

230818 NRPSI Update

NRPSI Activities

Introduction

All involved with NRPSI are acutely aware of the need to continually call public sector organisations to account given the damage to public service interpreting over many years, particularly since the financial crisis which stimulated outsourcing.

The efforts of NRPSI in lobbying and advocating protection of, and development of, standards in public service interpreting has led to major changes in the ecosystem already but there is still very much more to do.

It is not possible to list everything which has been carried out by NRPSI, but I am however delighted to draw out some of the more significant aspects of NRPSI's recent work.

The more those who are professional public service interpreters who have the qualifications and experience join NRPSI as Registrants, then the louder NRPSI's voice can be; see

http://www.nrpsi.org.uk/downloads/Qualifications_and_Experience_Criteria_for_Entry.pdf

NRPSI is not only committed to giving voice to the voiceless - those who cannot speak English and need an interpreter in complex situations where the consequences can lead to life changing outcomes - but is also committed to giving professional public service interpreters a louder voice with government, public sector organisations and other stakeholders who can ensure a fairer ecosystem for all, including regulated, Registered Public Service Interpreters (RPSIs).

Please see the latest strategy document which was recently published following an in-depth review of current positioning after 28 years of operating. NRPSI is focused on all these issues mentioned in the document, not least constantly drawing attention to the need to obtain appropriate remuneration, terms and conditions, commensurate with the qualifications and experience of registered, regulated practitioners such as yourself;

<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/NRPSI-Strategy-2023-to-2025-document-is-published-today-click-here-to-read-the-latest-update.html>

Background

NRPSI is the UK's independent voluntary regulator of professional interpreters specialising in public service. We maintain a public register of professional, qualified and accountable interpreters, who adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct:

http://www.nrpsi.org.uk/downloads/NRPSI_Code_of_Professional_Conduct_22.01.16.pdf

The National Register is free of charge to access and searchable online.

The need for defendants in court to be able to understand the proceedings, using an interpreter if necessary, was identified in the landmark R v Iqbal Begum Court of Appeal ruling which stated:

'It is beyond the understanding of this court that it did not occur to someone that the reason for her [the defendant's] silence..... was simply because she was not being spoken to in a language which she understood.'

As a result, the 1993 Runciman Royal Commission on Criminal Justice recommended that a national register of qualified interpreters should be established with the aim of 'using only interpreters with proven competence and skills, who are governed by a nationally recognised code of conduct'.

NRPSI was established in 1994 with the support of the (then) Institute of Linguists (IoL) and funded by the Nuffield Foundation, to develop a model for the provision of public services across language and culture. The emphasis was on providing reliable communication in response to the multi-lingual nature of modern UK and public services' need to provide access to all, irrespective of language barriers.

In 1994 this project laid its foundations for the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI).

NRPSI became independent of the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIoL) on 1st April 2011 and is an independent not-for-profit organisation.

Every interpreter on the National Register has met the standards that were set and agreed with a wide range of stakeholders for education, training and practice in public service.

All Registrants are subject to the NRPSI Code of Professional Conduct and allegations are investigated by an independent Professional Conduct Committee and Disciplinary Committee; see

<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/for-clients-of-interpreters/complaints-about-interpreters.html>

From the Serious Case Review following the death of Daniel Pelka, aged 5, in September 2013:

'Without proactive or consistent action by any professional to engage with him via an interpreter, then his lack of language and low confidence would likely have made it almost impossible for him to reveal the abuse he was suffering at home.'

Using the National Register to find an interpreter ensures that not only qualified professional practitioners are engaged, but that the interpreter can be held accountable should their conduct or competence fall below the high standards expected of a Registered Public Service Interpreter (RPSI).

NRPSI Registrants are now officially ‘Accredited Professionals’ as of July 2023

Excellent news for all NRPSI Registrants as, at last, you have been recognised as ‘Accredited Professionals’ by the UK Government’s new ‘Regulated Professions Register’, created by the Department for Business & Trade: see <https://www.regulated-professions.service.gov.uk/>

As NRPSI regulated and Registered Public Service Interpreters (RPSI) you can rightly claim to be officially accredited: see below.

