The National Consortium
of Interpreter Education Centers

Phase II Deaf Consumer Needs Assessment

Final Report

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE
NATIONAL CONSORTIUM OF INTERPRETER EDUCATION CENTERS (#H160A&B)
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SEPTEMBER 2009

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The National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers is funded from 2005 – 2010 by the U.S. Department of Education RSA CFDA #84.160A and B, Training of Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind.

Foreword

The National Consortium of Interpreting Education Centers (NCIEC) is authorized and funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), U.S. Department of Education. Through grants awarded by the Department, the National Interpreter Education Center (NIEC) and five Regional Interpreter Education Centers (RIECs) that comprise the Consortium are working collaboratively to increase the number of qualified interpreters nationwide and ensure that quality interpreter education opportunities and products are available across the country.

A primary requirement of the NCIEC grants is to conduct ongoing activities to identify needs in the field of interpreter education. This report has been prepared based on the findings and conclusions of a national needs assessment specifically designed and carried out to assess the needs of deaf consumers across the country. This Deaf Consumer Needs Assessment Final Report is submitted by the NCIEC on behalf of the NIEC and the five RIECs. The report provides an overview of the needs assessment process, discussion of primary assessment findings, and presentation of conclusions and next steps for responding to those findings.

Acknowledgements

This report is submitted by Dr. Dennis Cokely, Associate Director and Dr. Betsy Winston, Director, National Interpreter Education Center at Northeastern University (NIEC), with extensive help and input from:

- Lillian Garcia, NIEC
- Sarah Snow, NIEC
- Karen Dahms, Scott Musich, External Consultants: Needs Assessments Team, NCIEC

We also wish to extend special thanks to the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Center Directors and staff of the:

- National Interpreter Education Center at Northeastern University
- Northeastern University Regional Interpreter Education Center
- Gallaudet University Regional Interpreter Education Center
- CATIE Center at the College of St. Catherine
- Mid-America Regional Interpreter Education Center
- Western Region Interpreter Education Center

We gratefully acknowledge the help and support of all the consumers who participated in this study. Without their active participation, this Needs Assessment would not have been possible.

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National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers
Deaf Consumer Needs Assessment
Phase II Report

Executive Summary

The National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC) is authorized and funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), U.S. Department of Education. The Consortium is comprised of the National Interpreter Education Center and five Regional Interpreter Education Centers. Since its inception, the NCIEC has been working on a number of national initiatives, one of which has been the design, development and implementation of needs assessment activities. The objectives of the needs assessment activities are to identify current and future needs of interpreter education programs, interpreter educators, interpreters and consumers of interpreter services.

This report, the Phase II Deaf Consumer Needs Assessment Report, represents the culmination of the second needs assessment activity carried out to better understand the current and projected needs of deaf consumers as they relate to the availability, quality and overall use of interpreter services. The Phase I Deaf Consumer Needs Assessment effort was designed as the first in a series of on-going activities planned by NCIEC to collect input from deaf consumers. Upon recommendation by its external evaluators, it was agreed that the Phase I effort would target just those deaf consumers that could be easily reached through an electronic survey, a data collection tool used successfully in the previous needs assessment efforts. Therefore, the Phase I effort centered on design and dissemination of a survey instrument, developed by the NCIEC through a collaborative process that included opportunities for input and feedback on the part of content experts and stakeholders in the field of interpreter services. The survey was disseminated electronically to deaf consumers through the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) eZine membership list. That survey effort was completed in March 2008.

The Phase II needs assessment activities reported on here were carried out through the conduct of interview and focus group sessions with additional targeted segments of the nation’s deaf consumer population. The NCIEC worked closely with agencies and programs serving deaf populations (e.g. independent living centers and other groups), in each of its five regions to identify deaf individuals who were unlikely to have been reached by the electronic survey to participate in those planned sessions. The consumer selection process was carefully carried out to ensure that the input gathered through Phase II was appropriately representative of the nation’s deaf population with respect to gender, race and ethnic background, prevalence of other disabilities, academic and work status, and geographic location.

The remainder of this report is organized into two primary sections. Section I presents broad and detailed findings identified through a comprehensive analysis of the 61

Phase II survey instruments completed during the focus group and interview sessions. Section II presents recommendations to the NCIEC for responding to those findings.

I. Phase II Needs Assessment Findings

This section of the report provides a detailed description of findings related to each question posed by the Phase II deaf consumer survey instrument. Findings are organized into a number of sub-categories based on the type and range of data collected through the survey and the results of the analysis process.

