

# MEDISIGNS Project awarded a European Language Label 2013

The European Language Label is an award for innovative language-learning projects. It rewards creative ways to improve the quality of language teaching, motivate learners and make the best of available resources.

Winning projects must demonstrate creative thinking and lead to improved teaching provision and learner achievement. They must be innovative, effective and replicable by across Europe.

Interesource Group (Ireland) Limited led an international team of experts in the development of MEDISIGNS which was funded under the Life Long Learning programme in partnership with the Centre for Deaf Studies, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, University of Nicosia, Cyprus, The Foundation for the Promotion of Entrepreneurship, Poland, Stockholm University, Sweden and Heriot-Watt University, Scotland.

MEDISIGNS represents a ground-breaking initiative that focuses on providing language and communication skills to Deaf people, interpreters and those in the medical profession.



## European Language Label An Séala Eorpach Teanga

Haaris Sheikh, Project Chair and Chief Executive of Interesource Group says that *“one of the most important things we want to do is to show how Deaf patients, doctors and nurses, and interpreters can work together to get the best results. Good communication doesn’t depend only on the interpreter: everyone has to co-operate”*.

Sometimes it is not possible to get an interpreter in a healthcare setting, often leaving a Deaf person or the healthcare provider in a situation which potentially compromises the level of patient care being delivered. Potentially, this forces a Deaf patient to either wait until an interpreter becomes available, or rely on a family or friend to casually interpret on their behalf. This is not ideal especially in medial situations that are sensitive, confidential or private in nature. From the perspective of a Deaf

community and the project consortium, it is important to note that the provision of qualified interpreters, and especially those trained in healthcare aspects, is not viewed as a luxury but as a fundamental human right to the access and provision of appropriate healthcare.

Products addressing this need have been developed before, however they have been largely produced to serve a single geographic market and a single user group. MEDISIGNS has been rolled out in 5 countries and targets 3 distinct user groups in Ireland, Cyprus, Poland, Sweden and the UK.

### Products include:

- Multilingual on-line course on medical interpreting in 5 countries;
- A European report on Deaf healthcare provision: *“A Prescription For Change: Report On EU Healthcare Provision For Deaf Sign Language Users”*;
- Professional Master classes series;
- iPhone App in English and also an iPhone glossary
- Workshops for sign language interpreters who work in medical settings;
- Workshops for health professionals providing them with a better understanding of what they need to know when working with Deaf patients and interpreters;
- Workshops for Deaf people to inform them on issues that arise in medical encounters and tips on how to get the best from interpreted medical encounters.

- Documentary: *“Deaf Healthcare – A Matter of Interpretation”*

**Further information and access to products through: [www.medisignsproject.eu](http://www.medisignsproject.eu)**