Sadly there are, as yet, no restrictions on who can carry out professional public service activities (see <https://www.regulated-professions.service.gov.uk/regulation-types>) but this is a major step to gaining protection of title and statutory recognition for ‘Registered Public Service Interpreters’: see <https://www.regulated-professions.service.gov.uk/professions/chartered-linguist>

MOJ Lobbying

NRPSI has been heavily engaged in lobbying the Ministry of Justice. Note the most recent presentation which was delivered to Ministry of Justice senior management and others within the MoJ extolling the need for improved standards and regulation. It is a vital intervention and one we hope all Registrants are aware of so they realise the nature of pressure being placed at the heart of the UK’s public sector language services: <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Review-the-NRPSI-presentation-to-the-Ministry-of-Justice-delivered-on-17th-October-2022-here.html>

This is key to gaining changes in the MOJ’s framework, which we know has been the cause of many problems over many years, not least poor remuneration and dissolving standards.

Tackling the negatives of outsourcing has been a major platform for NRPSI’s work and this presentation about outsourcing has been delivered many times: <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Review-the-PDF-of-the-Outsourcing-presentation-delivered-on-22nd-June-2022.html>

NRPSI’s campaign regarding the MOJ’s framework can best be summarised by <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/To-explore-the-differences-between-NRPSI-s-positioning-regarding-MoJ-s-language-services-delivery-and-what-is-currently-happening-in-the-courts-click-here-for-a-summary.html> .

NRPSI ran a sustained public campaign based on images which pinpointed the issues in the MoJ's language service delivery. Many NRPSI Registrants joined in this work by 'Liking' and 'Sharing' the social media posts through 2021; see <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Click-here-to-see-a-summary-of-the-issues-NRPSI-has-been-addressing-with-the-MoJ-s-language-services-delivery.html>

Many NRPSI Registrants joined in lobbying by writing to their MPs and getting letters back from them following the pressure they placed on the MoJ; see this link for just one of the many letters written by NRPSI for Registrants to send to their MPs; <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Write-to-your-MP-to-find-out-more-about-how-the-Ministry-of-Justice-defines-assignments-Click-here-for-the-pro-forma-letter-you-can-send-to-your-MP.html>

We believe that without the MP campaign, the commitment from the MoJ to set up an independent review would not have happened; <https://slator.com/uk-conduct-review-of-minimum-qualifications-for-interpreters/> .

The Ministry of Justice launched an independent review of language services delivery, as reported by many media channels including the digital platform 'Slator'; change and transformation is on the agenda for public service interpreting within HMCTS; see <https://slator.com/uk-conduct-review-of-minimum-qualifications-for-interpreters/>

Baroness Coussins gave a speech in the House of Lords supporting the need for regulation and registration of public service interpreters and the need to ensure recognition and protection of title for those who meet the standards needed to be a professional practitioner; see <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2021-11-22/debates/E73503CA-6A96-4A1E-82D9-156E084FFA71/PoliceCrimeSentencingAndCourtsBill#contribution-DEBBFD05-93BF-497E-B588-627E6BC84C41>

NRPSI welcomed this support from Baroness Coussins and the All Parliamentary Party Group on Modern Languages; see <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Read-NRPSI-reaction-to-Baroness-Coussins-intervention-in-the-debate-at-the-Police-Crime-Sentencing-and-Courts-Bill-on-Monday-22-November-2021-click-here.html>

Review this piece for a fuller understanding of NRPSI's efforts; <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Read-NRPSI-reaction-to-Baroness-Coussins-intervention-in-the-debate-at-the-Police-Crime-Sentencing-and-Courts-Bill-on-Monday-22-November-2021-click-here.html>

We are still waiting for the full independent review findings, which was called in to being in February 2022, to be published. Having said this, there are positive signs about changes to the framework being developed by the MOJ following many hours over many days, weeks and months of consultation and collaborative dialogue.

For more information on this you should go back to the May 2023 monthly newsletter at <https://nrpsi.cmail20.com/t/t-e-zvdrtd-l-n/> and you can review the current abhorrent framework and then compare with the proposed new framework – a massive change. We continue to pressurise to ensure even this proposed framework is improved.

You should also see this video of a presentation made to over 40 people at an AIT event, describing the work carried out by NRPSI, pressure placed on the MoJ and a further perspective on the proposed new framework; see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-3k_TaFt2I&feature=youtu.be

The slides for this were also used at a NRPSI Town Hall on 28th June 2023, attended by over 50 Registrants; see <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/NRPSI-Town-Hall-was-held-on-28th-June-click-here-to-see-the-presentation-delivered-at-the-lively-event.html>

NRPSI continues to drive the MOJ and its contracted agencies to make improvements; many partner organisations in PI4J (such as the CIOL, ITI and the APCI, SOMI and AIT) are also lending their voices too. Please see <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2021-11-22/debates/E73503CA-6A96-4A1E-82D9-156E084FFA71/PoliceCrimeSentencingAndCourtsBill#contribution-DEBBFD05-93BF-497E-B588-627E6BC84C41>. Many specific issues, such as off-contract payments and recognition of status, are on the agenda.