The first category of findings reports basic information about the 61 survey respondents, including respondent characteristics and demographics, as well as data related to respondent academic and work status. The next category of findings reports information related to respondents' preferred or primary means of communication. Following that information, findings are related to the respondent use of interpreter services, specifically, prevalence of use, and extent to which interpreter services are available to meet needs. The survey also captured a number of important information regarding the various settings in which consumers use interpreter services. Findings in this area include settings identified by respondents as most important for services, and information related to the availability of interpreter services within specific settings.

The findings section also reports on respondent perceptions of interpreter characteristics and qualifications. Specifically, this category of findings reports on respondent perceptions regarding interpreter certification, interpreter ethnicity, and interpreter knowledge to perform the job, including whether interpreters possess specialized knowledge to work in specific settings. In addition, the survey also collected a range of information regarding respondent satisfaction with interpreter services. Findings in this regard include overall satisfaction, respondent comfort level in working with interpreters, and perceptions about interpreter attitude and respect for respondent privacy. Finally, the last section of findings present data related to respondent use of Video Relay Services (VRS), and general respondent opinions regarding the extent to which interpreter education programs are currently available nationwide.

A. Information about Respondents

This first category of findings presents specific demographic and other descriptive information about the Phase II survey respondent pool.

Respondent Identification

In the survey, respondents were asked to identify themselves as either: deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind. They were also provided an "Other" selection option. Responses to that question in the survey are presented on Table 1 below.

Respondent Self-Identification Table 1		
Self Identification	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Deaf	56	91%
Hard of Hearing	4	7%
Deaf-blind	0	%
Cochlear Implant	0	%
Other	0	%
No response	1	2%
Total	**61**	**100%**

Finding: The majority of respondents, or 91%, identified themselves as "Deaf". Only 7% of respondents identified themselves as "Hard of hearing". When considering the high number of respondents that selected the 'deaf' self-identification option, it is possible that consumers may feel that the 'deaf' identification option carries with it more recognition, support and resources than the other identification options.

Respondent Gender

The survey also collected information regarding respondent gender. Responses are presented on Table 2.

Respondent Gender Table 2		
Gender	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Female	31	51%
Male	30	49%
Total	61	100%

Finding: The survey respondent pool is split approximately equally across the two genders.

Respondent Age

The survey also queried Phase II respondents with regard to their age. Six age ranges were provided as possible selection options. Responses are presented on Table 3.

Respondent Age Table 3		
Average Age	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
21 - 30 years old	10	16%
31 - 40 years old	11	18%
41 - 50 years old	19	31%
51 - 60 years old	11	18%
61 - 70 years old	8	13%
70+	2	4%
Total	**61**	**100%**

Finding: Of the total 61 respondents, 83% fall between the ages of 21 and 60 and thus comprise a subset of the deaf population most likely to be employed, and perhaps equally as likely to have work-related interpreting needs.

Respondent Race and Ethnicity

The survey also sought to determine the race or ethnic background of survey respondents by using the U.S. Census demographic categories. Responses are presented on Table 4.

Ethnic or Racial Background Table 4		
Race/Ethnicity	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
European American/White/Caucasian	28	46%
Latina/o/Hispanic	11	18%
Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0%
African-American/Black	13	21%
Asian American	3	5%
Pacific Islander	0	0%
Prefer not to answer	0	0%
Other, please specify	6	10%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: In the Phase II survey, 46% of the respondents identified themselves as “European American/White Caucasian”; 21% identified themselves as “African American/Black”, and 18% identified themselves as “Latina/o/Hispanic”.

Respondent Academic Status

The survey asked respondents to indicate their highest level of completed education. Information reported by respondents in this regard is presented on Table 5.

Highest Level of Completed Education Table 5		
Education Level	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
1st - 5th grade	3	5%
6th - 8th grade	4	6%
High school	44	72%
Certificate	3	5%
AA/AS	1	2%
BA/BS	2	3%
MA/PhD	1	2%
No response	3	5%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: As indicated by the data on Table 5, the majority of the Phase II survey respondents reported they have achieved a high school degree, specifically, 72% of respondents. However, anecdotal observation of the taped focus groups and interview sessions suggests that literacy levels were in many cases lower than a high school degree.

