



Provincial Review
Of
ASL/DEAF STUDIES AND INTERPRETER
EDUCATION IN BC

*A research project funded by:
the BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development*

*In Partnership with:
Douglas College
Vancouver Community College*

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“Any where any time any how we always face our own barriers on a daily basis therefore there is never an equal access in communication unless there is a qualified interpreter” (Respondent in Deaf Community survey).

When the clarity and efficiency of communication between two people was not accomplished immediately, the deaf individual almost always end up suffering in the end losing their own advantage, benefits or even a success in their goal (Respondent in Deaf Community survey)

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INTERPRETERS IN BC

Project Advisory Committee

1. Co-Chairs
 - Jan Carrie: Dean CFCS. Douglas College
 - Allison Norman/Dale Hunter: Deans, Language Studies, VCC

2. Membership :
 - Karen Foot: Community Living
 - Susie Giroux: Sorensen Video Relay Services
 - Janice Lyons: Medical Interpreting Services/WIDHH
 - Kirsten Hagemoen: VCC Alumni
 - Cecelia Klassen: Family Network
 - Rhys McCormick: Post –Secondary Communications Access Services
 - Eddy Morten: Deaf-blind Services Society of BC
 - Heather Perry: WAVLI
 - Allison Sands – Douglas College Alumni
 - Patrick Tarchuk: PSDHH

3. Role of the Advisory Committee
 - To provide guidance, input and expertise to the review process
 - To assist the consultant in accessing information relevant to the review
 - To suggest participants for focus groups, surveys and/or interviews
 - To ensure the review process is respectful of Deaf community members
 - To review project recommendations and suggested courses of action

4. Meetings of Advisory Committee

The committee met four times,

 - June 9, 2009 - at the beginning of the review process to discuss project goals, research process, provide contacts to contactors
 - Sept 29, 2009 - upon completion of preliminary research and to brainstorm steering committee input to program structure recommendations
 - Oct 27, 2009 - to review and provide feedback on draft recommendations
 - Nov 23, 2009 - to review first draft of the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

In the spring of 2008, in response to the decision by Vancouver Community College to place its ASL/Deaf Studies program under review for possible cancellation, the Deaf community brought to the attention of VCC and the BC provincial government the dire shortage in B.C. of trained ASL interpreters that limits access to medical care, the legal system, community services and employment for Deaf individuals.

For the past two to three years VCC and Douglas College, the two public post-secondary providers of training in ASL/Deaf Studies and Interpreting have been faced with a paradox of declining program enrolments and high student attrition rates at a time when there is a significant shortage of trained interpreters. As a result, the Colleges requested funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development to facilitate a provincial review of ASL/Deaf Studies and Interpreting instruction that would include following goals:

- To investigate the current and emerging trends of supply and demand of American Sign Language interpreters and signers, affecting Deaf and hard of hearing British Columbians of all ages in accessing education, community services and employment,
- To examine the current delivery of ASL and ASL Interpretation training in British Columbia in the public secondary and post-secondary systems (VCC and Douglas College),
- To research best practices in training models/delivery of ASL instruction and interpreter training in other Canadian provincial jurisdictions,
- To identify the barriers to attracting and retaining young British Columbians to a career in ASL/Interpreting.

It was recommended that the provincial review produce a report that includes recommendations on:

- Strategies to raise career awareness, attract and retain students in ASL and Interpreting,
- A service delivery model for ASL/Deaf Studies and Interpreting instruction within the public secondary and post-secondary systems in BC, which utilizes new technologies as appropriate,
- Resources (financial, human, organizational, technological and curricular) needed to support the recommended service delivery model.

A project advisory committee was established to provide oversight to the review and a project manager and a project consultant were retained. This committee included representatives from the Vancouver Community College and Douglas College PACs, from employer groups and from the Council of Service Providers.

The review involved meetings with and surveys of, current and past students of the VCC ASL/DS program, current and past students of the DC Sign Language Interpretation Program, interviews with Administrators/Faculty at the other four Canadian Interpreter Education programs and at a selected number of leading US Interpreter Education programs. Surveys of the Special Education Administrators for BC School districts and the BC Post-Secondary Disability Service Coordinators, surveys of interpreters in BC through WAVLI and of Canadian interpreters, through AVLIC, survey/interviews of agencies and organizations that work with Deaf/HH populations (national and provincial), surveys of members of the Deaf/HH community through the Family Network for Deaf Children and through analysis of existing data. The review was initiated at the end of May 2009 and completed with the writing of this report in December 2009.

Draft recommendations for best practices were developed based on the research data collected. These were discussed initially with the Advisory Committee, then with administrators for the two BC programs and then with the faculty/staff in the two programs to ensure feasibility for implementation, before their inclusion of the final recommendations in this report.

The recommendations of this report address the following conclusions

1. There is a shortage of Visual Language Interpreters in BC. This shortage is evident across all geographical areas of BC but is critical in many areas outside the Greater Vancouver area. The daily needs/rights of the BC population that are Deaf or Hard of Hearing cannot be adequately met by the existing practicing Visual Language interpreters.
2. There is a need to promote the profession as a Visual Language interpreter (VLI) and to make changes to the educational programs to enhance recruitment/retention into ASL studies, into the ASL/Deaf Studies Certificate and into Interpreting Education programs and careers as Sign Language Interpreters.
3. There is a need to consider “work-readiness” of graduates of two-year Interpreter Education programs and issues of transition from education to work.
4. There is a need to consider the issues of attrition of interpreters from the field and to consider strategies that enhance retention of program graduates as interpreters or in allied careers.
5. There is an ongoing need to enhance the skills of Visual Language Interpreters, especially in specialty areas including interpreting for post-secondary education, K-12 education, medical, mental health, legal, business related and interpreting at advanced levels to meet the needs of deaf professionals and of higher education.
6. There is a need to enhance/develop the two existing programs that prepare students for working with the Deaf/HH, the VCC ASL/Deaf Studies certificate program and the Douglas College Visual Language Interpretation program, to better meet the changing need of the communities they serve and to reflect changing trends and the professionalization of Visual Language Interpreters.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase PR about Interpreting as a profession.
2. Enhance recruitment into Interpreter Education by restructuring the Sign Language Interpretation Program at Douglas College as a Degree program. (Recommendation #14) Graduates with a BA could progress to other fields with their BA - such as to teaching, graduate programs in Deaf Studies, as well as allowing lateral transfer with credit into other degree programs. A program that allows transfer of credit into other degree programs and/or accepts transfer credit from other UT/Career programs into Interpreter Education would enhance recruitment.
3. Enhance “professionalism” of interpreting career to make it more attractive as a career in current social environment.
4. Increase financial support for students in ASL/Deaf Studies and Interpreter Education Programs through work with College Foundations for additional targeted bursaries, scholarships, and by seeking forgiveness for Student Loan/Grant .
5. Provide upgrading and advancement for current and future interpreters by facilitating the laddering to a degree option, based on recommendation for an Interpreting Degree program. (Recommendation # 14).

6. Regular meetings should be structured between the VCC ASL/Deaf Studies program faculty and the DC Sign Language Interpretation program faculty to discuss issues - curricular, professional, administrative - that impact across programs. These meetings should include the respective Deans/Associate Deans for these programs, and should be initiated as soon as possible
7. As the learning of ASL is the first, and prerequisite step in the education as an interpreter and as there is a critical shortage of qualified ASL instructors, that the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development and the Ministry of Housing and Social Development consider financial support for those Deaf individuals who are interested in taking the DC ASL Instructor program.
8. That the Ministry of Advanced Education and Ministry of Education facilitate increased offering of ASL courses for credit as a second language in secondary schools and at post-secondary institutions.
9. That the VCC ASL/DS certificate program remain as a one-year certificate program.
10. That, although there are distinct program and resource advantages to co-location of the two programs, it is recommended that, in the immediate future, the ASL/DS certificate remain at VCC and that program energies be directed to enhancing the existing program and building closer ties between the two programs.
11. That the ASL/DS Certificate program consider restructuring some of current curricular materials into more academic course (i.e. Sociology of Deaf culture), with potential for transfer credit.
12. That consideration be given to offering some and/or all courses of the VCC ASL/DS certificate through a distance delivery model, perhaps in partnership with other colleges outside the lower mainland and/or in partnership with the Outreach Program for the Deaf or Hard of Hearing Students and/or directly with school districts that lack individuals qualified in ASL interpretation
13. That, in the development of the above recommendations consideration also be given to developing a course that is more focussed to the needs of a Special Education Assistant working in the K-12 system
14. That the current two-year diploma Sign Language Interpretation Program be restructured as a degree program. Entry into the program should be at year two with appropriate prerequisites that meet year one requirements, one option of which would be the completion of the VCC ASL/DS certificate. That discussion and planning for this option begin as soon as feasible.
15. That the current two-year diploma program and/or a restructured degree program in Sign Language Interpretation remain at Douglas College.
16. That the restructuring to a degree program be initiated by adding a fourth year and reorganizing existing courses to incorporate the breadth/academic elective requirements. It is further recommended that the breadth requirements (where possible) be consistent with a declared specialization for interpreter education i.e. nursing biology for those intending to specialize in medical interpreting, criminology coursed for those intending to work in legal interpreting, Early Childhood Education/Classroom Support Worker courses for those intending to work in the K-12 education system, and so on.

17. That if, in the future, the certificate and degree programs are co-located at one college, there should continue to be a separate certificate program that serves broader learning needs than entry into the Interpreter Education program.
18. That, if a degree program is established at Douglas College, careful consideration be given as to how individuals who have previously graduated from the DC Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR) may be able to access the appropriate courses to allow them to upgrade to a degree.
19. That some individual theory courses (where suitable) in a restructured degree program in Sign Language Interpretation be opened to DC students in other programs or to General Studies students.
20. It is recommended that Douglas College apply to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development for an increase to the Program funding level for the Douglas College Sign Language Interpretation program.
21. It is recommended that Douglas College seek a onetime only grant from the Ministry of Advanced Education, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Housing and Social Development to facilitate the establishment of a dedicated lab for the Interpreter Education Program, This could best be done in consideration of restructuring to a degree program and, if possible, in partnership with a corporate sponsor.
22. The creation of a degree program would require the recruitment and hiring of faculty with advanced degrees. Future hires to the DC Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR) should make this a priority. Furthermore, it will be important for program credibility to maintain an appropriate balance of hearing and Deaf instructors.
23. In any restructuring to a degree program, Douglas College needs to be aware of changing technology that will in future provide alternatives for person-to-person interpretation. Interpreters will need to be more computer savvy.
24. In any restructuring to a degree program, Douglas College should consider the integration of service learning or a co-op option to increase applied learning for interpreting students.
25. It is recommended that the interpreter education program have access to a dedicated Sign Language Interpretation lab.
26. It is recommended that a dedicated drive be established for the DC Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR) faculty and students.
27. As the ASL/Deaf studies program is a provincially unique program and an important prerequisite to Interpreter Education, that the technology needs of this program be reviewed and provided targeted Ministry Grants and/or some priority in VCC capital budget allocations to ensure access to updated resources for students This could best be done in conjunction with the above recommendations for program enhancement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the work done by Jan Lindsey and Jan Carey (at Douglas College) and Allison Norman (at Vancouver Community College) who identified the need for this review, and who developed the project proposal. We would also like to thank the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Development who recognized the value of facilitating this important research and provided the funds to complete this comprehensive provincial review.

We wish to acknowledge all the individuals who have contributed in so many ways to this report, especially the members of the Advisory Committee who gave time from their busy schedules to provide directions, provide feedback, critique the findings and make introductions to others who contributed to the information in this Report.

We wish to thank the many administrators and faculty at the Canadian Interpreter Education Programs and those American Interpreter Education programs we contacted. All gave willingly of their time and expertise to add depth and value to this review process. Special thanks to Cheryl Palmer, program coordinator at Douglas College, and Vincent Chauvet, program coordinator at Vancouver Community College, for providing information, answering many questions about program operations and for organizing the meetings of their respective departments.

We wish to thank the members of the many organizations/agencies, community groups, educational institutions and the individuals we contacted, who contributed their expertise, viewpoints and insights to the important questions posed by this provincial review. Thanks also go out to all the individuals who took the time to respond to our various questionnaires and surveys, especially to all the interpreters who took the time to respond to yet another survey. Their feedback was invaluable to the development of the recommendations.

A thank-you to Barbara Hill and Rosemarie Bernardo for their administrative support and for making arrangements for meetings of and contacts with the project advisory committee. Special thanks to Anne Gapper and to Lidia Peter-Wallesch, for their administrative support and for arranging for the final editing, organization and printing of this report.

The work done for this review has provided us with opportunity for ongoing learning. It has been our pleasure to work with the Deaf Community and its representative organizations.

Mia Gordon
Monte Hardy

THE REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Sign Language interpreting requires rapid mental processing and above-average intellect; maturity, emotional stability and the ability to deal with stress; appropriate cross-cultural, social and linguistic skills; and the ability to interpret comfortably in front of large audiences as well as in highly-sensitive, personal settings. Entrance into the program, therefore, requires a person to be mentally, physically, emotionally, linguistically and culturally able to carry out the tasks required in the job as a Sign Language interpreter.

(Douglas College Calendar)

1.1 General Information on Interpreting as a Profession

Communication is essential for learning, for development of one's sense of self and for building effective relationships. Most people take for granted the ease of verbal and auditory communications that are part of all aspects of their daily life. However, for a Deaf person, communication with hearing people is a daily challenge and they face many barriers in their efforts to communicate even the most basic information.

A sign language interpreter is a professional who facilitates communication between Deaf people and hearing people. The process of interpreting is complex, and involves the ability to accurately represent a message expressed in one language, its meaning and intent including its cultural components, into another language with its cultural components, without changing the meaning. The goal is that interpretation conveys the same message to those who utilize a second language as would be conveyed directly to those who receive the original message in their own language. This process is complex and, to some degree, often imprecise.

An individual with a high level of ASL is not necessarily a good interpreter. Interpreters need to be highly skilled and culturally aware in order to accurately convey meaning from one individual, one language and culture, to another. In the view of many Deaf people, a trained and qualified professional interpreter to assist Communications between hearing people and Deaf people is their right (CAD 2007).

Clifton Carbin in his book 'Deaf Heritage in Canada'. (1996) provides a historical overview of the utilization of interpreters in Canada. Carbin describes how sign language interpreting in earlier times was provided mostly by volunteers who had little or no professional training, often family members of the Deaf individual. He notes some professional interpreters were acknowledged in the literature, dating from the late 1800's. These often were individuals who worked in Schools for the Deaf.

Sign Language interpreting as a career or a profession dates from the late 60's early 70's. In the 70's there was a general shift in how the interpreter's role was perceived - away from that of "friend/helper," (and often a volunteer) toward that of "trained professional" (paid.) The

recognition of interpreters as a specific career led to the establishment of provincial professional associations. A national association, the Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada (AVLIC) was established in 1979. It represents ASL-English interpreters in advancing the profession by promoting high standards with and for its members. Currently, almost every province has its provincial chapters. In BC, the Western Association of Visual Language Interpreters (WAVLI) was founded in 1987. It has about 186 members and has become the largest chapter in Canada.

The first formal interpreter educational programs in Canada were generally one-year programs. However, members of the Deaf Community, parents of Deaf children and professionals working in Interpreter Education programs voiced concerns about the skill levels of these program's graduates (McDermid, 2008). In response to these criticisms, and as a result of ongoing research and review of effective strategies for education of interpreters, most Canadian programs developed into two-year or three diploma programs plus a prerequisite one-year certificate with emphasis on learning ASL language skills and Deaf Culture.

Over the past half century of formalized Interpreter education the field has evolved relatively quickly, from volunteers with ASL knowledge, to graduates of one-year certificate programs, to graduates of two/three year diploma programs that have a one-year ASL/Deaf Studies certificate as a prerequisite. Today, with the identified needs for higher levels of education and higher levels of interpreting skills to meet the needs of specialty areas such as medical, legal, business, advanced education, and K-12 education, there are increasing pressures to move Interpreter education to degree programs, in both Canada and the US. The decision by RID to require degrees by 2012, reflects this trend.

In the US, the number of Interpreter Education programs has grown from 2 in 1968, to 14 in 1978, to 55 in 1988, to 85 in 1998, to 130 in 2008 (NCIEC 2008, page 8) of which 30% are Bachelor Degree programs (NCIEC, 2009). This dramatic growth in the US was fuelled by strong federal legislation: the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) with its precursor the Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975, that legislated the rights of Deaf/HH Americans to have access to interpreter services. The Rehabilitation Act also authorizes a variety of training and research grants, providing support for the growth and development of Interpreter Education in the United States, and providing support for some students enrolled in Interpreter Education programs.

Although Canada has not passed similar strong federal legislation regarding the rights of the Deaf to interpreters in education and in accessing services provided to the public, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Human Rights Acts (both federal and provincial), prohibiting discrimination based on disabilities, impact on the right of the Deaf/HH to interpreter services. A number of court cases and Human Rights tribunal decisions have recognized the rights of Deaf/HH Canadians to have access to interpreter services (see section on legislation.) However, there have been no targeted federal or provincial funds to support the provision of interpreter services, the development of Interpreter Education programs or for the support of students enrolled in such programs. Thus, Canadian legislation has had very limited impact on Canadian interpreter education programs, and Canada has not experienced a similar growth. The number of programs has remained fairly stable since the 90's, although the locations and the structures of the programs have changed. Currently there are five programs in Canada, one of which is a degree program.

1.2 Certification/Accreditation

In Canada, the only national process for certification of the professional interpreter has been developed by and is administered by the Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada (AVLIC) - the Canadian Evaluation System (CES). However the number of individual interpreters accredited through this process is low - 9% (53) of Canadian interpreters responding to our survey have the Certificate of Interpretation (COI) designation. Only 9 interpreters in BC have COI designation. 13% (26) of respondents from the Canadian interpreter survey indicated that they have tried and failed the CES. The low numbers are attributed to the cost of preparing for and taking the written and performance part of the test and to what many members perceived as a low success rate. Also, there is little incentive to follow this credentialing process as employers seldom require COI designation.

In our survey of Canadian sign language interpreters 11% of respondents indicated that they are registered with RID in the US. This provides them the opportunity to refer to themselves as registered interpreters. However, that will become more difficult in the future as RID has stated that, by 2012, a degree will be required for registration. As only one program in Canada is a degree program and as it graduates an average of three interpreters per year, registration with RID will no longer be an option for the majority of the graduates of Canadian Interpreter Education programs.

In BC there are two additional screening procedures. The first is the Post-Secondary Sign Language Screen (PSS), for interpreters who wish to work in post-secondary education. In a survey of BC interpreters 47% of respondents indicate that they have passed the PSS. It is generally required by Post-secondary Institutions. However, due to interpreter shortages, most institutions will utilize interpreters without this certification, although usually at slightly lower per hour rates. The screen is facilitated through the BC Post-Secondary Communication Access Services (PCAS), who also provides workshops and some individual tutoring to interpreters in preparation for passing the screening process.

The second BC screening process is the Medical Interpreting Screen developed by the Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (WIDHH) which is responsible for Medical Interpreting Service (MIS) and is funded by the Medical Services Plan of British Columbia (MSP). This service was established as a result of the Eldridge vs. British Columbia Supreme Court decision in 1997. MIS provides sign language interpreters, oral interpreters, and Deaf Interpreters where necessary for effective communication in the delivery of health care services. MSP will provide interpreting services for those services that are billable but do not cover para-health services such as physiotherapy, chiropractor or dental services. MIS will organize professional interpretation for non-urgent and emergent situations such as admission assessment, consultation visits, and patient/family conferences (from MIS website). In a survey of BC interpreters close to 33% indicated that they have passed the MIS screening. Interpreters who have COI designation have the MIS screening requirements waived.

1.3 Interpreter as a Profession

Sign Language Interpreters have several options including working as a freelance contractor, working in an agency or for a service provider offering regular hours of work, or a combination of the two. Freelance work allows the sign language interpreter to choose jobs that fit their skills, needs and schedule. They can get jobs through booking agencies, contract with agencies that hire interpreters regularly or take on jobs that are placed on a list-serve with WAVLI. Agencies such as schools (K-12), video relay operator, or service agencies who utilize interpreters frequently are sources of regular wage and income. 34% of Canadian interpreters who responded to our survey indicated that they combine permanent ongoing interpreting positions

with freelance work. 28% of respondents said that they only do ongoing interpreting work and 26% of interpreters engage in freelancing in a variety of settings. The following table from the Canadian national survey of Interpreters provide information on areas of employment

Indicate the approximate percentage of your interpreting work in each of the areas (equal to 100%):							
Answer Options	0%	1-10%	11-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%	Response Count
General	13	53	33	15	6	9	128
Medical	27	45	27	17	8	2	126
Legal	55	34	8	5	2	0	104
Business	23	45	15	14	7	2	105
Mental Health	42	38	17	9	2	1	109
Social Services	27	54	22	5	5	1	114
K-12 Education	60	7	4	3	9	21	103
Post-Secondary Education	32	30	16	17	21	24	140
Vocational Training	51	19	8	4	1	6	88
Vocational Rehabilitation	49	29	2	4	1	0	85
Video Relay	61	20	1	2	0	1	85
Religious/Social/Family	50	22	11	11	9	15	118
	35	58	8	2	2	1	106
answered questions							194

The types of freelance work that interpreters are willing to accept are influenced by several factors: wages, location, minimum hours for callout, and travel allowances. The most significant factor was the location of the interpreting job (90%), followed by hourly rates (70%), and minimum hours for callout (47%). The typical minimum hours for an interpreting job are 2 hours. Travel allowances were important for 24% of respondents.

In Canada, there continues to be some confusion by hearing agencies, government services, and community services providers about who can be called or considered a sign language interpreter. Currently, the accepted standards to be considered a professional interpreter are graduation from an Interpreter Education Program and active membership with the provincial association of the professional chapter (in BC, WAVLI) of the national professional organization - AVLIC. Agencies surveyed (both interpreting and social services) all required graduation from an interpreter education program and membership in a provincial association as part of their hiring requirements. These agencies have frequent use of sign language interpreters and understand qualifications. Many agencies or businesses that may occasionally hire sign language interpreters do not understand the standards for sign language interpreters in terms of training and certification.

Due to a shortage of professional interpreters in rural areas these standards may not be applied as rigidly, or at all. For example, paid interpreting, especially in the K-12 system, and in rural communities, may still be provided by individuals who have taken some ASL courses or who have learned ASL because they grew up in families that used ASL as the primary means of communications. Volunteer interpreting may also be provided by family members, friends and signers when professional interpreters are not available or not affordable. However, the use of volunteer interpreters is not the preferred means of communication for Deaf community members and it is only out of necessity that they are used.

