

**Service Category Definition - DSHS State Services Grant
September 1, 2015 - August 31, 2016**

| | |
|---|---|
| Local Service Category: | Linguistics Services |
| Amount Available: | To be determined |
| Unit Cost: | |
| Budget Requirements or Restrictions (TRG Only): | Maximum of 10% of budget for Administrative Cost. |
| DSHS Service Category Definition | <p>Support for Linguistic Services includes interpretation (oral) and translation (written) services, provided by qualified individuals as a component of HIV service delivery between the provider and the client, when such services are necessary to facilitate communication between the provider and client and/or support delivery of Ryan White-eligible services.</p> <p>Linguistic Services include interpretation/translation services provided by qualified interpreters to HIV-positive individuals (including those who are deaf/hard of hearing and non-English speaking individuals) for the purpose of ensuring communication between client and providers while accessing medical and Ryan White fundable support services that have a direct impact on primary medical care. These standards ensure that language is not barrier to any client seeking HIV related medical care and support; and linguistic services are provided in a culturally appropriate manner.</p> <p>Services are intended to be inclusive of all cultures and sub-cultures and not limited to any particular population group or sets of groups. They are especially designed to assure that the needs of racial, ethnic, and linguistic populations severely impacted by the HIV epidemic receive quality, unbiased services.</p> |
| Local Service Category Definition: | To provide one hour of interpreter services including, but not limited to, sign language for deaf and /or hard of hearing and native language interpretation for monolingual HIV positive clients. |
| Target Population (age, gender, geographic, race, ethnicity, etc.): | HIV/AIDS-infected individuals living within the Houston HIV Service Delivery Area (HSDA). |
| Services to be Provided: | Services include language translation and signing for deaf and/or hearing impaired HIV+ persons. Services exclude Spanish Translation Services. |
| Service Unit Definition(s) (TRG Only): | A unit of service is defined as one hour of interpreter services to an eligible client. |
| Financial Eligibility: | Income at or below 300% Federal Poverty Guidelines. |
| Client Eligibility: | HIV positive resident of Houston HSDA |
| Agency Requirements (TRG Only): | Any qualified and interested agency may apply and subcontract actual interpretation services out to various other qualifying |

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| | agencies. |
| Staff Requirements: | ASL interpreters must be certified. Language interpreters must have completed a forty (40) hour community interpreter training course approved by the DSHS. |
| Special Requirements (TRG Only): | Must comply with the Houston EMA/HSDA Standards of Care. The agency must comply with the DSHS Linguistic Services Standards of Care . The agency must have policies and procedures in place that comply with the standards <i>prior</i> to delivery of the service. |

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FY 2017 RWPC “How to Best Meet the Need” Decision Process

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Step in Process: Council | | Date: 06/09/2016 |
| Recommendations: | Approved: Y: _____ No: _____ Approved With Changes: _____ | If approved with changes list changes below: |
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| Step in Process: Steering Committee | | Date: 06/02/2016 |
| Recommendations: | Approved: Y: _____ No: _____ Approved With Changes: _____ | If approved with changes list changes below: |
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| Step in Process: Quality Improvement Committee | | Date: 05/19/2016 |
| Recommendations: | Approved: Y: _____ No: _____ Approved With Changes: _____ | If approved with changes list changes below: |
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| Step in Process: HTBMTN Workgroup #2 | | Date: 04/26/2016 |
| Recommendations: | Financial Eligibility: | |
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |

The Importance Of Using Professional Interpreters In A Small Healthcare Setting

Posted by [Anthony Toronto](#) on Jul 23, 2015 3:00:00 PM

Professional health care interpreters are quite necessary for working with and overcoming linguistic barriers in patient relations. Since most health care organizations provide either no interpreter services, or services that are bordering on inadequate, patients who have limited English-speaking abilities often do not receive necessary health care or quality health care. Patient care unsurprisingly suffers when patients and doctors have unsatisfactory communication. In

fact, studies have also shown that if language barriers between doctors and adult patients are not conquered, misdiagnosis and inappropriate treatment are far more likely to occur. In this post, we discuss how using professional interpreters shapes outcomes in healthcare settings.



What Is The Cost Of Not Hiring A Professional Interpreter?