Respondent Work Status

An open-ended question in the survey asked respondents to list their current job/career. Because of the open-ended nature of the question, responses varied widely. In order to best analyze and compare responses, six primary categories of job/career were established:

- Academic professional (includes professor, teacher, school administrator or employee of an academic institution
- Business professional (includes lawyer, doctor, consultant, business owner)
- Hourly workforce
- Student
- Not currently working
- Retired

Table 6 organizes and presents survey responses in those broad categories.

Respondent Job/Career Table 6		
Type of Job/Career	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Academic professional	0	0%
Business professional	5	7%
Hourly workforce	8	13%
Not working	37	61%
Retired	3	5%
Student	2	4%
Other	6	10%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: Of the Phase II survey respondents, only a few reported they were currently working. Specifically, 7% of respondents reported they were business professionals and 13% reported they were employed in the hourly workforce. What is particularly striking in the Phase II composite data is the high percentage of respondents that reported they did not have a job and were not currently working, or 61% of respondents. However, it must be taken into consideration that 47% of the Phase II respondents reported they are currently a VR consumer (see Table 6a below). This could account for a significant portion of the respondents that reported they were not working at the time of the survey. In addition, the 10% of respondents that reported in the "Other" category indicated they were previously a VR consumer, had attained employment, but then had been laid off or had lost their job.

Respondent VR Status

The Phase II survey included a question related to whether or not the respondent was a VR consumer at the time of the survey.

VR Consumer Table 6a		
VR Consumer	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Yes	29	47%
No	17	28%
Other	6	10%
No response	9	15%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: Of the Phase II survey respondents, nearly half reported they are a consumer of VR services, or 47% of respondents. In addition, all six of the respondents that selected the "Other" option, reported that they previously had been a VR consumer. In that case, it can be stated that more than half of the respondents, or 57% of Phase II respondents, are or have been consumers of VR services. One goal of the Phase II survey was to ensure input of VR consumers. The data reported on the table above would indicate that that goal has been achieved.

B. Respondent Means of Communication

The survey asked respondents to identify their preferred or primary means of communication. Table 7 presents responses to that question.

Respondent Preferred/Primary Means of Communication Table 7		
Communication Method	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
ASL	54	89%
Signed English	0	0%
Cued Speech	0	0%
Oral	0	0%
Contact signing (PSE/Pidgin)	0	0%
Total Communications	0	0%
Tactile ASL	0	0%
Tactile Signed English	0	0%
Finger spelling	0	0%
Writing	0	0%
Other, please specify	6	11%
Total	**61**	**100%**

Finding: The majority of respondents, or 89%, reported they preferred ASL, or used ASL as their primary means of communication.

C. Use of Interpreters and Interpreter Services

This section of findings presents an array of information related to obtaining interpreter services, frequency with which respondents request interpreter services or have difficulty obtaining those services, and respondent perceptions regarding the use of Deaf Interpreters (DI) and Video Relay Services (VRS).

Obtaining Interpreter Services

In the survey respondents were asked to indicate if they know how to get an interpreter when they need one. Responses to that question are presented on Table 8 on the following page.

Respondent Ability to Obtain Interpreter Services Table 8		
Type of Response	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Yes	52	85%
No	8	13%
No response	1	2%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: Most respondents reported they know how to get interpreter services when they need them. Specifically, of the Phase II survey respondents, 85% of respondents reported they know how to obtain interpreter services, and 13% reported they do not. However, it is worth considering that 47% of Phase II respondents reported they were currently a VR consumer (Table 6a), and therefore may not actually be currently involved in securing their own interpreter services as those services would typically be arranged for and provided by the VR agency.

Frequency of Interpreter Use

Respondents were asked how many times during an average month they typically used interpreter services. Responses to that question are presented on Table 9.

Frequency Interpreter Services Used Table 9		
Frequency per month	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
0 times	0	0%
1 - 3 times	17	28%
4 - 6 times	19	31%
7 - 9 times	6	10%
10 - 12 times	6	10%
13 - 15 times	2	3%
15+ times	11	18%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: The highest number of respondents reported they used interpreter services between "4-6 times" per month, or 31% of the total survey respondents. The second highest reported level of use was 28% of respondents reporting they used interpreter services "1-3 times" per month. It is also interesting to note the 18% of respondents reported they utilize interpreting services more than 15 times per month.

It is interesting to aggregate the survey data to assess the extent to which Phase II respondents are utilizing interpreter services more than four times per month: 72% of respondents in aggregate reported they use interpreter services four times per month or more. It would also be interesting to learn more in future needs assessment efforts about those consumers that utilize interpreter services 15 times per month or more.