Interpreter education programs are currently experiencing pressures for further development in order to graduate interpreters with higher levels of interpreter skills especially in specialty areas such as medical, legal, business and higher education. In the Deaf community survey 76% of respondents indicated that they always expect that their interpreters are properly trained and certified. Deaf people in professional occupations indicated that while the current interpreters are well trained they need further education/experience to increase their skills and general knowledge in order to meet professional needs. Examples such as college level curriculum, mental health assessments, understanding of physiology, medical terms, facilitation, negotiations, educational assessments and the like were given as areas that interpreters needed further training.

One Deaf respondent, in response to the question, "Should interpreters be properly trained and certified?", stated "*Always!!! Especially in professional, academic, legal, medical areas. When the clarity and efficiency of communication between two people was not accomplished immediately, the deaf individual almost always ends up suffering in the end losing their own advantage, benefits or even a success in their goal.*"

1.4 Title Protection

Over the years a number of different titles/names have been given to and assumed by individuals providing interpretation services to the Deaf, hard of hearing and Deaf-Blind. These include Sign Language Interpreter, ASL-English Interpreter, Visual Language Interpreter, Deaf-Blind Interpreter Deaf Interpreter or Interpreter.

In Canada, occupational title protection falls under provincial jurisdiction. In reaction to non-qualified individuals working in BC, and referring to themselves as Interpreters, often with resultant complaints/ problems encountered by consumers, WAVLI is currently pursuing title protection for three titles most commonly used by professional interpreters working in field:

- Registered Sign Language Interpreter (R.S.L.I.)
- Registered ASL-English Interpreter (R.A.S.L.E.I.)
- Registered Visual Language Interpreter (R.V.L.I.)

This has been a long process, which necessitated other actions by WAVLI including amendments to their bylaws to include a Code of Ethics and an Internal Dispute Resolution Process and to include more stringent membership requirements. Their membership requirements moved from self-identification as an "interpreter" to the current requirement of graduation from Interpreter Education program, and active membership in WAVLI / AVLIC (some past members would be grandfathered.) They started the process to title protection almost 10 years ago and WAVLI has now submitted their application to the Provincial Government of British Columbia. The Alberta Chapter of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (ACRID) is the only other provincial chapter actively pursuing title protection.

2. SUPPLY AND DEMAND OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

2.1 Current and Emerging Trends of Supply and Demand of ASL Interpreters

The availability of qualified professional interpreters is driven by the number of individuals attracted to the study of American Sign Language and to the study of ASL-English interpretation, the number of interpreters that are graduated from a recognized College/University Interpreter Education program and the rates for the retention and attrition of qualified, professional interpreters in their field of practice.

The determination of the number of sign language interpreter to meet the needs of the Deaf population is an important consideration of the supply and demand issue. According to Joe McLaughlin, in his unpublished dissertation (2009), and citing a paper by J. Baily and S. Straub (1992) the accepted ratio for sign language interpreter to people who are Deaf is one to twelve. They then estimated in 1992 that the US requirements of sign language interpreters to meet the need would be approximately 25,000 for 350,000 Deaf people in the US. The estimate of this ratio was cited well before the advent of Video Relay Services which was available to the Deaf population in 2000.

In the United States, in spite of the availability over 130 programs of interpreter education, there is an ongoing reported shortage of sign language interpreters across the nation. Each of the American programs interviewed for this report stated that there was demand for more Sign Language Interpreters. In 2006 the United States Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration, in response to the ongoing lack of interpreters and concerns about the quality of interpreters, funded the establishment of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC). The NCIEC works to address the shortage of interpreters through research and education, and has five regional centers in addition to their national center at Northeastern University. The centers work together in their goal to increase the number of qualified interpreters and advance the field of interpreting and interpreting education. The US Dept of Rehab Services also provides grants for activities related to interpreter education including grants to post-secondary institutions for research, support for professional activities, and support for students attending a number of Interpreter Education programs.

2.2 Canadian

Across Canada, a number of surveys and reports have documented the shortage of qualified professional sign language interpreters including the Department of the Secretary of State, (1987); Dubiensi, (1988); the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, (1992); the Ontario Association of the Deaf, (1993); Schwenken (2003); the Canadian Hearing Society, (2004); the Vancouver Sun (2008)

In a survey completed in April, 2009 by the Canadian Association of Disability Service providers in Postsecondary Education (CADSPPE), of 44 institutions (Universities/Colleges) responding from 8 provinces, 39% of respondents indicated they had asked students to utilize other forms of communication services because interpreters were not available and 28% indicated that students had been "unable" to attend the program for which they had been admitted because the appropriate service(s) could not be secured.

The Canadian Association of the Deaf in their position paper on Interpreting (2007) states that "There is a critical lack of interpreters in Canada, and a widespread lack of understanding of their role." Stats Canada's census of 2006 indicated that the population of Canada was just over 31

million people. Utilizing the internationally accepted statistics for Deaf people of 1 in 1,000 and using Baily and Straub's estimate of 1 interpreter for 12 Deaf people as a standard then Canada should have approximately 2600 sign language interpreters to properly meet the needs of Deaf Canadians. AVLIC has only 618 registered sign language interpreters. A number of interpreters who work in the K-12 system and some community are not registered with their provincial chapters and the national association so are unaccounted for in this estimation.

All professionals interviewed for this report have stated that there is an ongoing shortage of qualified interpreters in all areas of Canada. The shortage is acute in non-metropolitan areas but is also felt in all major cities, especially the lack of qualified interpreters with education in specialty areas such as medical, legal, higher education and K-12 education. In the national survey of interpreters done for this report, 83% believed there is an interpreter shortage. Surveys of parents of Deaf and hard of hearing children and Deaf community members also concur that there is a shortage of interpreters.

Individuals who are deaf, deafened or hard-of-hearing are becoming more aware of their right to access professional interpreter services, reinforced by court action, human rights and charter decisions. The impending demand for sign language interpreters for Video Relay Services and the increasing numbers Deaf/HH adults continuing through and returning to education and to advanced education, fuels an ongoing need for increased numbers of qualified, professional interpreters.

2.3 British Columbia

In BC, there is a critical lack of access to qualified, professional interpreters to meet many of the needs of Deaf and hard of hearing in all facets of their lives: education, medical, mental health, legal, government services, business, work settings, religious meetings and community services. Given the estimate of the number of Deaf people who use sign language as 4,455 in British Columbia and utilizing the estimate of 1 interpreter for 12 Deaf people there would be approximately 371 sign language interpreters needed to meet the need of BC Deaf citizens. Currently, there are only 186 registered members of WAVLI. This means that an additional 139 trained interpreters are needed to bring the ratio of interpreters to Deaf people to acceptable standards.

People who are Deaf and hard of hearing profoundly feel the inequity of communication access, something most people take for granted. One respondent said, *'I often feel like I have to be put on a level down under from other hearing people because I can't receive equal information or equal right to picking my own day/time of appointments.'* (See appendix ---- for more personal responses received by the researchers). There is a growing sense of anger and frustration expressed by many Deaf people in British Columbia. Children and adults in the education system are not adequately served and the opportunities for the Deaf/HH to move into careers and professions that enable them to self sufficient, contributing members of our communities through education are severely impacted.

In surveys done for this report, when asked if there were shortages in availability of qualified professional interpreters the responses were

- K-12 District Special Education Contacts – 73% yes, 19% didn't know
- Post –secondary Disability Service Coordinators – 40% yes for GVR and 81% yes for areas outside GVA (Note some replied only for own region) As well 72% of the respondents indicated that in the past two years they had been unable to hire sufficient qualified interpreters to meet students' educational needs.
- Deaf Community – 100% yes
- Parents – 90% yes

- Canadian Interpreters 83% yes
- BC Interpreters 89% yes

In some informal community surveys prior to this provincial review project, the Well Being Program (WBP) reported that between the months of January – May 2008, they were forced to cancel 15 appointments for clients (mental health services), 9 appointments for clients (addiction) services and 5 staff training events were cancelled due to unavailability of interpreters. For the same period (January – May 2008) Medical interpreting services (MIS) had 177 appointments that they were not able to fill and the Community Interpreting services (CIS) had 112 appointments they were not able to fill due to shortage of interpreters.

Replies to several surveys completed for this report indicate that the opening of Video Relay Service call centers in Burnaby and in Victoria in 2008 by an American company, Sorenson Communications, to provide services for Americans, impacted significantly on the availability of qualified interpreters in Vancouver and Victoria. The positive outcome of the VRS call centers is that Sorenson provides “regular” employment for Visual Language Interpreters, with attractive wage scales and opportunity for professional development. The negative outcome is that it removed qualified interpreters from being available for freelance contract work in other service areas, heightening what was already a critical shortage of interpreters in the Lower Mainland.

The Canadian Radio and Television Commission held hearings in November 2008 on “Unresolved issues related to the accessibility of telecommunications and broadcasting services to persons with disabilities”. The CRTC released, among other items, a statement on Video Relay Services. They ordered Telus and Bell to implement trials of the VRS in order to gather more information about costs and operational issues. They recognized that the VRS will include highly-skilled interpreters in ASL and LSQ to provide services. The trials will have a near future impact the availability of interpreters in British Columbia and Alberta (Telus trials) as well as Ontario and Quebec (Bell VRS trials). With the eventual full service the demand for qualified sign language interpreters will continue to increase.

In an attempt to address the issue of the shortage of interpreters, the (BC) Council of Service Providers has established an Interpreter Recruitment Committee, a subcommittee of the council. They have taken a number of initiatives - writing letters to various related Ministers in BC highlighting impacts of this shortage, a meeting with then the Ministry of Education, work to seek BC Student Loan forgiveness for interpreting students (as is currently in place for some other professions) and the production of a promotional DVD, to be utilized to recruit interpreters (now near completion.)

There are many factors impacting on the availability of interpreters in BC (and in Canada.) The most obvious is the low numbers of interpreters graduating from interpreter education programs, 21 across Canada in 2007/08 and 30 in 2008/09. In BC, 66 students have graduated from the Douglas College Interpreter Education Program over the past 5 years. The fact that the interpreter education programs have had major issues with recruitment and retention of students, has only compounded the problem

WAVLI provided current demographic information on interpreters (registered with WAVLI) availability in BC. We did not obtain statistics relevant to the number of individuals who were Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing living in the various regions of BC, although agencies that serve the need of the Deaf exist in mid size cities in most regions of BC

However, we can compare the numbers provided by WAVLI to the number of Deaf/HH children reported in the relevant school districts and in post-secondary institutions in the various regions of BC. The numbers for students in school districts (2008/2009 reported numbers) are approximate as geographical regions of school districts may not conform to WAVLI geographical regions.

REGION	# REGISTERED INTERPRETERS (including DI)	# K-12 DEAF AND HH STUDENTS	# POST-SEC. DEAF/HH STUDENTS
Lower Mainland	139	617	209
Island Region	25	172	25
Thompson-Okanagan	13	170	10
BC Rockies	1	41	1
Northern BC	2	107	0
Howe Sound, Central Coast	0	26	0

Only 16 out of 59 BC School Districts report utilizing qualified professional interpreters in the provision of services for the Deaf/HH students. Districts cite lack of qualified interpreters, cost of qualified interpreters, difficulty of recruiting interpreters into school district positions (placement on staff compensation scale) and lack of fit between roles of interpreters and position expectations for work in the K-12 system.

For the Post-secondary system, 72% of the responding institutions stated that over the past two years they had occasions where they were unable to hire sufficient interpreters to meet students' educational needs. Of these 47% stated it was due to no available interpreters, and 61% responded they did not have interpreter to meet all teaming requirements. Students have had to change their schedule to match interpreter availability (38%), have delayed taking their course/program (38%), have utilized other accommodation (38%), or have transferred to another institution (15%).

2.4 Deaf Perspectives on Interpreters and Interpreting Needs

“Any where any time any how we always face our own barriers on a daily basis therefore there is never an equal access in communication unless there is a qualified interpreter” (Respondent Deaf Community survey).

The Deaf community across Canada value the sign language interpreter as a means of relaying and receiving accurate information. 75% of Deaf community respondents indicated that they prefer the use of an ASL interpreter but indicated that there were not enough interpreters (90%).

Many of the respondents indicated that because interpreters were not available and/or affordable, they resorted to writing notes back and forth (50%), using family or friends (37%), or cancelling/postponing meetings (37%) The alternatives were clearly less than satisfactory for many Deaf people. Respondents indicated that their English was not as good so misunderstanding was common. Others said that using family or friends impinged on their privacy but could not see other options. Finally cancelling or postponing meetings or appointments were frustrating and resulted in many unnecessary delays.

Given the barriers in communication between Deaf and hearing people in all settings, the lack of interpreters exacerbates that barrier and further isolates them from many important services and sources of information. The shortage of qualified interpreters affects deaf people of all ages, in school and at work. Deaf individuals struggle to access interpreters for everyday living needs. Students wishing to pursue higher education struggle to access interpreters qualified to work in

such settings. Mainstreamed deaf children often have poor quality interpreters or no interpreter, especially those in rural areas.

2.5 Current Issues of Recruitment and Retention of ASL-English Interpreters

2.5.1 Recruitment

Through the surveys, most current and past students and many of the contacts in post-secondary institutions identified the lack of knowledge available to the students in secondary schools, about interpreting as a career, as a major issue in attracting young people into the field.

Individuals currently registered in either the VCC ASL/DS program or the DC Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR) stated they had learned about interpreting as a career, when they were taking ASL courses. The survey of VCC certificate graduates indicated that 76% learned about interpreting as a career while registered in the certificate program and 77% of graduates obtained the information on the VCC certificate program by research on the web. Many of the responses indicate that students had returned to learning ASL and Deaf Studies because they had worked with Deaf/HH as part of previous work and became interested in ASL.. Many were attracted to the learning of ASL as a language and then investigated possibilities for employment utilizing the newly learned language skills. There were also many responses that indicated that an increased opportunity to take ASL classes either as part of secondary school, adult studies and/or as credit courses for student enrolled in other post-secondary studies to build increased interest and knowledge of ASL and Deaf cultures, would attract more individuals to ASL studies, the necessary prerequisite to becoming an interpreter..

Students in the VCC certificate program, when asked if they were continuing to Douglas College diploma program, expressed their concern that the programs did not result in a degree nor did it give them any transferable credit to other degree programs, either upon completion of the diploma, or if they wished to change career directions either while in the program or at some point in their future. They expressed the view that three plus years of post-secondary studies with no transfer credit or degree options was “not-fair” and gave that as a reason for not continuing into the Douglas College Interpreter Education (INTR) program. Students currently enrolled in the Douglas College program expressed similar concerns but stated that they were committed to becoming an interpreter, in spite of lack of degree, and 57% indicated they planned to go on to a degree program at some point in the future.

Although Douglas College has negotiated block transfer credit to the University of the Fraser Valley and to Athabasca university, graduates who pursue the transfer to UFV have remarked that, due to lack of credit for specific discipline courses, they needed to take some year 1 and 2 courses in order to take the senior year courses in their chosen major (i.e. take Psychology 100/200 as prerequisite to year three and four Psychology courses) This meant that in spite of the two-year block transfer into a four year degree program they needed to do three more years to attain their degree. In essence they needed to do six plus years to obtain a four year degree (1 year certificate plus prerequisite ASL courses, 2 year INTR diploma and three years at the university). And, of course, a degree is required if individuals wish to move into more senior/professional positions that require degrees and/or enter any graduate programs. These challenges for interpreters obtaining degrees exist, in spite of a huge lack of individuals with undergraduate degrees and graduate degrees required to work in Canadian Interpreter Education, Deaf Studies, and Teachers of the Deaf/HH education programs.

2.5.2 Retention

There are many facets to working as an interpreter that make it attractive as a profession. These include the flexibility of being an independent contractor, the wide variety of interesting places for work, especially in community interpreting, the satisfaction of working with a client, and relatively high hourly wages for many freelance contracts.

There are a number of factors that negatively impact on the retention of interpreters. They include health issues /related health problems such as carpal tunnel syndrome and tendonitis, and psychological pressures from work in stressful situations, the stress/uncertainty of contract employment, issues of trust and dependency/confidence between interpreter and consumer, and the time pressures of simultaneous interpreting (speed of talk, cross cultural impact). Survey responses also cited role conflict in the K-12 education system; employment related issues such as job stability/workload fluctuation, low wages for some staff positions and/or the overall annual compensation with no benefits for freelance interpreters. For rural areas other factors include a need for some base level of guaranteed work to remain in a smaller community, lack of support systems and other interpreters for teaming, and access to professional development and upgrading courses

In our survey of Canadian interpreters the majority of respondents (31%) have been interpreting for less than five years followed closely by those interpreting for 6 to 10 (22%) and 11 to 15 years (21%). 16% of respondents have been interpreting for over 20 years. 18% indicated that they are planning on retiring from interpreting in the next 10 years

Respondents provided the following reasons, in ranked order, for why they think people leave the interpreting field: Health, Job stability, wage/benefits, job conditions, isolation/lack of support, personal /professional reasons, politics, lack of professional development, lack of satisfaction/recognition, frustrations/discouragement, and role confusion.

2.5.3 Related Health Problems

Of 181 respondents 52% indicated that health related reasons were the primary reason that interpreters were leaving the field. These included medical (RSI), burnout, stress, and exhaustion.

ASL utilizes movement of the hands, wrists, arms and trunk with facial expressions to convey meaning, to communicate. Thus ASL is a much more physical process than conveying meaning through speech. There has been considerable research and publication on the prevalence of pain/discomfort, especially carpal tunnel syndrome and neck/shoulder pains, among sign language interpreters, (Woodcock and Fischer, 2008). Fisher and Woodcock (2007) report that nearly one in four interpreters have been diagnosed with tendonitis, arthritis or carpal tunnel syndrome. A study by the Rochester Institute of Technology determined that interpreters are at high risk for ergonomic injury, compounded by increased mental and cognitive stress, and that the impact on retention is a major issue (Science Daily, 2008). Maintaining practices that may decrease the physical impact of sign language interpreting and may prevent injury are crucial to avoiding early attrition from practice

Some research has demonstrated that the requirements of a professional interpreter to interpret what is presented and to suppress their own thoughts, feelings and reactions/emotional response to any given situation may increase the stress for the interpreters (Dean and Pollard, 2001.) This is noted as especially prevalent for those interpreting in emotionally charged environments such as critical illness, legal issues, family crisis, drug and alcohol dependencies and so on.

It is observed that the team-interpreting, where interpreters do not have long continuous periods of interpreting, reduces physical stress and potential injury. Unfortunately, with the shortage of interpreters, post-secondary contacts have noted that it is difficult to find enough interpreters for teaming so that solo work, working alone an hour or more, is required more frequently. Solo work is also more often the norm for interpreting assignments such as for medical appointments, business dealings, college counselling appointments or individual consultations with instructors. In our survey of Canadian interpreters 43% indicated that three-quarter or more of their interpreting work is done solo. 40% of interpreters say that between 25% and 75% of their work is done solo. 34% of Canadian interpreters indicated that between 1 and 10% of their solo work should have been provided by team interpreters while 12% of interpreters indicated that between 11 and 25% of their solo work should have been team interpreted.

Interpreters also report on the stress of having to deal with increased demands for their services, both on a paid and volunteer basis, and the emotional stress of having to turn down requests for their service, especially requests from friends, professional colleagues, high need community members and organizations and/or the subsequent stress of overwork due to responding affirmatively to such requests.

2.5.4 Job Stability

In BC, the field of Interpreters is characterized by work that is mostly free-lance contracting work, although there are a number of regular ongoing staff positions available. Although working as a freelance interpreter is attractive in that it offers competitive wages, interesting and varied job assignments, and the opportunity to determine availability for work, the negative side is that it also involves a great deal of travelling between assignments, a worry about the fluctuations of workload, and greater stress of dealing with new environments and associated need for new knowledge. Many interpreters combine a regular ongoing interpreter jobs with freelance opportunities to supplement their income.

In rural areas there is not enough contract work to guarantee professional interpreters a necessary ongoing income to support themselves. Work fluctuates with the needs of the Deaf population in the community – when Deaf individuals leave the community the work for the interpreter disappears or is diminished. Also in rural areas there are very few support structures for the interpreters, such as access to other interpreters for teaming assignments, for collegial support, for professional development. As a result interpreters tend to locate in, or relocate to, the lower mainland. There are some exceptions as the Okanagan and the Victoria areas have a sufficient base of Deaf/HH individuals to provide sufficient ongoing work.

Thirty-Seven (37%) percent of respondents in our Canadian survey indicated that job stability was a significant factor in interpreters leaving the field. Most respondents who indicated this referred to the freelance portion of the work available to sign language interpreters.

One of the agency respondents said that it sometimes seems to be the time of the week and the time of the year that factors into the shortage of interpreters. For example, when school-based interpreters are not working during the summer the market for available interpreters may flood creating competition for fewer jobs.

Other factors that contribute to the shortage may include the training and qualification of interpreters for specific assignments such as medical, legal, mental health, social services and other areas of specialization. These specializations require higher level skills and further training, which often is not available to the generalist sign language interpreters. A final factor for job stability is the Deaf community preference for certain sign language interpreters. Deaf adults are very clear that they have preferences for certain interpreters due to familiarity, trust, confidence in interpreting skills, and comfort with interpreter's sign language.

2.5.5 Wages/Benefits

The range of wages for sign language interpreters is large depending on a number of factors. The range for a freelance interpreter can be from \$20 to more than \$50 per hour, often with a minimum of two hours for each appointment. In our survey of Canadian interpreters, 40% of interpreters said that they earned between \$31 and \$40 per hour, 29% indicated that they earned between \$41 and \$50 per hour, and 25% indicated that they earned between \$20 and \$30 per hour. Of the 191 that responded to the question whether or not they felt that the remuneration was appropriate, 70% indicated they felt it was appropriate while 30% felt they were not adequately compensated. There is some discrepancy in answers to whether interpreters felt the hourly wage was appropriate and or adequate, which might be explained by the fact that in many cases hourly rates are adequate, but lack of full time equivalent work hours, having to piece together contracts in different locations, business ownership costs (for freelance work) and lack of access to benefits may result in dissatisfaction with total compensation. Respondents in the K-12 school setting appeared most likely to disagree that they were compensated appropriately

Staff positions (although they may not be fulltime) generally provide “guaranteed” salaries, usually with benefits and WCB coverage. These are located in the provincial school for the Deaf, at Sorenson Communication Video Relay services (Burnaby and Victoria), with some agencies, some school districts and at least one college. However many positions in school districts are classified as Special Education assistants in their placement on the compensation grid, at pay levels significantly different from those of freelance interpreters in the community and or in the post-secondary system . A recent (March 2009) informal survey by a member of this project advisory committee through WAVLI contacts, indicated that wages for work in K-12 system ranged from \$22.23 to \$27.55 per hour. At these lower rates of pay, compared to community freelance work, they have difficulty attracting qualified interpreters into these positions.

