

Selecting Language Assistance Service

Elizabeth Colon, Heartland's Cross-Cultural Interpreting Services

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1

Illinois Demographics

- 40% of immigrants & refugees go directly to the suburbs to live.
- Metropolitan Chicago ranks third in the nation in the number of Latino residents
- 75% of the Polish immigrant community in Illinois live in Chicago.
- Asians from the Indian Sub-Continent and Russians are primarily concentrated in Northwest Cook County
- Chicago has the eighth largest African population in the country.
- In Illinois, English Language Learners (ELL) spoke over 132 different languages. (ISBE Evaluation Report, 2004)

2

Health Disparities

*differences in quality of care
that are not due to
clinically appropriate treatment decisions
or
patient preferences*

Institute of Medicine, 2001

3

Health Disparities

- Native Hawaiians have one of the poorest health profiles of any ethnic group in the United States (Mokuau et al., 1995).
- Cervical cancer incidence rates for Vietnamese women is 5 times higher than for white women. (Miller et al., 1996)
The death rate for all cancers is 30% higher for African American than for Whites. (Healthy People 2010)
- Latinos living in the United States are almost twice as likely to die from diabetes than are non-Latino Whites. (Healthy People 2010)
- The rate of diabetes for this population group is more than twice that for Whites. (Healthy People 2010)

4

Legal and Regulatory Requirements Mandating Interpreter Services

- Title VI of the Office of Civil Rights Act of 1964 / Guidance Memorandum of 2000
- Illinois Language Assistance Service Law of 1994 / 2004
- HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)
- Patient Bill of Rights
- Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)
- National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health Care (OMH)

5

Title VI of the Office of Civil Rights Act

Provides that no individual shall, on the grounds of race, sex, color, national origin, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, and status as a parent be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

6

Executive Order 13160

“Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited-English Proficiency”

August 11, 2000

7

Illinois Language Assistance Services Act – 1994/2004

- Requires hospitals and nursing homes to offer language assistance services to limited English proficient patients.
- Signage of services to be posted at patient primary entry points i.e. emergency rooms, admissions, main entrance, etc.
- A standardized list of documents is to be translated
- Review annually policies and procedures regarding language assistance
- The Illinois Department of Public Health is responsible for monitoring and review as well as the implementation of a consumer complaint hot line

8

Patients Bill of Rights

Patient has the right to receive accurate and easily understood information about health plan, health care professionals, and health care facilities. If the patient speaks another language, has a physical or mental disability, or just does not understand something, assistance will be provided so that informed health care decisions can be made.

9

HIPAA

HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1996

Protects a patient's medical information, standardizes medical information, and simplifies processing claim information.

10

Joint Commission of Accreditation Of Healthcare Organizations

Patient has the right to information in a
language that they understand.

NOTE:

In January 2006, the Joint Commission published approximately 38
requirements related to the provision of culturally and
linguistically appropriate health care.

11

Interpreter vs. Translator

- A translator is a person who converts the message written. For example, translation of written documents.
- An interpreter is a person who converts the message orally.

12

Translators

- Converts a written message/document into another language in written form.
- May have received training/education.
- May hold a professional certificate in their field of expertise or a degree in linguistics.

13

Who should not be used as interpreters?

- Family
- Friends
- Children
- Untrained bilingual staff

14

Errors That Can Occur When Using Adjunct Interpreters

- “Interpreter” omitting important information because he/she cannot keep up or may not know the appropriate equivalent in the patient’s language.
- “Interpreter” changes the word order of the original statement, thus, changing its original meaning.
- “Interpreter” feels the need to add words, phrases, or sentences in order to explain the patient/clients point.
- “Interpreter” gives his/her opinion, answers for the patient, confuses words that sound almost the same.

15

A Trained Medical Interpreter

- Is proficient in all language skills: reading, writing, speaking and comprehension.
- Has had their language proficiencies tested/evaluated.
 - **Individuals should be tested both orally and verbally**
- Has 40 or more hours of training in techniques, ethics, culture and medical terminology.
- Interpersonal and public speaking skills.
- Follows the National Standards of Code of Ethics and the National Standards of Practice.
- Has working knowledge of the healthcare system.

16

What To Expect From An Interpreter

- To repeat everything that is being said.
- To maintain confidentiality.
- To interpret everything by not omitting, editing, adding or polishing of information.
- To refrain from providing input.
- When the provider leaves the room, the interpreter will leave.

17

What Interpreters Should Not Be Expected To Do

- Provide written translations – they are not trained as a translator.
- Push, pull or transport patients to other departments.
- Act as a social worker, friend or guarantee the health outcome of the patient
- Share personal information about themselves.

18

Questions To Ask Before Choosing An Agency?

- **INTERPRETER SERVICES**
 - Rates/Fee-for-Service vs. contract
 - Hidden Cost
 - Travel and Mileage
 - Is it more for uncommon languages?
 - Is there an additional cost for last minute request?
 - Cancellation policy
 - Availability of interpreters
 - Qualification of interpreters
 - Are interpreters assessed and trained?
 - HIPAA and JCAHO compliant
 - TB requirements
- **TRANSLATION SERVICES**
 - Rates per word/page
 - Translation – computer program or person
 - Cost for uncommon languages
 - Is there an additional cost for last minute request?
 - Qualification of translators
 - Professional background of translators
 - Turn around time
 - Rush fee cost
 - Delivery of final document

19

Questions To Ask About Training Program

- Length of training
- What is covered?
 - Interpreter code of ethics
 - Role of the interpreter
 - Cultural and Ethical Dilemmas
 - Techniques
 - Basic terminology (colloquial, technical/medical, abbreviation, acronyms)
 - Confidentiality

20

Thank You!

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