Working with the Police

Historically there have been some police forces which have used the ESPO (Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation) Framework to engage with public service interpreters; this allows them to work with bilingual native speakers who have enrolled on a Level 1 vocation public services interpreting course.

The development of the DPS (Dynamic Purchasing System) and the launch of the PAIT scheme by the police has been a positive step forward; see <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Click-here-for-the-latest-from-the-police-regarding-developments-with-the-PAIT-scheme-and-contracts-on-the-DPS.html>

Thanks to the approach by the police language service management team, and the lobbying and advocacy from NRPSI over many years, with partner organisations in the PI4J (Professional Interpreters 4 Justice), the police are now focused on engaging with professional interpreters who have level 6 qualifications and 400 hours experience. This is beginning to replicate the exemplar in the public sector language services' ecosystem, the London Metropolitan Police Service, which only engages with regulated and Registered Public Service Interpreters who adhere to the NRPSI Code of Professional Conduct.

Lobbying the NHS

With regard to the NHS, please note the recent letter to the government, shadow minister and also to the CEO of the NHS; <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Click-here-to-read-the-open-letter-sent-to-the-Health-Minister-and-Shadow-Health-Minister-about-the-death-of-a-Gloucester-mother-who-tragically-died-owing-to-a-delay-in-post-birth-treatment-and-poor-interpreting-services.html>

Note NRPSI asking Registrants to write to their MPs; you may have done this already but if you haven't then you might join the many of your colleagues who have already done so; see <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Join-the-campaign-to-lobby-for-improvements-in-NHS-language-service-delivery-for-patients-and-save-lives-by-clicking-here.html>. This is a very effective tool in lobbying and actually kick-started many improvements being planned in the MOJ, but not yet implemented, following a similar campaign in 2021.

See <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/If-you-disagree-with-this-statement-then-click-here-people-can-have-legal-representatives-who-can-help-Friends-family-and-non-government-organisations-can-also-assist-the-person.html>

If you have not seen the NHS Guidelines for managing language services, you can find them here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/guidance-for-commissioners-interpreting-and-translation-services-in-primary-care.pdf> . As you can see, NRPSI is accepted as central to best practice; sadly the government so under-funds the NHS these best practice guidelines are often ignored by procurement management.

Follow up letter re NHS

<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Click-here-to-read-NRPSI-follow-up-lobbying-with-the-NHS.html>

On 8th August 2023 NRPSI was informed that the NHS's Healthcare Inequalities Improvement team will be leading a language-services scoping review; see the letter dated 8th August 2023 (<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/The-NHS-s-Healthcare-Inequalities-Improvement-team-will-be-leading-a-language-services-scoping-review-see-the-letter-dated-8th-August-2023.html>).

The letter stated: 'Ensuring solutions are identified which that will bring about the necessary changes – we are very much welcoming the opportunity to speak to NRPSI'

Marketing Support for Registrants

Please have a look at this guide for usage of NRPSI by those employed in the public sector and beyond.

This has been widely distributed by NRPSI and Registrants;

https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/downloads/NRPSI_Register_User_Guide_v220520.pdf .

You probably saw it mentioned in a recent newsletter and I hope you have had chance to send it on to those you know who could make use of it: many Registrants have done so and we are delighted to create marketing materials which are specifically prepared for Registrants to make use of in their own marketing.

I know many Registrants have shown interest in the 'Proud' campaign (<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Proud-to-be-a-Registrant-Does-RPSI-mean-something-to-you-Click-here-and-download-this-PDF.html>) . This campaign has gone down well with Registrants and many are using the visuals.

This presentation was delivered at a recent conference where there were over 100 delegates:
<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Click-here-to-see-a-PDF-of-NRPSI-s-presentation-to-the-delegates-at-the-Celebration-of-Mother-Tongue-conference-organised-by-the-Linguists-Collective.html>.

