

Effective Use of Interpreters

Health Education,
Cultural & Linguistics Department
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Learning Objectives

- ✓ To clarify the role of an interpreter
- ✓ To explore the modes of interpretation
- ✓ Increase awareness of Cultural Disparities related to Limited English Proficient (LEP) patients when interpreting
- ✓ Increase awareness of laws and regulations and the Code of Ethics when interpreting and the Standards of Practice
- ✓ To illuminate the ethical considerations of the interpreter session
- ✓ To illustrate ways in which service providers can manage interpreter encounters



Interpreter

- The primary function of the interpreter is to facilitate communication between two people who do not speak the same language, without altering or omitting the message.
- The interpreter must listen to the speaker, understand and analyze what is said and then transmit the speech in the appropriate form in a different language.
- The message must be transmitted in such a manner that the listener can respond as if s/he heard and spoke the source language.



Modes of Interpretation

Interpreters use different modes of interpreting under different circumstances.

The **Four Modes** used include:

- Consecutive
- Simultaneous
- Summarization
- Sight-Translation



Consecutive Mode

- Simplest and most common mode of interpretation
- Interpreter waits for speaker to pause before beginning the interpretation
- Communication is in short and concise segments
- Interpreter controls pace, transmits complete message, including intent, tone, emotion and gestures
- It closely resembles the way we talk to each other



Simultaneous Mode

- Requires a high level of skill
- Special equipment often employed
- Interpreter transmits the message into the target language at about the same time as the speaker delivers it
- Can be whispered or spoken in a normal tone of voice
- This technique is useful when an interpreter is interpreting for a single person in a large group.
- It is also useful when patients launch into an emotional speech that cannot be interrupted or in times of emergency.



Summarization

- When one person speaks at length and the interpreter summarizes the important points at the end.
- The full content of the encounter is condensed and not fully transmitted.
- Not recommended as it does not provide sufficient information or allow for the full meaning of the encounter to be understood.
- If the interpreter is going to summarize, he/she should take careful notes while the person is speaking.



Sight Translation

- Interpreter reads document in source language, then rereads it in target language
- Document should be no longer than a page and provider should be present
- Provider, *not the interpreter*, is responsible for clarifying information in the document being translated
- Requires high skill level, including literacy in both languages



Four Basic Roles of an Interpreter

- **Conduit** - *whatever goes into the ear must come out of the mouth, from one language to another.*
- **Clarifier** - *One who, or that which, clarifies.*
- **Cultural Broker**- *Is the act of bridging, linking, or mediating between groups or persons of different cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change.*
- **Advocate**- *An action taken on behalf of an individual that goes beyond facilitating communication, with the intention of supporting good health outcomes.*



Facilitating the Interpreter Encounter

➤ Who is in control of the interpreter encounter?

You, as the provider can take charge to ensure smooth communication.

➤ What is a successful encounter?

- A successful encounter begins with an introduction in which the interpreter's role is clearly established.
- Familiarize the interpreter with the appointment before going in, sharing any relevant documents to study ahead of time.
- Inform clients of the role of the interpreter and its limitations, confidentiality provisions, and allow the interpreter to explain how he or she works (signals, short sentences, etc.).



Managing the Encounter

- Remember that you are in control of the encounter, and that relationship should be established early on between you and the patient.
- While the interpreter must be acknowledged, introduced, and their professional role defined at each encounter, do not allow the interpreter to become the center of the encounter.
- Before you begin, make sure the patient understands the interpreter
- Be familiar with the interpreter code of ethics, so that you can support the interpreter in upholding them.



Managing the Encounter Continued...

- Help the interpreter maintain professional distance from the patient.
- Ask the interpreter to wait outside the room if you must leave and return.
- Allow the interpreter to take notes. At the end of the encounter, the interpreter should hand these to you.
- Do not allow multiple people to talk at the same time.
- Take responsibility for placing the interpreter next to and slightly behind the patient.



Managing the Encounter Continued...

- Speak in First Person
 - Always speak directly to the client
 - Be Transparent
 - Do not have side conversations with the interpreter
 - Allow for Clarification
 - Allow the interpreter to intervene with third person to ensure understanding
- ❖ *Some languages do not have exact equivalents. Your interpreter may need to speak a full sentence to convey a single word. If you suspect your interpreter is adding something to the message, ask them about it.*



Tone, Register and Pace

- Use language appropriate to the client and situation
- Lower the register and speak slowly to ensure understanding
- Try not to ask compound questions- one question at a time
- Carefully pronounce names, numbers, and acronyms
- Allow time for breaks
- Your interpreter has a very demanding mental task and is the only one in the room who will be speaking the entire time.



Interpreter Code of Ethics

- ✓ Accuracy
- ✓ Confidentiality
- ✓ Impartiality
- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Role Boundaries
- ✓ Cultural Awareness
- ✓ Professionalism
- ✓ Professional Development
- ✓ Advocacy



Help the Interpreter to Maintain Boundaries

- Remember that the interpreter is providing a voice for the client, not managing their case
- Remember that an interpreter does not share nor offer his original thoughts
- Remember that the client is responsible for his/her choices
- Do not ask the interpreter for an opinion
- Do not ask the interpreter to fill out client's paperwork
- Allow the interpreter to take notes, but insist that they be given to you after the encounter



Family, Friends, and Child Interpreters

- Family, friends or children who interpret for patients often experience uncomfortable role reversals. If the topic is delicate or serious, they may be too embarrassed or too nervous to interpret well.
- They do not have the language skills and medical terminology knowledge needed to interpret accurately and completely
- Recent confidentiality regulations call into question the appropriateness of using casual interpreter substitutes.



Language Barriers Lead to Medical Mistakes

- Unintended consequences of using untrained or ad hoc interpreters can cause:
 - Numerous errors
 - Omissions
 - Inaccurate word substitutions
 - Misinterpretation of anatomical parts, key medical terms, etc.
- Intentional editing is more common than you might think



Effective Interpreting vs. Non-effective Interpreting

Non-Effective:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=D9s3sl5AoMg

Effective:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=YR-TXflhTA#t=11



KFHC Available Services

- Over-the-phone interpretation 24/7
- Onsite Interpretation
- American Sign Language Interpretation:
 - Onsite ASL Interpreters and virtual access available via:
 - Zoom
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Skype
 - Google Docs
- Insight Application:
 - ASL
 - 30+ languages
 - Online instructions: <https://res.cloudinary.com/dpmykpsih/image/upload/kern-site-353/media/1917/lls-vri-provider-training-guide-2020.pdf>
- California Relay Service



How to Request Services

➤ Contact KFHC Member Services Department:

During KHS business hours:

Call 1-800-391-2000

Select option 1 for the Member Services Department

Inform the Member Services Representative of the need for an interpreter and they will connect you to an interpreter.

After KHS business hours:

Call 1-800-391-2000

Select option 2 for the Advice Nurse Line

Select option 3 to access an interpreter

Inform the Advice Nurse Line of the need for an interpreter and you will be connected to an interpreter.

- Onsite and Virtual interpretation requests requires a seven-business day advance notice.



Thank You For Your Time!

If you have any questions, please contact Cynthia Cardona, Cultural & Linguistics Administrative and Support Supervisor at (661) 617-2498.

