

## INTERPRETER SERVICES

### Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, the employee will be able to:

1. Describe Harbor-UCLA's responsibility to provide interpreter services to patients
2. Describe the actions the employee must take to access interpreter services utilizing the Video Medical Interpreting (VMI) units and other telephone technologies deployed throughout the medical center
3. Describe how to document in the patient's chart when an interpreter is used

### Instructions to the Employee:

Please read the following section, then answer the study questions at the end of the section.

## INTERPRETER SERVICES

### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Harbor-UCLA Medical Center ensures the availability of interpreter services, free of charge for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) patients. An LEP person is one who is unable to speak, read, write or understand the English language at a level that permits him/her to interact effectively with healthcare and social services agencies and providers. LEP patients and patients who are hearing impaired will have interpreter services available to them at the point of service or any point requested or identified during the provision of services. A patient is not required or expected to use family members or friends as interpreters and family members and friends should not be used unless specifically requested by the patient. **Minors (18 years or younger) may not be used as interpreters under any circumstances.**

### II. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal, State and Joint Commission regulations and standards require that we provide linguistic accessibility to LEP persons to ensure meaningful access to programs and services.
1. Linguistic access is defined as immediate responsiveness to individual linguistic needs so that an LEP or hearing/speech impaired person can effectively communicate with healthcare providers.
  2. Interpreter Services must be available at all times and at no cost to the patient.

### III. GUIDELINES FOR ACCESSING INTERPRETER SERVICES

- A. Harbor-UCLA Medical Center has recently established a Language Center located in Bldg. N-17, ext. 6557 with dedicated full-time interpreters. To maximize the use of the in-house interpreters Harbor-UCLA has deployed Video Medical Interpreting (VMI) equipment and various telephone technologies (ie, Polycorn speaker-phones, dual handheld cordless phones, handset splitters), as well as participate in the Healthcare Interpreter Network (HCIN). HCIN participation allows hospitals to share interpreter services whereby health-system based interpreters from numerous California public hospitals and Language Line (telephonic interpreting services) are available 24 hours, 7 days a week via real-time videoconferencing and various telephone technologies with an average connect time of less than one minute.

The following are steps one should take to access interpreter services for a patient:

1. Identify the language of the Limited English Proficient (LEP) patient.
2. If one is bilingual and speaks the language of the patient's preference, communicate with the patient in the preferred language.
3. Utilize bilingual staff in one's work area, if available.
4. If bilingual staff is not available, use the Video Monitoring Unit or the telephone technologies available in your area that facilitates multiple phone users at one time and call ext. 5405 for an interpreter.
5. If an in-person interpreter is needed, call ext. 6557 for assistance Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm (outside of these hours, access the Interpreter Directory via the Harbor Intranet). When requesting an interpreter, provide the following information:
  - a. The date and time interpreter is needed.

- b. The location where the interpreter is needed.
  - c. The approximate length of time the interpreter is needed.
6. American Sign Language (ASL) can be accessed via the VMI units. For patients identified as needing an ASL interpreter prior to their clinic visit, contact the Outpatient Unit Coordinator at ext. 3572 to make arrangements for an interpreter, especially if the clinic does not have a VMI unit.
  7. A telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) is located in the Emergency Department at the Clerk's Desk. The TDD number is (310) 328-2352.

**Remember:**

- ✓ If an interpreter is used, one must document in the patient's medical record the Name or ID # of the interpreter.
- ✓ If an interpreter is used during the informed consent discussion, the interpreter or healthcare provider must complete the Interpreter Attestation Form.

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE STUDY QUESTIONS**

**INTERPRETER SERVICES**  
**Study Questions**

Select the best answer to each question. **DO NOT** write in the manual.

1. When encountering a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) patient, the employee should:
  - a. Seek the assistance of a bilingual staff member in the department
  - b. Ask the patient's 16-year old daughter to interpret for today's visit
  - c. Ask the patient to bring an interpreter with him/her for future appointments
  - d. B and C
2. When unable to find an interpreter within one's department/area after 1700 or on weekends, the first step should be:
  - a. Request the patient's 16-year old daughter to interpret
  - b. Ask the patient if he/she has a friend who can interpret
  - c. Access the Interpreter Directory via the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Intranet
  - d. Call the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center telephone operator to access the Language Line Services (telephonic interpretation services)
3. The term Limited English Proficiency (LEP) applies to a person who is unable to speak, read, write or understand the English language:
  - a. At a high school level
  - b. At a college grade level
  - c. Without the help of a minor family member
  - d. At a level that permits the person to interact effectively with healthcare providers

**CHECK YOUR ANSWERS TO THE STUDY QUESTIONS**

### Answers to Study Questions

1. a      2. c      3. d

If you answered all of the questions correctly, go on to the next section. If you missed one or more, read the content again and repeat the study guide questions.

### INTERPRETER SERVICES Bibliography

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