Respondents were also asked to report how many times during an average month they want interpreter services but can't get them. That information is reported on Table 10.

Frequency Interpreter Services Wanted but Unavailable Table 10		
Frequency per month	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
0 times	18	30%
1 - 3 times	36	58%
4 - 6 times	3	5%
7 - 9 times	2	3%
10 - 12 times	1	2%
13 - 15 times	0	0%
15+ times	1	2%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: Overall, 70% of respondents reported they had some level of difficulty obtaining interpreter services when they were needed. In addition, it is concerning that such a high number of respondents reported they wanted interpreter services "1-3 times" per month, but were unable to obtain those services. In that frequency category, 58% of respondents reported they were unable to secure services. This data may suggest that it is more difficult for those consumers trying to access interpreter services on a more sporadic basis (the 1-3 times per month frequency), than those consumers that utilize interpreters at a higher frequency level, which may indicate more routine use and opportunities for advance planning and scheduling.

Use of Deaf Interpreters

Respondents were asked whether or not they would like to use deaf interpreters. Table 11 presents responses to that question.

Respondents Feelings about use of Deaf Interpreters Table 11		
Type of Response	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Yes	31	51%
No	17	28%
Doesn't Matter	13	21%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: Of the total Phase II respondents, 51% reported they would like to use deaf interpreter services; 28% reported they would not like to utilize deaf interpreter services.

In addition, 21% of respondents reported it didn't matter to them. It is worth considering that the Phase II respondent pool, perhaps having few communicative strategies or low communication confidence, may feel a high level of identification and comfort in working with an interpreter professional that is also deaf, or are open to trying out new communication strategies.

Respondents were also asked to report on those settings in which they have or have not used deaf interpreters over the past year. Respondents had the option of selecting more than one setting. Table 12 presents responses to that question organized in order of setting in which most respondents **have** used deaf interpreter services over the past year.

Settings Deaf Interpreters Used Table 12				
Interpreting Setting	**Yes**		**No**	
My work/job	4	7%	57	93%
Conferences	1	2%	59	96%
Health	9	15%	52	85%
School	4	7%	55	90%
Entertainment	1	2%	59	96%
Religious services	1	2%	59	96%
Daily Business	5	8%	56	92%
Legal needs	6	10%	55	90%
Social Services	6	10%	54	88%
Voc rehab	3	5%	57	93%
Mental health	1	2%	58	95%

Finding: Across the board, more respondents have not used deaf interpreter services than have in any of the settings identified by the survey. While in Table 11, it appeared that the Phase II respondent pool reported positively with regard to using deaf interpreters, when the same respondents reported on settings in which they have utilized a deaf interpreter (Table 12 above), it would appear that very few Phase II respondents have actually utilized the services of a deaf interpreter.

Use of Video Relay Services

The survey included several questions related to respondent use of Video Relay Services (VRS). The first question asked respondents to indicate whether or not they use VRS. Responses are presented on Table 13 on the following page.

Respondent Use of Video Relay Service Table 13		
Type of Response	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Yes	51	84%
No	8	13%
No Response	2	3%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: The majority of Phase II survey respondents reported they use VRS, with 84% of respondents reporting they use VRS, and only 13% reporting they do not. However, it is unclear from the manner in which the question was asked whether the 84% use VRS technology to communicate directly with deaf peers, or whether they actually use VRS interpreters. In addition, it is interesting to recall that 47% of respondents reported they are a VR consumer (Table 6a). In another NCIEC data collection effort, initial data collected from state VR agencies suggests that the use of VRS in the provision of client services is relatively low.

The survey also asked respondents to indicate whether they believe VRS has made it more difficult for them to obtain 'live' interpreter services to fill their community interpreting needs. Table 14 presents responses to that question.

VRS Has Made it Difficult to Obtain 'Live' Interpreters Table 14		
Type of Response	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Yes	21	34%
No	18	30%
Don't know	21	34%
No Response	1	2%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: Of the Phase II survey respondents, 34% reported they believe that VRS services have made it more difficult for them to obtain 'live' interpreters to fulfill their interpreting needs; 30% reported they believe the advent of VRS services have not made it more difficult to obtain live interpreting services. An additional 34% of respondents reported they "Don't know." It is interesting to aggregate the "Yes" and "Don't know" response options. In aggregating that data, 68% of the Phase II survey respondents either think that VRS has affected the availability of interpreters in live community settings, or are not sure. Viewing the reported data in this way would seem to indicate that a significant number of Phase II consumers believe VRS has had an impact on the availability of interpreter services in the community.

