

While the goal of National Certification is honorable I believe the focus is in the wrong place. Within VRS there is opportunity to develop skills in a supported environment where the consumers are empowered with the ability to ask for a different CA if communication styles do not match. There are settings in our field with little to no support for professional growth and where the consumers are stuck with whoever sits down in the seat in front of them. For example the K-12 as a whole does not require national certification in most states and children and other consumers in this setting do not have a button to push to switch interpreters (CAs) if communication is not successful. National organizations need to focus consumers have little to no power ? K-12, postsecondary, freelance etc.

Also, Within the VRS setting newer interpreters have the ability to be supported and switch out with another interpreter if the situation becomes too much. New interpreters in any of the other mentioned settings do not have a way to ask for help nor are there many checks and balances to be sure they are performing at an acceptable level. VRS has managers, peers, and support staff who are there to continually provide feedback, support and training with the goal of obtaining national certification. If national certification is required before an interpreter is able to sit in a VRS seat we are limiting the growth of our field. VRS is the opportunity to grow certified interpreters unlike most other settings where interpreters work alone.