Contacts in the BC post-secondary system indicate that wages range from \$22 to over \$50 with 94% paying between \$30 and \$45. Several institutions indicated they had to pay higher than usual wages when trying to attract an interpreter for a last minute position. Almost all (83%) provide paid prep time and many provide other miscellaneous benefits such as parking, minimum call out hours (2 or 4 hours) and/or travel time. At VCC, the largest employer of interpreters of the post-secondary institutions, where they have experienced much difficulty attracting qualified interpreters into staff positions (CUPE) the college was able to initiate a labour market evaluation and increase their rates of pay to \$45 - \$47 per hour making them competitive with compensation rates for community interpreters. Due to increased enrolment, in January, 2010, VCC will be hiring 9 fulltime interpreters and at least 8 additional PT interpreters plus additional contracts for subs and miscellaneous assignments. Now the challenge is not pay, but lack of freelance interpreters for the additional contracts.

Some postsecondary institutions have complained that higher pay at other institutions and or agencies creates competition for the limited number of interpreters.

3. GENERAL INFORMATION ON DEAF, HARD OF HEARING AND DEAF-BLIND POPULATIONS IN BC

Accurate statistics on hearing loss are very difficult to obtain. Most of the research and statistics gathering rely on self-identification and an inconsistent use of terminology and definitions. One concern with definitions is the definition of "deaf" and "hard of hearing". How does a person know to define themselves as "hearing" (albeit with some difficulty hearing) and what is the dividing line between "hard of hearing" and "deaf"? Definitions are unclear, and many individuals with hearing loss would not see themselves as within the definitions provided. Furthermore there is an ongoing debate between the medical definitions of deaf and hard of hearing and the definition of Deafness as a cultural minority. The Canadian Health and Disability Survey began collecting information on people with a variety of disabilities in 1983, but generally culturally Deaf Canadians do not consider themselves to be "disabled," and thus refuse to be included in a disability group survey. As well, Stats Canada forms and many other surveys are very deaf-unfriendly and many may not ever complete survey forms.

In its position paper Statistics on Deaf Canadians (2002), CAD maintains that Statistics Canada cannot accurately identify the Deaf/HH populations of Canada based on national census. It is the opinion of the CAD that no fully credible census of Deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing people has ever been conducted in Canada. CAD uses the traditional "one in ten" formula for estimating statistics, with strong disclaimers. They compare statistics between Canada and the United States, and assume that statistics for Canada will be one-tenth of statistics for the U.S. (based on the fact that Canada has approximately one-tenth the population of the U.S.) CAD concluded that in 2006 there were 310,000 profoundly deaf or deafened individuals and 2,800,000 people who are possibly hard of hearing. (CAD Position Paper, 2007).

According to the Canadian Hearing Society (CHS), almost 25% of adult Canadians reports having some hearing loss (CHS Awareness Survey 2002), although closer to 10% of people actually identify themselves as culturally Deaf, oral deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing.

In international research it has been suggested that the estimate in developed countries that the prevalence of Deafness at birth or in early years is 1-3 in 1,000. Given that BC's population is at 4,455,207 this would result in estimates of severe to profound hearing loss between 4,455 and 13,365 people. Other reports (mental health reviews) estimate the number of Deaf people (including children) in British Columbia, have placed the number between 5,000 and 8,000. Since international research and the BC mental health study estimates are relatively similar it is safe to assume that these numbers are a more accurate estimation of Deaf adults and children who utilize sign language.

The two largest metropolitan areas in BC are the Metro Vancouver area that now includes about 51% of the Province's population, followed by the Greater Victoria area with about 8%. However, our surveys support the perspective that the population of Deaf/HH in these two regions, (perhaps more so in the Metro Vancouver) are over-represented in the general population, for a number of reasons. These includes families with deaf children moving to Greater Vancouver to obtain better support services for their children, post-secondary students attending colleges and universities where appropriate interpreter services are more readily available, better social opportunities, and the greater opportunity for work for Deaf people in this region.

According to the Canadian Helen Keller Centre, the Canadian Community Health Survey conducted in 2001 showed that 69,700 Canadians lived with "*dual disability of Deaf-Blindness or a combination of both vision and hearing losses that limit their everyday activities.*". They also note that only 3,000 Canadians have been identified as using intervenor services. According to

the report, A Study of Deaf-blind Demographics and Services (2005) there were 2820 Canadians who were identified as Deaf-blind. There were 287 identified Deaf-blind British Columbian (adults and children).

3.1 Unemployment and Underemployment

In their position paper on Employment and Employability of Canadians who are Deaf/HH, and based on their survey and collection of data in 1998, the Canadian Association of the Deaf found that only 20.6% of Deaf Canadians were fully employed; 41.9% were under-employed; and 37.5% were unemployed. By comparison, 60.9% of all Canadians were employed, and only 8.1% were unemployed. The combined unemployment and under-employment rate for Deaf Canadians has remained unchanged over a six-year period (1992-98), despite improvements and growth in the overall Canadian employment rate. (CAD, 2007)

Deaf individuals are often in entry-level, vocational, unskilled or semi-skilled positions that pay low wages offer few benefits, provide little job security and have little potential for advancement. (Canadian Association for the deaf, Roots and Kerr, 1998) They are under-represented in professional and administrative occupations. There is a need to promote and facilitate professional education and professional careers for the Deaf/HH. As education is a prerequisite to almost all employment fields, the real and anticipated barriers for Deaf/HH students wishing to attend post-secondary education, impacts greatly on their access to education and therefore to their lifetime ability to enter and advance in their chosen careers.

Malkowski (2008) notes there is a crisis in education for Deaf/HH Canadians and that, in 1992, Canadians with university degrees were 14% of the general population, but only 2.7% of Hard of Hearing and less than 2% of the deaf population held degrees. He also reported that 85% of Deaf Ontarians are underemployed and unemployed. (CAD, 1992)

The Canadian Hearing Society (2004) provides research demonstrating that post-secondary education is often less available to Deaf/HH students due to:

- Deaf/HH Students often graduate from secondary schools with lower literacy skills and need to do 'make-up' courses to increase skill levels adding to the length of their program of studies (and thus to student loan/grant debt loads).
- Deaf/HH students in rural areas have not received adequate support services early in their education, and are not familiar with nor trained to use accommodations such as interpreters, transcribing services, etc., and are not knowledgeable of support services available for post-secondary program.
- Due to lack of interpreter, students may not be able to take the courses they choose, at the times they choose.
- Deaf/HH students may face additional costs of obtaining adaptive equipment.
- Deaf students are often "counselled" into vocational programs.

It is not only challenges in accessing and succeeding in post-secondary education that impacts on unemployment and underemployment. Many Deaf people experience subtle forms of discrimination and exclusion in their efforts to obtain jobs or promotion in the marketplace. Deaf community members often have expressed feelings that they are not offered jobs because employers do not want to expend the efforts or expense to provide accessible communication (interpreters). A recent Deaf graduate with the top mark in his BCIT program was the last person in his class to get an internship. This example is not an exception for many Deaf people who succeed at the post-secondary level only to face misconceptions or reluctance by employers to hire them.

Deaf people seeking employment often face the problem of interpreters not being available for a scheduled job interviews. Perspective employers are often not willing to change interview schedules to accommodate the need to find an interpreter. Deaf people who are working often share stories of an inaccessible workplace where employers refuse to hire or are unable to afford interpreters so that they can participate in staff meetings, workplace training or performance evaluation meetings

One executive of a Deaf service agency, part of a large government organization, says that she cannot participate in area manager meetings because interpreters were unavailable. She said that she has missed about 7 or 8 such important meetings in the past year. Deaf employees at this agency have had to cancel and postpone many meetings where hearing people were participants because of the lack of interpreters.

3.2 General Information on Deaf/HH Students in Educational Setting in BC

There is a very serious shortfall in the number of interpreters needed to meet the needs of the Deaf and HH students in both the K-12 system and in the post-secondary systems. However the issues for Deaf and HH students in the two sectors, over and above the shortage of qualified interpreters, are very different.

3.2.1 K-12

The statistics for the number of children and youth in the K-12 education system is important as it provides a potential source of regular employment for many sign language interpreters.

The Ministry of Education numbers published in March 2009 provide the following numbers for students registered in K-12 (public schools only) reported as Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Deaf-Blind.

	<u>04/05</u>	<u>05/06</u>	<u>06/07</u>	<u>07/08</u>	<u>08/09</u>
Deaf or hard of hearing	1488	1406	1329	1281	1239
Deaf-Blind	54	48	50	54	65

Numbers indicate that during the decade from 85/86 student numbers increased each year but that in the years following 95/96 most years have shown slight declines in Deaf/HH students. The actual numbers in any year may be under-reported as Deaf/HH children that have additional needs, are likely to be reported within another category that provides higher per student funding to the school districts, such as physical dependency. Although the numbers in K-12 have decreased this does not impact on interpreter availability as very few school districts utilize qualified professional interpreters.

In most districts ongoing support services are provided by Special Education Assistants (SEA), whose ASL skills range from no sign language skills, to having taken some sign language courses or having learned sign language in Deaf/HH families or from friends, to graduates of the VCC ASL/Deaf studies certificate program, to those holding a diploma in Interpreter Education. School districts identified the two major issues in providing interpreting/signing services were lack of professional interpreter (63%) and lack of SEAs with ASL skills (58%). The shortage of these two skill sets creates educational barriers for many children with hearing loss, exacerbating the delays in their educational development.

Besides the shortage of interpreters in BC and complexity of supporting Deaf and hard of hearing children, graduates of the Douglas College PSLI have indicated that they do not see school districts as a employer of choice due to several factors. Sign language interpreters (whose

education has generally focussed on interpreting for 'adults') feel that the classification as Special Education Assistants and the compensation do not match the training and the work that they do. Sign language interpreters also experience role conflict when working as a member of an educational team. School districts expect that the sign language interpreter take on duties beyond interpreting including work that is often the role of the SEA. There is a conflict between the training sign language interpreters receive and the expectation of school districts concerning their roles.

In the survey of the K-12 Districts, representatives have said that the Douglas College interpreter graduates are unprepared to work within the school setting and lack understanding of their role as part of an educational team. Of school districts that utilized qualified professional interpreters in some settings, 38% did not experience any difficulties while 30 % stated the qualified profession interpreter was not prepared to multitask and/or take on responsibilities for other tasks required of staff in K-12. Douglas College instructors have clearly stated that their interpreter training program trains sign language interpreters and their graduates are not trained to meet the broad expectations of the school districts. The reality is that the lack of qualified interpreters educated for and working in the K-12 system, impact on the education of the Deaf/HH students, both academic performance and social development (Russell, 2000, Winston 2004).

The Nova Scotia Community College has included a module on educational interpreting in their Interpreter Education program and the K-12 system now utilizes NSCC program graduates in their elementary and secondary schools. In Manitoba, the Ministry is working in partnership with the school districts and Red River College to offer their one-year Deaf Studies certificate program to Special Education assistants working in primary/secondary schools. In the Interior of BC, Okanagan College, Continuing Education, in partnership with local school districts, has developed and will be offering a one-year Hearing Assistant Certificate. This 246-hour certificate program prepares paraprofessionals to work in the school and pre-school settings with children who are Deaf or hard of hearing and is aimed to those currently working in these settings. Unfortunately, there was no consultation with nor any links for this CE certificate to the existing VCC ASL/DS program (which might have provided some transfer of credit).

It is important to realize that these are not Interpreter Education programs, but they do provide some opportunity for enhancing the skills of those working with Deaf/HH elementary and secondary students. It is equally important to clearly distinguish between signers/communicators, paraprofessionals and professional interpreters and to work to increasing the role of the qualified interpreter in the K-12 system.

It would be advantageous for the VCC ASL/Deaf Studies program to be able to offer some or all of its courses on an outreach basis , in partnership with Colleges and/or School districts, to provide professional Development opportunities for SEA's and others working in with the Deaf/HH individuals. This would also allow SEA's working in the field, and interested in becoming Visual Language Interpreters, to obtain the equivalent of the one-year ASL/ Deaf Studies coursework prior to moving to Vancouver to enter Interpreter Education program.

3.2.2 Post-Secondary

Students who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing, plan to attend a public postsecondary institution must contact the Center for Students for Disabilities (name of service may vary) at the institution they would like to attend. The coordinator(s) working in the center interview the student and in consultation with the student, plan the necessary communication supports. Students must provide documentation that demonstrates their level/degree of hearing loss. Students may request their preferences for interpreting service although their preferred service may not always be provided. In the last year of the PCAS reports (08/09) 66% of the students requested and received ASL interpreting services – a 23% increase over the previous year. The number of

students self identified as Deaf/HH in the public universities, colleges and institutes and receiving services have been increasing over the past five years (with one decrease in 05/06.) The following numbers were provided by PCAS.

	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
Deaf/HH Students receiving ongoing support services*	170	120	185	200	210

It is noted that these students tend to cluster in specific institutions. In 2008/09 83% of post-secondary students were registered in the Greater Vancouver area and 53% were registered at just two institutions – Douglas College and VCC. At VCC, these students are primarily in a Deaf and Hard of Hearing - Job Readiness program and in an English upgrading program. At Douglas students are registered in all programs including career-tech, university transfer, degree and upgrading programs. Rural colleges register few Deaf/HH students, often due to lack of ability to provide interpreter support services. Post-secondary students who have not already moved to the Lower mainland (with parents) early in life in order to access better services for their K-12 schooling, often move to the lower mainland to post-secondary institutions that are perceived as more “deaf friendly”.

The numbers of student in post-secondary are increasing each year, due to Deaf/HH students staying in school longer to pursue higher level credentials/degrees and due to adults returning to learning along with the recent Secondary School graduates. Comments from the Disability Service Coordinators in Post-Secondary Education and interpreters working in this area, indicate that there has been a heightened pressure in contracting for interpreter services in this current academic year, due to increased enrolments of Deaf/ HH students and an apparent shortfall in available interpreters. This situation has created greater pressures for interpreters to accept additional work, pressures for institutions to increase pay scales and/or greater frustrations for students who were unable to obtain their preferred interpreter services for their chosen educational program. Responses from the Coordinators indicate that over the past two years, 36% of post-secondary students have had to change or reorganize their courses, 42% used alternate services, and 29% have had to delay taking their courses/program. Two colleges reported that students moved to another college.

Although in the urban postsecondary institutions, most of the support/communication needs of Deaf/HH students are being met, the shortages of interpreters continue to create frustrations and barriers for Deaf/HH students for successful completion of vocational training programs, applied diplomas and degrees and therefore become barriers in moving forward into preferred employment for their chosen career paths

3.2.3 Post-Secondary Communication Access Services (PCAS) Services

The BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development funds Post-Secondary Communication Access Services (PCAS) to support students with hearing loss province-wide.

The service provides resources to:

- Disability coordinators and administrators to recruit and hire service providers
- Interpreters, transcribers, captioners and electronic note-takers who work in post-secondary classrooms
- Students who want to explore service options in post-secondary
- Faculty to explore teaching tools that enhance access for students in their classrooms; and staff who interact with students with hearing loss.

PCAS administers the BC Post-Secondary Interpreting Screen (Screen) which measures the minimum skill set required of service providers working in public post-secondary settings. Interpreters who are successful on the Screen receive job postings through an on-line service

(Jobsline) on a preferred basis. If positions are not filled by interpreters who have passed the Screen they are then forwarded to all interpreters who have completed an Interpreter Training program and are members of the Westcoast Association of Visual Language Interpreters (WAVLI). Professional and skill development opportunities, as well as mentoring for interpreters are offered by PCAS on an ongoing basis.

PCAS also provides information on services in the post-secondary system to parents of students preparing for a transition to secondary school, through individual inquiries and through formal presentations. Interpreters and transcribers available through the PCAS Jobsline Registry are shown in the following table.

Jobsline Registry	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Interpreters Screen	62	71	67	72	79
Interpreters. No Screen	27	32	46	40	45
Oral Interpreters			7	6	6
Transcribers		14	18	19	23
Total	89	117	138	137	153

The actual services provided to Deaf/HH students are the responsibility of each institution, who will determine the level, type and availability of services to be provided to each student, recruit/hire the interpreters and arrange interpreter schedules.

3.3 Legal and Human Rights Decisions impacting on the right to access interpreting services

Culturally Deaf, oral deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing Canadians continue to experience discrimination in the workplace and when accessing vital services that most Canadians take for granted such as education, employment, health care, and housing (The Canadian Hearing Society Position Paper on Discrimination and Audism, 2007). In order to obtain the right to sign language interpreter Deaf people often must battle bureaucracy and often resort to legal actions to ensure that their basic human right to services, information or communication are provided. In Canada, there is no equivalent to the United States' American with Disabilities Act (1990).

In Canada and in BC a number of the important areas of legislation and/or Human Rights and Charter challenge decisions impact on the requirement to provide interpreter services to Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals. They include:

3.3.1 Legislation

- The Canadian Charter of Human rights and Freedom (1982) Sections 14 and 15
The Charter is a bill of rights entrenched in the Constitution of Canada. The Charter supersedes all provincial human rights codes. Sections 14 and 15.1 are explicit in its provision for sign language interpreters during any proceeding in which Deaf Canadians are involved.

Interpreter

14. A party or witness in any proceeding who does not understand or speak the language in which the proceedings are conducted or who is deaf has the right to the assistance of an interpreter.

Equality Rights

Equality before and under law and equal protection and benefit of law

15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

➤ Canadian Human Rights Act [1985]:

This Act extends the laws of Canada to uphold the principle that “all individuals should have an opportunity equal with other individuals to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have and to have their needs accommodated...without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices based on...disability.”

➤ BC Human Rights Act (Amended March 31, 2003,)

The Human Rights Code protects British Columbians from discrimination in areas such as employment, housing, and services and facilities customarily available to the public. The Human Rights Code applies to all businesses, agencies, and services in B.C., except those regulated by the federal government. It protects people from discrimination in public situations, which include schools, workplaces, universities, hospitals, medical clinics, stores, restaurants, provincial and local government offices, and transit services. It also protects people against discrimination in printed publications and in areas such as employment, tenancy, and the purchase of property. Protection from Discrimination gives a brief description of the coverage provided by the Human Rights Code. (BC Ministry of Attorney General, PROTECTION FROM DISCRIMINATION, Jan 2008).

3.3.2 Legal Decisions

➤ Eldridge vs. British Columbia (Attorney General 1997)

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that it is the responsibility of governments to provide sign language interpreters. Although the case was based on the right to have access to interpreters in the health setting, the principles set out in this decision apply generally to services provided by government. The Eldridge decision ruled that failure to provide sign language interpretation and to build interpreter resource capacity where it is needed for effective communication in the delivery of Health Care and other Public services violates the rights of Deaf Canadians.

As a result of this decision BC Ministry of Health agreed to fund the Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to facilitate the availability of interpreters for medical interpreting.

➤ Martin and Laseur v. Nova Scotia (2003).

Although this decision in the Supreme Court of Canada involved a challenge to the constitutional validity of NS Workers' Compensation legislation, The Supreme Court decision determined that persons with disabilities must be treated as individuals as a guarantee of equality under the Charter; that the right of equality "requires a considerable degree of reasonable accommodation...on an individual basis." This decision placed a broader burden of responsibility on governments to provide interpreters. (Schwenker, 2003)

- Canadian Association of the Deaf, et al. v. Her Majesty the Queen (2006)

Reinforces the legal precedent set by Eldridge decision and requires all Federal Government programs and services provide sign language interpreters “upon request”

The court issued three declarations:

- a) Where a deaf or hard of hearing person receives services or participates in programs administered by the Government of Canada, sign language interpreters are to be provided.
- b) Where the Government of Canada engages in public or private consultations with non-governmental organizations in the development of policy and programs in which the deaf and hard of hearing have identifiable interests, sign language interpreters must be provided where organizations of deaf and hard of hearing people wish to be involved.
- c) In the above circumstances, the Government of Canada is responsible for the cost of access.

- Howard v UBC (1993)

In 1993, the BC Council on Human Rights reached a decision that the University of British Columbia was responsible to provide a sign language interpreter for a Nigel Howard, a Deaf student, if he was unable to qualify for funding from outside sources.

- Jericho Hill Legacy Trust vs. Government of BC Class Action Settlement

The Government of British Columbia in the Provincial Legislature on June 28, 1995 agreed to:

Article 2: Improve accessibility to employment and the establishment of programs.

Article 5: Literacy and Education: That the promotion and advancement of Education and Literacy Programs be provided throughout the Province of British Columbia.

Article 6: to recognize that American Sign Language was the “true language used by the Deaf Community. That Deaf Culture and ASL belonged to the Deaf Community around the province of British Columbia.”

- R. v. Carlick, 1999 CanLII 5547 (BC S.C.) — 1999-05-17
Supreme Court of British Columbia — British Columbia

Accepted the validity of testimony interpreted by sign language and deaf interpreter in court proceedings

- R. v. Flesh, 1992 CanLII 1818 (BC C.A.) — 1992-11-25
Court of Appeal — British Columbia

Accepted use of oral interpreter, real time captioning and sign language interpreter at the same time for the above-mentioned proceedings.

3.3.3 BC Government Policies

➤ Attorney General of BC Website policy

If you have to go to court as a party to a court proceeding and you need help with the English language, the court will provide you with an interpreter in the following situations:

- Provincial and Supreme Court criminal adult and youth cases,
- Family cases in Provincial Court,
- Traffic court cases,
- Municipal bylaw cases,
- Upon court order, in any court.

The interpreter will be with you throughout the court hearings to interpret for you, so that you will understand what is going on in court and the judge and other participants will understand your testimony.

