

Guidelines for health staff producing multilingual information

Planning the project

Once you have decided to produce a new multilingual resource, and the topic is chosen, check if there is information (in other languages or in English) already available in print, electronic or audiovisual form, to avoid duplication. You can:

- ask the person responsible for Multicultural Health in your Local Health District (LHD)
- visit the Website of NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service
<http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au>.

Next, you may need to seek advice on the most appropriate way to convey the information (in case the topic is culturally sensitive or controversial) and in which languages material should be produced. Ask Multicultural Coordinators, bilingual health staff, the Health Care Interpreter Service in your area, the Community Relations Commission or staff of NSW Multicultural Health Communication (MHCS). At this point, you should reach agreement on essential points to be included in the multilingual material.

Other items to finalise:

- funds available for the project (see details below)
- who you are trying to reach in which languages
- development of a distribution plan to ensure that the completed multilingual project materials will reach the intended readership
- format in which material is to be developed and published i.e. electronic, audio, print or audiovisual (or a combination). Publishing on the Web can be a cost-effective way to distribute multilingual resources, as it allows the user to locate and read information on screen and also download and print from the NSW Multicultural Health Communication webpage in desired languages.

Publishing decisions

- who will decide on content
- who will write it
- who will take responsibility for accuracy, currency of information and updating as needed
- overall design and layout
- whether illustrations (if any) will be used

Multilingual information in print

Regardless of whether you opt for multilingual publishing on paper or online, your next step can be to consider one of two options in developing the source material. Your choice will depend on the nature of the project and the funds and time available (see budget estimates below).

Option 1

Arrange for the information to be written in English and then translated and checked. In this case, ensure that the text is written in clear, cohesive, unambiguous English, avoiding medical or specialist health jargon. OR

Option 2

Ask the author to write down (in English) the essential points that should be included. Next, choose bilingual advisors who can each write the information in their own language, in a manner acceptable to speakers of the languages concerned. In this model, each language version will need to be checked to ensure that all the essential information has been included, and conveyed accurately. All proposed corrections should be discussed with the bilingual writer concerned. You should thus obtain language versions each containing essential information presented in culturally appropriate terms.

NB: For all translation and checking use qualified translators (see Translation and checking below), preferably working in consultation with the author. Allow for checking costs in your budget.

Details of content

Remember to include:

- date of production, and details of who owns the publication and is responsible for content
- title headings and sub-headings in the other language first (with the English following in a smaller font). (This will help English-only health staff identify the publication and use it effectively).
- clearly identify each language version with the name of the language on every page in English and in the other language as well (e.g. Italian, Italiano)
- which words you want left in English only (eg titles of health staff, community health centres, addresses, phone numbers) or whether you want translators to add explanations where terms may be unfamiliar to speakers with limited English.
- number each page
- where possible telephone numbers, names of persons and addresses should be avoided, as they are likely to change often.

Deadlines

It is important to have realistic deadlines. Finalising content and wording in English takes time before the translation process starts. Especially if projects have several languages, the entire process may take months rather than weeks to complete. When seeking quotes make sure you have deadlines and that translators, agencies and printers can meet them. Try to obtain time estimates as well as costings.

Translation and checking

NSW Multicultural Health Communication (MHCS) can advise on suitable translators and arrange for your translations and checking or can arrange agencies or who can manage the translation. Individual translators can work under your supervision, or commercial agencies can supervise the entire project. Whether you are

coordinating the project or using an agency, make sure that translators are accredited for translation into the desired language(s) by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) at the professional level (former Level 3). If using a translation agency, check that they can demonstrate experience with organising translations and multilingual typesetting and printing.

We recommend that in all translation projects two NAATI accredited translators are used for each language (one to translate and one to check). For some minority/emerging communities if you can not locate accredited translators, ring NAATI for information 02 9267 1357 (fax 02 9267 4720) on 'recognised' translators.

Budget estimates

When preparing a budget, obtain estimates for translation, checking, typesetting and printing, as these tasks usually each attract separate fees. Depending on the language, many translators can typeset the text electronically, and lay the text out in accordance with your wishes. You must provide exact specifications or a template. Often the translation can be sent in on disk or via Email. If you are using a commercial typesetter and/or printer, check whether translators and your printer have compatible fonts, typesetting and printing facilities. If you decide to print multiple copies, you will also need to decide on quantities and obtain a printing quote.

To provide you with an accurate costing, translators and agencies need to know exact specifications: number of words, deadlines and layout requirements. Inclusion of diagrams or illustrations, or complex layout will add to costs. Cost will be higher for urgent jobs, and for "camera ready" (print quality) work. You can ask for "copy" (photocopy) quality. As a guide only: you can expect to pay approximately \$70 per 100 words for translating, checking and proofreading (first and final typeset versions). This amount varies significantly between agencies. Printing costs also vary.

Producing the multilingual resource

Details should be provided to translators or bilingual writers of exact requirements and contact details for someone to respond to enquiries. If you are coordinating the project, use a Job Sheet with dates and contact details for each language version as it moves through each stage of the translation process. On it, include your name and contact details, and:

- any instructions to translators, checkers and writers (e.g. use bilingual headings, keep a copy of the translation and of the English text for later checking)
- title of text
- name of translator (with contact details)
- name of checker (with contact details)
- language of translation
- date due for translation & date due for checking
- name and details of contact person for advice
- layout specifications or electronic requirements.

Send out to each translator:

- the Job Sheet/detailed instructions
- the English text (two copies if using a checker) as a hard copy

- the fully laid out document in English as a word processing file on disk for the translator to overtype the English text with his/her translation (MS-Word preferable, as it can be used with MS-Word for Macintosh and MS-Word for Windows)

When using a checker (see below for checking guidelines), ask the translator to send the translation and job sheet directly to the checker, with a copy of the English text. Translator and checker should agree on changes. If there is a dispute between the translator and checker, which cannot be resolved by discussion, seek a third (anonymous) opinion. If possible, arrange for a further check by bilingual health workers, before final typesetting and printing.

When you receive typeset 'galley' proofs or disks, check English headings, publication numbers, phone numbers and page numbers and arrange a first proofreading by translator or checker, then arrange for the typesetter to make corrections. A qualified translator should then be paid to proofread the typesetter's corrections before printing is arranged.

NB: Final typewritten or typeset material for printers should not be faxed or photocopied, as this will affect the quality and sometimes the layout dimensions, resulting in your final version being of poor quality.

Feedback on this document

These Guidelines are part of a guidelines series produced by NSW Multicultural Health Communication and are published on our website

<http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au> together with "Seven Steps: guidelines for health staff checking translations" under Resources.

Please contact NSW Multicultural Health Communication if you have any Comments on how these Guidelines could be improved. Email: mhcs@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au, Tel (02) 9816 0347, Fax (02) 9816 0302.