D. Interpreting Settings

This section of findings presents information related to the array of settings in which consumers seek and access interpreter services.

Settings Most Important to Respondents

Phase II survey respondents were asked to identify the single setting in which it was most important for them to have interpreter services. Table 15 captures that reported information.

Settings Identified as Most Important for Interpreter Services Table 15		
Interpreting Setting	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
My work/job	6	10%
Health	48	78%
School	2	3%
Conferences	0	0%
Daily business	0	0%
Religious services	0	0%
Legal	0	0%
Social services	0	0%
Mental health	2	3%
Entertainment	0	0%
Vocational rehabilitation	1	2%
Other, please describe	1	2%
No response	1	2%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: The setting identified by the highest number of respondents as most important was "Health", with 78% of Phase II survey respondents selecting that option on the survey. The next highest response category was "My work/job", with 10% of survey respondents selecting that option. It is not surprising that only 10% of Phase II respondents selected "Work/job" as the most important setting, considering 47% of Phase II respondents reported they were currently VR consumers (Table 6a). It is also interesting to note that there was so little spread across the various setting selection options among the Phase II respondents.

Settings Most Difficult to Access Interpreter Services

The survey also asked respondents to identify the settings in which they found it most difficult to obtain interpreter services over the past year. That information is presented on Table 16. Respondents were not limited to selecting one setting. Therefore, the number of responses to the question exceeds the number of survey respondents as many respondents identified more than one setting.

Settings Identified as Difficult for Securing Interpreter Services Table 16		
Interpreting Setting	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Health	32	52%
My work/job	16	26%
Conferences	0	0%
Entertainment	2	3%
Religious services	0	0%
Legal	10	16%
School	7	11%
Daily business	1	2%
Social services	4	7%
Mental health	2	3%
Voc rehab	3	5%
Other	18	30%

Finding: The two settings respondents identified as the most difficult to obtain interpreter services in are "Health", selected by 52% of respondents, and "Work/job", selected by 26% of respondents. Again, it is worth recalling that 47% of Phase II respondents reported they were a VR consumer (Table 6a). In addition, it is concerning that such high percentages of respondents reported it was difficult to attain interpreting services in health settings (52%). It would be interesting to further break down the "Health" setting into health-related sub-settings in future data collection activities.

Further assessing data reported in this portion of the survey, the 18 responses in the "Other" category were examined more closely. In assessing those responses, there were a few similarities. Of the 18 responses in that category, 14 of the respondents selected the "Other" category and reported they have no problem obtaining interpreting services. The remaining four responses in this category could not be aggregated or compared.

The survey analysis included a comparison of the settings identified by respondents as 'most important' for interpreting services with those settings identified by respondents as 'most difficult' to obtain interpreter services. A one-to-one comparison is impossible as respondents were limited to selecting one setting as the 'most important', but could select more than one setting as 'most difficult.' However, it is interesting to note the differences in the ranking of settings. Table 17 provides the rank order of settings by 'most important' and 'most difficult' for obtaining services.

Settings Services Most Needed Compared to Those Most Difficult for Securing Services Table 17					
Setting	**Services Most Needed**		**Setting**	**Settings Most Difficult**	
Health	48	78%	Health	32	52%
My work/job	6	10%	My work/job	16	26%
School	2	3%	Conferences	0	0%
Conferences	0	0%	Entertainment	2	3%
Daily business	0	0%	Religious services	0	0%
Religious services	0	0%	Legal	10	16%
Legal	0	0%	School	7	11%
Social services	0	0%	Daily business	1	2%
Mental health	2	3%	Social services	4	7%
Entertainment	0	0%	Mental health	2	3%
Voc Rehab	1	2%	Voc rehab	3	5%

Finding: It is interesting that the setting identified by the highest number of respondents as 'most important' ("Health") is also the setting most respondents identified as 'most difficult' for obtaining interpreter services. This further illustrates the need to better understand the health-related sub-settings, and factors that may contribute to making it difficult to attain interpreter services in those sub-settings.

E. Interpreter Characteristics and Qualifications

Respondents were asked a number of questions regarding their perceptions of interpreter characteristics and qualifications. Specifically, this category of findings reports on respondent perceptions regarding interpreter certification and ethnicity, interpreter knowledge to perform the job, including whether interpreters possess specialized knowledge to work in specific settings.