➤ British Columbia Ministry of Education

Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, includes the following:

E.10 Deaf or Hard of Hearing
Personnel (page 84 and 85)

Visual language interpreters:

Where a district determines that a student's program will include the services of a visual language interpreter, often referred to as an interpreter or sign language interpreter, the visual language interpreter should meet standards established by:

- the Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf, Inc. (R.I.D), or
- the Association of Visual Language Instructors of Canada (AVLIC);
- or be a graduate of the Douglas College Visual Language Interpreter Training Program or an equivalent program from another institution.

Teachers' assistants

Teachers' assistants working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing should have sufficient training and understanding of hearing loss for the duties they are assigned. Teachers' assistants should be able to demonstrate:

- an understanding of the social, emotional and educational implications of hearing loss; and
- competence in the communication mode of the student(s). Where the role of the teacher assistant is to facilitate communication between the student and others in the environment the district should ensure the teacher assistant can demonstrate proficiency in the communication mode of the student. In instances where sign communication and/or oral interpretation is required and the individual is not a qualified interpreter, districts are advised to arrange for qualified interpreters to evaluate the communication competency of the teacher assistant.

3.3.4 International Convention

- The United Nations Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, Article 24, Education (March 2007)

This convention recognizes the rights of deaf people to equal access to education, and upholds their rights to be educated in Sign Language.

3 (c) Ensuring that the education of persons and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or Deaf-Blind, is delivered in the most appropriate language and modes and means of communication for the individual and in environments which maximize Academic and social development.

4. ... [governments] shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including those with disabilities who are fluent in sign language, Braille and to train professionals and staff who work with all levels of education...

Note: While Canada has signed the convention they have yet to ratify the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities in Parliament.

It should also be noted that there is increased recognition, at the provincial levels, of American Sign Language as a language. In 1988, Manitoba was the first to recognize ASL. In 1990 Alberta identified ASL as an optional language for classroom instruction in education settings (Carbin, 1996.) In 1993, ASL and LSQ were proclaimed as the mandatory language of instruction for Deaf students in Ontario (McDermid, 2008). The Government of British Columbia on June 28, 1995 recognized ASL as a language of the Deaf community of British Columbia. In addition, Howard v. UBC case (noted above) ASL is now recognized as a valid language for second language requirements at post-secondary institutions

4. GENERAL INFORMATION ON INTERPRETER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

4.1 American Interpreter Education Programs

The National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) has created a list of American Interpreter Education programs, available on their website. This list indicates that there are 144 Interpreter Education Programs of which 30% were BA/BS degree programs, 64% were AA/AAS (2 year) degree programs, and 6% were certificate programs.

As part of research for this report, faculty from leading American programs were interviewed through structured telephone conference calls. Based on conversations with American Institutions, it appears that the interpretation skills and expertise of graduates from various programs are perceived as varying widely, due to differing admission requirements, different curriculum content, different levels of expertise/education of instructors, and other factors. Programs vary greatly in their ASL entrance requirements, from no ASL prerequisites to level IV. They noted that there are many inconsistencies in learning outcomes for ASL and Interpreting courses between institutions. The particular focus of any interpreter education degree program varies, generally impacted by the organizational structure and the departmental affiliation (i.e. Linguistics vs., Human Services vs. Education). As well focus of two-year AA or AS degrees vary greatly, some are more focussed on development of ASL skills, others on interpreting skills, making it more challenging to develop transfer agreements. A number of two-year programs have successfully negotiated with BA programs to provide degree completion for their 2 year graduates.

In 2012, a minimum of a bachelor's degree will be a requirement for certification by RID. That has placed increased pressure on two-year AA/AAS interpreter education programs to seek articulation and/or transfer agreements with BA programs. NCIEC is currently facilitating a process of discussions between AA and BA programs to determine appropriate next steps including discussions of a "lack of ASL standards, interpreter education program (IEP) entrance and exit requirements, the changing roles of two-year programs, models for AA-BA transition, and partnership models between two-year and four-year programs." (NCIEC 2008, page 1) The revised requirement by RID has also emphasized the trend to Bachelor's degree. Many of the programs face a shortage of qualified faculty. There have been a number of creative agreements between institutions including block transfer, distance education and on-line learning. One example is the agreement between Tulsa Community College In Oklahoma and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UNLR). Students at Tulsa can continue their studies to complete a UALR BA degree through a combination of web-enhanced distance delivery, contracting with local instructors in Tulsa, and travel of UALR faculty to Tulsa for summer intensives (from Tulsa Community College website).

There is also increased focus on distance delivery of interpreter education program and the use of technology to deliver programs for American Sign Language and ASL-English Interpreting courses. The most notable of these programs is the Distance Opportunities for Interpreter Training (DOIT) Center at the University of Northern Colorado offers a comprehensive, highly regarded 4 year BA in ASL-English Interpretation program designed for distance utilizing multiple technologies and summer intensives courses. It is self-funded through student tuition plus federal, state and other grants. Students may access transfer credit into the program, based on individual assessments for ASL and interpreting skills. Another is the Educational Interpreting Certificate Program (EICP) offered through the DOIT center. It is a 30 credit certificate program for paraprofessional interpreters working in the K-12 system in partnership states. A study to determine the effectiveness of this distance delivered program, published in the Journal of

Interpretation (Johnson and Witter-Merithew, 2004), determined that distance delivery to cohort groups was effective in upgrading interpreting skills.

4.2 Information on Canadian Programs

In Canada, there are five existing Interpreter Education programs and they are all diploma programs offered through colleges across Canada. One program (Manitoba) is offered in partnership with the university and graduates receive both a diploma and a degree.

Generally, programs in Canada that prepare individuals as qualified, professional interpreters, incorporate a number of similarities in program structure and curriculum content. Currently, in Canada all Interpreter Education programs have a prerequisite of an ASL/Deaf Studies certificate (with slightly different names in different institutions). The certificate programs provide intensive study in ASL and in Deaf Culture and have prerequisites for basic knowledge of ASL, usually to Level III. The certificate year is followed by a two to three year Interpreter Education Diploma Program focussed primarily on the development of higher levels of ASL and on the learning and practice of interpretation skills. All incorporate an extensive practicum prior to graduation, to provide 'real-life' application of learning. It should be noted that most Interpreter Education programs will allow students who have the required fluency in ASL and knowledge of Deaf culture, into their programs without the certificate. It should also be noted that completion of the certificate program is not sufficient for entry into Interpreter Education programs, that diploma programs have a separate admission process and individual assessment prior to entry.

All Canadian programs work with their local Deaf associations and Deaf community members and seek their feedback and input to the program through Program Advisory Committees, whose members generally include representatives from organizations of the Deaf, the provincial chapter of AVLC, representatives of service organizations for the Deaf, representatives from the Deaf community and program alumni.

Faculty and administrators at both Canadian and American Interpreter Education programs, interviewed for this report, expressed their perception that the current three to four year models for interpreter education in Canada are perceived as having the ability to graduate well qualified interpreters (compared to many American programs) due to the prerequisites for ASL level III, prior to entry into the certificate program, and due to well developed intake assessments, the intensity of program learning in ASL, the study of Deaf culture, and the concentration on learning interpreter skills. The Canadian programs graduate "generalists" and specialist training, such as medical, legal, education are gained through on the job experience or through some post graduate specialist seminars.

Representatives of all Canadian programs state that their graduates have no difficulty finding work and that there continues to be a shortage of qualified interpreters, especially outside the major metropolitan areas.

As part of the research for this provincial review, administrators and faculty for each of the other four programs in Canada were contacted and interviewed. The following information on the Canadian programs is primarily based on these interviews and on some follow-up communications with program faculty and/or administrators.

4.3 Nova Scotia Community College

In Nova Scotia, a one-year Interpreter Education certificate program was established at Saint Mary's University in 1985 (although not accredited by the university) but was discontinued by 1990 (McDermid, 2008). In 1993, a two-year diploma program was established at the Halifax campus of the Nova Scotia Community College. It had a biennial intake and required a minimum

of 240 hours of ASL instruction for entry into the program. In 2007, the diploma path was restructured into a one-year Deaf Studies Program, with its first graduates in 2008, plus a two-year ASL-English Interpretation (AEI) Diploma program with annual intakes started in 2008. The restructuring of the curriculum and the move to annual intakes followed the publication of, and the recommendations included in a major and very inclusive provincial review "Supply and Demand of American Sign Language/English Interpreters in Nova Scotia" (Schwenker, 2003.) The review was initiated by the college but completed under the auspices of Deafness Advocacy Association of Nova Scotia, with Ministry funding. It is perceived that the graduates of the restructured programs will better meet the needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing populations in the Maritimes.

The revised program has added a module for educational interpreting in year two of the AEI program, to address the needs of graduates working in the K-12 system, an area identified in the Schwenker (2003) report as having an urgent need for review and change. The Atlantic Provinces now utilize professional interpreters (mostly program graduates), hired on year long contracts, in the K-12 Education system. These interpreters are employed by Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA.)

Over the past five years the program has graduated 26 interpreters (through the previous program with biennial intakes.) Currently the Deaf Studies program takes in a maximum of 30 students each year and the ASL/English Interpretation Diploma a maximum of 16 students. Most graduates go to work in the K-12 and Post-secondary Education systems.

The program is located within the Applied Art Programs, School of Applied Arts and New Media and located on a brand new campus, where they have access to new technology. .

They have articulated a two-year transfer credit for graduates of the interpreting program, with Royal Roads University (Victoria) into their Bachelor of Arts and Communication and have initiated discussions on transfer agreements with several other Universities.

4.4 George Brown College, Toronto, Ontario

In the 1990's there were three Interpreter Education programs in Ontario. The largest program, established in 1987, was at Sheridan College and initially consisted of a two-year 'Sign language Communicator' or "ASL" program then a one-year Interpreter Education program. An average of 35-40 students was graduated each year from the second year and less than ten from the third year. Similar programs - two-year Communicator plus one-year Interpreter Education were established at Cambrian College in 1994, to meet the needs of Northern Ontario, and at St Clair College in 1987. George Brown College, was established 1997 as a 1 year ASL and Deaf Studies certificate and a 3 year ASL – English Interpreter diploma. This new program structure was based on the recommendations by the College Standards and Accreditation Council (CSAC).

In 1997 the Ministry of Education and Training developed Standards for Interpreter Education Programs, and the programs at Cambrian and St.Clair were restructured as one-year ASL/DS certificate programs followed by a three year interpreter education programs -(McDermid, 2008.) Sheridan closed in 1997 as part of a significant program rationalization, suspensions and downsizing. Cambrian College closed in 2001/02 and St Clair College closed in 2008 as part of individual college restructurings.

George Brown College, the only remaining Ontario program, has been offering ASL – English Interpreter Program (AEIP) since 1997, and the ASL - Deaf Studies Program (ADSP) since 1999. The ADSP program currently accepts up to 80 students per year and is the prerequisite for the AEIP program, but it also feeds the ASL and Literacy Instructor Program and the Deaf-Blind Intervenor Program. The AEIP program now accepts up to 28 students and is a three year, six

semester diploma program. In 2010 the ASL-DS certificate will become prerequisite for AEIP and the two programs will work together. It is planned that the students will move from the certificate to the diploma program based on grades and success in the certificate program, Students will still be screened for admission as the program will continue to accept other applicants who have deemed to have equivalent level skills to that of the ADSP. . Students will have a comprehensive assessment only on initial entry into the program, (cost saving) but the program will maintain an exit point for students at the end of year one (with the ADSP certificate) with plans to build pathways into other GB programs for certificate completers.

Like other Canadian programs George Brown has faced enrollment and funding pressures in recent years. In order to deal with program costs, the Director has facilitated a number of initiatives including obtaining one time funding for a program review to consider curriculum and program structure, enrolment/retention “hot-spots”, and technology issues. Based on recommendations from the program review, they have been reviewing ASL-EIP curriculum, have completed the review for year 1 and have implemented changes for Fall 2009. They will continue curriculum review and development for Year 2 and 3 during the 2009/2010 academic year.

As an outcome to the review, and based on the fact that the George Brown program is the only Interpreter Education program remaining in the province, the program was successful in receiving an increase to program weighting/funding from level 3 to 8, based on complexities of program instruction, for the AEIP program. They are currently seeking an increase to program weight/funding for the ADSP certificate program. They also applied for and received a onetime only grant for a major lab upgrade to facilitate advanced technological solutions. In order to deal with funding issues/program costs, they have increased ADSP enrolments/class sizes to a total enrolment of 80 students, split into 4 groups of 20 students per group. AEIP enrolment has been 28 for a number of years. They have increased enrollment targets and are focusing more efforts on recruitment and retentions of students.

An ongoing issue has been that, with pressures to meet program targets, the program has sometimes accepted weaker students who pass 3 of 4 screening processes – impacting on attrition rates. Over the past 5 years the Interpreter Education Program has graduated 62 students

George Brown currently offers an ASL Literacy Instructor program. They have submitted a grant proposal, with a community partner, to launch a 15 month, part-time ASL Literacy Instructors program – to upgrade instructors of ASL in regions outside Toronto. It is intended to be an outreach program, a portable format with blended learning including face-to-face, book/print-based modules and on-line learning. They hope to utilize advanced technology to provide more outreach services to the rural areas.

The Ontario Interpreting Services (OIS), a service of the Canadian Hearing Society and a major provider of interpreter services in Ontario, voiced concerns about the work-readiness of diploma program graduates, and established the 10 month Interpreter Internship Program. The goal was to provide a bridging from the skills obtained in the diploma program at George Brown College (or other program) to the skills required for working in a real life setting, and thus to increase the number of interpreters available to work for OIS across the province. Currently, the OIS Internship Program is changing its focus to a greater emphasis on enhancing the skills of the interns with a particular focus on Diagnostics. The OIS Interpreter Internship Program couples practical experience, working with senior staff and freelance interpreters, with one to one feedback and instruction. It has expanded its program from 4 interns per year to 8 interns per year. (CHS, 2009)

4.5 Red River College/University of Manitoba

In Winnipeg, in 1978, the Red River Community College (RRC) established a 10 month interpreting certificate which, in 1985, was changed to a 2 year program. Students entering this program were expected to have ASL knowledge prior to entering the program. In 1999 RRC established their ten month Deaf Studies Certificate program which became a prerequisite for the Interpreting Education Diploma. Students are required to have successfully completed Level 103 in the Signing Naturally course, or equivalent, for entry into the certificate program and the certificate includes a 5 week ASL summer emersion session to enhance ASL skills. Most of the prerequisite ASL skills for entry into the program are taken through Adult CE programs and/or secondary schools.

Discussions were initiated in the late 1990s between RRC and the University of Manitoba (U of M), to set up a formal relationship between the two institutions to offer a joint Interpreter Education Diploma Program offering a diploma from RRC and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the U of M. This joint program was formalized in 2001 and is currently the only Canadian degree program in Interpreter Education.

At RRC the program is housed within the Creative Arts Department while at U of M it is housed within the Department of Linguistics. All ASL and Interpreting courses are scheduled at the RRC campus while all Linguistics and other university elective courses are taken at the U of M campus – creating some commuting challenges for the students. Like most Canadian programs, this joint program faces enrolment/retention challenges. The university has the advantage of being able to backfill their linguistics courses with students taking other Linguistic majors but RRC is not able to backfill their Interpreting courses. Having 20 ASL/DS students start at the certificate level, but ending up with only 4 graduating with a degree has resulted in administrators placing pressure on the RRC /U of Man partnership in this program.

Some challenge to graduating more students from the Interpreter Diploma/ Degree program are that the ASL/DS has a limited enrolment of 20 students and not all those students complete the program or are interested in moving into the Linguistics Degree program at University of Manitoba or in becoming professional interpreters. Currently, of 19 RRC ASL/DS students only 8 are considering continuing on to become interpreters. Another challenge is the transition of academic expectations for students from the College certificate program to the Academic degree program. Currently the partnership agreement between the two institutions limits entry to the degree program to graduates of the RRC certificate so, with attrition at end the certificate and then through the three years of the University program, few students graduate.

RRC has a dedicated server to provide video instruction and students have individual accounts to submit video assignments on line. The program utilizes digital technology.

In 2008 the Manitoba Association of Visual Language Interpreters (MAVLI) created a DVD that effectively demonstrated the difference in the quality of interpretation, the quality of the transfer of information utilizing signers/non-professional “interpreters” vs. trained interpreters. The DVD includes expert perspectives from professional in the fields of Deaf Studies and Interpreter Education that highlights the impacts of the “communication gaps” resulting from lack of signers’ interpreting skills on the learning of children. The impact of the DVD on the Manitoba Ministry of Education resulted in the offering of a Ministry sponsored two-year, P/T format of the RRC ASL/DS certificate, to SEA’s currently working for School Districts as a step to improving the skills of SEAs working with Deaf/HH students in the K-12 system. This DVD is available from MAVLI

The Manitoba Ministry of Education has also funded about 20 ASL instructors for provision of ASL in Secondary Schools.

4.6 Lakeland Community College

In Alberta, Grant MacEwan Community College (GMC) opened an ASL-English Interpreter (AEIP) program in 1984. GMC also established a Pre-Interpreter program that changed to Sign Language Studies Program (SLSP), also 10 months in duration, and a pre-requisite to AEIP. They also offered ASL levels I - IV, which were prerequisite to the Sign Language Studies program. The AEIP program had about 10 – 12 graduates per year. The SLSP was suspended in 2002 and the AEIP was discontinued in 2003.

Lakeland College began offering ASL courses in 2004, through their Continuing Education programs, in response to the programs closing at Grant MacEwan. In 2006 a Sign Language and Deaf Studies (SLDS) certificate was initiated by Lakeland College, also through CE on a cost-recovery basis. In the first years of the SLDS program there were problems with course cancellations due to low enrolments, leading to discouraged students not completing the program. As of fall 2009, the certificate program has been restructured as a 16 month part-time evening, weekend program, continuous program with a guarantee of no course cancellations. It is expected that this will result in lower attrition and a greater number of certificate graduates.

Lakeland College has also developed and initiated a two-year Sign Language Interpretation Diploma (SLID) program with seat capacity of sixteen students. The first intake into the SLID program was in August of 2008 and it is expected that the first cycle, which started with 15 students will have 11 graduates in Dec. 2009. The Diploma program is 60 credits - four semester program condensed into 16 months and it offers a blended learning format through on-line technology and face-to-face classes, offered evenings and weekends. It is a full-time, very intense program and includes supervised fieldwork, immersion and a 12-week practicum as part of this condensed 18-month program. The Lakeland SLDS certificate, or equivalent program, is prerequisite to the Interpretation Diploma program. The SLDS graduates continuing on to the SLID program will take two bridging courses in Nov/Dec prior to entering the Diploma program in January 2011.

Lakeland has negotiated Memorandum of Understanding with The University of Alberta, to host both the SLDS certificate program and the new 2 year Interpreter Education Diploma program, at their Edmonton campus. The location at the University provides a central, city setting and provides added credibility for students located on the University campus. One advantage of the evening weekend structure for both programs is that they can take advantage of well-qualified instructors who have full time appointments at other universities/colleges across Canada, and students therefore have exposure to diverse instruction and philosophies. The program has a dedicated class but not a dedicated lab. All learning areas at the University are wireless and students are required to have the use of a laptop computer.

The program will delay the intake of the second cohort group for one year, to allow one year for curricular review. As the current student are the first cohort group to move through this unique program, there has been a need for ongoing adjustments, review and recommendations for modifications and/or enhancement to curriculum and operations. The program is currently working with Athabasca University on a two-year block transfer agreement toward Athabasca University's BPA in Human Services, and is seeking other transfer agreements. There have been some preliminary discussions with the U of Alberta for transfer possibilities. They have expressed long term plans to move to a degree model.

The SLID program is funded through the Alberta Enrolment Planning Envelope (EPE) so the funding is based on audited enrolment student numbers. The facilities portion of the grant goes to the U of A to fund the hosting of the two programs..

4.7 The BC Programs – Vancouver Community College and Douglas College

BC is unique in that the two educational programs for the preparation of qualified professional interpreters are housed at two different institutions in the Greater Vancouver area. The ASL/Deaf Certificate Program at Vancouver Community College and the Interpreter Education Diploma program at Douglas College.

The first educational programming in BC for the teaching of ASL and Interpreting skills was offered at the King Edward Campus of the Vancouver Community College as a ten month vocational program. In 1979/80 the program name was changed from Interpreting program to Para-professional Worker with the Deaf, and in 1981/82 it became the Para-professional Worker with the Hearing Impaired program. In May 1983 the program was moved to its current location at the new King Edward, Broadway campus and the certificate program was offered there as well as continuing evening classes for ASL, both as part of the Adult Special Education Department. In 1986/87 the program was changed to Sign Language/ Interpreter Development and moved from Adult Basic Education and placed within in a restructured Career division. In 1990/91, after the initiation of the Visual Language Interpreter program at Douglas College, the program became the Sign Language Studies with a greater emphasis on ASL development and increased focus on Deaf culture. These name changes and modifications to program curriculum mirrors, to a large extent, the changing expectations around the study of ASL and of Interpreter education across Canada. Currently the program is known as the ASL/Deaf Studies Certificate program and is a prerequisite for the Douglas College two-year Interpreter Education Diploma.

The enrolment capacity for the one-year certificate program has decreased over the past decade, from three classes of 18 in 1999 to, in 2006, to the current intake of two classes of 16 students.

The Douglas College Visual Language Interpreter Program (VLIT) had its first intake of 13 students in Jan 1988, into what was originally a three semester program with a possibility of an internship at program end. The curriculum was being developed as it was being taught, by a group of dedicated contract faculty very motivated to building an interpreting /diploma program. Because the program was under development and faculty were assessing the effectiveness of curriculum during this first offering of the courses, questions were raised by faculty and students about program structure, standards, and internship requirement, In Sept. 1988, there was a second intake with 20 students, but by November it was evident that the program needed to be four semesters, to allow students the time to learn sufficient interpreting skills. By January 1989 the VLIT program was extended to 4 semesters and was designated as a Diploma program and in April 1989 it had its first graduating class of 8 students. The Sept 1989 intake was postponed for a year to allow for structured curricular review and program development. (Douglas College Program Review, 1990).

There was a comprehensive program review early in the program development, in 1990, which provided a series of recommendations for program development. Some important recommendations in the review report were to raise the level of ASL as pre-requisite for entry into the program and to establish an enhanced assessment/screening process for entry into the diploma program, the recommendation that the program have a minimum of two full-time faculty, one Hearing Interpreter and one Deaf individual, plus a full-time Lab technician, and recommended an annual intake of 16 students. It recommended the establishment of a Program Advisory Committee with representatives of from the Deaf communities and allied organizations to provide feedback to program development. As well there was a recommendation for greater cooperation and articulation of courses/program with the Vancouver Community College Interpreter Development Program. (Douglas College, Program Review, 1990). By the time the 18 month follow-up report was tabled in February, 1993, these recommendations had been implemented.