A video of this presentation has been made available by the event organisers:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGedVYe99Kc>

Lobbying agencies/language service providers

The ATC (Association of Translation Companies), representing the outsourcing interpreting agencies, for the first time ever in January 2020 published a very positive manifesto regarding dealing with professional public service interpreters. We are sure this will have an effect in the future and that there is an inexorable drive to improved relationships within the economic system set up to handle public sector linguistic services; see <https://atc.org.uk/atc-public-sector-manifesto/>; a long way to go but this manifesto, published pre pandemic, is sign of intent to engage and find improvements. NRPSI will continue its lobbying in this arena too. NRPSI issues with agencies to be addressed are:

- Accept ‘public service interpreting’ is a profession with professional practitioners and as such, deserves and demands recognition of the independent regulator and respect for the independent register which has no political or commercial pressures
- If funds from public sector organisations are not enough, then do not take the contract; persuade the public sector it has to pay reasonable and fair engagement fees through agencies because agencies need to create shareholder value and pay dividends to shareholders through profits but at the same time can only do this by engaging with professionals who can carry out engagements professionally, otherwise agencies’ pool of interpreters will dry up – where’s the pipeline if we cannot attract new recruits with the right capabilities to the profession
- Act as outsourced engagement agencies – but do not also manage paid for/contracted lists. We ask that agencies start to undo much of the damage which has been caused over the last decade in public service interpreting in the UK because agencies have been running their own lists where quality control has been dissolved with many bilinguals, those who have no relevant vocational qualifications, those with low level vocational qualifications and those with no experience are engaged in roles where they are a danger to the public
- Stop describing public service interpreters as ‘linguists’. True that all professionally recognised and accredited public service interpreters are linguists, but not all linguists are public service interpreters; this abuse of the term ‘linguist’ only creates a platform for engaging with those who are not qualified or experienced and should not be conducting engagements
- Do not engage with pseudo-interpreters/ untrained bilingual speakers at low cost, as this is killing the profession and leaving the public at risk
- Engage only those who have relevant vocational qualifications and experience which ensures the public are protected – as well as protecting agencies reputations and reputations of public sector organisations
- Only access public service interpreters from the independent regulator and register; support the call for professionalism in public service interpreting

- Define engagements where simultaneous interpreting is important – so Level 6 is vital (situations where complexity with consequences is at the heart of the engagement) – such as police and court engagements
- Terms and conditions; ensure these are fair and not asymmetrical where all the power is in the hands of the agency
- Remuneration commensurate with qualifications and experience:
 - Per hour amount to be increased
 - Minimum time fixed at more than just an hour; two-hour minimum at least if not more...
 - Travel time to be paid
 - Out of pocket expenses to be covered

Working with other stakeholders

To review what other members of PI4J are doing please see <https://pi4j.org.uk/>. It is worth exploring the CIOL's published documents with regard to the police; <https://www.ciol.org.uk/uk-police-resources> . It is no accident that the set-up of PAIT mirrors the demands of NRPSI for the basic platforms of professionalism. We have more to do and this is a key platform for 2023 onwards as outlined in the strategy document which you will have already seen. Having said this, we are beginning to see £30.00 an hour and a two-hour minimum being introduced across police bookings which is very encouraging.

Lobbying the Home Office

NRPSI has recently been guiding newly appointed Home Office procurement specialists with regard to best practice in language services; please note:

Thank you for your email and thanks to John for his testimonial regarding NRPSI's work.

If you do not know about NRPSI it is worth spending time on the website; see www.nrpsi.org.uk

and review the news pages for many useful resources such as the launch of the police

interpreting awards, the 'Proud' campaign visuals ([https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/For-](https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/For-all-those-who-have-asked-for-more-details-about-how-to-use-the-Proud-campaign-visuals-please-click-here.html)

[all-those-who-have-asked-for-more-details-about-how-to-use-the-Proud-campaign-visuals-please-click-here.html](https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/For-all-those-who-have-asked-for-more-details-about-how-to-use-the-Proud-campaign-visuals-please-click-here.html)) and a presentation extolling the value of independent regulation; see

<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Review-the-NRPSI-presentation-to-the-Ministry-of-Justice-delivered-on-17th-October-2022-here.html>

As the only voluntary regulator of highly qualified and experienced public service spoken-language interpreters, which has been operating for the last 29 years, you will certainly find professional practitioners as Registrants on the National Register;

see <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/for-clients-of-interpreters/why-use-a-registered-interpreter.html>

To fully understand the qualifications and evidenced experience needed by someone who is on the National Register please review [https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/for-interpreters/join-the-](https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/for-interpreters/join-the-register.html)

[register.html](https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/for-interpreters/join-the-register.html) where you will also note the work carried out to check identities and security

clearances. The photo ID cards carried by all Registrants, which are renewed each year with a

new photograph, have a QR code on the reverse which links you directly to the National Register and their specific entry.

To check how many Registrants there are for specific languages and how to get in touch with them is easy; just set up an account, free of charge and takes a few minutes, and roam around the National Register.

