

Encountering awkward characters

A community midwife has organised a home visit with an interpreter. She arrives with the interpreter at the patient's home to find a family member present. This family member then stays for the duration of the appointment.

Practical issues

- seating arrangements
- hospitality in the home setting

Practice issues

- presence of a fourth party
- multiple conversations taking place
- privacy around performing intimate examinations in the home setting
- blurring of personal and professional boundaries
- shift in power dynamic and status of participants
- body language
- taking charge of the appointment focus
- professional status of the interpreter and expectations of interpreter / service provider role
- good practice
- time pressures

Strategies

- coping with the unexpected
- negotiating personal and professional boundaries
- managing disclosure of personal information