

From: Roger Beeson
Sent: 14 June 2012 17:35
To: Paul Parsons
Subject: Addition to the Code of Conduct & Complaints Procedure

Hi Paul

I've been in discussions with several colleagues about the failure of people to use NRCPD's Complaints Procedure. I raised a question on e-newsli about it, which prompted some not too constructive discussion, but also some off-list comment.

We know that the bureaucracy and tedium of making a complaint puts people off, especially Deaf people with lower levels of English. I've seen the process from both sides, and understand how onerous it is. But another key problem is that interpreters themselves are reluctant to address colleagues' sub-standard interpreting and/or professional conduct. I plead guilty on that one. I can confidently give constructive feedback to someone who's open to it, particularly if they've asked for it. But it's a devil when the interpreter is fiercely incompetent. Alone, it can be your opinion against the colleague's - who are you to judge me!!

The ideal situation is when more than one interpreter experiences the misconduct. The interpreter who got suspended last year had been causing damage for years before being captured by groups of interpreters, and her unprofessional reaction to being challenged. But that's relatively uncommon.

Currently there are longstanding concerns about an interpreter X. I am informed that around 20 interpreters would attest to their own adverse experience of X. Several agencies will never employ X again. But as far as I know nobody has ever made a formal complaint.

Personally I have confidentially viewed 2 video tapes showing awful interpreting into BSL by X. The interpreting had happened many months before. The organisation would not allow the video to be shared outside. The organisation's own view was that was up to NRCPD to ensure standards. I could not address the issue with the interpreter, but I know others have, and X is convinced of their high abilities.

The whole system is so financially stretched, that it can't cope with more than a handful of complaints a year, yet alone going out and assess interpreters who are reported to be poor performers.

As a move towards better policing by interpreters themselves, how would one go about embedding the following?:

1. In the Code of Conduct, a duty on interpreters to challenge a colleague's poor professional practice, and if appropriate report the colleague to NRCPD
2. In the Complaints Procedure, to allow a cumulative complaint stretching back over a period which is much more than a month and which isn't about a single event

How do such ideas get considered?

Best wishes

Roger

Roger Beeson
NRCPD Registered Sign Language Interpreter