The Territory Government today announced improvements to the Northern Territory Interpreter and Translator Service to better meet the needs of those with language assistance requirements.

Multicultural Affairs Minister, Delia Lawrie, announced the changes following a review of the Northern Territory Interpreter and Translator Service.

"The Martin Government is reaffirming its commitment to the multicultural community by re-organising resources to provide a more flexible service for all," said Ms Lawrie.

Historically, there has been an arrangement in place for over ten years where a Greek and Chinese interpreter has been based at Royal Darwin Hospital on only a part time basis.

Under the new arrangements at the hospital interpreting services will be provided for all language groups through the Northern Territory Interpreter and Translator Service.

Additionally, to help attract and retain local interpreters and translators, the Northern Territory Government is increasing payment rates for interpreters and translators by up to 50%.

"This payment increase recognises the important work undertaken by interpreters and translators and will also act as an incentive for improved quality of service and accreditation," said the Minister.

The review also recommended the co-location of the Northern Territory Interpreter Service with the Aboriginal interpreter Service. This is planned to take place in the early part of the new financial year.

"The two offices will continue to operate with their own identities and will not impact on resources or service delivery for both client groups," said Ms Lawrie.
"These changes are an important aspect of the support Government provides to people who cannot speak English fluently. We will continue to provide and expand these services."

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