



## In Other Words – an anthology of interpreters' stories

Since 2009 we have run a dedicated Mental Health Interpreting Service which is funded by the local CCG and Health Authority. We have a firm commitment to training and provide regular clinical supervision for all our interpreters who work in a mental health context. From our supervision sessions it has become very clear that this support is very rarely available for all interpreters. They have no other outlet for the feelings and thoughts which they witness and experience and without adequate support the burnout rate can be very high.

As a creative response to this situation we worked with Sheila Hayman, a creative writing facilitator, to run a creative writing group for interpreters to write about their personal and professional experiences: who they are (when they are not interpreting what other people want to say), what led them to becoming an interpreter, what impact the work has on them. We were awarded funding from Awards for All, and the result is the anthology *In Other Words: the interpreters' story*.

The interpreters in this anthology present the dilemmas they face, having to hold professional boundaries while experiencing great personal pressure. Interpreters, as the writings show, often become deeply personally involved in the cases into which they are invited. Their own experience of bridging cultures and their understanding of the nuances of cultural experience and of the non-verbal cues that often speak more than words contribute in many ways to their effectiveness.

The stories we share are not presentations of models of excellent practice. They are real human stories from the interpreters' own experiences. The interpreters have been courageous in sharing and reflecting on their dilemmas, the risks they take and the mistakes they can make. To request a copy of the free PDF, or to buy a hard copy please email [kim@mothertongue.org.uk](mailto:kim@mothertongue.org.uk)