You will see the 'Find an Interpreter' function on all pages of the website.

At the same time, NRPSI is holding the Home Office to account when and where necessary; see <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Click-here-to-read-NRPSI-s-letter-to-the-Home-Office-regarding-reports-of-plans-to-cut-the-asylum-backlog-by-sending-questionnaires-to-refugees-instead-of-conducting-official-interviews.html>

All this work is bearing fruit; see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-investigations-use-of-interpreters/criminal-investigations-use-of-interpreters-accessible> ; you will find this quote... “If the services of an interpreter are required for evidential interviews and procedures the interpreter **must** be registered on The National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI)”.

Working with the Crown Commercial Service

The latest iteration of the CCS framework has been much improved and it is anchored with NRPSI’s code of Professional Conduct for the first time.

NRPSI will continue to have constructive dialogue with the management team at CCS and we are all hoping for further improvements which will mean better protection for the public and a fairer ecosystem for professional practitioners.

Such improvements take time but without dialogue, these improvements would not happen.

Working with the Interpreting Academy

The National Register has close ties with the Interpreting Academy and is committed to working alongside this organisation as it delivers successfully for the public service interpreting community.

Other examples of how NRPSI’s activity is being noticed include:

NRPSI LinkedIn site

Followers have increased by over 400% over the last two years due to the volume of news focused on professional public service interpreting; see <https://www.linkedin.com/company/2134408/admin/>

Mike Orlov’s LinkedIn site

Hitting over 18,500 followers, this LinkedIn channel is a superb vehicle for getting messages out about the need for statutory recognition of regulated and Registered Public Service Interpreters (RPSIs); see <https://www.linkedin.com/in/orlovmike/>

NRPSI website; see <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/>

- Registered website users stand at 17,875 in January 2022, compared to 17,562 in December 2021; an increase of 313 or 2% month on month.
- In January 2021 there were 16,015 registered website users; a year-on-year increase of 1,860 or a 12% lift.
- In January 2022, 5,142 language searches were recorded; an increase of 1,496 against January 2021's 3,646 language searches; a 41% lift.
- All this indicates much greater focus on the work NRPSI is conducting on behalf of those who are professional practitioners, complying with the Code of Professional Conduct; follow this link - (http://www.nrpsi.org.uk/downloads/NRPSI_Code_of_Professional_Conduct_22.01.16.pdf)

There is still much to do with regard to remuneration, terms and conditions for police engagements, but major positive steps have been taken and NRPSI is continuing to lobby for the best possible platform to protect the public and ensure best possible environment for those who are professional practitioners.

Examples of NRPSI's publicity activity include:

Legacy media supporting regulated and Registered Public Service Interpreters

Many articles and features have been published in magazines such as the Law Society Gazette, ITI Bulletin Magazine, CIOL's Linguist magazine, the Financial Times and of course the well-received BBC Radio 4 programme entitled 'Giving Voice to the Voiceless'.

This is a phrase often used by NRPSI when advocating statutory recognition for regulated and Registered Public Service Interpreters, first coined by a Registrant.

See this link for one example of legacy media coverage: <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Financial-Times-article-from-5th-November-as-a-pdf.html>

Also see:

<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/You-will-find-the-latest-NRPSI-article-appearing-in-the-most-recent-edition-of-The-Bulletin-ITI-s-journal-here-click-for-a-short-but-informative-read.html>

...and this link for another example: <https://thelinguist.uberflip.com/the-linguist-archive/the-linguist-59-4-aug-sept-2020>

...as well as <https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/cps-to-write-to-defence-teams-linked-to-unqualified-court-interpreter/5107515.article>

Articles written by NRPSI supporting regulated and Registered Public Service Interpreters

Listed below are just some of the articles written by NRPSI, with links to each of the pieces and a quote taken from each feature. Many of these have been picked up by both legacy and digital media, such as 'Government Business Magazine' and 'Health Business Magazine'.

11th November 2019, supporting Registrants operating in Health settings:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/public-service-interpreting-nhs-uk-mike-orlov/>

Quote from the article:

Well- trained, qualified and experienced public service interpreters contribute to the safeguarding of human rights. Registrants who voluntarily accept and adhere to the NRPSI Code of Professional Conduct are inspirational beacons to professionalism in language service provision.'

18th June 2020, making the case for regulation and registration in public service interpreting:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/case-registration-regulation-public-service-language-provision-orlov/>

Quote from the article:

'Independent registration and regulation are valuable controls against 'bad-actors'; exposing their poor delivery when compared to those whose goals are anchored in professional delivery in public-sector language-services. Part of NRPSI's mandate when it comes to upholding standards is to flex every muscle to expose and tackle inequities and inequalities which hamper sustained high-quality delivery for the public.'

