

## Guide to British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreting Services – Primary Care

### Face to Face Interpreters

Face to face interpreters should be booked for all GP appointments where possible.

For same day/next day requests and cancellations call 0141 347 8811. For requests further in advance of this please [fill in our online form](#) or email [interpretingservice@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:interpretingservice@ggc.scot.nhs.uk).

The phone lines are open from 8.00am – 6.00pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am – 4.00pm Saturday and Sunday.

### BSL Online Interpreting

The BSL Online interpreting service is available 24/7 and offers a vital additional support for patients in certain circumstances. **This service is not always suitable or acceptable for BSL patients and should therefore only be used as a backup facility.**

BSL Online can be easily accessed by any available device, such as the ward iPad or any mobile phone, using the QR code below or using the [direct link](#).



### When should BSL Online be used?

- On the day /impromptu conversations at reception
- Routine appointments with nurse (bloods, follow-ons)
- Routine admin (booking, results, general health advice)
- Emergencies - only if no face-to face interpreter available

To ensure the use of BSL Online is appropriate, it is important to check with the patient and get informed consent.

Please also test using your phone or iPad beforehand to gain familiarity and ensure there are no connection issues. If there are any problems, please [contact us](#) straight away and book a face-to-face interpreter instead.

## **FAQs**

### **What should I do if a patient asks for a face-to-face interpreter instead?**

Respect the patient's preference. Document the request and follow local booking procedures.

### **What if the patient is not comfortable using video interpreting?**

Some patients may feel unsure about video calls. Reassure them that it is a secure and professional service. If they're still uncomfortable, offer to arrange a face-to-face interpreter.

### **Do I need to book the online interpreter in advance?**

BSL Online is available on demand and does not require booking. However, for pre-planned or lengthy appointments, please book a face-to-face interpreter to ensure continuity and the best experience for the patient.

### **Can family members interpret instead of using a BSL interpreter?**

No – family or friends should not be used as interpreters. Professional BSL interpreters ensure clear, impartial communication and protect patient confidentiality.

**For further information and support contact [Paul.Hull@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Paul.Hull@ggc.scot.nhs.uk)**