Interpreter Certification

Respondents were asked to indicate whether it was important to them that the interpreter providing services was certified. Table 18 on the following page presents information collected from the respondents in this regard.

Importance of Interpreter Certification Table 18		
Frequency	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Always	31	51%
Often	2	3%
Sometimes	8	13%
Seldom	0	0%
Doesn't Matter	20	33%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: The majority of Phase II respondents place value on interpreter certification. Of the total respondents, 51% reported interpreter certification as "Always" important. It is interesting to also note that to 33% of the Phase II survey respondents, interpreter certification "Doesn't matter." However, anecdotal observation of the video-taped focus group and interview sessions suggests that a number of Phase II respondents did not understand the concept of certification, which may have contributed to the 33% of respondents reporting certification "Doesn't matter".

Interpreter Ethnicity

Respondents were asked how important it is to them that the interpreter providing services is from their own ethnic group. Responses are presented on Table 19.

Importance of Interpreter Ethnicity Table 19		
Importance	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Always	1	2%
Often	1	2%
Sometimes	0	0%
Seldom	0	0%
Doesn't Matter	59	96%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: Based on the reported data, it would appear that interpreter race or ethnicity is not important to most of the Phase II survey respondents. For 96% of respondents, the ethnicity of the interpreter providing services "Doesn't matter." This may be due to the relative scarcity of the ethnically-diverse interpreter, and the historic lack of choice deaf people have had in the selection of the interpreters they work with. In addition, it is also possible that this consumer group has had less exposure to interpreters from ethnically diverse backgrounds, and/or may not understand their rights or be able to clearly and concisely express their rights regarding interpreting services, including requesting interpreters from ethnic backgrounds similar to their own.

Interpreter Knowledge

Respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which the interpreters providing service "Know what they are doing." Responses are presented on Table 20.

Interpreters Know What They Are Doing Table 20		
Satisfaction level	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Always	19	31%
Often	24	39%
Sometimes	17	28%
Seldom	0	0%
Doesn't matter	0	0%
No response	1	2%
Total	61	100%

Finding: It is concerning to note that only 31% of respondents believe the interpreters they work with "Always" know what they are doing. Additionally, 39% of respondents reported that the interpreters they work with "Often" know what they are doing, and another 29% reported interpreters only "Sometimes" know what they are doing. Looking at the data in aggregate, there is a high percentage of respondents sharing the perception that the interpreters they work with do not always know what they are doing (67% of Phase II respondents if the options "Often", "Sometimes", and "Seldom" are aggregated). This table in particular may be an indication that consumers do not perceive that interpreters are qualified or best prepared to assist them. Respondents were also asked to report whether they believed that interpreters providing services had the specialized knowledge required to work in specific settings, or whether it mattered whether the interpreter had specialized knowledge of a particular setting. Table 21 presents both the number of responses for each option, as well as the percentage of respondents that selected that option. The settings are organized in order of those that received the most responses in the "Yes" category.

Believe that Interpreters Have Specialized Knowledge for the Setting Table 21						
Interpreting Setting	**Yes**		**No**		**Doesn't Matter**	
Health	23	38%	2	3%	35	57%
My work/job	5	9%	7	11%	49	80%
Legal	29	33%	3	5%	38	62%
School	7	12%	8	13%	46	75%
Conferences	2	3%	8	13%	51	84%
Mental Health	8	13%	6	10%	46	75%
Social services	1	2%	10	16%	49	80%
Daily Business	0	0%	8	13%	53	87%
Religious Services	2	3%	8	13%	51	84%
Voc rehab	1	2%	8	13%	51	83%
Entertainment	1	2%	8	13%	52	85%

Finding: Responses to this question clearly indicated that the majority of Phase II survey respondents felt that it didn't' matter whether interpreters had specialized knowledge of the specific setting to do their jobs. Looking just at the "Doesn't Matter" column of data, in each setting category more than 55% of respondents in each setting category reported specialized knowledge of the setting didn't matter; in most cases, the percentage of respondents selecting the "Doesn't Matter" option were more than 80%. However, when considering this response set on the part of the Phase II respondents, observation of the actual video-taped focus group and interview sessions indicates that not all participants understood the concept of interpreter specialization, thereby potentially impacting the high number of responses in the "Doesn't matter" column.

The two settings in which the highest number of respondents reported that interpreters had the necessary specialized knowledge of the setting to do their job were health (38% of respondents) and legal (33% of respondents).

