

## Minutes: March 2023 NZSL Board Meeting

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Excerpts from NZSL Board minutes

### **NZSL Interpreter workforce strategy**

- 16.1 There is a lot of Government interest in the NZSL Interpreter workforce, especially with the recent UN concluding recommendation that calls for training more interpreters, including tri-lingual interpreters.
- 16.2 ODI reviewed all reports commissioned by the Board since 2017 and have identified four main themes, however the issues are complex.
- 16.3 ODI recommend developing a strategic approach and have provided a sample for consideration. The content still requires consultation within the interpreting sector to develop a comprehensive plan.
- 16.4 The role of educational interpreters must be considered, including a discussion with MOE about how they can support this role.

#### **ACTION:**

- ODI to consult on and develop and workforce strategy for Board consideration in August 2023.

**DECISION:** The Board are happy to consider a strategic approach to resolving a range of interpreter workforce issues.

### **NAATI Interpreter Standards**

- 18.1 ODI provided an overview of the Certificate pathway to become eligible for a NAATI test at Certified Provisional Interpreter (CPI) Level.
- 18.2 The Board welcomed representatives from the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Sign Language interpreting qualification and the Sign Language Interpreting Association of New Zealand (SLIANZ).
- 18.3 They presented a range of risks that they anticipate if the Board were to accept a Certificate pathway. These include:
  - a. Reducing the quality of interpreting services.
  - b. Risking NZSL Interpreter health and wellbeing – not having strategies to manage a range of ethical dilemmas.
  - c. Reduced understanding of ethnics when working with the Deaf community, SLIANZ note that Certificate training does not talk about the SLIANZ ethics.

- 18.4 The Board are clear that the introduction of standards is one solution for interpreting issues and there are a range of levers that can be used to lift the quality of interpreting for the Deaf community. These include:
- a. Implementation and monitoring of government guidelines.
  - b. Implementing a workforce strategy.
  - c. Setting a suitable SLPI level to demonstrate NZSL proficiency.
- 18.5 At this time the Board feel the risks can be mitigated through a range of other strategies, however reserve the right to review this decision if the quality of interpreting is negatively impacted.
- 18.6 There are several consequences if NAATI is not used to manage the assessment of interpreter skills and ongoing re-certification requirements. These include:
- a. Cost of implementing a bespoke solution.
  - b. The need to invest in leadership capacity and capability within the Deaf community including turi Māori.
  - c. Limited NZSL Board funding.
- 18.7 Additional consultation with AUT and SLIANZ now would not provide any additional information. Substantial information is already available from community consultation and reports since 2017. The Board is clear about the issues and concerns relating to NAATI and will not conduct additional consultation.

**ACTIONS:**

- Inform SLIANZ and AUT of the decision by 31 March.
- ODI will provide a draft for the Board to provide feedback.
- Provide information about SLPI for the Board to decide the appropriate proficiency level for Certificate qualified interpreters.
- Consult AUT about their graduation NZSL proficiency level.
- Develop information about the qualification pathways for NZSL Interpreters and the Deaf community.

**DECISION:** The NZSL Board endorses the use of a Certificate pathway for NAATI eligibility with a majority vote. However, do not recommend the pathway to deliver quality Interpreting services for the Deaf community