Over the past decade the program has continued to develop, added required practicums in the summer semesters, and has incorporated some other Child, Family, Community studies courses into its curriculum. The program capacity has remained constant at 16, although currently there is some over-enrolment to make up for student attrition.

In spite of an ongoing shortage of qualified interpreters in BC, both the VCC program and the Douglas College programs have encountered some major enrolment and retention challenges in the past few years. In 2007/08 VCC graduated only 19 students (18 in the previous year) and Douglas College had only 7 students enrolled in year two of the Diploma program. As colleges faced increased pressures from Victoria to meet enrolment targets, the programs faced increased internal pressures- within each college, to the extent that VCC in the spring of 2008 determined the need to cancel the ASL/Deaf Studies Certificate program. There was a major reaction in the Deaf community and at Douglas College, where the VCC certificate program was the feeder program into the Douglas college Diploma program, and discontinuation of the certificate program threatened the viability of the Interpreter Diploma program. Cancellation did not occur and currently both programs enjoy full enrolments (both programs were over-enrolled this year) and greater retention of students.

4.8 Overview of the Five Canadian Programs

	<u>ASL/DS Certificate</u>	<u>Interpreter Ed</u>
<u>Program length:</u>		
BC	1 year (10 month)	2 year
Lakeland	16 months (part-time)	2 year equivalent - 4semester continuous
RRC/U of M (degree+diploma)	1 year	3 year
George Brown	1 year (8 month)	3 year NSCC
	1 year	2 year
<u>Program size, maximum enrolment:</u>		
BC (VCC/DC)	32	16
Lakeland	34	16 (biennial intake)
RRC/U of M	20	20
George Brown	40 (x 2 sections)	28
NSCC	30	16
<u>Program funding:</u>		
BC	Ministry (base/block)	Ministry (base/block)
Lakeland	Cost recovery	Ministry (EPE *)
RRC/U of M	Ministry	Ministry (base/block)
George Brown	Ministry	Ministry (base/block)
NSCC	Ministry (base/block)	Ministry (base/block)

* Enrolment Planning Envelope – per student funding

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Number of Graduates from ASL/DS Certificate & Int. Ed – Canadian Programs

Certificate	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	Total
VCC	38	25	18	19	35	135
Lakeland N/A*						
RRC/U of M	15	13	6	11	11	56
George Brown	28	41	45	42	36	192
NSCC **				24	16	23
Totals						

* Program available about five years, but consistent offering of courses impacted by cancellations due to enrolment numbers. Program started new cohort group Sept 2009 with guaranteed course offering for the 16 month period (graduation for current cohort will be Oct, 2010)

**Certificate program started in 2007

I.E. Diploma	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	Total
Douglas	11	17	9	11	6	66
Lakeland					*	
RRC/U of M	2	2	3	4	5	16
George Brown	13	9	10	6	12	62
NSCC **	10	0	9	0	7	26
Totals				21	30	170

* Lakeland is a new program. Potential grads in Dec 2009 = 11,

** Biennial intake, started annual intake in 2007

5. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE TEACHING OF ASL IN BC

ASL is the preferred language for communication and learning for Deaf people in North America. The learning of ASL is the first and prerequisite step for becoming an ASL-English interpreter.

Access to opportunities to learn ASL is important for parents of Deaf children as children continually learn and develop in their sophistication and use of sign language as they become older. Parents, as a result need to be able to access educational opportunities to continue to develop their ASL in order to communicate with their children. Many parents have reasonable support for learning ASL during their child's preschool years but do not have similar learning opportunities when their child enters elementary school. Siblings of Deaf and hard of hearing children also don't have opportunities to enhance their ASL in order to communicate. Hard of hearing children and children with cochlear implants need to have the opportunity to learn ASL as it provides them with alternative means and supports in communication with each other. Therefore, it is important that children and deafened adults and their family and friends have the opportunity to learn ASL. The acquisition of language for communication and learning is critical to early childhood learning and yet there are very few resources available for deaf, hard of hearing children, or their parents/family to learn ASL. In many areas of BC, students enter an integrated education system, where support services are provided by special Education assistants with limited and sometimes no, ASL knowledge. These students flounder in their formal education programs as well as in their social learning, etc, etc

One young mother with a deaf child, interviewed as a member of the VCC ASL program, explained that after trying to obtain support services for her son and for herself in the interior of BC and after trying to seek out opportunity to learn ASL for herself to be able to communicate and support her son in her own community where she had family support, had made the decision to move to Vancouver to take ASL courses and hopefully the certificate program, and to place her son in a school where greater levels of support were available

5.1 Supply and Demand for ASL Instructors

There is critical shortage of qualified ASL instructors in BC. Available instructors are in huge demand and are pressured to take on responsibilities for teaching additional ASL courses for other institutions and/or other organizations, above regular workloads. At times, ASL courses have been cancelled for lack of instructors. The Deaf community feel strongly that ASL should be taught by a Deaf instructor, a native signer, to provide an authentic learning experience.

Douglas, through its Continuing Education Department, has developed and offered an ASL provincial Instructor program for individuals fluent in ASL since about 1990. The original group registering for the program mostly completed the program and many are teaching ASL in BC communities, but subsequent offerings of this certificate program experienced declining enrolments and currently it is not offered, due to low enrolments. The Coordinator for this program states that although there is interest in the Deaf community for taking this certificate program, and that there is a need for additional ASL instructors, Deaf individuals have been unwilling and/or unable to pay the tuition fees for this cost-recovery program although graduates of this program are needed to teach ASL in community programs.

These courses are also offered (summers) in partnership in Edmonton at the U of A through the Alberta Cultural Society of the Deaf (ACSD) who provides funding support for these courses .

5.2 ASL Courses Offered in Secondary Schools

There is provincial curriculum for three levels ASL for BC Secondary schools (Intro to ASL, ASL 11 and ASL 12), and BC universities accept ASL to meet second language requirements. However, most school districts do not offer ASL courses in secondary schools as they are more expensive than other language courses. Because ASL is a visual language, class sizes must be small. Many ASL instructors working in community programs do not have degrees or teaching certificates, so they cannot teach in the BC Secondary schools. If there is no Deaf teacher working in the school district, the district must hire a Deaf instructor to pair with a certified (hearing) teacher who maintains responsibility for the course instruction, in order to teach the ASL course, increasing costs. Some classes are taught by hearing teachers, a practice that is not supported by the deaf community

Currently Burnaby and Kelowna school districts offer the most active ASL courses as part of the secondary school curriculum. Five out of 41 districts responding to the School District survey reported that they offered ASL courses to high school students.

5.3 ASL Courses Offered Through Continuing Ed/Adult Education

Access to ASL courses for adults who wish to learn or improve ASL language skills is often problematic. Continuing Education/Adult Education courses in BC, both in School district and College programs are run on cost recovery model. As class sizes for ASL courses need to be small, tuition revenues are low and ASL courses are often subsidized by other, more profitable, CE or Adult Education courses. Often courses are cancelled when minimum enrolments are not met, creating frustration for those adults wishing to learn ASL for entry into the VCC ASL/Deaf certificate program or enhancing skills for employment in those positions where individuals work with Deaf/HH, especially Special Education Assistants, for parents/family members of Deaf/HH individuals who wish to learn higher levels of ASL to facilitate communications, and/or for those who are taking courses for general interest. The survey of individuals on the ASL student Network reveal many are frustrated by the inability to register in higher levels of ASL, due to unavailability of higher level course, and are frustrated by course cancellations that result in time "gaps" between different level courses (and therefore some loss of ASL knowledge/skills.)

Of the 41 School districts responding through the surveys, 9 districts indicated that they offered ASL through Continuing Education/Adult Education. Of the 23 Post-secondary institutions, 7 indicated that they offered ASL as part of their Continuing Education programming.

ASL courses may also be offered through organizations that provide support to the Deaf/HH communities such as Deaf Children's Society of BC who organize courses at Sunny Hill.

5.4 ASL Courses Offered for Credit in Post-Secondary Education

Both VCC and Douglas College offer credit courses in ASL but they are only available to students within the program and provide only program specific credit.

Currently only one post-secondary institution, the University of Victoria, offers ASL as a university level second language credit course, within the Faculty of Humanities. Starting Sept 2009 they offered ASL Level 1, credit courses for hearing students pursuing their degrees in their different areas of professional interests, with the idea that these future teachers, social workers, nurses, lawyers, doctors, child and youth care workers, counsellors, psychologists etc will be more familiar and aware of Deaf community, Deaf culture and ASL to facilitate their work with their Deaf/HH clients after graduation. They had original planned to offer only one section, but in the face of huge demand, opened a second section of ASL 1. They have 62 students in two

sections of ASL 1 (with over 80 on the wait list initially). The first section was totally registered by first year priority registration students – so they added a second section. They plan to offer ASL Level 2 in the winter (2010) semester

They currently have no plans to do second year ASL but that might happen in future years and long term plans are to develop and offer a minor in Deaf studies, for students in Human and Social Development programs.

5.5 FEEDBACK ON BEST PRACTICES IN TRAINING MODELS

5.5.1 Recommendations from Canadian Programs. *

1. A degree is essential to recognition of the profession of ASL-English Interpretation and should be the longer term goal of every Canadian program
2. A degree will facilitate career progression and facilitate access into advanced degree programs such as Teacher Education,, Master or Ph.D. in Deaf Studies or Interpretation, and so on.
3. Creating a degree program will require faculty with MA's and PhD's. There are not many in Canada and the program may need to facilitate additional education for existing **faculty.**
4. Care must be taken in developing from diploma to degree programs to not weaken the interpreter skills training as a result of having to integrate general studies courses. There is not necessarily a correlation between degree and quality, the program must build curriculum carefully
5. It is an advantage to have ASL/Deaf studies and Interpreter Education on one campus. Co-location provides a greater base for program and technology development, sharing of resources, and provides multiple models of interpreting for students.
6. Incorporate service learning or co-op education into degree program or expanded program. Commitment to service is authentic. Practice in real-work settings enhances "work-readiness" of graduates. Ontario has internship program – but it serves small numbers and is expensive.
7. Pay attention to qualifications of instructors. Use deaf instructors and staff in the program (again recognize there is a shortage of Deaf professionals in Canada)
8. Consider partnerships' liaison with other Canadian programs if you are building degree program (several programs expressed interest in building links to a degree program if possible)
9. Utilize discourse based learning
10. Access report by L. Johnson and A. Witter-Merithew (Entry to Practice Competencies for ASL-English Interpreters, National Distance Learning Center Project) who provide a good review of competencies for interpreters. Utilize the research being done in the US. (They have more federal money for research and have current research available))
11. Utilize good screening for intake to ensure competent entrants, and reduce attrition.
12. Canada needs to pay more attention to the needs of K-12, as the typical interpreter education graduate not well prepared for role in K-12 (nor is K-12 often prepared for interpreter role)

*Many of these recommendations come from Dr Debra Russell, David Peikoff Chair of Deafness Studies, University of Alberta

5.5.2 Recommendations re best practices from leading American Programs/Leaders in Interpreter Education

1. Should move to degree program. It is becoming more important to have higher levels of education as integral to the professionalization of the interpreting profession and to address need for interpreters with areas of specialization especially for higher education.
2. Consider integration of service learning or co-op education to enhance student's opportunity to practice in workplace setting.
3. Help the decision makers understand that they need to develop a doable plan of action as to how to provide for the needs of Deaf/HH in K-12 education. Do not set unrealistic expectations (i.e. definitive standards for interpreting within set timeline) as it will backfire (based on experience in some American states)
4. Be current in the field – look to current research. Pay attention to the trends and development of interpreting as a profession.
5. Ensure faculty and staff of interpreter education program include Deaf professionals and native speakers of ASL
6. Offer ASL courses for the Deaf – we offer English to others in our communities to facilitate communications, learning and growth so why not ASL for the deaf to meet the same goals
7. Encourage Deaf community to take ASL and deaf studies. There is a significant decline in the next generation of ASL teachers and ASL/Deaf studies could be a feeder program for ASL instructors.
8. Consider on-line delivery of some courses to reach out to rural based communities and individuals (consider the DOIT model), who often do not have access to adequate supports/services or professional development opportunities.

5.5.3 Other Feedback and Suggestions

5.5.3.1 Interpreters

1. Move to BA with strong emphasis on areas in K-12, medical, mental health, and legal.
2. Train more Deaf Interpreters and Deaf-Blind interpreters for the field.
3. Bring in more Deaf role models and signing models during training.
4. Practicums need to be more frequent and longer.
5. Practice of interpreting during training should be more hands on rather than by video.
6. IEPs and provincial chapters need to partner to provide mentors and supportive bridging from training to work.
7. ASL courses should be more intense and condensed. ASL learning should be more reflective of the Deaf community.
8. Improve the technology of the labs available to students training in ASL/Deaf Studies and interpreting.
9. Co-location of DC and VCC should be considered.

5.5.3.2 Community and interpreting agencies

1. Expand training to BA degree with considerations for minors in areas such mental health.
2. Specialized training in areas of medical, legal, mental health and social services.
3. Strengthen training in the area of 'interpreting for meaning'.
4. Exposure to a variety of signing models reflective of the Deaf community.
5. Consider co-location of VCC and DC programs.
6. More practical experiences during training in the specialized areas.

5.5.3.3 Deaf Community

1. Professional Deaf workers have higher expectations and require higher skilled and knowledgeable interpreters. Specialized training is needed.
2. Either a closer relationship between the colleges or co-location.

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3. Re-emphasis on gesture, finger spelling, receptivity and interpreting for meaning when learning ASL.
4. Interpreters need more training especially in the specialized areas. A BA degree would be supported by the Deaf community.
5. Interpreters need more exposure to Deaf children/youth, Deaf-Blind, immigrant Deaf, Deaf plus and a variety of different people within the Deaf community.
6. Interpreters who are in training need to be more involved in the community.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

1. There is a shortage of Visual Language Interpreters in BC. This shortage is evident across all geographical areas of BC but is critical in many areas outside the Greater Vancouver area. The daily needs/rights of the BC population that are Deaf or Hard of Hearing cannot be adequately met by the existing practicing Visual Language interpreters.
2. There is a need to promote the profession as a Visual Language interpreter (VLI) and to make changes to the educational programs to enhance recruitment/retention into ASL studies, into the ASL/Deaf Studies Certificate and into Interpreting Education programs and careers as Sign Language Interpreters.
3. There is a need to consider "work-readiness" of graduates of two-year Interpreter Education programs and issues of transition from education to work.
4. There is a need to consider the issues of attrition of interpreters from the field and to consider strategies that enhance retention of program graduates as interpreters or in allied careers.
5. There is an ongoing need to enhance the skills of Visual Language Interpreters, especially in specialty areas including interpreting for post-secondary education, K-12 education, medical, mental health, legal, business related and interpreting at advanced levels to meet the needs of deaf professionals and of higher education.
6. There is a need to enhance/develop the two existing programs that prepare students for working with the Deaf/HH, the VCC ASL/Deaf Studies certificate program and the Douglas College Visual Language Interpretation program, to better meet the changing need of the communities they serve and to reflect changing trends and the professionalization of Visual Language Interpreters.

6.2 Recommendations with rationale

STRATEGIES TO RAISE CAREER AWARENESS, ATTRACT INDIVIDUALS TO ASL/DEAF STUDIES, AND INTERPRETER EDUCATION

6.2.1 Increase PR about Interpreting as a profession.

By:

- Support for Council of Service Providers Recruitment subcommittee initiatives, including production of a DVD.
- Make a request to the Ministry of Education to provide copies of this DVD and related information on Interpreting as a career, to every secondary school in BC.

Rationale

- Most students in Secondary School ASL classes, in the VCC certificate Program and/or in the Douglas College Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR), as well as contacts at post-secondary institutions, identified the lack of knowledge and information about interpreting as a profession, especially in secondary schools, as a major barrier to attracting more individuals to the field of interpreting.
- The surveys indicate that the majority of students in the ASL/Deaf Studies, and Sign Language Interpretation Programs became interested in/learned about interpreting as a career through knowing a family member or friend who utilized interpreter services. Second most common was learning about interpreting while doing an ASL course in

secondary school or through Adult Ed programs – many students in ASL classes became interested in the language and researched areas where they could utilize ASL as career. Many had also seen interpreters working at public events or broadcasts.

- When survey participants were asked what could be done to attract individuals to a career as a profession the most popular response was to provide publicity about interpreting as a profession, especially at the secondary school level.

6.2.2 Enhance recruitment into Interpreter Education by restructuring the Sign Language Interpretation Program at Douglas College as a Degree program. (Recommendation #14) Graduates with a BA could progress to other fields - such as to teaching, graduate programs in Deaf Studies. Credit courses completed as part of BA could also be transferred into other degree programs. A program that allows transfer of credit into other degree programs and/or accepts transfer credit from other UT/Career programs into Interpreter Education would enhance recruitment.

Rationale

- There will be greater attraction for a career as interpreter, if it can be seen as a career with potential for growth, change and possible movement to higher degrees or move into other related professional areas.
- Students in both the VCC DS/HH and DC Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR)s were very critical of the fact that they were taking three plus years of education but were ending their studies with a diploma and no transfer credit into a degree or other diploma program.
- Students who do not complete the Sign Language Interpretation program (voluntarily or involuntarily) do not have formal transfer credit for courses taken and must “restart” other diploma or degree programs.
- Some graduates of the DC Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR) have obtained 2 year block transfer into a related degree program (i.e. UFV) but, because they lacked year 1 and 2 UT courses, they needed to take one additional year to enter the year 3 and 4 courses for declared majors. Essentially, they had to complete ASL prerequisites, one-year Certificate program, two-year diploma program plus three years in a University program to obtain their degree.
- Interpreter Education is currently one of the few areas where a student must take three plus years of post-secondary studies in order to obtain a diploma that has no transferability to other educational programs.
- Students in the ASL/Deaf Studies certificate program voiced concerns that to enter the certificate program they were required to have at least one-year of part time ASL studies and to be an interpreter they would need to do two more years of study, but still not have a degree, nor have any university transfer credit.
- With an increasing requirement for degrees for work as a professional within the Deaf/HH communities/service areas, a degree option enhances recruitment.

6.2.3 Enhance “professionalism” of interpreting career to make it more attractive in current social environment.

By

- Support legal procedures by WAVLI to seek title protection to enhance the professionalism of Interpreters
- Create degree option for Interpreter Education (Recommendation 14)
- Enhance/formalize professional linkage/interactions between faculty and administrators of ASL/DS certificate programs and Interpreter Education programs across Canada.

Rationale

- The perceptions of Sign Language Interpreting as a profession will enhance recruitment into the field.

6.2.4 Increase financial support for students in ASL/Deaf Studies and Sign Language Interpretation Programs, through work with College Foundations for additional targeted bursaries/scholarships and through seeking forgiveness for Student Loan/Grant

Rationale

- Work with the Douglas College Foundation and the VCC Foundation to secure more targeted bursaries and scholarships for students in the ASL/Deaf Studies and in the Interpreter Education programs.

Pursue recommendation for loan forgiveness (BC Student loans/grants as well as Canada Loans/grants) for students who complete Interpreter Education Program on condition that they work two years as an interpreter

- Interpreter education is a relatively expensive program for students, who due to the intensity of the program and requirement for summer practicums (which often include travel costs to other regions of Canada) have little opportunity to work while completing their program.
- BC already has loan forgiveness over three years for students who graduate from a program for (among other professions) teachers of Deaf/HH, speech language pathologists, audiologists, if they work in public institution and/or in an underserved area of B.C. This list should be expanded to include graduates of the Interpreter Education program. See <http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc/repay/repaymentassistance/loanforgiveness.htm>

6.2.5 Provide upgrading and advancement for current and future interpreters by facilitating the laddering to a degree option, based on recommendation for an Interpreting Degree program. (Recommendation # 14)

Rationale

- The responses to the National Interpreter Survey indicate that 37% would be interested in taking a degree program (41% already hold degrees)
- As attrition in the field of interpreters is impacted by physical and emotional health, stress of freelance work, and so on, providing options for career paths may take some interpreters out of this field, but many would still be available for interpreting on a part time basis or in specialty areas.
- Upgrading to a degree program could facilitate enhancement of current skills and be combined with learning for one of the specialty areas identified in this report.

A MODEL FOR THE DELIVERY OF ASL/DEAF STUDIES AND INTERPRETER EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR BC

6.2.6 Regular meetings should be structured between the VCC ASL/Deaf Studies program faculty and the DC Sign Language Interpretation program faculty to discuss issues, curricular, professional, administrative, that impact across

programs. These meetings should include the respective Deans/Associate Deans for these programs, and should be initiated as soon as possible.

Rationale

- There appears to be a considerable difference in program educational philosophies, academic expectations for students, and philosophies regarding working with the Deaf/HH communities, between the two programs. There is a need to discuss openly these differences so that students may possibly make better transitions between the two programs.
- Closer professional relationships between the two programs will create expanded professional expertise available to both programs and the opportunity to share expertise and resources between the two programs
- There should be clear communications about the program expectations for the VCC certificate program and how the outcomes relate to the program expectations of the Douglas College program.
- Closer ties between the programs, including potential instructional exchanges, could facilitate mutual understanding and provide synergy for development of ASL Deaf studies and interpreter education, and provide greater variety of ASL language models to both programs.

A. ASL COURSES

6.2.7 As the learning of ASL is the first, and prerequisite step in the education as an interpreter and as there is a critical shortage of qualified ASL instructors, that the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development and the Ministry of Housing and Social Development consider financial support for those Deaf individuals who are interested in taking the DC ASL Instructor program (currently a Continuing Education Program).

Rationale

- There is a critical shortage of qualified ASL instructors in BC (and elsewhere in North America.)
- There are Deaf individuals who have expressed interest in enrolling in the DC ASL Instructor Program, but who are unable or unwilling to meet the tuition costs of this cost-recovery program
- Providing this opportunity to Deaf individuals enhances their employment options and provides “qualified” instructors
- That Douglas College ASL Instructor Program could consider closer ties with the VCC Instructional Skills Certificate Program, for the delivery of these courses

6.2.8 That the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development and Ministry of Education facilitate increased offering of ASL courses, for credit as a second language, in secondary schools and in post-secondary institutions.