25th June 2020, advocating access to public services for all, including those who do not speak English:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/lack-english-language-skills-should-mark-someone-out-second-orlov/>

Quote from the article:

'While state resources are clearly not limitless, it is nevertheless critical to set public sector funding priorities on the basis of commitments to quality-principles, not just supply and cost considerations; especially when lives are at stake. The pressure to save money or recoup costs should not be allowed to insidiously undermine the principle of non-discriminatory access to public services and should certainly not hinder access to justice for all and free and clear access to medical services.'

2nd June 2020, a call for statutory recognition of Registered Public Service Interpreters

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/clarion-call-statutory-recognition-registered-public-service-orlov/>

Quote from the article:

'For NRPSI, 'quality' is one of the defining characteristics of the public service interpreting profession. It is the quality of the qualifications and experience of Registrants and the interpreting services they deliver which sets them apart; they represent the pinnacle of the profession. And, of course, the NRPSI Code of Professional Conduct underpinning their professional practice is based on quality and standards.'

11th December 2020, addressing those who engage with public service interpreters

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/do-you-work-public-sector-serving-need-make-use-spoken-mike-orlov/>

Quote from the article:

'If the interpreting function fails, we lay ourselves open to miscarriages of justice; misdiagnoses leading to all sorts of problems for patients, medical professionals and the NHS; and desperate situations for those who need help from our social services. To protect the public, to defend the reputation of the public services and to ensure professionalism in public sector interpreting, always ensure you insist on an independently accredited interpreter who has had their qualifications checked, experience validated and their security clearances reviewed; check the annually updated ID card which is only issued each year after a strenuous renewal process for each Registrant.'

13th January 2021, supporting professional public service interpreters:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/nrpsi-independent-register-regulator-professional-public-mike-orlov/>

Quote from the article:

'Add your voice to those calling for recognition of qualified and experienced public service interpreters. Make your support for statutory recognition known to those in government. Embrace those who have the appropriate qualifications, have gained experience and are prepared to put themselves on the line, adhering to NRPSI's Code of Professional Conduct. Regulated and Registered Public Service Interpreters are there for those who need it most - those who cannot speak English but need to interface with the UK's public services.'

27th April 2021, the future for public service interpreting

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/future-independent-registration-regulation-public-services-mike-orlov/>

Quote from the article:

'Would you accept an unregistered and unregulated doctor diagnosing your ailments? Of course not. Would you accept a barrister acting on your behalf in a trial or bail hearing who has only been approved by a commercial organisation whose primary concern is maximising profits? I very much doubt it. So why accept the services of an interpreter without the appropriate Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) in Health or Law who is not independently registered and regulated? There is no reason why anyone should tolerate this when it is possible to work with a professional and qualified public service interpreter who has at least 400 hours of experience, checked and accredited by the independent, not-for-profit Regulator of spoken word public service interpreting.'

19th May 2021, asking is it futile to demand statutory recognition for professional public service interpreters PART 1

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/blowing-wind-mike-orlov/>

Quote from the article:

'If a public sector organisation calls someone a 'Language Professional' when they are patently untrained, under-qualified or inexperienced, why should we trust that particular public sector organisation? Why would you trust any commercial organisation accepting contractual requirements that drives them to recruit bilingual speakers for government engagements? Are they surrendering standards, ethics and public safety in pursuit of company profits, dividends for owners and shareholder value? Are they encouraging less than acceptable requests from questionably managed public sector organisations which put cost and supply before ensuring spoken word public service interpreters are fit to act on behalf of someone who does not speak English? Sadly, such things are already happening.

Consequently, it is not pointless to pursue statutory recognition for professional public service interpreters; it is not 'blowing in the wind'. Not when public trust lies in independent regulation, in the assurance that professionals are being regulated by the independent body, where there is no interest in maximising revenue from government contracts or reducing costs by paying interpreters lower engagement fees.'

25th May 2021, asking is it futile to demand statutory recognition for professional public service interpreters PART 2

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/tilting-windmills-future-public-service-interpreting-uk-mike-orlov/?trackingId=78%2Bp8%2FY5SX2Gdh%2BQQnDRg%3D%3D>

Quote from the article:

'Clearly, NRPSI still faces very real challenges in its pursuit of statutory recognition for public service interpreting, its protection of the title of Registered Public Service Interpreter (RPSI) and for the independent registration and regulation of RPSIs to become mandatory. However, we are a long way from 'tilting at windmills', and we remain committed to championing and protecting safeguarding-standards for the public. And we are committed to holding to account those who would change or dismantle these standards to suit expediency, profit or ease supply issues by eroding serious and vital matters of principle.'