According to an [NPR article](#), there was a study by the American College of Emergency Physicians that analyzed interpreter errors that had clinical consequences, finding that "the error rate was significantly lower for professional interpreters than for ad hoc interpreters--12 percent as opposed to 22 percent."

Professional interpreters understand their role in the health care setting and appreciate the delicate balance-- they are trained to know when to be transparent and when to step forward.

In the long run, the costs of professional interpretation are likely to be far less than delayed care or lawsuits resulting from misdiagnosis, or mistreatment, etc. that can occur in a setting with language barriers.

Easing LEP Patient Stress & Promoting Comfort

Much of the initiative to hire qualified interpreters in healthcare is focused on making the experience less stressful for LEP patients. A trip to a hospital or a small health care clinic can be nerve-wracking, even for people who are proficient English speakers. So if you are a LEP patient, you can imagine that the experience is exponentially more intimidating. It is unquestionably important that a patient is able to converse with a medical professional in a language that they are comfortable with. This will greatly improve interactions between the patient and doctor, which can help make the patient feel more secure.

Opt For Certified Interpreters

Some hospitals and doctors use telephonic interpreting so that they can receive assistance in their desired language. However, the people who work for these language services often aren't certified to be medical interpreters, meaning that they don't have an extensive understanding of medical terminology, which can inevitably lead to issues down the road.

Interpreting Solutions For Health Care Clinics

There are a wide variety of different solutions available to small health care clinics to provide interpreting services. These solutions will have the largest impact on limited English proficiency speaking families. Ideally, a small health care clinic should seek an on site interpreter, as this promotes the best communication method for patient and provider. With on-site interpreting, the interpreter will be able to pick up on body language and cultural issues that might not be as apparent during a phone conversation. However, in situations where an on site interpreter is not available, health care clinics can opt for using telephonic interpreters. While interpreting via telephone remains a common practice, technological developments allow for more dynamic options for providing remote interpretation, like video remote interpreting. To learn more about these technologies, check out ["A Brief Overview Of Language Translation & Interpreting Services."](#)

Seeing as small health care clinics don't have large budgets for language services, another option is to utilize bilingual staff members. Testing the proficiency of these employees language skills is absolutely crucial before allowing them to either provide care in another language or act as an interpreter. Interpreting is not an easy skill that just any bilingual person can do. Interpreting, especially in a medical environment, takes studying, practice, and an understanding of the code of conduct and ethics. To

avoid costly errors in care, be sure to have bilingual employees take a language proficiency test or interpreter assessment to ensure their language skills are adequate for the additional role they are being asked to take on.

iTi | Medical Interpreters

While the task of determining appropriate language services will be largely dependent on individual circumstances, small health care leaders have a vast array of different options that can be structured to meet the needs of their patients.

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Medical interpreters bridge important gap Services becoming more crucial in Houston area



Medical Interpreter Sign

Houston is an international city, with a diverse population and those who are visiting daily, but most of all, people come from around the globe to seek care at the Texas Medical Center, one of the largest and most prestigious medical centers in the world.

Due to this, medical interpreting is becoming more vital and important as hospitals and doctors in Houston, and Texas, are seeing more international clients. And doctors want to ensure the quality and professionalism of the interpreting services they must provide patients, according to **Valerie S. Mayer**, CMI- Spanish interpreter and translator, IMIA Texas Chapter.

The growing international clientele is creating jobs as well, as hospitals in all areas of the city and surrounding areas are finding an increasing need for interpreters, which includes Texas Children's.

"Texas Children's Hospital hires interpreters for our three campuses, the West Campus in Katy, Main Campus at the Texas Medical Center and Texas Children's Pavilion for Women," Mayer said.

At Houston Methodist and Texas Children's, Spanish is the most requested language, followed by Arabic, Vietnamese, Chinese and Urdu.

"We also receive requests for less common languages like Burmese, German, Italian, French, Portuguese, Japanese or Nepali, and sign language," Mayer said.

Working as an interpreter is a full-time position.

"Hospitals also fill the need with contract interpreters when needed," said **David L. Marshall**, spokesperson, **Global Healthcare Services Group, Houston Methodist Hospital**.

Texas Children's has full- and part-time interpreters who cover the different areas of the hospital and clinics 24/7. There are many shifts.

"We also provide phone and video relay interpretation services if a face-to-face interpreter is not available," Mayer said.

According to Marshall, interpreters are required to have a bachelor's degree or five years of related experience.