Rationale

- ASL is the language for those who are Deaf/HH
- The children, parents, family and friends of those who are Deaf/HH should be provided greater opportunity to learn ASL to facilitate learning/development of Deaf children and facilitate communications and social interactions. .

- ASL learning is the first step and required prerequisite to becoming an interpreter. Surveys identified that learning ASL was a major factor in decisions to become an interpreter.
- Many professionals working in varied fields work with Deaf individuals as part of their client group/service provisions. They should have access to learning the language (for credit) to facilitate better communications in their professional/work settings
- As ASL courses are more expensive to teach, due to smaller class size and need to have ASL instructors available, special incentives may need to be provided to individual schools or post-secondary institutions

B. ASL/DEAF STUDIES CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

6.2.9 That the VCC ASL/DS certificate program remain as a one-year certificate program

Rationale

- The ASL/DS Certificate program is a well established, vocational program, and is accessed by students for a wide range of reasons. Only some enter with the expressed intent of applying to an Interpreter Education Program.
- Only half of the students graduating from this program are qualified and/or suitable for the DC Sign Language Interpretation program
- Even if all students were qualified for entry to the Douglas College Interpreter Education program, it has limited capacity for intake (16-18) and that number includes applicants from other programs and or ASL backgrounds
- Some students who enter the certificate program are taking the one-year program as a career enhancement (SEAs, Social Workers teachers). Other students (with an interest in ASL) are taking this program as a career exploration.
- Several students each year transfer from this program to the DC Classroom/Community Support Worker Program.

6.2.10 That although there are distinct program and resource advantages to co-location of the two programs, it is recommended that, in the immediate future, the ASL/DS certificate remain at VCC and that program energies be directed to enhancing the existing program and building closer ties between the two programs

Rationale

- Although from a program and organizational perspective there is rationale for the co-location of the two programs, there are historical differences between program philosophy and goals. It is felt that each program has unique strengths which should be developed and that energies would initially be better directed to each program's development and growth at their current institution.
- There was mixed reaction (50/50) from current students re the advantages of co-location for the two programs but general agreement that if the programs were co-located they should be at Douglas College.
- There was strong support for co-location of the two programs from administrators of other Interpreter Education programs, based on perspective that collocation would provide opportunity to jointly build and share resources, create value of varied professional expertise, as well as provide potential to build a stronger/larger base to upgrade technology for both programs. Currently the programs have two different funding and instructional models - one as vocational program and one as career tech program. There is some strength in the certificate program as a vocational model as it involves a 10 month, more intensive teaching schedule for the acquisition of ASL skills.

- That if co-location is contemplated in the future both programs should be located at Douglas College and maintain exit points for students who wish to transfer into other social service or UT programs.

6.2.11 That the ASL/DS Certificate program consider restructuring some of current curricular topics into more academic course (i.e. Sociology of Deaf Culture) with potential for transfer credit.

Rationale

- The levels of English and academic preparation of graduates of the certificate program has been identified as an area of concern, for students moving into the DC programs by both students and faculty..
- A revised course curriculum could, through discussions/negotiations, be eligible for general university level transfer credit to universities/colleges inside or outside BC to provide some transfer credit for graduates of the certificate program. .

6.2.12 That consideration be given to offering some and/or all courses of the VCC ASL/Deaf Studies Certificate through a distance delivery model, perhaps in partnership with other colleges outside the lower mainland and/or in partnership with Outreach Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students and/or directly with school districts that lack individuals qualified in ASL interpretation

Rationale

- Students who are interested in ASL/Deaf Studies and/or Interpreter Education, must now move down to the lower mainland to do both the certificate and diploma programs (and often the prerequisite ASL courses.) Students who move to Vancouver for three years to do training/education generally remain in the lower mainland
- There is a high need for educational opportunities for SEA's interested in and/or responsible for working with Deaf/HH students in the K-12 system outside the lower mainland. Hiring interpreters in centers outside the lower mainland to be the technicians for distance programs will increase work opportunity and retention of interpreters in major centers outside Lower Mainland.
- There is a high need for educational opportunities for professionals/service workers (health, social services) interested in and/or responsible for working with Deaf/HH individuals in communities outside the lower mainland. Distance courses will facilitate access to courses on Deaf Culture and ASL skills, while continuing work in their communities.
- A potential model for an outreach program is the Intervenor training courses/certificate offered through a partnership between Douglas College and BC Deaf-Blind Outreach Program
- There are several successful models for distance delivery of ASL/Interpretation courses in the United States, particularly the Interpreter Education programs offered through the DOIT Centre at the University of Northern Colorado.
- It is noted that Ministry of Education in Manitoba has this year launched, in partnership with School districts, an initiative to provide the RRC ASL/DS certificate program, on a part-time basis, to individuals currently working as SEA's. Ontario is also developing an outreach education program.

6.2.13 That, in the development of the above recommendations, consideration also be given to developing a course that is more focussed to the needs of a Special Education Assistant working in the K-12 system.

Rationale

- There is a reality that some graduates of the certificate program come from and/or return to work in a SEA position in the K-12 system. However, the current VCC program students have little access to education that could help be better prepared to meet the needs of young learners and to work as a member of an educational team in the K-12 education system.
- Given the reality that many of the SEA working in school districts have little education in the skills and knowledge of Deaf culture this could be provided as an opportunity to upgrade skills as part of an outreach program (see recommendation 12).

C. INTERPRETER EDUCATION PROGRAM

6.2.14 That the current two-year diploma program in Sign Language Interpretation be restructured as a degree program. Entry into the program should be at year two, with appropriate prerequisites that meet year one requirements, one option of which would be the completion of the VCC ASL/DS certificate. That discussion and planning for this option begin as soon as feasible.

Rationale

- Student feedback from current and past students in both the VCC ASL/Deaf Studies program and the Douglas College Sign Language Interpretation program, have voiced a strong desire that the program, given its length and intensity, should be a degree program.
- The vast majority (97%) of students currently registered in the DC program have stated that they would have enrolled if it was a three year program (after their one-year prerequisite at VCC)
- The Survey of interpreters in BC, indicated that 66% would be interested in taking a fourth year, only if it led to a degree.
- Feedback from Administrators at other Canadian Interpreter Education programs have expressed support for this transition and have indicated some willingness to consider links from their programs into a degree program.
- Feedback from the Administrators/Faculty at leading American Interpreter Education programs, strongly recommend the move to Interpreter Education degrees. The RID has stated that a degree will be a prerequisite for Registration/certification by 2012. Currently, American two-year programs are working to affiliate with degree programs through articulation agreements.
- A degree program would provide a greater range of options for graduates of the program, including moving to other professions such as teaching, or progressing to graduate schools.
- There will always be students who enter the Sign Language Interpretation program who do not complete to graduation. Currently such students do not have transfer credit to any other academic or career programs. A degree program would allow students who have taken some of the Sign Language Interpretation program but do not complete to graduation (voluntarily or involuntarily) to transfer, with credit, to other degree or career programs at Douglas College or elsewhere.

- Graduates of a degree program would have a higher level of academic skills and experience, enabling them to be more competent in working as interpreters in Post-Secondary education – still one of the major employment options for interpreters.
- Professionals who are Deaf/HH are demanding higher levels of academic attainment for interpreters and higher levels of interpreting skill for work in higher education, government, business and legal environments.
- The learning and application of ASL and Interpreting skills practiced over an additional year, will enable graduates to have a higher level of interpreting skills upon graduation.
- Opportunity to pursue advanced education opens new opportunities for employment to interpreters, resulting in a greater opportunity for career laddering/and or diversity

6.2.15 That the current two-year diploma program and/or a restructured degree program in Interpreter Education remain at Douglas College.

Rationale

- Douglas College has a successful track record of developing Applied Degree programs that creatively meet the needs of the BC communities.
- Douglas College currently offers a very wide range of University transfer courses, and applied diploma/degree courses that could be utilized to meet breadth requirements in the Interpreter Education Degree programs.

6.2.16 That the restructuring to a degree program be initiated by adding a fourth year and reorganizing existing courses to incorporate the breadth/academic elective requirements. It is further recommended that the breadth requirements (where possible) be consistent with a declared specialization for interpreter education i.e. nursing biology for those intending to specialize in medical interpreting, criminology coursed for those intending to work in legal interpreting, Early Childhood Education/Classroom support worker courses for those intending to work in the K-12 education system, and so on.

Rational

- There is a recognized need for more educational preparation for specializations as evidenced by feedback in the surveys and interviews done as part of this provincial review.
- The availability of existing courses at Douglas College, will enhance opportunity for interpreter education students to broaden knowledge, with minimized costs for additional course sections/ course development for the degree program..For example, breadth courses that could be taken by interpreting students interested in K-12 work include, Psychology of Learning, Behavioural Interventionist (Autism), Classroom and Community support courses, and so on
- There has been considerable concern raised regarding the suitability of the existing Sign Language Interpretation program to appropriately prepare interpreters for working as part of an educational team in the K-12 system – a field where there is enhanced opportunity for work in centers outside the Lower Mainland. (see Appendix 2 – Other Issues)

6.2.17 That if, in the future, the certificate and degree programs are co-located at one college, there should continue to be a separate certificate program that serves broader learning needs than entry into the Interpreter training program.

Rationale

- Feedback from leading American institutions that offer I.E. programs stress the importance of having a separate screening for entry into an Interpreter Education program, to assess suitability on more than knowledge of ASL
- An Interpreter Degree program should provide multiple entries at year two, one of which would be completion of the ASL/Deaf studies Certificate in BC or other provinces.

6.2.18 That, when a degree program is established at Douglas College, careful consideration be given as to how individuals who have previously graduated from the DC Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR) may be able to access the appropriate courses to allow them to upgrade to a degree.

Rationale

- The survey of BC Interpreters indicated 41% were interested in a fourth year if it led to a degree. The national survey indicated that 37% of interpreters intended to pursue the degree option in the next five years (41% already held degrees.)
- Program development should build in multiple entry points to accommodate the interpreters currently working in the field, both graduates of the current program and of other certificate diploma programs, who wish to access a degree.
- Program entry should also consider portfolio assessments, PLAR to award credit for learning in the field. There may need to be a bridging course for practitioners in the field.

6.2.19 That some individual theory courses (where suitable) in a restructured degree program in Sign Language Interpretation program be opened to DC students in other programs or to general studies students.

Rationale

- Higher enrolment in some courses will reduce overall program costs; while maintaining small class maximums in those course that require smaller class sizes to meet the CCIE Standards (ASL and Interpreter Skills). This may require some realignment of course content.
- Selected courses in the Interpreter Education program could be opened to students enrolled in other programs, especially the professional programs whose graduates have high probability of working with members of the Deaf community as part of their professional work.
- Selected courses in the Sign Language Interpretation program could be opened to Deaf students enrolled in other programs, to provide them opportunity to take courses related to Deaf culture/community for academic credit. Douglas College has a relatively high number of students taking academic programs.
- Consideration is given to development of a minor in “Deaf Studies” for students intending to enter professions other than Interpreter Education and have high probability of working with members of the Deaf community as part of their professional work. University of Victoria is currently working to develop this option and Douglas College could work in collaboration/partnership with this initiative.

D. RESOURCES NEEDED TO SUPPORT RECOMMENDED EDUCATION DELIVERY MODEL

6.2.20 It is recommended that Douglas College apply to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development for an increase to the Program funding level for the Douglas College Sign Language Interpretation program.

Rationale

- The funding for the Sign Language Interpretation program is currently at a Program weighting established on the initiation of the program. As the program developed, based on recommendations from the stakeholder groups, the funding level has not been amended.
- The Sign Language Interpretation program is a relatively expensive program due to curricular structures. . In order to meet National Standards, and to be able to effectively teach a visual language and its interpretations class sizes for ASL and Interpreter Skills must be small.
- The learning of interpretation skills requires practice in real life situations, and therefore the integration of practicums, and other experiential learning, with attendant higher level of coordination.
- The success of the program is dependent on utilization of appropriate technology/labs.
- The Sign Language Interpretation program is a provincially unique program and one of only five in the country In order to continue to meet the needs of the Deaf population and to improve the services that are provided, it is crucial that the graduations numbers for interpreters from the program is greater than the attrition rate for interpreters.
- The George Brown College (Toronto) recently received an increase to program weighting/funding from level 3 to 8 based on complexities of program instruction, for the AEIP program. They are currently seeking a funding increase for the ADSP certificate program.

6.2.21 It is recommended that Douglas College seek a onetime only grant from the Ministry of Advanced Education, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Housing and Social Development to facilitate the establishment of a dedicated lab for the Interpreter Education Program, This could best be done in consideration of restructuring to a degree program and in partnership with a corporate sponsor.

Rationale

- The Sign Language Interpretation has unique needs that are currently not well served by the existing CTTEL lab, shared with ESL.
- An enhanced and dedicated lab could be utilized to initiate some outreach professional development and or ASL learning to rural communities, currently isolated from opportunities for professional development/support.
- It is intended that such a lab could be utilized by the Sign Language Interpretation Program, by Continuing Education courses in ASL, by other Continuing Education/Professional Development courses, and potentially for workshops/courses that serve the needs of the deaf communities.
- Such a request would be strengthened by the support of corporate sponsorship.
- In recognition of the fact it was a provincially unique program, and the recognized changes in technology that support Interpreting services and learning Interpreter skills, George Brown College last year received a onetime only grant of \$300,000 for a state of the art Interpreter Education lab.

6.2.22 The creation of a degree program would require the recruitment and hiring of faculty with advanced degrees. Future hires to the Interpreter Education program

should make this a priority. Furthermore, it will be important, for program credibility, to maintain an appropriate balance of hearing and Deaf instructors.

Rationale

- It is recognized that there is a crucial shortage of professionals qualified in the field of Deaf/HH education, and an even greater shortage of Deaf professionals. Recruitment would need to be North-American in scope.
- There is a need to support the learning of Deaf students and deaf professionals pursuing advanced degrees, up to and including Graduate studies, to meet the crucial shortfall and increasing demands for qualified/credentialed Deaf Faculty in Higher Education.

6.2.23 In any restructuring to a degree program, Douglas College needs to be aware of changing technology that will in future provide alternatives for person-to-person interpretation. Interpreters will need to be more computer savvy.

Rationale

- The use of text based services has increased in both the K-12 and the post-secondary systems. Additional skills will provide greater option for employability for program graduates.
- The planned implementation of VRS for BC and Alberta residents will increase the demand for interpreters.
- The utilization of technology for remote interpreting appears to be a means of addressing shortage of interpreters in rural areas in the US.

6.2.24 In any restructuring to a degree program, Douglas College should consider the integration of Service Learning or a Co-op option to increase applied learning for interpreting students.

Rationale

- In responses to surveys from practitioners, employers and agencies in utilizing interpreter services, there are significant concerns about the “work-readiness” of graduates. The more that the program is able to integrate authentic practice in real-life settings, these transitions will be easier for program graduates.
- Community agencies, employers and students have observed the need for expanded practice of interpreting skills in a “real world” setting.
- Service Learning requirements (especially at the senior year) would enhance availability of interpreter services within the community.
- Administrators at the lead American Institutions for Interpreter Education recommended enhanced practice through Coop or service learning as part of best practices
- In the future, some consideration should be given to working with WAVLI to create potential mentorships for program graduates.

6.2.25 It is recommended that the DC Interpretation Program have access to a dedicated Sign Language Interpretation lab

Rationale

- Currently the Sign Language Interpretation program shares a lab with EASL program. But technology for IT and EASL is different, so when upgrades done for EASL it impacts on the IT utilization. Lab updates have followed ESL needs primarily. The Lab does not

- have ability for students to see audio visual simultaneously with recording video/ visual (signing)
- Because ASL interpreting skills learning requires speech and sign language, verbal course work cannot be taught nor practiced in open labs shared with ESL students, where there is a requirement for silent work.
- Students currently do not have adequate space and technology for the practice and recording of ASL Interpreting assignments.
- Current specialized software developed specifically for ASL Interpreting instruction - Linkwell (Canadian based) can be delivered only on a MAC base.

6.2.26 It is recommended that a dedicated drive be established for the Sign Language Interpretation Program Faculty and Students

Rationale

- A dedicated drive would allow students to record assignments on the designated drive, for marking by instructors as instructors cannot access individual student computers. This is especially important for a potential distance delivery of some coursework.

6.2.27 As the ASL/Deaf studies program is a provincially unique program and an important prerequisite to Interpreter Education, that the technology needs of this program be reviewed and provided targeted Ministry grants and/or some priority in VCC capital budget allocations to ensure access to updated resources for students. This could best be done in conjunction with the above recommendations for program enhancement.

Rationale

- The program is unique in preparing students in working with the Deaf/HH populations as Interpreters but also within other social service fields
- That if Distance education is to be considered as part of a BC outreach program, technology would need to be enhanced

In addition to the Recommendations that are made above the researchers make the following observation:

Concerns have been raised around the need to further develop educational opportunity for Deaf Interpreters and/or Deaf-Blind interpreting. However it is recognized that this is a low-incidence, high-need population and that given relative pressures on the program these needs may not be fully addressed within the current programs. However Douglas College should further explore the training needs for these skill sets. (See Appendix 2, Additional Issues)

7. APPENDICES

Appendix I:

- 7.1 Personal Statements Regarding Access to Interpreters
 - 7.1.1 From Deaf Community Members
 - 7.1.2 From the Parents' Survey
 - 7.1.3 From Parents of Deaf/HH
 - 7.1.4 From Departmental Assistant – Douglas College
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 - 7.2.1 Interpreting/Communicating for Deaf/HH Students in K-12 Education
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Appendix III:

- 7.3 Responses to Survey and Questionnaires: Highlights
 - 7.3.1 ASL Student Network
 - 7.3.2 ASL Students – Secondary Schools
 - 7.3.3 VCC ASL/Deaf Studies - Students
 - Class of 2008/2009
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 - 7.3.4 Douglas College Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR): Current Students (2009/2010)
 - 7.3.5 VCC ASL/Deaf Studies Program: Graduates
 - 7.3.6 Douglas College Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR) Grads: 2009
 - 7.3.7 Survey of BC School Districts
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 - 7.3.9 Survey of Canadian Interpreters AVLIC Members
 - 7.3.10 Survey of BC Interpreters, WAVLI members
 - 7.3.11 Survey of BC Deaf Community
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Appendix IV:

- 7.4 Canadian and American Interpreter Education Programs Interviewed for this Report
 - 7.4.1 Interpreter Education Programs: Canadian
 - 7.4.2 Interpreter Education Programs(contacted): American

Appendix V:

- 7.5 Listing of other Agencies Contacted/ Interviewed

Appendix VI:

- 7.6 Acronyms and terminology utilized in Report

Appendix VII:

- 7.7 Links

7.8 REFERENCES

7. APPENDIX I:

7.1 PERSONAL STATEMENTS REGARDING ACCESS TO INTERPRETERS

7.1.1 From Deaf Community members

Cost of interpreter is an obstacle with small business and/or "private" institutes (i.e. CDI, beauty school, etc). ...Or personal needs to access communications at large family gathering, reunions, weddings, funerals, etc.

You have to book even way in advance than before, you used to be able to book one week in advance, but then even with just one week's advance/call, nobody is available!, very frustrating.

I'd LOVE to have a interpreters everywhere, like in stores, or at the dentist, or for art juries that I go to. I just go without, at the mercy of the hearing person who sometimes seems to get impatient with my apparent slow communication. I know interpreters feel like they are taken for granted, but for me that is NOT the case at all. Sometimes, I wish I was hearing so it would be a lot less trouble.

The greatest challenge of finding and booking an interpreter is availability. Also, of making a request for an interpreter well ahead of the time which can be unrealistic at times. Sometimes an office or agency calls back with a rescheduled meeting at a short notice; it creates some difficulties in booking and securing a interpreter in this time frame.

I often feel like I have to be put on a level down under from other hearing people because I can't receive equal information or equal right to picking my own day/time of appointments. Or even be able to attend any community sessions/workshops/meetings at any time within 2 weeks because there is still not enough interpreters to call even in such time frame

My preferred interpreters are not available as much as they used to be, and have to "settle less" (less years of experience of interpreting) or be stuck with an interpreter/someone I am not very familiar with. Or, worse, someone I don't prefer at all.

It is important to me that my interpreters have proper training in my work; also knows their area of specialities whether it is mental health, legal or business.

They (interpreters) have to have the knowledge of the specific field in which is being interpreted in order to best provide quality interpretation to those who are using the services of the interpreter

Getting interpreters who are able to understand the language of curriculum at the college level is hard to get and results in communication problems. Interpreters who interpret for professionals need to have a high degree of training - i.e. B.A. and a strong English language base. Interpreters need more practicum in various areas to expose them to the different settings such as legal and post-secondary education.

I think some interpreters are not ready to be professional due of lack of confidence and I think interpreter programs should add one more year so they can have more training and experiences.

In a professional setting it is important that the interpreters are able to understand the requirements of precise use of professional jargon and languages.

7.1.2 **From the Parents' Survey:**

The lack of understanding that even children with disabilities still have the need to communicate with others.

I don't believe that places like the recreation centre understand how important it is to have an interpreter for their program nor Beavers club even if they did understand they would say they couldn't afford that.

Unable to find adequate availability of interpreting.....cancellations are frustrating recently and generally have really struggles to find community interpreters.

My child is very involved in sports (trains daily.) We would love to have interpreting for this but again, we run into the same barriers (costs and availability).

I asked for an interpreter when my child joined a parks and recreational sports program, none were available or provided. Joining community programs does tend to be a problem in a noise environment. My child gets too distracted and doesn't get as much out of the program.

I had a fabulous interpreter who got a job with a VRS company and took a leave of 1 year. Now we have an interpreter who has been in the school district for a very long time and is good but not qualified/ certified. Also with his interpreter taking a leave for one-year, that means that the school district posted the job, but who is going to move to Campbell River for a possible 1 year job.

There are not enough skilled people out there. I am trained as a SEA and have worked in the system so I advocate for my daughter that nothing less than the best is good enough. Unfortunately most parents don't know what their child needs and how to get it until it is too late.

I just wished more interpreters would move up north. I think maybe someone should approach the school up north and suggest that they raise the wage to match the schools etc down on the coast or have like northern living allowance because its hard to attract interpreters up north. This must be done as the deaf up north are really suffering and accepting people that aren't qualified to do interpreting. Not acceptable. This is there life. Need someone to advocate in the north.

It would be nice if there was advocating done to government for access to funds for interpreters...say each family is given \$500 per year to use in the manner that would best help their child access the community. A basic human right is access to community and this would help families and promote more opportunities for Deaf child/ youth.