F. Respondent Satisfaction with Interpreter Services

The survey included a number of questions designed to assess respondent satisfaction with the interpreter services they receive. These questions related to overall satisfaction; respondent comfort level with the interpreters providing services; extent to which interpreters serving them ensure and protect privacy, and perceptions regarding interpreter attitudes and understanding of deafness and deaf culture.

Overall Satisfaction

The survey included a broad question that asked respondents to rank their level of overall satisfaction with the interpreter services they receive. Responses are presented on Table 22.

Respondent Overall Satisfaction with Interpreter Services
Table 22

Satisfaction level	# of Responses	% of Respondents
Always	25	41%
Often	26	42%
Sometimes	9	15%
Seldom	1	2%
Never	0	0%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: Of the Phase II survey respondents, only 41% reported they are "Always" satisfied with the interpreter services they receive. This leaves 59% of respondents in aggregate reporting they are only "Often", "Sometimes", or "Seldom" satisfied with the services they receive.

Respondent/Interpreter Comfort Level

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they establish a comfort level with the assigned interpreter and can understand and communicate fully. Responses to that survey question are presented on Table 23.

Respondent Comfort Level with Interpreter Table 23		
Frequency	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Always	15	25%
Often	25	41%
Sometimes	17	27%
Seldom	0	0%
Never	0	0%
No response	4	7%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: Of the Phase II survey respondents, only 25% reported they "Always" were able to establish a comfort level with the assigned interpreter, and were able to communicate and understand fully. Another 41% of respondents selected the "Often" option and 27% reported they are only "Sometimes" able to establish a comfort level with the interpreter providing service. Future data collection activities should include questions designed to further understand issues and causes contributing to consumer responses to this question, for example, factors that contribute to consumer/interpreter comfort levels, such as gender match, ethnicity match; etc.

Respondent Privacy

Respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which they felt the interpreter providing services respected and ensured their privacy. Responses are presented on Table 24.

Interpreter Respects and Ensures Respondent Privacy Table 24		
Type of Response	**# of Responses**	**% of Respondents**
Always	24	39%
Often	17	28%
Sometimes	9	15%
Seldom	0	0%
Doesn't matter	10	16%
No response	1	2%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: It is concerning that of the total respondents, only 39% reported they "Always" feel that the interpreters providing them services protect and ensure their privacy. It is interesting to note that 16% of Phase II survey respondents reported that it "Doesn't matter" if the interpreter respects and ensures their privacy. However, during the focus group and interview sessions, a number of respondents expressed the view that they didn't know what the interpreter said or did once the session was over, so really had no idea of whether or not their privacy was protected. However, future surveys could further explore the reasons and conditions under which respondents feel that interpreters do not respect or maintain their privacy.

Interpreter Attitude and Understanding of Deafness

Survey respondents were asked to indicate whether the interpreters they work with have good attitudes toward deaf people. Responses are presented on Table 25.

Interpreter Attitudes Toward Deaf People
Table 25

Type of Response	# of Responses	% of Respondents
Always	17	28%
Often	23	38%
Sometimes	19	31%
Seldom	0	0%
Doesn't matter	2	3%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: It is concerning that in response to this question, only 28% of respondents reported that the interpreters they work with have good attitudes toward deaf people. The highest percentage of responses fell into the "Often" category, with 38% of respondents reporting that interpreters they work with "Often have good attitudes toward deaf people"; another 31% reported they are "Sometimes" satisfied with the attitude of the interpreter. Future data collection activities should include questions designed to further understand issues contributing to consumer perceptions in this area. Specifically, future data collection should try to explicate what respondents mean by "good attitudes" toward deaf people.

Respondents were also asked to report their perceptions regarding interpreter understanding of deaf and deaf-blind people and culture. Table 26 presents both the number of responses to that question and the percentage of overall respondents.

Interpreter Understanding of Deaf/Deaf-blind People and Culture Table 26				
Frequency	**Deaf People and Culture**		**Deaf-blind People and Culture**	
Always	9	15%	1	2%
Often	14	23%	2	3%
Sometimes	21	34%	2	3%
Seldom	0	0%	0	0%
Doesn't Matter	0	0%	0	0%
Doesn't apply	17	28%	55	90%
No response	0	%	1	2%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**	**61**	**100%**

Finding: With regard to respondent perceptions of interpreter understanding of deaf people and culture, the highest response category was "Sometimes" with 34% of Phase II survey respondents reporting that interpreters they work with sometimes understand deaf people and deaf culture." The second highest response category was "Often" with 23% of respondents, followed by "Always" with only 15% of responses. Future data collection should try to explicate what respondents mean by "understanding of deaf people and culture."

