

Communication barriers in healthcare

Good healthcare requires good communication between you and the professionals caring for you. This can sometimes be a challenge, however. You may, for example, find it hard to express yourself in the local language or cultural barriers may influence communication and that could affect the quality of the healthcare you receive.



Some of these people will simply act as translators while others who are more closely involved with your community may act as a bridge between people of different cultures and the health service to ensure that healthcare is both accessible and understandable. Depending on your needs, you could be attended by one of the following professionals:

- **Translators.**
- **Mediators.**
- **Professionals of foreign origin.**
- **Community health officers.**

Communication can be one of the main problems in healthcare for the immigrant population. One major reason for this is that health can involve a lot of technical terms, or you may be required to give a clear explanation of what you are experiencing.

If you find it hard to express yourself or to understand the main language used in the community where you live, translators will help you to communicate with healthcare staff and make sure that you understand one another during medical consultations or any necessary treatments or operations.

Depending on your needs, these professionals can also provide information about how the healthcare system works and about your rights and responsibilities, as well as services available. Some of these professionals may work with healthcare staff to make them aware of the characteristics and expectations of patients from different cultures.

This is crucial to ensure care that bears in mind and respects cultural differences. This will make you feel better cared for and encourage your involvement in treatments.

How to access these professionals

Depending on availability, public health services will generally assign you one of these professional services to help you. If you have not been offered any such help, however, and are finding it hard to communicate, you may ask the hospital caring for you because many have professionals like these on their teams. You can ask for the services of these people when you meet the medical or nursing team that is looking after you.

You may also ask social workers (see the respective InfoVIHtal sheet), who can tell you how to contact the services of available mediation professionals.

You may also ask a non-governmental organisation (NGO). They can provide you with the information you require. Some, such as Salud Entre Culturas, may even offer such services themselves.



gt grupo de trabajo sobre tratamientos del VIH
ENTIDAD DECLARADA DE UTILIDAD PÚBLICA
ONG DE DESARROLLO



¿TIENES DUDAS
SOBRE EL TEMA?
PREGÚNTANOS

Tel. 93 458 26 41

Descargo de responsabilidad

La información contenida en esta ficha no pretende sustituir la recibida por el médico. Las decisiones referentes a la salud siempre deberían tomarse tras consultar con los profesionales sanitarios. La información médica puede quedar desactualizada con rapidez.

Si te surge alguna pregunta tras leer esta ficha, te aconsejamos hablar con tu médico o enfermera o llamar a gTt-VIH, al 93 458 26 41, para comprobar si existe alguna novedad relevante al respecto.

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