Individuals interested in being an interpreter at Texas Children's, though, must have at least two years of experience as a medical interpreter.

The applicant's evaluation is extensive. Beyond the regular screening process, the department gives a test to assess the abilities and skills of interpretation that combine fluency in both languages (English and the second language), vocabulary knowledge, terminology, memory, note techniques, HIPAA law knowledge, understanding of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and ethics in the profession, according to Mayer.

"At this time, we do not require our interpreters to be certified medical translators, but this may be changing," Marshall said.

Texas Children's **Language Services Department** has the goal of having all interpreters certified nationally through the **National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters** and the **Certification Commission** for Healthcare Interpreters by 2015.

Interpreters also work on document translations such as discharge documents, medication information, handouts and others.

"Besides the face-to-face interpreters, the hospital is equipped with video interpreter units, and double-handset telephones for direct access to interpreters at the rooms, main areas of the hospital, and clinics," Mayer said.

In checking numerous job boards for interpreters, numerous languages interpreters are in demand, from Spanish to Cantonese.

Further details

For Texas Children's, visit www.texaschildrens.org. For Houston Methodist, go to www.houstonmethodist.org.

By Rebecca Maitland, jobs correspondent

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Accessible Translation Solutions

BY ACCESSIBLETRANSLATIO | JANUARY 18, 2013 · 11:41 AM

Medical Translation and Interpreting: Saving Money, Saving Lives

Some professions can be very competitive and those who don't perform the same type of job duties may not understand why. Sometimes I think, "Why are these people being so competitive and cut-throat with their colleagues? It's not like they're saving lives!" However, in the field of medical translation and interpreting, we can say that yes, linguists often might be saving lives. Here are two examples of how medical translators and interpreters can save clients money while their work can save lives:

The first example is found in an article posted in January 2009 in [American Medical News](#) from the [American Medical Association](#). This case involved a New Jersey rheumatologist who refused to provide a sign language interpreter for a patient being treated for lupus. This patient consistently requested an interpreter, but claims that her requests were always denied. The physician's argument was that Medicare did not reimburse the entire cost of an interpreter for each visit. Instead, he passed written notes back and forth to the patient and her family.

Apparently, this was not enough for the patient to feel as though she understood what was happening at the medical visits and she transferred to another doctor.

The patient sued the original physician, claiming violation of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act, along with New Jersey's anti-discrimination law. The jury found the rheumatologist had indeed discriminated against the patient when failing to provide a sign language interpreter.

If a medical interpreter had been present at the child's visits with the rheumatologist, she might have felt differently about the care she received and would not have sued the physician, which will likely cost him more than an interpreter would have.

Then there is the story of Lia Lee, a child raised in California of Hmong refugees and the focus of Anne Fadiman's book, [The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures](#). Lia was misdiagnosed twice as having had pneumonia, when in reality, she was epileptic from the time she was an infant. Lia's parents did not speak English well enough to communicate with the doctors who treated her, and they often misunderstood how to care for her at home. They did not know how to describe the child's seizures effectively to her physicians, as in their own culture, these episodes seemed to convey that her body was being overtaken by a spirit.

Misunderstandings continued between Lia's parents and her physicians, as both sides were unable to communicate effectively and understand each other's cultures. A New York Times article reported, "The seizures worsened; by the time Lia was 4 ½, she had made more than 100 outpatient visits to medical facilities and been admitted to the hospital 17 times. When she was not quite 3, in frustration at what he viewed as her parents' refusal to administer her medication, Dr. Ernst (Lia's physician) had Lia legally removed from the family home." Lia was sent to live in foster care for one year, yet another blow to her parents. Her health worsened and

the relationships between her parents and her physicians were strained, as neither side seemed to adequately comprehend the culture and language of the other. Lia died on August 31, 2012.

A medical interpreter at Lia's visits and proper translation of her prescriptions and care instructions could have allowed Lia to receive consistent and proper care for her condition, likely avoiding her placement in foster care. Needless to say, such services would have greatly improved her quality of life.

These are only two of the stories about how medical translation and interpretation can save lives and reduce costs by avoiding unnecessary tests, misdiagnoses, treatment errors and miscommunication. To ensure compliance with federal regulations as a health care provider, be sure to request [professional interpretation and translation](#) for patients and their families. It truly can save you money and continue to save lives.