For the question regarding interpreter understanding of deaf-blind people and culture, the highest number of responses were in the "Doesn't apply" category, with 90% of respondents selecting that survey option. This is to be expected given no Phase II survey respondent identified themselves as "deaf-blind."

Adequate Number of Interpreter Education Programs

One final question in the survey asked respondents to indicate whether they believe there are enough interpreter education programs available today. Responses are presented on Table 27.

Adequacy of Interpreter Education Programs Table 27		
Type of Response	**# of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Yes	19	31%
No	19	31%
No opinion	23	38%
Total responses	**61**	**100%**

Finding: Of the Phase II respondents, 31% reported they do not believe there are enough interpreter education programs in place, and another 31% reported there are enough programs. In addition, 38% of Phase II respondents reported having "No opinion" regarding the issue. However, observation of the Phase II focus group and interview session videotapes suggests that a number of Phase II respondents did not understand the nature of the question, or the scope of what would be considered an interpreter education program.

G. Respondent Location by NCIEC Region

Respondents were asked to identify the state/NCIEC region in which they reside. That information is provided on Table 28.

Respondent Location of Residence by RSA Region Table 28	
RSA Region	**Phase II Respondents**
Region I	11
Region II	0
Region III	7
Region IV	5
Region V	9
Region VI	7
Region VII	0
Region VIII	7
Region IX	8
Region X	7
Total	**61**

Finding: There were two regions in which no consumers participated: Region II and Region VII.

This concludes the Findings section of the report.

II. Recommendations - Phase II Needs Assessment

The recommendations provided below relate specifically to the conduct of future needs assessment efforts, and have been developed to ensure that NCIEC deaf consumer data collection activities are accurately representative of the nation's overall deaf population.

Recommendation 1: Increase input of other deaf consumer sub-groups
Future deaf consumer needs assessment activities should be designed to include more participation on the part of hard of hearing, deaf-blind, low functioning deaf, and consumers with cochlear implants. In this effort, 91% of participants identified themselves as 'Deaf."

Recommendation 2: Expand the data collection process to target transition-age deaf and hard of hearing consumers
In the Phase II survey, 83% of respondents reported they were between the age of 21 and 60. Future efforts should seek to increase involvement of transition-age consumers, as well as consumers that may be recent high school graduates or enrolled as postsecondary students (the 17-21 age range).

Recommendation 3: Increase participation of consumers from targeted culturally and ethnically diverse populations
Future efforts should seek to increase input of Latina/o/Hispanic, Native American, Asian American and Pacific Islander deaf and hard of hearing consumers.

Recommendation 4: Identify strategies to involve consumers that have not completed high school
Of the Phase II pool of survey respondents, 72% reported they had achieved at least a high school degree. Future data collection activities should be designed to obtain input from deaf consumers that have not achieved this level of academic accomplishment, and include opportunities for input from the low functioning deaf consumer population.

Recommendation 5: Seek input from consumers that don't use ASL as their preferred/primary means of communication
Of the Phase II respondents, 89% reported they preferred ASL, or used ASL as their primary means of communication. Future efforts may seek to target input from consumers not using ASL as their predominant mode of communication.

Recommendation 6: Collect data to better assess factors that cause consumers difficulty in accessing interpreter services
For example, future assessment activities could include questions related to the time of day, type of setting, geographic location, rate paid for the service, resources on the part of the individual to advocate for services, etc. in order to better understand how those factors may create barriers with regard to accessing services.

Recommendation 7: Future efforts should seek to breakdown the "Health" setting to understand more about health-related sub-settings

Phase II consumers identified Health settings as most important to them (78%), and 52% of Phase II respondents identified Health settings as difficult to attain interpreting services in. Future data collection activities should break down the Health setting to determine which health-related sub-settings are most important and difficult to attain interpreting services in, for example, emergency room visits, in-patient care, out-patient care, doctor's appointments, substance abuse meetings, etc.

Recommendation 8: Collect data to better understand how consumer education impacts on consumer choice and satisfaction with interpreters and interpreting services

Phase II survey respondents, having largely achieved a high school degree or less, might have limited capacity to self-advocate and might therefore experience more difficulties or problems related to accessing and using interpreter services. Future data collection activities should therefore include questions designed to better understand the impact on consumer education on consumer choice and satisfaction with services.