

Tips for Using a Medical Interpreter

- Identify patients who may need an interpreter
- Allow extra time for the interview
- Meet with the interpreter before the interview to give some background, build rapport, and set goals
- Document the name of the interpreter in the progress note
- Realize that most patients understand some English, so do not make comments you do not want them to understand
- Seat the interpreter next to or slightly behind the patient
- Speak directly to the patient, not the interpreter
- Use first-person statements (“I” statements); avoid saying “he said” or “tell her”
- Speak in short sentences or short thought groups
- Ask only one question at a time
- Allow appropriate time for the interpreter to finish the statement
- Prioritize and limit the key points to three or fewer
- Do not use idioms, acronyms, jargon, or humor
- Insist on sentence-by-sentence interpretation to avoid tangential conversations
- Allow 10-minute breaks for every hour of interpretation
- Use the “teach back” or “show me” technique to ensure patient comprehension
- Have a post-session discussion with the interpreter to get further details and make corrections, if necessary

**For questions or to schedule an HCI, contact
Advanced Health Customer Service:**

541-269-7400

customerservice@advancedhealth.com



ADVANCED HEALTH HEALTHCARE INTERPRETER (HCI) SERVICES

Advanced Health is committed to health equity. By contributing to the efforts of improving quality of care and facilitating communication between members and providers, we hope to see improved outcomes and decreased inequities in our community.

Why should your practice use an HCI?

Certified healthcare interpreters provide the assurance of safety, accuracy, respect of boundaries, and transparency required in a healthcare setting. When it comes to facilitating communication in a clinical encounter between parties that don't speak the same language, there is a large difference between bilingual individuals and professional healthcare interpreters.

Certified healthcare interpreters understand medical terminology in both languages and employ professional techniques to handle the complexities that arise with patients, families, and healthcare providers.

- *Certified Commission for Healthcare Interpreters*





Healthcare Interpreter (HCI) Services:

Professional Healthcare Interpreters (HCI) have a positive impact on clinical care for patients with limited English proficiency (LEP). For patients with LEP, healthcare interpreters play a major role in raising the quality of clinical care to approach or equal that for patients without language barriers. This in turn increases patient satisfaction, improves adherence and positive outcomes.

Patients who speak English “less than very well,” or speak a language other than English at home are least likely to access preventive care and regular care or be satisfied with their care. Patients with LEP are much more likely to have adverse effects from drug complications, poor understanding of diagnoses, lack of informed consent, low health literacy, and a greater risk of being misunderstood by their physicians as well as other negative outcomes.

How your organization can utilize HCI’s:

While numerous interpreter services are available and currently utilized, Advanced Health can provide a qualified HCI professional for your Spanish speaking population.

To schedule an HCI for a patient appointment:

1. Please call to schedule at least **3 days** prior to needing an interpreter. An interpreter may not always be available

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2. Have the following information:

- Member ID
- Patient name and contact information
- Date and time of appointment
- Address/Location/ Room/Provider
- Approximate length of time interpreter will be needed

3. If you need an HCI right away, please call for availability and have the following information:

- Member ID
- Patient name and contact information
- Date and time
- Address/Location/ Room/Provider
- Approximate length of time interpreter will be needed
- Reason for urgency



HOW TO IDENTIFY PERSONS WITH LEP AND THEIR LANGUAGE:

Healthcare provider offices should promptly identify the language and communication needs of the person with LEP. If necessary, staff will use a language identification card (or “I speak cards,” available online at www.oregon.gov/oha) or posters to determine the language. In addition, when records are kept of past interactions with members/patients or family members, the language used to communicate with the person with LEP will be included as part of the record.

Some persons with LEP may prefer or request to use a family member or friend as an interpreter. However, family members or friends of the person with LEP should not be used as interpreters unless specifically requested by that individual and after the person with LEP has understood that an offer of an interpreter at no charge to the person has been made by the facility. Such an offer and the response should be documented in the person’s file. Children and other clients/patients/family members should not be used to interpret, in order to ensure confidentiality of information and accurate communication.