My son used ASL/oral and needed an SEA and scribe. I had to fight to keep his interpreter/SEA/Scribe for his high school education. The job posting had Interpreter listed and he got an interpreter who was not able to adjust to other duties. There are many children who fall between the cracks such as my son did who needed sign supported oral assistance with a scribe and special education duties for his needs. I understand the need for certified sign interpreters for Deaf children but had to fight to have my sons needs met. A job posting is good if it fills the requirements of the student which is sometimes not so cut and dry and easy to fill.

In our school system they were not experienced in hiring interpreters and were relying on educational assistants with sign skills.

My child does not have an interpreter - the individual is an special assistant with some signing/still learning sign. With the way the assistants are distributed in our school district, this is the best that was available. But it is still inadequate for my son's needs.

For the past two years the school district has been willing to hire an interpreter. But now our problem is that there are not enough interpreters around to be hired. So now we are gearing up to have a Typewell transcriber. While this is of support I don't see it being the perfect system. My daughter's first language is English so Typewell is probably going to work. But interpreters can make language come alive in ways typists cannot, naturally.

The one thing I have to say about the school system is although our interpreter was hired to ASL interpret for our son the school has also expected her to aid the teacher so she isn't always interpreting what is being said while she is tending to other students that are misbehaving in the class. She is sometimes helping getting those children back on focus rather than interpreting everything that is being asked or said in the class I feel that a lot is getting missed whether it is addressed to our son or not he could benefit from that ASL exposure. She is really his teacher the interpreter not the school teacher.

There are so many children that are hard of hearing and there is definitely a need for more government sponsored programs incorporating sign language Interpreters. People who hear well have no clue of how difficult it is to find out that your child can't hear then for the parents to learn sign language in order to communicate with the child, and for the child who is hard of hearing not to be able to communicate basic needs and wants. More sign language interpreters are definitely needed in order to facilitate the learning process between child, family, school, community, and many more. Imagine if your child is sick but can't tell you what hurts, or your child should attend a day care but as a parent you are worried that if something happens your child would be unable to communicate who, where, when, what.

I answered some of these questions as if my son was still in the school system but now there are new challenges in the post-secondary situation which he is finding. Recently, we hired an interpreter for our son to take a 7 hour course and cost us \$674.00 (travel time, mileage and misc. expenses) So, now the reality of the costs have opened our eyes to the challenges a deaf adult faces.

With the school we were told we would not get a Visual Language Interpreter so don't bother asking as there are none available! Some Deaf kids have had difficulty getting an ASL interpreter so we certainly would not get one as a hard of hearing student.

7.1.3 **From Parents of Deaf/HH**

From a mother whose Deaf son has been accepted into BCIT. to the Family Network for Deaf Children: I need your help. It looks like he may not start his course at BCIT next week due to the unavailability of an interpreter. The next course starts on Jan 2010 and it's full. This is very upsetting, as his path to this point has already been extremely difficult, and if he doesn't take this course his entire plumbing career could be in jeopardy. I can only blame myself that I didn't begin looking for an interpreter earlier and let the ball drop. He has been in touch with L. H. at BCIT and she has secured an interpreter for December only. He contacted WAVLI and WIDHH today as he scrambles looking for an interpreter. THIS IS CRITICAL. I'm open to suggestions.

7.1.4 **From Departmental Assistant – Douglas College**

To make arrangements for one Program Advisory Committee meeting for which four interpreters were needed (two for Deaf-Blind committee member), 52 emails were exchanged plus a number of phone calls. This secured us 4 interpreters from 2 agencies.

7.1.5 **From Contacts in the Education Systems**

(There is a) HUGE shortage (of interpreters)! Also there is limited support or access to professional development/resources in rural area, particularly in the North.

We lost our only interpreter over 8 years ago (Northern College)

It's a catch 22. Interpreters don't want to go to smaller communities because we cannot guarantee full time employment and students who are Deaf don't often come to the College here because we cannot ensure the interpreters.

Within the GVA the number of providers is strained to meet the current demand as such even minor fluctuations in the number of requests, or changes in the number of interpreters, renders it difficult to have confidence that we can meet the needs of registrants.

Not sure if there is anyone in Prince George who is qualified interpreter.

Working with children and youth requires very different skills than working with adults

It has been the case that qualified interpreters were not willing to take on other educational roles, There has not been a lot of training for working in school districts in interpreter programs

We do not have any qualified interpreters and very limited personnel with any signing in our area.

APPENDIX II:

7.2 ADDITIONAL ISSUES RELATED TO INTERPRETING BUT OUTSIDE REVIEW

There are a number of issues that have been raised by multiple stakeholder groups interviewed and/or surveyed for this report. Although they do not fall within the mandate of this provincial review they are important issues and need further review with the development of strategies/recommendations. They include the provision of interpreting services in the K-12 System and the access for Deaf/HH students to post-secondary education at institutions specifically structured for Deaf populations and issues of services for the Deaf-Blind population in BC.

7.2.1 Interpreting/Communicating for Deaf/HH students in K-12 Education

The learning that takes place in the early years of formal education provides the basis for the level of success in the K-12 and the post-secondary systems. Unfortunately, for Deaf/HH students the lack of adequate access to appropriate levels of interpreting service may lead to underachievement in formal learning as well as in social learning.

The issue of appropriate communications/signing and interpreting services for Deaf/HH students were raised by many of our contacts including the respondents to the survey of K_12 School districts, parent organizations, community respondents, by other Canadian Interpreter Education programs, by leading American programs, by the BC Deaf and Hard of Hearing Outreach Program (for K-12,) and by individuals interviewed for this report.

Feedback from the surveys done for this report indicates that parents not clear about the varying skill level of individuals providing support to students. According to respondents in the parents' survey, it appears that decisions about support for the child in the K-12 system varies from school districts to school districts. In our survey of parents, 36% of respondents indicated the decision for support of their child was through a collaborative effort between themselves and the school staff. 23 % did not know how decisions were made and 22% indicated that it was the district teacher for the Deaf/HH.

According to a CUPE review of SEAs in BC 26% of respondents indicated that they have some credentialing in ASL. While the survey is not clear what is meant by 'credentialed' it seems to imply that 26% of SEA respondents utilize sign language in some capacity in their jobs. 32% of parent respondents in our survey indicated that their child required the support of a sign language interpreter. Other respondents indicated that their child required SEA skills with interpreter skills (16%) or high levels of ASL (22 %).

Services to Deaf/HH students in the K-12 system are complex and are impacted by many factors. These include the critical shortage of professional ASL interpreters in BC, especially in rural areas; the cost of qualified professional interpreters, the limitations on compensation for interpreters/signers imposed by staff collective agreements, as well as lack of flexibility in hiring the most qualified SEA for a specific assignment (due to seniority requirements), the low numbers of Deaf/HH students in many school districts, the lack of specialized education courses/programs that prepare interpreters for work in the K-12 system

In the United States, several states have mandated the use of only qualified professional Interpreters in the K-12 education system and almost all States have set minimum ASL fluency

credentials for Special Education Assistants and/or Interpreters working with Deaf/HH students. A variety of credentialing, screening, and/or registration is mandated by state legislation including RID, EIPA, NAD and/or State specific credentialing/screening. There is also increasing focus on educating interpreters for work in the K-12 system, through coursework within programs or through certificates programs for working educational interpreters

The complexity of D/HH children's needs, including communication, behavioural, learning and other additional disabilities, impact on support services. Almost 60% of respondents in the parent survey indicated that their child had some identified additional needs besides hearing loss. However, most school districts responses provided much lower numbers of Deaf/HH students with additional needs- the majority of their responses indicated 10% to 30%. This probably stems from different understandings of what is meant by additional needs (educational needs, better interpreting, additional support needs, social development needs, etc). Other issues identified during research for this report that should be addressed but are outside the mandate of his review are strategies/process for assessment of child's communication needs; decision-making process to determine child's best fit for support; the isolation of interpreters in some school districts; a lack of experienced supervision for SEAs working with Deaf/HH students, limited support resources professional development for SEAs.

Debra Russell, Ph.D., David Peikoff Chair of Deafness Studies at University of Manitoba, has been heading a two-year national research project on deaf education and student outcomes in an inclusive environment in the public school system. She is quoted in an Article University of Alberta ExpressNews web site "Start by looking at deaf education as a second-language issue." ... "If deafness is viewed in the same way as some of the other disabilities are, then there is a risk of overlooking the key features that are different about deaf kids: they don't hear the language of instruction," ... "All other children with disabilities hear that language of instruction." (Jamie Hanlon, 2009) Russell further observes that "some students may only get one-third of the classroom instruction given to regular students through the use of an interpreter who is not fluent and lacking proper qualification." So that by the time they finish elementary school they are "far delayed, based on the lack of language access [in] the language-rich environment" (Jamie Hanlon, 2009) leading to academic and social problems throughout their educational programs.

What is clear is that there is a need to further study this area in order to achieve a better understanding of

7.2.2 Access to Accessible Education for Post-Secondary Students

In Canada, all post-secondary institutions are taught in Spoken English or French (sign language interpreters provided or captioning provided). This is somewhat academically accessible, but not a fully inclusive environment for ASL users. There are no post-secondary institutions that provide educational programs for the Deaf/HH in their first language - American Sign Language. Gallaudet University in the US is the only university in the world that has 100% accessible/inclusive academic and social post-secondary programs for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. The Rochester Institute of Technology houses the National Technical institute for the Deaf and enrolls over 1,100 deaf and hard-of-hearing students across more than 200 fully accessible technical programs. CSUN, in California enrolls more than 220 Deaf/HH students, mainstreamed into regular university programs and houses the National Center of Deafness. There are Deaf/HH students in BC who would wish to attend these programs – especially Gallaudet, but the costs of attending are prohibitive for most and the Ministry of Advanced Education provides limited support.

Other provinces (Alberta & Ontario) providing funding to deaf/hard of hearing students studying outside of Canada, in a university that uses ASL as its language of instruction, through the

provision of “top up” funding (approximately \$20,000 to \$25,000 per year.) Ontario and Alberta have created this top up to remove one barrier for their deaf students.

In BC, many of the Deaf/HH professionals, have received some education at Gallaudet. As there is a critical shortage of Deaf teachers/instructors in all levels of education and of ASL Instructors it would make sense to encourage BC residents to educate themselves for these positions rather than hiring from outside the province or, more likely, outside the country. Many Deaf staff working at the B.C. School for the Deaf, Provincial Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCFD) and various organizations throughout B.C. attended Gallaudet and are successfully employed. (Backgrounder for Press Conference, Aug 11, 2009 - <http://vimeo.com/6066301>)

7.2.3 Addressing the Needs of Deaf-Blind

Ministry statistics show that there were 65 Deaf-Blind students registered in the K-12 system. The Ministry of Education has established the B.C. Provincial Outreach Program for Students that works in partnership with BC public school districts and Group I and II independent schools to help district staff determine appropriate support for Deaf-Blind students and to provide professional development to district staff working with these students. The Outreach Program is currently working with Douglas College's Continuing Education Program to offer a 300 hour certificate program in Intervention for Persons with Deaf-Blindness. Two courses, the Introduction to Deaf-Blindness and the Introduction to Intervention are considered to be entry level training for anyone supporting someone with Deaf-Blindness. District staff can take any or all courses.

Currently there are no training programs specifically for Deaf-Blind Interpretation in Canada. Seattle Central College offers two-year programs in Interpreter training and Deaf Interpreters with some emphasis of interpretation for the Deaf-Blind. Douglas College students have an orientation to Deaf-Blindness and participate in a summer Deaf-Blind retreat organized by the Seattle Lighthouse for the Deaf-Blind.

This report has not had opportunity to do more in-depth research on meeting the needs of the Deaf-Blind in our community. It is an area that needs more consideration and study.

APPENDIX III:

7.3 RESPONSES TO SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRES: HIGHLIGHTS

This section provides highlights of the information most pertinent to the report, from the various surveys facilitated during background research for this report.

7.3.1 ASL Student Network

In June 09, a questionnaire was developed for students who were currently or had recently taken ASL courses. An invitation was sent to all students registered on the BC Student ASL network, describing the Provincial review and inviting them to complete a questionnaire on Survey Monkey, through a provided web link. The same questionnaire was completed by students in some ASL classes in the VCC ASL courses and manually entered into Survey Monkey. A further invitation to complete the survey via Survey Monkey was extended to current students in the VCC ASL program, who had not yet completed the survey. A total of 93 responses were received of which 88 were female. Ages ranged from 19 to 67.

When asked what motivated them to take the ASL courses 46% indicated General interest, 16% had family member Deaf/HH and 27% had friend/acquaintance Deaf/HH. Many indicated they had made contact with Deaf individuals as part of their work and wished to learn ASL for more effective communication.

90% of the respondents stated they planned to continue their ASL studies and 50% indicated they were going on to VCC certificate program and 42% stated they planned to be an ASL interpreter. 31% indicated they studied ASL to enhance skills and create more opportunity in their current field of work and 42% planned to use ASL learning in volunteer work.

Some indicated that they had difficulty finding the next level course or that courses had been cancelled in their community. Some stated they were interested in continuing ASL studied through the certificate program but could not take time away from F/T employment or travel to Vancouver to enter the VCC certificate and/or the DC diploma programs.

7.3.2 ASL Students – Secondary Schools

In June 09, a questionnaire was developed for students who were currently enrolled in Secondary School ASL courses. After contacts with several School districts both Kelowna and Burnaby (districts with largest ASL student enrolments) were able to facilitate the completion of the questionnaire by students in their ASL classes during last week of classes (June 09). A total of 84 responses were received. Students were enrolled in grades 9 to 12 with the majority of students in grade 11/12. 58% indicated it was their first ASL course and 42% indicated they had taken one two or three courses prior to current course.

When asked what motivated them to take the ASL courses 38% indicated General interest, 4% had family member Deaf/HH and 19% had friend/acquaintance Deaf/HH. 37% were taking the course as University entrance/second language requirement, 12% were encouraged by a counsellor. 52% indicated that they currently used ASL in personal/family life.

63% of the respondents stated they planned to continue their ASL. 18% stated they planned to be an ASL interpreter and 38% planned to use ASL in their future careers but not as an interpreter and 44% planned to use ASL in their future personal/family life.

7.3.3 VCC ASL/Deaf Studies - Students

Class of 2008/2009

The VCC ASL/DS class was visited in June 09, just prior to their program completion. Students were informed about the Provincial Review, some discussion followed and all students were asked to fill out a questionnaire. Thirty responses were collected and analyzed.

In response to a question as to what motivated them to take this certificate program, 23% had friends/acquaintances who were Deaf/HH, 10% had family members Deaf/HH and 17% knew someone who was an interpreter. Several indicated they had come in contact with Deaf/HH individuals as part of their work and were motivated to learn ASL language. 83% learned their ASL prerequisites through college/Adult Ed courses and 50% had learned about the VCC ASL/DS program by doing research on the web. Several indicated their interest in ASL, developed in earlier ASL courses, led them to explore further ASL education.

In terms of future utilization of their learning in this program, 77% said they entered the program because they planned to be an interpreter, 23% had taken the program to learn ASL for their career but not as an interpreter – of which 20% indicated they were already, or were planning to be, Special Education Assistants in K-12. 13% had planned to be an interpreter but changed their mind during the year in the program, 57% planned to move to DC Interpreter Education program.

About 27% of the students were from outside the Lower Mainland prior to starting their ASL studies.

40% stated they learned about career as interpreter during their year at VCC.

Class of 2009/2010

Current students in the VCC ASL/Deaf Studies program were informed of the study and were asked to fill in a questionnaire, similar to the in-class questionnaire given to the previous classes, but on Survey Monkey. 21 individuals responded.

In response to a question as to what motivated them to take this certificate program, 15% had friends/acquaintances who were Deaf/HH and 25% had family members Deaf/HH, and 30% knew someone who was an interpreter. Several indicated they had learned ASL in secondary school and others responded that they were interested in learning languages and/or sign language in particular.. Most gained the prerequisite ASL skills by taking courses through College or Adult Ed courses (79%)

In terms of future utilization of their learning in this program, 85% said they had originally entered the program because they planned to be an interpreter, 62% still planned to be interpreters and 33% had taken the program to learn ASL for their career but not as an interpreter while 76% planned to apply to the DC Interpreter Education program

Of the respondents, 43 of this year's students had previously been employed F/T , 48% had lived in the lower Mainland prior to entering the program, 24% on Vancouver Island, 24% from other provinces and 14% had come from another country. Most students (62%), found out about the VCC program by research on the web, (33%) by talking to an interpreter and/or 24% by talking to a friend /acquaintance.

85% had entered the program in order to become an interpreter and 76% plan to apply to an Interpreter Education program.

7.3.4 Douglas College Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR): Current Students (2009/2010)

The researcher visited the DC Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR) in Oct. 09, and all students in the year 1 and 2 were asked to fill out a questionnaire. Thirty one students attended the combined class and 31 responses were collected. All responses on the completed questionnaires were entered into Survey Monkey for ease of analysis.

According to responses, 80% of students had previously been employed F/T.

Prior to entering the VCC Certificate and DC diploma programs 46% lived in the Lower Mainland, 25% were from out of province., and 83% had completed the VCC ASL/DS program.

Asked about the transition between VCC and Douglas programs, 63% indicated they had no difficulty and of the 37% who indicated they experienced difficulties in the transition, most commented on the increased academic expectation and standards in the Douglas College program. When asked whether they believed that two programs should be at one College, 52% said yes and 48% no. Some of the comments supporting the no answer to this question indicated that many students in VCC program were exploring other career options and not intending to be interpreters, that by having separate programs students were exposed to a wider variety of teachers and ASL styles, that the differences between the two colleges add valuable richness to the educational experience, and that the two programs have different focus. Some comments supporting the yes answer, were create easier transition, allows certificate students to learn more about interpreter education, would provide more exposure/interaction with other college programs, and facilitate more communication between instructors of the two programs.

The responses were unanimous that if the two programs were co-located, they should be at Douglas College. Some reasons given were, students could take other academic classes, greater integration with other programs is possible, an exposure to higher quality educational standards, and potential for interactions with the many deaf students on campus in regular DC programs.

To the question should the Douglas College program be re-structured to three years and to a degree program 97% said yes. Comments to support such a development included better preparation for work as interpreter; a degree would be more useful to future careers; graduates could build on degree to go on to Masters programs; that a degree gives profession more credibility; and that the interpreting program would be more recognized and respected. Several comments emphasized that there should remain an exit point for the certificate program.

To the question - if it were a three year degree program would you still have enrolled 97% said yes with comments such as one more year to get degree would be a worthwhile investment; extra year would allow me more courses in Early Childhood, psychology, etc; and I would want to be an interpreter whatever it takes.

76% of graduates stated they intend to seek work in the Greater Vancouver area, 20% Vancouver Island 12% in other areas and 28% outside BC (some gave more than one response).

7.3.5 VCC ASL/Deaf Studies Program: Graduates

VCC research office provided a list of emails of students previously registered in the certificate program over the past 10 years, with a note to state these were emails while students were registered at VCC and may no longer be valid.

An email was sent out, notifying certificate graduates of the provincial ASL survey and asking that they complete a short survey on Survey Monkey through a provided web-link. As well a number of individuals who self identified as program grads that were met while doing research in the community, contacted the consultant. They were interviewed and their responses were manually entered into Survey Monkey.

A total of 20 responses were received. Of these 40% entered the DC Interpreter training program, 15 % went on to a University degree program and 20 % went on to another college diploma or certificate program.

Of the respondents 65% were currently employed F/T and 30% P/T. Work included Special Ed Assistant, Nursing, Social Services positions and Interpreting.

Of the respondents 45% indicated that they had entered the VCC ASL/DS program to become an interpreter and 55% indicated that their original intent had been to utilize ASL in their career but not as an Interpreter. About 50% stated that they had changed their career plans during the year they took the certificate program. Some stated they had entered to become an interpreter, but changed their career plans, but a few others stated that they decided to become an interpreter during this year.

Most (65%) had obtained their prerequisites for the certificate program through College or Adult Ed programs. 75% of the respondents stated they had learned about the career of interpreter during the certificate year and 50% indicated they had changed their career goals while taking the certificate program (some to interpreting and some away from interpreting to other career goals).

7.3.6 Douglas College Sign Language Interpretation Program (INTR) Grads: 2009

Because the consultants planned a survey of all WAVLI members, with some questions specific to their experience in and recommendations for the DC VLIT program only the immediate past graduates were asked to complete a graduate survey. Individual contact was made with the 2009 graduates. Only six of the original entering class of 16 graduated in 2009. All six responded to the request to complete a questionnaire.

Prior to entering the VCC Certificate and DC diploma programs 50% lived in the lower mainland, 33% were from out of province, and 67% had completed the VCC ASL/DS program.

50% of the respondents indicated that they plan to pursue further post-secondary studies including the BA (one noted the requirement of BA for registry with RID.)

When asked about their recommendations for changes to the DC VLIT program, the respondents were unanimous that the Douglas College program should be structured to a degree program. Comments included that a degree means they would be better prepared for interpreting work, and would allow for more specializations. Other recommendations for program change included upgrading technology from VCR to digital and creating dedicated lab space to facilitate homework assignments and practice sessions (to eliminate scheduling for equipment and rooms for recording, and hauling equipment to and from the library. Students commented that the week between practicums, when students have to fly back to campus were very expensive and could be delivered via technology. There was also a recommendation for exposure to a variety of

language models/styles and more guest lectures from working interpreters, to gain different perspectives of interpreting.

67% of graduates stated they intend to seek work in the Greater Vancouver area and/or Vancouver Island and 33% outside BC, where they lived before entering the program.

7.3.7 Survey of BC School Districts

Requests to complete a questionnaire were sent to all School districts through the BC Council of Administrators of Special Education. Of the 59 districts, 41 responded for a response rate of almost 70%. These districts represent approximately 95% of Deaf/HH students enrolled in the K-12 system in BC (1149 - 08/09 according to Ministry stats). There responses were manually entered into SurveyMonkey for ease of analysis.

There was a wide range of responses to what percentage of these students had additional special needs – but the majority were from 10% to 30%.

Services to these students are provided through:

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1. SEAs that know ASL/how to sign | 30% |
| 2. SEAs who have completed the one-year ASL/DS certificate | 38% |
| 3. Qualified professional Interpreters who are district staff | 38% |
| 4. Qualified professional Interpreters on contract | 5 % |
| 5. Varies depending on availability of Support Staff who are able to sign/utilize ASL | 32% |
| 6. No ASL/interpreting provided in the school district | 22% |

Where interpreting is provided by Special Education Assistants, they are screened for knowledge of ASL in 76% of the cases, some formally by district Teachers of the Deaf/HH or professional interpreters, some more informally through school administrators or district staff..

