

## **Meeting with representatives of Visual Language Professionals (VLP)**

**1.30 pm, 22 February 2013, Leeds**

### **Present:**

VLP: Karen Gillespie, Alan Haythornthwaite, David Wycherley

NRCPD: Paul Parsons, Angela Nunn

**Protected Profession Status:** We discussed whether there is a genuine strategy to make sign language interpreting a protected profession. The aim is that only those who are properly trained can call themselves interpreters. Post qualification continuing education (CPD) is a requirement of chartered professions. It was agreed that clear communication is vital to make sure those on the register realise the importance of CPD to get them to protecting their title. The recent update outlined the Board's headlines for strategic intent. At the March Board meeting members will discuss the objectives behind its aims.

**Criminal Record Disclosure:** The Criminal Records Bureau for England and Wales has merged with the Independent Safeguarding Authority to become the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Nothing has changed in England. In Scotland the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme is fully operational. It is now illegal for NRCPD to request sight of CRB disclosure certificates from Scottish applicants. As a result NRCPD is considering moving towards a declaration for this for all applicants. The declaration will be discussed at the Practitioners' Forum and standards advisors will be asked to look at it from the practice point of view. Discussion around the inclusion of competence questions caused some uneasiness. These types of questions are asked by all major professional bodies. 3.4 should be included in section 2. The draft declaration will be shared with Practitioners' Forum members at their meeting next week.

Suggestions for revised questions included asking if there are any medical reasons why you cannot work within the Code of Conduct, or which 'prevent or limit your competence.'

1.7 includes bankruptcy

Clear communication vital in this area.

**CPD/Revalidation for maternity leave/looking after disabled children etc:** VLP

asked how someone can revalidate if they have not done any CPD as been on maternity leave etc. NRCPD will pro rata the CPD hours. If a break extends into two registration years, the total CPD hours will be required in the second year. Self declaration will not be accepted. If someone taking a break for medical reasons NRCPD will need to see evidence.

The fees to be charged to those on extended breaks is to be discussed at the Practitioners' Forum. Possibility of having nominal fee to keep registration, or discount fee next time registration is live. No application fee if inactive. Maximum time allowed for extended breaks 2 years or more?

**Fees 2013/15:** Paul to send VLP the 3 year fee forecast approved by NRCPD board. The aim was to bring all communication professionals to the same fee level in 3 years. The proposed registration fee for 2014 is £205. This will be discussed further at the Practitioners' Forum. Suggestion from Alan: other professions offer free training to communication professionals eg barristers.

**Job Centre Plus:** Alan shared an example of Job Centre Plus using unregistered interpreters. JCP said they would provide their own interpreter, which often was not a qualified interpreter. Royal Mail preferred to use their own Qualified list of interpreters. This was refused on the grounds that JCP interpreters could be provided cheaper.

**SignSafe campaign:** Some VLP members were disappointed that signsafe cards were sent out without them knowing anything about the campaign. They said the cards had been shown to deaf people who didn't find them useful. NRCPD has received positive feedback and the cards are having the desired effect in some places. The cards were developed with Deaf people to make the messages simple. The card is not meant to explain what an interpreter does but to give the public a choice to make a decision to only use those who are safe to practise. Simplicity needed. They are having an effect so far but this will be measured over time.