# Panel 3:

# Loose Lips Sink Ships: Collaborating to Steer Interpreters Toward Better PHIPA Compliance

## Presenters:

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| • Christine Klerian | Program Administrator, Ottawa Language Access | Somerset West CHC |
| • Grace Eagan | Director, Language Services & Digital Strategy | Access Alliance Multicultural Health & Community Services |
| • Simeon Kanev | Privacy Officer and Business Lead | Alliance for Healthier Communities |

## Description:

Trust impacts health outcomes. Where we face language barriers, the interpreter is key in fostering that trust relationship. How do we hold interpreters to the same privacy and confidentiality standards expected of providers? This is our co-design journey toward a standardized privacy and confidentiality training module for Community Interpreters.

## Session objectives and learning outcomes:

- Implement co-design best practices
- Encourage and support better privacy and security adherence of independent contractors;
- Influence procurement practices when it comes to privacy and security compliance

## Full description:

**CHALLENGE**:

Health service providers (HSP) in Ontario are held accountable to the protection of PHI, often including mandated annual training for staff. By extension, procurement policies require that vendors (including language interpreters) comply with the HSP's policies regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of PHI.

What do we really know about the training provided by vendors, and how can we make sure that everyone handling PHI and/or involved in client interactions has regular, appropriate, and standardized privacy training? These questions are critical to ask because the interpreting profession is not regulated and interpreters are typically freelance independent contractors. There is currently no standardized PHIPA curriculum in interpreter core competency courses, and interpreter role boundaries can often be tested – all pointing to a need for accessible, current, and relevant training.

**ACTION**:

Two Ontario CHCs, both with their own roster of interpreters, individually set out to develop and deliver an annual PHI training for their interpreters. Each turned to the Alliance for Healthier Communities for input on PHIPA technical content development, and so an opportunity for co-design emerged.

Together, Access Alliance (Toronto) and Somerset West (Ottawa) worked with the Alliance to create online training content that would be thorough, credible, and relevant to the context of interpreting in health care. We knew that we needed to recognize the role that technology plays, so we implemented a two-part course: first, cyber awareness training and then, protecting PHI best practices.

The involvement of the Alliance was vital for the credibility of the content, leveraging the subject matter expertise of their privacy training lead. We, then, made the content relevant to the contexts and challenges of community interpreting.

**IMPACT**:

The two-part eLearning course is a first of its kind in Ontario and has been recognized for PD units by the Ontario Council on Community Interpreting. The collaborative aspect of the co-design illustrates the efficiency that can be achieved by avoiding a duplication of effort and the added richness of content from multiple sources, relevant to a wider learner audience.

An online asynchronous delivery makes the course easily accessible to interpreters who face time and travel challenges as independent contractors, and paves the way to position the course as a standard training for interpreters based or working remotely in Ontario. It also allows for purchasers of interpreting services to review and vet the course for themselves as part of responsible procurement practices.

The module on privacy and confidentiality was beta-tested in December 2023, and modified based on interpreters' feedback. The official launch of the module is due in mid-February 2024. We expect 130 interpreters to complete it within the first quarter. The module's assessment component allows measurement of learning outcomes, which will guide the adaptation before it is ready for scale and spread across the province.

**TRAJECTORY**:

Our vision for this training is to set the standard across Interpreting Service Providers in Ontario. Having leveraged our organization's talent to co-design the module, we are confident we will be able to adapt the course as needed.