



Age Care Association



Interpreter Services

A number of Health Centres (Centro de Salud) on the Costa del Sol have teams of interpreters who volunteer their language skills to help individuals with little or no command of Spanish, and are unpaid for their services. They are usually available during medical consulting hours. The interpreters are a vital link in the communication between patients and medical and administrative staff at Health Centres. Diagnosis and treatment is more appropriate and effective when there is good verbal interaction. At the present time interpreters work in a number of Health Centres, including Arroyo del la Miel and Torrequebrada. It is suggested that people living in Fuengirola contact the Foreigners Advice Department (Tel: 952802002) who can provide the location of Health Centre interpreters in the area. Similarly, residents of Mijas should contact the Foreign Advice Department (Tel: 952485900); residents of Nerja can telephone 952 521531 for help and information about volunteer interpreter services. For other towns contact the local tourist office (see free English newspapers for telephone numbers) and ask about interpreter services.

One of the most traumatic experiences for retired older people can be admission to a State hospital, particularly for those unable to communicate adequately with medical staff. Three hospitals in the Province of Malaga have teams of interpreters: The Hospital Virgen de la Victoria – commonly known as the Clínico or the University Hospital (Tel: 951032000, Hospital Carlos Haya (Tel: 951030100), and the Hospital Costa del Sol, in Marbella (Tel:

Some interpreters at Health Centres are prepared to accompany people for specialist and hospital appointments outside their normal volunteer duties. A financial charge for this service maybe levied. Contact 952447637 for details of some interpreters willing to provide this service.

A cautionary note of warning. We have been informed about a few people who advertise as interpreters, but whose communication skills are less than adequate. This could lead to possible inaccurate diagnosis and treatment. Forewarned is forearmed.