Respondents identified the major issues in providing Interpreter services to Deaf/HH students in there district as follows

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Lack of professional interpreter | 63% |
| 2. Cost of professional interpreters | 33% |
| 3. Difficulty of recruiting qualified professional interpreters into school district positions | 73% |
| 4. Lack of Special Ed Assistants with sufficient ASL skills | 58% |
| 5. Limitations of union scale/differentiated job descriptions in recruiting qualified professional interpreters (QPI) | 40% |
| 6. Limitations of union scale/differentiated job descriptions to motivate SEAs to take ASL/Deaf Studies certificate | 21% |
| 7. Most QPIs do not have the skill sets and/or motivation to take on other responsibilities associated with providing support to students in the K-12 setting | 33% |

Of the districts that had hired qualified professional interpreters, 32% reported no difficulties with their work in the K-12 setting, but the remainder reported that the qualified professional interpreters did not have the skills to work in the K-12 setting, were not able to multitask and/or were not able to work as a member of an educational team.

In response to the question as to whether they a lack of qualified professional interpreters in the communities they serve, 73% responded yes, 11% no and 19% did not know.

ASL Courses were offered through continuing education in 22% (8) districts and through secondary school(s) in 14% (5)districts.

7.3.8 Survey of Post-Secondary Education – Disability Services Coordinator

Requests to complete Questionnaires were sent out to all Post-Secondary Disability Services Coordinators. Of the 25% requests sent out 23 responses were received representing a 92 % response rate (another still promised).

In response to whether they believe there is a shortage of interpreters 37% replied yes for the Greater Vancouver area and 83% for areas outside the Greater Vancouver area. Some institutions state they have no available interpreters in their communities.

In response to the question –have you been unable to hire interpreters to meet students' educational needs in the past two years 74% replied yes. To deal with the lack of interpreters 36% replied that students changed schedule/courses to match interpreter availability, 42% utilized other accommodations and 29% stated student delayed taking the courses. In some cases single interpreters were utilized where there should have been team interpreting. Two institutions responded that students transferred to another institution.

Of responding institutions 75% responded that they require certification from a recognized interpreter training program, 40% required membership in WAVLI and 60% required previous post-secondary experience. However 65% stated that required qualifications depended on interpreter availability. One replied "historically, certification not an option, not available". In addressing wages of the 14 that responded to this question, reported wages varied considerably but 84% of the institutions indicated hourly wages of between \$30 - \$45. Almost all paid for prep time and minimum call out hours. Several indicated that they had needed to offer enriched pay to attract interpreters (\$45-\$60) to take on additional contracts, when faced with a last minute shortage of interpreters to meet student needs.

In the rating of some factors for Interpreter Education, 92% of responding institutions indicated specialized course work related to post-secondary education was important/very important, 86% indicated increased general post-secondary education was important/very important, 58% indicated developing a degree program was important/very important and 100% of those responding indicated that offering ladder to a degree program was important/very important.

7.3.9 Survey of Canadian Interpreters - AVLIC Members

The survey of Canadian sign language interpreters were sent out through the members of AVLIC by their e-mail list. Out of a possible 618 members of the Association for Visual Language Interpreters of Canada 208 respondents participated in our survey. This is a response rate of almost 34%.

i) Education

87 (180) indicated that they were graduates of an interpreter training program.

41% (81) respondents indicated that they had at least a Bachelor's degree. 6 of those indicated having a Master's degree.

73 (37%) indicated an interest in pursuing a degree in the next five years.

98% of respondents are interested in workshops, training or educational opportunities in the interpreting field

63 indicated that there is not enough professional development in their geographic area

Time and costs were identified as the two major barriers for taking specialized training. No financial incentives and no post-secondary credit were next identified barriers to taking specialized training.

ii) Primary area of employment

Indicate the approximate percentage of your interpreting work in each of the areas (equal to 100%):							
Answer Options	0%	1-10%	11-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%	Response Count
General	13	53	33	15	6	9	128
Medical	27	45	27	17	8	2	126
Legal	55	34	8	5	2	0	104
Business	23	45	15	14	7	2	105
Mental Health	42	38	17	9	2	1	109
Social Services	27	54	22	5	5	1	114
K-12 Education	60	7	4	3	9	21	103
Post-Secondary	32	30	16	17	21	24	140
Education	51	19	8	4	1	6	88
Vocational Training	49	29	2	4	1	0	85
Vocational Rehabilitation	61	20	1	2	0	1	85
Video Relay	50	22	11	11	9	15	118
Religious/Social/Family	35	58	8	2	2	1	106
answered questions							194

iii) Interpreter's Plans

70 (35%) interpreters indicated that they were considering a change in career from interpreting at some point over the next 10 years

83% of respondents believed that there is an interpreter shortage in Canada

Only 53 (9%) of AVLIC members have COI designation in Canada. However, the majority of 127 respondents that indicated that they were considering COI certification. Some of those respondents (26) also indicated that they were considering RID certification.

7.3.10 Survey of BC Interpreters - WAVLI Members

The BC interpreter survey was sent to interpreters who were members of the Westcoast Association of Visual Language Interpreters. Out of a potential 186 members 76 responded to an online survey for a response rate of almost 41%. WAVLI is the largest provincial interpreter association by membership in Canada.

71% of respondents indicated that they graduated from the Douglas College Interpreter Education Program.

36 (47%) of respondents indicated that they have completed and passed the PCAS screening while 6 (8%) have tried but not have succeeded. The rest of the respondents indicated that they have not attempted the screening.

25 (33%) of respondents indicated that they have successfully completed the MIS screening while 6 (8%) have tried but did not pass. The rest of the respondents indicated that they have not attempted the MIS screening. Interpreters with COI designation are exempted from the MIS screening.

British Columbia has 9 interpreters with COI designation out of an identified 53 interpreters across Canada who has COI designation.

16 respondents indicated that they also have RID designation.

Of 76 respondents 66% (50) indicated that they were interested in a 4th year of training only if it led to a degree.

30% of respondents were interested in a fourth year if it was offered during evenings and weekends while 29% were interested in a distance delivery format with short-term intensive in-class sessions.

When asked if they felt that there was an interpreter shortage, respondents indicated there was in areas outside of the Greater Vancouver area (32%), followed by provincial shortage (27%) and specific fields (26%). When asked to indicate which specific fields experienced shortages respondents indicated medical, education, mental health and legal areas as the primary areas.

54 out of 76 respondents indicated that they attended VCC for their ASL studies. Most respondents who attended VCC for their ASL studies rated all areas as **'good'**. These areas indicated on the survey are as follows: ASL signing skill development (highest at 67%), learning about deaf culture/community, Student workload, Appropriateness of class size, Opportunity for skill development, Suitability/Availability of learning aids/technology/resources (lowest at 43%), Program organization/structure, Appropriateness of courses in preparation for the Douglas College interpreting training program, and Instructor Availability outside class time.

54 out of 76 respondents indicated that they attended Douglas College for their interpreting training. Most of the respondents indicated that the following was **good or 'excellent'**: Appropriateness of class size, Opportunity for skill development, and Practicum placements, ASL and interpreter skill development and Suitability/Availability of learning aids/technology/resources, Learning about deaf culture/community, Student workload, Program organization/structure, Appropriateness of courses to Interpreter career, and Instructor Availability outside class time.

It is important to note that significant respondents indicated the following as **average or below average**: Learning about deaf culture/community, Suitability/Availability of learning aids/technology/resources, Program organization/structure, and Appropriateness of courses to Interpreter career.

7.3.11 Survey of BC Deaf Community

185 Deaf community members in British Columbia responded to survey. It is important to note that there is significant difficulty in getting responses from the BC Deaf community and this is consistent with other attempts to survey the Deaf community. Given that the preference for providing information is in person and in ASL the method of gathering information either electronically or through paper/pen responses results in lower response rate.

If the estimate of 4,455 signing Deaf people in BC is accurate the estimated response rate is quite poor. The response rate for this survey then is less than 5%.

86% of respondents indicated that they are Deaf, 76% of respondents are from the Greater Vancouver area and 86% indicated that ASL is their preferred language of communication.

76% indicated that they prefer ASL interpreters.

59% use interpreters an average of 1 to 3 times a month while 52% average the experience of wanting an interpreter but cannot get one 1 to 3 times a month.

The three top reasons that Deaf people cannot get interpreters are because of unavailability, schedule conflicts and the cost of interpreters.

50% of respondents indicate that if interpreters are not available they resort to writing notes back and forth with hearing people. Respondents also will use family/friends or reschedule meetings/appointments if interpreters are not available. Most of the Deaf community respondents clearly indicated that these alternative means of communication are not preferred as they wish more interpreters are available.

90% of Deaf community respondents indicate that there are not enough interpreters.

Deaf community respondents indicated the following (in rank order) as areas where it is important to have interpreters: health, workshops, employment, legal, school, mental health, social services, entertainment, daily needs, and religious observances/meetings.

75% indicated that it is always important to have trained interpreters.

Between 23% and 46% of respondents indicated that the following is true often or always true:

- a. The interpreters who work with me have good attitudes toward Deaf people
- b. The interpreters who work with me ensure my privacy
- c. The interpreters who work with me know what they are doing.
- d. The interpreters who work with me are professional.
- e. The interpreters who work with me are well-trained.
- f. The interpreters who work with me know about Deaf Culture.
- g. The interpreters who work with me are fluent in ASL.

It is important to also note that 14% to 17% of respondents indicated that the above statements are sometimes true.

In interviews with various Deaf community members it was also clear that professional Deaf people were more likely to be dissatisfied with the quality and choices available to them regarding interpreters. They were very clear that they wanted to see the level of professionalism and education of interpreters to be raised. Deaf professionals indicated that they feel that they were not represented well by the available interpreters in British Columbia.

7.3.12 Survey of Parents of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

An online survey of BC parents of deaf and hard of hearing children was sent out through the Family Network for Deaf Children. We received 82 responses from parents with a good distribution from all parts of British Columbia. Parents also identified the level of schooling that their child attended and the distribution was also reasonably reflective of all levels from preschool to post-secondary ages.

When asked how they would identify their child, 48% (38) said Deaf, 36% (29) said hard of hearing, 14% (11) said Cochlear Implant user, and 3% (2) said Deaf-Blind. When asked if their child had additional support needs, 59% said yes while 41% said no. We followed up with a request to identify what additional needs their child had and parents responded with the following responses:

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Learning	Physical	Behavioural	Autism	Health	Gifted	ESL	None
21	7	7	4	2	2	1	38
47.7%	15.9%	15.9%	9.1%	4.5%	4.5%	2.3%	

Parents then were asked what their child's preferred or primary means of communication. Respondents said ASL (42%), oral (29%), mixed oral and sign language (23%), and Signed English (1%). The complexity of supporting Deaf and hard of hearing in the school system is reflective of both the additional disabilities and communication support needed to access education. Parents were diverse in what they thought would be the best support for their child in the classroom (see table below).

SEA with no signing skills	SEA with basic signing skills	SEA with moderate signing skills	SEA with advanced signing skills
5	3	6	15
7.2%	4.3%	8.7%	21.7%
SEA with interpreter signing skills	SEA with oral interpreter skills	Sign Language Interpreter	Oral Interpreter
11	6	22	1
15.9%	8.7%	31.9%	1.4%

Questions in the survey then moved from the classroom to the community. Parents were asked if they accessed sign language interpreters outside of the school setting, 61% said yes while 39% said no. Parents often are put into the role of interpreter or communication support for their child. When asked how often they interpret for their child, they said 'all the time' (23%), 'often' (28%), 'sometimes' (33%) and 'never' (17%). When asked if they thought that there were enough interpreters in their community 90% said 'no'. Then they were asked what those barriers in accessing interpreters were, parents responded with the following:

Unavailable	Schedule Conflicts	Cost of Interpreters	Agency does not know how to get one	Agency does not understand about my child's rights
38	11	35	12	12
67.8%	19.6%	62.5%	21.4%	21.4%

Parents were then asked that if they had access to interpreters in their community how often would they use them in a month:

0	1 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 10	11 - 15	>15
17	14	16	8	4	9
25%	20.6%	23.5%	11.8%	5.9%	13.2%

7.3.13 Survey of Agencies that Contract or Employ Interpreters

Seven agencies that either employed or contracted with sign language interpreters were surveyed and interviewed regarding their perceptions. Three agencies hired sign language interpreters to provide interpreter services while two provided a mix of interpreter services and social services. The final two agencies provided only social services. These agencies provided a large source of employment outside of the K-12 and the post-secondary school system.

Three of the interpreter agencies provided part-time or full-time employment for interpreters. Only one agency provided steady employment for more than 5 sign language interpreters. Most of the work provided to sign language interpreters was via contract and those contracts were largely event based or short term event-based (less than 3 months). Only 4 agencies provided contracts or were contracted for long-term ongoing (more than 4 months). What does appear to be clear is

that the source of work for many interpreters is not always consistent or provided ongoing steady sources of income. Only one agency truly provided ongoing steady employment that averaged about 11 to 20 hours a week.

Four of the seven agencies provided or hired Deaf Interpreters. One agency said that there were no available Deaf Interpreters in their geographic area.

In terms of screening 6 of 7 agencies engaged in some screening. The seventh agency did not as they subcontracted their work to a booking agency but did have criteria for the interpreters that they hired. The most common screening criteria were membership in a provincial interpreter agency. The least common screening criteria were a sign language proficiency assessment.

All agency representatives were clear that they believed that there was a shortage of interpreters definitely outside the Lower Mainland but also within the Greater Vancouver area.

In the evaluation of Douglas College interpreter graduates agencies clearly indicated that there needed to be further training. The expectations from the agencies was for higher quality interpreters with a enhanced understanding of medical, education, legal, mental health, and social services both in signs and general knowledge. An exposure to various signing models was another area indicated by agencies as an important growth area for interpreters in training. There was also indication from agencies that there needed to be an increased opportunity for practical experiences and mentorship both during the training and post graduation. Most of the agencies provided some level of pairing of newer interpreters with experienced interpreters.

Agencies also agreed that a move towards a B.A. Degree would be a positive move for the training of interpreters that may meet the concerns expressed in the surveys.

APPENDIX IV:

7.4 CANADIAN AND AMERICAN INTERPRETER EDUCATION PROGRAMS INTERVIEWED FOR THIS REPORT

7.4.1 Interpreter Education Programs: Canadian

- Nova Scotia Community College
Bruce Tawse, Dean, School of Applied Arts and New Media
Doug Barnes, Academic Chair, Applied Arts
Denis Smith, Coordinator, ASL-English Interpretation Program
- George Brown Community College
Nandini Daljit, Director, School of Social and Community Services
Phyllis Beaton-Vasquez, Curriculum Review Leader, ASL Programs
- Red River College and the University of Manitoba
Rick Zimmer, Coordinator, Deaf Studies Program, RRC
Terry Janzen, Associate Professor and Department Head, Department of Linguistics,
University of Manitoba
- Lakeland Community College
Jason Dewling, Associate Dean of Arts, Science, Business and Academic
Services
Kirk Ferguson-Uhrich, Chair, Program of Sign Language/Deaf Studies and Sign
Language Interpretation
Debra Russell David Peikoff Chair of Deafness Studies & WCCSD Director,
University of Alberta
- Douglas College and Vancouver Community College
Meetings in June 2009 and Sept 2009 with all faculty/staff and Dean associated
with the VCC ASL/Deaf Studies Program and with all faculty/staff and Dean
associated with the Douglas College Sign Language Interpretation Program.

7.4.2 Interpreter Education Programs (contacted): American

- Gallaudet University
Steven Collins, Chair and Assistant Professor, Interpretation Programs
- Ohlone Community College, CA
Joe McLaughlin, Former Dean of Deaf Studies
- Rochester Institute for Technology, National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID)
Linda Siple, Director, ASL and Interpreting Education
- St. Catherine University, MN
Paula Gajewski-Mickleson, Chair, ASL and Interpreting Department
Lauri Swaby, Professor, ASL and Interpreting Department

- University of Northern Colorado: Distance Opportunities for Interpreter Training Center (DOIT)
 - Leilani Johnson, Director, DOIT Center
 - Anna Witter-Merithew, Assistant Director, DOIT Center

- Western Oregon University
 - Elisa Maronee, Program Coordinator, ASL/English Interpreting Department
 - Amanda Smith, ASL/English Interpreting Department

APPENDIX V:

7.5 OTHER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTED/ INTERVIEWED

Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada (AVLIC)

Westcoast Association of Visual Language Interpreters WAVLI

BC Provincial Outreach Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

Canadian Learning Society

Intern Project for Ontario

Canadian Association for the Deaf

Canadian Hearing Society- Internship Program

National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC)

Western Association for the Deaf

Wellbeing Program, BC

ASL Student Network

Douglas College Continuing Education, Program Coordinator for CFCS programs

Articulation meeting, BC ASL Instructors (June)

Provincial Services for the Deaf and Hard of Haring

Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre

Still Interpreting, Inc.

Sorenson

APPENDIX VI:

7.6 ACRONYMS AND TERMINOLOGY UTILIZED IN REPORT

AA	Associative of Arts
AAS	Associate of Applied Science
ACRID	Alberta Chapter of Registered Interpreters of the Deaf
ACSD	Alberta Cultural Society of the Deaf
ADSP	ASL/Deaf Studies Program
AEIP	ASL-English Interpreting Program
ASL	American Sign Language
ASL/DS	American Sign Language and Deaf Studies
AVLIC	Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BC	British Columbia
BCIT	BC Institute of Technology
CAD	Canadian Association of the Deaf
CADSPPE	Canadian Association of Disability Service Providers in Postsecondary Education
CAESLI	Canadian Association of Educators of Sign Language Interpreters
CE	Continuing Education
CES	Canadian Evaluation System
CHS	Canadian Hearing Society
COI	Certification of Interpreter (AVLIC)
CRTC	Canadian Radio and Television Commission
CSAC	College Standards and Accreditation Council
DBI	Deaf-blind Interpreter
DC	Douglas College
DI	Deaf Interpreter
DOIT	Distance Opportunities for Interpreter Training (Center)
EICP	Educational Interpreter Certificate Program
GMC	Grant MacEwan College (Alberta)
HH	hard of hearing
IEP	Interpreter Education Program
IEP	Interpreter Education Program
INTR	Interpreter Program
ITP	Interpreter Training Program
K-12	Elementary and Secondary school system
LSQ	Langue des Signes Québécoise
MIS	Medical Interpreting Services (WIDHH)
NAD	National Association of the Deaf (US)
NCIEC	National Consortium of Interpreter Education Center
NSCC	Nova Scotia Community College
OIS	Ontario Interpreting Services
PCAS	Post-secondary Communication Access Services
PSDHH	Provincial Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (Province of BC)
PSLI	Program of Sign Language Interpreter
PSS	Post-secondary Sign Language Screen (BC)
RASLEI	Registered ASL-English Interpreter
RID	Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf
RRC	Red River College (Manitoba)
RSI	Repetitive Strain Injury

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RSLI	Registered Sign Language Interpreter
RVLI	Registered Visual Language Interpreter
SEA	Special Education Assistant
SLDS	Sign Language and Deaf Studies
SLDS	Sign Language and Deaf Studies
SLI	Sign Language Interpreting
SLID	Sign Language Interpreting Diploma
U of M	University of Manitoba
UBC	University of British Columbia
UFV	University of Fraser Valley
ULAR	University of Arkansas – Little Rock
UT	University Transfer
VCC	Vancouver Community College
VLI	Visual Language Interpreter
VLIT	Visual Language Interpreter Training
VRI	Video Remote Interpreting
VRS	Video Relay Services
WTK	Written Test of Knowledge (AVLIC)

APPENDIX VII

7.7 LINKS

Interpreter Education Programs - Canadian

- **Nova Scotia Community College**
http://www.nsc.ca/Learning_Programs/Programs/PlanDescr.aspx?prg=ASLDC&pln=DEAFSTDIES
http://www.nsc.ca/Learning_Programs/Programs/PlanDescr.aspx?prg=ASLA&pln=AMSI GNLANG
- **George Brown Community College**
<http://www.georgebrown.ca/Marketing/FTCal/comsrv/C114.aspx>
- **Red River College and the University of Manitoba**
<http://me.rrc.mb.ca/catalogue/ProgramInfo.aspx?ProgCode=DEASF-CT&RegionCode=WPG>
<http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/departments/linguistics/index.html>
- **Lakeland Community College**
http://www.lakelandcollege.ca/programs/human_services/ASL/
http://www.lakelandcollege.ca/programs/human_services/sign-language/
- **Douglas College and Vancouver Community College**
http://www.vcc.ca/programs-courses/detail.cfm?div_id=10&prog_id=106
<http://www.douglas.bc.ca/programs/sign-language.html>

Interpreter Education Programs (contacted): American

- **Gallaudet University**
<http://interpretation.gallaudet.edu/interpretation-BA.xml>
- **Ohlone Community College, CA**
<http://www.ohlone.edu/>
- **Rochester Institute for Technology, National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID)**
<http://www.ntid.rit.edu/>
- **St. Catherine University, MN**
<http://www.stkate.edu/>
- **University of Northern Colorado: Distance Opportunities for Interpreter Training Center (DOIT)**
<http://www.unco.edu/doit/home.html>
- **Western Oregon University**
<http://www.wou.edu/education/sped/bsbai.php>

Associations /Organizations

- **Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada (AVLIC)**
<http://www.avlic.ca/index.php>
- **Canadian Hearing Society**
<http://www.chs.ca/>
- **Canadian Association for the Deaf (CAD)**
<http://www.cad.ca/en/>
- **Canadian Hard of Hearing Association**
<http://www.chha.ca/chha/>
- **Post-Secondary Communication Access Services (PCAS)**
<http://www.bcit.ca/drc/pcas/>
- **Provincial Services for Deaf & Hard of Hearing**
<http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/psdhh/contacts.htm>
- **Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment**
<http://www.classroominterpreting.org/eipa/index.asp>
- **National Consortium of Interpreters Education Centers**
<http://www.nciec.org/>
- **Conference of Interpreter Trainers**
<http://www.cit-asl.org/index.html>
- **Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf**
<http://www.rid.org/>
- **Western Institute for the Deaf and hard of Hearing**
<http://www.widhh.com/>

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