14th June 2021, lobbying the UK Government for it to be mandatory for public sector organisations to only engage with independently registered and regulated public service interpreting professionals

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/taking-account-accountability-mike-orlov/>

Quote from the article:

'As long as public sector organisations continue to operate without NRPSI's involvement in protecting, maintaining and developing standards, NRPSI will continue to attempt reflective and constructive dialogue with those in authority with the aim of achieving best possible practice in spoken word public service interpreting for one reason only: to protect the public, giving voice to the voiceless, no matter what their mother tongue.

All practitioners and managers in public service organisations should demand that the spoken word interpreters engaged by them are registered with, and regulated by, NRPSI – the independent Regulator for spoken word public service interpreting in the UK. Where would you put your trust: in a commercially-driven agency that recruits, supplies and disciplines those on

their lists as per their commercial contracts with public sector organisations? Or an independent, not-for-profit regulator concerned with protecting the public?'

25th June 2021, extolling the value of independent regulation of public service interpreting

<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/You-will-find-the-latest-NRPSI-article-appearing-in-the-most-recent-edition-of-The-Bulletin-ITI-s-journal-here-click-for-a-short-but-informative-read.html>

Quote from the article:

'Since 1994, NRPSI has been the only independent not-for-profit regulatory body focused purely on professionalising spoken word public service interpreting to protect both the public services and public from poor interpreting practice. Independent registration and regulation will motivate and incentivise government, the public sector and those private companies in the ecosystem to behave in an ethically bound, socially responsible manner. Independent registration and regulation are the only means of holding those in positions of authority to account. The alternative is for them to be able to set and manipulate standards to suit them, as indeed they have been doing.

NRPSI is robustly addressing these issues and aims to achieve recognition of the value of independent registration and regulation across the UK, ensuring quality standards do not slip anymore and you and your colleagues can hold your heads high as recognised and registered public service interpreters.

NRPSI will continue to lobby government organisations and decision-makers for it to be made mandatory for public sector organisations to only engage with independently registered and regulated public service interpreting professionals across all nations in the UK.

NRPSI, which is free from commercial and political influence, will continue to lobby for and represent the public's interests, highlighting poor language services practice and processes in defence of the public service interpreting profession. It is through this activity that your interests will be protected; and adding your voice to this activity will only help speed things up.'

27th July 2021, speaking up for standards in public service interpreting

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/speaking-up-spoken-word-interpreting-standards-mike-orlov/>

Quote from the article:

'Faced with decision-making by public sector organisations which puts the public at risk, we desperately need a UK-wide system of professional registration and regulation for spoken word public service interpreting that is both independent and transparent to ensure the public is protected.

The processes of registration, regulation and accrediting fitness to practice must not be hidden behind closed doors, where public sector organisations and private companies actively block them from public review.'

1st June 2022, Article from Ted Sangster in the Interpreting Academy newsletter and broadcast through LinkedIn channels and NRPSI website

<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Click-here-to-read-the-latest-Interpreting-Academy-newsletter-including-an-article-from-NRPSI-s-outgoing-Chair.html>

Quote from the article:

'The work that interpreters do every day is of vital importance for both the public services and for the clients being interpreted. While the life and death situations quoted at the head of our Strategy may be exceptional, just about every job an interpreter carries out has the potential to change someone's life.

This is why it is crucial that every interpreter working in the public services is properly accredited. It is our mission to ensure that this is accomplished.'

3rd August 2022, Article from Agnieszka Ghanem in the Interpreting Academy newsletter and broadcast through LinkedIn channels and NRPSI website

<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Click-here-to-see-the-6th-issue-of-the-Interpreting-Academy-newsletter.html>

Quote from the article:

'To do things right is to do them by the best possible standards you can find in the industry; standards which have been developed over the last 28 years through advocacy and lobbying for 'protection of title' by the NRPSI, ensuring regulated and Registered Public Service Interpreters have the respect and standing which reflects their professionalism.

Professional interpreters should not only achieve qualifications (where these exist) and continuously update their skills through CPD and experience. They also should respect, and adhere to, the recognised and acclaimed Code of Professional Conduct emphasising the ethics which mark out a professional practitioner.

