



Origination 9/1/1992  
Final 11/15/2023  
Approved  
Effective 11/15/2023  
Last Revised 11/15/2023  
Next Review 11/14/2024

Owner Tami Chin:  
Executive,  
Operations  
Policy Area Administrative  
Applicability California Pacific  
Medical Center

## Policy - Interpreter Services

### POLICY:

The Medical Center will provide interpreter services at no cost to patients with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, in order to enhance effective communication and ensure access to health care information and services in accordance with Federal, State and Local regulations.

- I. The Medical Center shall provide resources that facilitate accurate and timely communication for CPMC patients with LEP and sign language needs.
  - A. A medical interpreter is an individual who is fluent in English and in a second language or nationally certified with the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) in sign language. Interpreters must have the ability to completely convert items and terms in medical terminology, respects the patient's rights to confidentiality, provides impartial interpretation and understands the role and ethics of being an interpreter.
  - B. The Medical Center shall provide translation of vital written material and/or communicate information in vital documents throughout the continuum of care such as: medical forms/questionnaires, consent forms and advanced directives.
  - C. Provide verbal offers and written notices to patients in the preferred language informing patients of their right to receive language assistance services.
- II. Interpreter Services provided include:
  - A. In person interpretation provided by certified staff interpreters, certified vendor-provided interpreters and qualified or competent bilingual staff.
  - B. Over-the-phone interpreting provided by a Sutter approved vendor.
  - C. Video remote interpretation provided by certified medical interpreters.
  - D. Sign language interpretation.

- III. Use of family members or friends for interpretation.
  - A. Patients are informed of their right to free interpreter services via the Patient Rights brochure provided to all patients on admission.
  - B. All LEP patients should be offered an interpreter for clinical or technical information. If a patient refuses an interpreter and requests a family member or friend to do the interpreting, the family member must be an adult (age 18 or over). It is not acceptable to have a minor child interpret. Documentation in the eHR should include the name of the interpreter and the relationship to the patient, e.g. husband, adult child, employee or professional service person. A patient's refusal to have an interpreter is also documented. Example: Patient refuses to have a certified interpreter. Patient requests that her husband, Joe Diego, interpret for her. Additionally, document the reason for the refusal, if offered. Even if a patient elects to use a family member or friend, the provider or staff member should suggest that a certified interpreter sit in on the encounter to ensure accurate interpretation.
  - C. Use of a family member/friend instead of a certified interpreter may also be used for non-clinical non-technical information and must be documented in the patient's chart.
- IV. All declinations of language assistance/interpreter services provided free of charge by Medical Center must be documented in the patient's chart.
- V. The Interpreter Services Department will assume the responsibility of ensuring competency of interpreters and qualified bilingual staff.
- VI. The signing of informed consent and advanced directives needs a certified interpreter or qualified bilingual staff interpreter.

## PROCEDURES:

Interpreter services can be identified and requested at the time of scheduling and/or registration and at anytime by any CPMC provider for their patients.

### **Same Day requests for language assistance**

For same day language assistance, on-site staff interpreters and/or over-the-phone interpreting services can be accessed as appropriate. Over-the-phone interpreting services are available 24/7 and should be used for immediate needs and for languages not covered by our on-site staff interpreters. CPMC's Qualified Bilingual Staff may be available to assist. Detailed guidelines for obtaining interpreters and accessing tools are provided on the CPMC intranet.

### **Next day/later requests for language assistance**

Requests may be made using the Online Interpreter Scheduling. Access to the Online Interpreter Scheduling system is for approved users only. Please contact Interpreter Services for approval. Interpreter Services will also enter requests online on a provider's or scheduler's behalf if necessary.

### **Request for Translations**

Requests to translate documents should be made by contacting Interpreter Services. Interpreter Services

Department will assume the costs of translating documents dealing with patient informational/ educational material, patient surveys, menus, and signage.

### American Sign Language

ASL interpreters may be scheduled by using the Online Scheduling System or by contacting Interpreter Services. Providers and schedulers may also contact our ASL vendors and/or use Video Remote Interpreting services as appropriate. Contact information and other details are kept current on the Interpreter Services' intranet site as well as on the ADA Guides for Staff.

### Further Information

Visit the Department's Intranet site for details, current contact information and language resources.

## References

Language access for LEP individuals is mandated by federal, state and local laws, as language access is "a civil right and one of the key paths to meaningful participation in a democracy" The Civil Rights Act, Title VI (Federal, 1964), Executive Order 13166 (Federal, 2000), Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act (1973, California) and the Equal Access to Services Ordinance (2001, San Francisco). California Hospital Association Consent Manual, 2019 Edition.

## Cross References:

Administrative Policy Patients/Visitors with Disabilities: Communication Assistance

## All Revision Dates

11/15/2023, 10/21/2020, 7/26/2016, 2/1/2013, 3/1/2010, 1/1/2010, 5/1/2008, 9/1/2005, 11/1/2004, 8/1/2004, 3/1/2004, 8/1/2001, 3/1/1998, 10/1/1997, 3/1/1996, 6/1/1995

## Approval Signatures

| Step Description            | Approver                                | Date       |
|-----------------------------|---|------------|
| Medical Executive Committee | Rob Baker: Manager, Medical Staff       | 11/15/2023 |
|                             | Tami Chin: Executive, Operations        | 11/7/2023  |
|                             | Tara Ray: Manager, Interpreter Services | 11/7/2023  |