and services that have been targeted as priorities in this review, interpreting in medical, mental health, employment, social services and PSC related events. Develop a service model that allows for consistency and quality across the program.

- 5.2 Ensure Deaf and Hard of Hearing employees have the technology appropriate for their workplaces (e.g. telephones that can text when traveling to remote locations, flashing fire alarms, etc.)
- 5.3 Continue to provide ASL tutoring and/or interpreting mentoring for the staff interpreter role.
- 5.4 Partner with a local NGO to provide ASL instruction via a Deaf ASL instructor on a regular basis for government departments and external stakeholder groups.

Conclusion

This report has provided an overview of the final evaluation of the ASL Pilot Project conducted for Corporate Human Resources and Diversity Services during 2014. This project was designed to provide evidence upon which to build a strategic plan and base decisions. The task was to review all aspects of the ASL Pilot Project and to identify strengths and needs.

The review was completed over four phases, and included the following activities:

Phase One

Define project tasks; develop interview and focus group tools; conduct data collection; and conduct review of relevant documents.

Phase Two

Conduct interviews and focus groups with appropriate stakeholders and personnel directly involved in the provision of services and recipients of the services to identify current strengths and needs within the delivery model.

Phase Three

Analyze all data collected.

Phase Four

Produce Final Report and hold project closure meetings.

The review has identified strengths and needs from the varied perspectives of consumers, service providers, employees, staff and funders. The following success indicators for the project, including the provision of direct services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, improved medical services, increased employment opportunities, and enhanced quality of life have not only been met, but have exceeded all expectations.

It is clear that the stakeholders who participated in this needs assessment want the Yukon Government to take bold steps in order to create a permanent ASL interpreting service that provides exceptional services and is recognized for its expertise. The themes should serve to guide the PSC in its future planning. A series of recommendations have been made that can be considered by the Yukon Government as they move forward with their strategic planning processes centred on diversity and inclusion for all citizens.

It is equally clear that the impact of this service is far reaching, not only for the Deaf community, but for their families, friends, local organizations, businesses and the citizens of the Yukon. The following quote illustrates the impact of having the interpreting service on all citizens:

“At the Conference on Human Rights there were over 110 participants – all of who benefitted from hearing directly from the experiences of the Deaf participants. Without an interpreter, the 100 participants would have had no idea what Deaf people experience in the Yukon. So it isn’t just Deaf people using the services – we all used the service. The Minister that attended needed the service, as did the media folks need the service, the City Councillors in attendance needed the service, and so on. So you cannot say it is for 12 people – it is serving the entire community of Whitehorse.”

(Deaf Citizen – follow up interview)

Many other provinces and nationwide organizations are noticing the inclusion efforts of this organization and this reinforces why the Yukon Government continues to be one of Canada’s top 100 employers. The Yukon is the first

jurisdiction in Canada to pilot a program of this nature and continues to be a leading jurisdiction on a national level relative to services delivery for Persons with Disabilities which strengthens the Yukon Government’s vision of a “great place work and live”, and “truly goes beyond all expectations”.

The foundation formed by offering the two-year pilot project has led to ample evidence to support the evolution of this project into a permanent program. Should that happen, the Yukon Government will be paving the way for all other Canadian governments to mirror this exceptional service, so that the rights of Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens are not only met on a National level, but they would have full communication access to all government programs/services and enjoy equal citizenship.

Canada is a signatory to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)*, and the Yukon Government has demonstrated how to comply with the UNCRPD tenets by taking a pro-active and visionary approach to including Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in their communities.

APPENDIX A:
Other Service Models

The following information compares four service organizations in Canada in order to provide a context for services that are provided by other effective organizations that service Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deafened, and Deaf Blind consumers.

Government of Canada, Translation Bureau

Primary services provided:

The Translation Bureau works to ensure services are provided in English and French, and they also work with contracted interpreters to provide services in 100 different Aboriginal and visual and foreign languages. This includes American Sign Language and Langue des Signes Quebécoise (LSQ) and tactile interpreting for Deaf Blind consumers and oral interpreting for consumers who are Deaf and wish to lip-read in English or French.

These services are coordinated by the Translation Bureau who works with contracted interpreters who have been screened via an in-house exam offered by the Translation Bureau. Each

department within the Federal Government must provide these services at their own expense. In previous years, the Translation Bureau has had an ASL and/or LSQ staff interpreter as part of the service delivery model in Ottawa, however in most recent years it has moved solely to a contract model.

Ontario Interpreting Services

Primary services provided:

Interpretation services for medical, mental health, social services, employment, educational, legal, government services, and personal business. Interpreters are able to provide communication in ASL, SEE, and LSQ (in some areas). These services are coordinated by OIS who work with both staff and contracted interpreters who have been screened via an in-house exam offered by OIS. The service receives government funding and operates a fee-for-service model for appointments not covered by government funding.

**Western Institute for the Deaf and
Hard of Hearing (WIDHH),
Vancouver, BC**

Primary services provided:

Interpretation services are provided for medical, mental health, social services, employment, educational, legal, government services, and personal business. WIDHH received some funding grants and also offers a fee for service delivery model. The interpreter department offers two distinct services: Community Interpreting Services and Medical Interpreting Services. The model of service involves both staff and contracted interpreters who are registered in the province of BC. In addition there is a provincial exam for medical interpreting services and once interpreters have passed that exam they are eligible to provide medical interpreting services. The Provincial Health Services Authority funds the service. There is provision of emergency interpreting services to be delivered outside of regular business hours.

**St. John Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Society (SJDHHS), New Brunswick**

Primary services provided:

1. *Employment* – SJDHHS works closely with government agencies to line up appropriate programming for Deaf individuals in the workplace, and to ensure that the client has the appropriate accommodations within their workplace. Also seeks out employment for summer students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing so that they can further their education goals. There are also three specific employment-related support services provided:
 - ◉ *Training and Employment Support Services (TESS)* – SJDHHS works with the employer to ensure that all support services necessary are in place prior to having the Deaf individual coming into the workplace.
 - ◉ *Training and Employment Development (TED)* - SJDHHS may make referrals to TED employment counselors, for Deaf individuals who are ready for work, but in need of some support finding work.
 - ◉ *Employer Sensitivity Training* – At the request of the client, case manager, or employer, will provide employers and

staff with a sensitivity training session relating to the clients' physical, communication, and cultural needs.

2. *Education* – For Deaf individuals who are interested in furthering their education, SJDHHS works with the schools/teachers/students to ensure that appropriate accommodations are being met within the classroom. May also involve advocacy work for the students' needs and rights.
3. *Family and Community Services* – Works with the family and client to determine any employment and financial needs that are present.
4. *Interpreter Services* – Provided by the NB government to cover medical, legal, counselling, Social Services, employment (applications, interviews, and crisis intervention), and education (interpreting within the classroom, parent/teacher meetings when the parent is Deaf). Also coordinates interpreting services for students pursuing post-secondary studies, job interviews, on-the-job training. SJDHHS coordinates payment of these services.

5. *Technical Devices* – provides technical devices, needs assessments as to the need for the appropriate device (i.e., audio-visual equipment).

6. *Library Resources* - resources for Deaf individuals and the community.

By contrast, CHRDS of the Yukon Government offers some of these same services to its stakeholder communities, including interpreting services, referral to resources, employment related services, sign language classes and support for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people through public education.