This code not only guides you in what to do (or not to do) in a professional context, but it also protects you and your rights as a language interpreter. Being regulated by the independent voluntary regulator gives assurance to your prospective clients that you are taking your profession seriously and are accountable for your actions.'

21st March 2023, regarding interpreting and the NHS by Phil Muriel, Non-Executive Director, NRPSI

<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Click-here-for-a-thoughtful-article-by-Phil-Muriel-about-interpreting-in-the-NHS.html>

Quote from the article:

'Would you be shocked to know the NHS routinely uses unqualified interpreters?

If there aren't enough Registered Interpreters to meet demand, the answer isn't to use under-qualified or unqualified individuals; to the contrary, the answer is for the NHS to strengthen its own guidelines and to make it a requirement (not a recommendation) that the interpreters it works with are properly qualified and registered with the appropriate organisation.'

April 2023, Article from Alan Kershaw to be published in the next Interpreting Academy newsletter and broadcast through LinkedIn channels and NRPSI's website

Quote from the article:

'An independent regulator – in this case, the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI), ensuring standards are maintained by all registered professionals. This regulator is a

trusted and reliable guarantor for the competence and conduct of Registrants. Central to its purpose are to:

- *protect the public*
- *nurture trust and confidence in the profession,*
- *deliver independent accreditation of the quality of the service offered by professional Registrants*
- *set professional standards that must be achieved*
- *ensure these are maintained and enhanced*
- *raising the standards, and so the standing, of the profession of public service interpreting.*

Are you doing a job or acting as a professional in public service interpreting?'

Working with other bodies

PI4J (Professional Interpreters 4 Justice) is a highly effective lobbying body representing the institutes, associations, unions and regulator concerned with improving the situation for professional public service interpreters who are registered, regulated and adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct.

The National Register supports the activity of these partners as much as it can. NRPSI promotes the CPD opportunities which are developed for professional practitioners by institutes, associations and training organisations; see <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-and-links/CPD-Events.html> as well as taking part in conferences and meetings. The next conference NRPSI will attend is the CioL conference to ensure public service interpreters have a voice at this important gathering.

Town Hall Meetings

NRPSI has been running a series of Town Hall meetings where Registrants can share their issues and be assured of follow up by the NRPSI secretariat. Areas of concern expressed in these meetings have been passed back to the relevant authorities, as NRPSI ensures Registrants' voices are amplified and heard.

Webinars

Follow this link (<https://we.tl/t-5nid0NMbam>) for an example of the many webinars delivered by NRPSI encouraging professionalism in public service interpreting, targeting those who are interpreters, those who work in public service settings and those who are in positions of authority to instigate changes.

Also see the webinar slides which have been presented a number of times for Registrants who want to improve how they run their own business; <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Managing-Your-Own-Business-webinar-slides-click-here.html>

Perhaps one of the key issues being addressed regularly by NRPSI is the need to review outsourcing as the basis for much public sector interpreting engagement. NRPSI has never stepped away from this issue, as witnessed by the many articles listed above. In June 2022, NRPSI will be addressing outsourcing again at a webinar organised by the AIT; see <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/outsourcing-reviewing-history-and-planning-for-the-future-tickets-272070800087?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

University Presentations

NRPSI has presented over 40 times to university modern language departments in the last 3 years, visiting universities in person prior to the pandemic but continuing the work remotely since the first lock down. These efforts are ensuring a stream of highly educated future public service interpreters are taking level 6 vocational qualifications and are beginning their careers as regulated Registered Public Service Interpreters.

It is valuable to listen to the concerns of undergraduates, postgraduates, early career researchers and faculty. Given this closeness to universities, NRPSI is working with the 'University Council of Modern Languages' (UCML) to lobby the public sector about ensuring fair remuneration, terms and conditions to ensure a future pipeline of professional practitioners.

The above is just some of the recent work carried out by NRPSI.

In summary...

When an interpreter is working in a public service setting, usually in a potentially life-changing or life-threatening interview situation, they are the only person who understands what both of the other parties are saying. If the professional ability and integrity of the interpreter cannot be relied upon, the potential for abuse of the public's trust is clear.

As already noted, NRPSI was set up following findings from a Royal Commission and with help from the Nuffield Foundation to ensure those engaged with as interpreters in the public sector are appropriately qualified, have the right levels of experience, and are ready to carry out interpreting assignments.

NRPSI's core function is to protect the public and the public purse from poor practice in interpreting. The risks and ramifications of not using highly qualified and experienced public service interpreters in the courts, in police interview rooms and in doctors' consulting rooms, to name but a few of the scenarios in which they should be used, is incalculable; why take the risk.

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