



Mission Hospital

Policy and
Procedure

Interpreter/Communication Services for Patients

Administration_Nursing ADM RI.14

Pending
Signature
(Rev: 7)

I. PURPOSE

To ensure that all communication needs for patients and families are met, to be inclusive of Limited English Proficient patients (LEP), surrogate decision makers, sight impaired and hearing impaired. Limited English Proficient patients (LEP), surrogate decision makers, are provided with a qualified language resource in the language of their preference, at no cost when medical conditions and treatment options are presented. This also includes services for patients and families who use or need sign language or Telecommunications device (TDD) for the deaf to communicate.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

Manager, Interpreter Services

III. SCOPE

All employees

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Limited English Proficient (LEP) patient:** patient who is unable to speak, read, write or understand the English Language at a level that permits him/her to interact effectively with health and social service agencies.
- B. **Healthcare Interpreter:** A healthcare interpreter: is a professional interpreter who has
 1. Been trained in healthcare interpreting,
 2. Adheres to the professional code of ethics and protocols of healthcare interpreters,
 3. Is knowledgeable about medical terminology, and
 4. Can accurately and completely render spoken or verbal communication from one language to another. Interpreters have been tested for their fluency in the languages in which they interpret. Note: Interpreting refers to the conversion of spoken or verbal communication from one language into a second language
- C. **Interpreter Associate:** an employee of Mission Hospital
 1. Whose language proficiency has been assessed;
 2. Meets the qualification criteria to assist the healthcare provider in brief interpretations;
 3. Completes fundamentals of interpreter training;
 4. Demonstrates ability to interpret terminology specific to their department and within the essential functions of their job;
 5. Adheres to interpreters protocols and HIPPA standards.
- D. **Role of the healthcare provider-** To work effectively with an interpreter the provider should:
 1. Orient and brief the interpreter by introducing yourself and stating the goal of the encounter.
 2. Orient the patient and state your name, role and introduce the interpreter.
 3. When communicating with the patient: a) Speak directly to the patient in first person (e.g. "Where is your pain?"). This helps avoid confusion and shortens the length of the encounter.
 4. Speak in short sentences and pause at the end of a complete thought.
 5. Everything you and the patient say will be interpreted without addition, omission or revision.
 6. At completion of the encounter, utilize the teach back method to check for patient understanding. (e.g. "We covered a lot today about your asthma medication and I want to make sure I explained everything clearly. Can you tell me how you will take your medication?")

V. PROCEDURE/GUIDELINES

A. Background

1. An interpreter is used to provide understandable care in the preferred language of patients ensuring they understand all clinical and administrative information.
2. Mission Hospital Mission Viejo and Laguna Beach provides its patients and visitors with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), non-English speaking or hearing impairment a meaningful opportunity to participate in their own, or their family member's care by the use of interpreters that results in accurate and effective communication at no extra cost.
3. Patients are informed of their right to an interpreter upon admission by the Admitting Counselors and by Interpreter Services postings at key points of entry throughout the hospital.
4. Minors (17 years of age and younger) may not be used as interpreters. If the patient, after being informed about the availability of interpreter services, elects to use a family member or friend (over the age of 18) to interpret, such a decision will be recorded in the medical record with an explanation for the decision; this excludes and does not pertain to behavioral health unit patients. Qualified interpreters must be used for every encounter with behavioral health patients; for medical, clinical, assessments, etc.
 - a. If the patient is a Behavioral Health patient an official interpreter (Pacific Interpreter telephone and video interpreter, video interpreter, a certified in person interpreter, or certified Interpreter Associate) must always be used for all informed consents and/or hearings.
 - b. For the Inpatient Behavioral Health unit, in-person face to face ASL service will be provided in the event the patient refuses all electronic forms of ASL services which the hospital provides.
5. Patients cannot be asked to bring in their own interpreter for medical encounters.
6. Family member, friend, minor, any independent contractor or third party are not to be used as an interpreter for consent forms.
7. When a Spanish or Farsi consent form is provided, an interpreter shall be provided as well.
8. When a patient's preferred language is Spanish or Farsi, all informed consent documentation must also be in preferred language.
9. When interpreting for informed consent the interpreter/interpreter associate will not also serve as the witness.
10. If a Mission Hospital Interpreter Associate employee does not feel comfortable with the level of clinical interpretation being asked of them, they have the right to refuse.

B. Access to Interpreter Services: Interpreter services are provided through:

1. Pacific Interpreters: is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, for telephone interpretation. Pacific Interpreters is a resource for all languages - a special dual handset phone is available in all patient care areas including Admitting, Patient Accounting and the PBX operators.
 - a. Pacific Interpreters can be contacted by dialing from any phone on the Mission Viejo campus 1-800-264-1552 and provide the access code: 829650.
 - b. From any phone in Mission Hospital Laguna Beach: 866.425.0217 and provide the access Code: 830608
 - c. Video Remote Interpretation (VRI) is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week and will be used for access to a Sign Language Interpreter or other languages, in cases when Hospital Interpreters are not available. VRI is a computer based telecommunication application that is used to access a live video remote interpreter to ensure effective communication between the patient and healthcare provider. In addition to the interpreter, the computers include the following applications: videophone and access to a video relay operator. Each clinical care area has a dedicated computer that has the video conferencing application for VRI use.
 - d. Video Relay Service (VRS) This Internet-based form of TRS allows persons whose primary language is American Sign Language to communicate with the CA (Communication Assistant) in ASL using video conferencing equipment. The CA speaks what is signed to the called party, and signs the called party's response back to the caller. VRS is not required by the FCC, but is offered by several TRS providers.

VRS allows conversations to flow in near real time and in a faster and more natural manner than text-based TRS. Beginning January 1, 2006, TRS providers that offer VRS must provide it 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and must answer incoming calls within a specific period of time so that VRS users do not have to wait for a long time. For more information regarding VRS visit www.fcc.gov/guides/video-relay-services.

- e. For Mission Hospital Mission Viejo Campus Only: In-house designated interpreters who have been trained and assessed for their competency in Spanish can be reached at ext 2600 Monday through Friday 7:00 AM - 3:30 PM.
- f. Hearing Impaired Resources:
 - 1. Access to TRS (Telecommunications Relay Service) is available by calling 0 at Mission Hospital, or for TDD telephone number for the hearing impaired is available by calling 800.735.2922, TTY Relay: 800.735.2929
 - 2. Sign language interpreter services. Can be reached anytime (24 hours, 7 days per week) through Video conference system on line, available through Ipads located in each unit.
 - 3. Visual aids for patients that cannot read or are hearing impaired are available in the Interpreter Resources Binder, which is located in each patient care unit, to assist the patient family member, health care provider and/or the interpreter. These consist of pictures of body parts (to which they can point to and relate a problem) and common patient care needs (raise bed, give a pill or injection, telephone, urinal, or no food allowed today, breath through your mouth).
 - 4. In-person ASL Services:
 - i. Primary and preferred contact:
 - 1. Fluent Language Solutions: (888)225-6056 or (704)926-5024 (Eastern Time)

C. Admitting Process

1. Patient Access will record the patient/family's preferred language to make their healthcare decisions. It will be documented if the patient/family requests an interpreter. Every effort should be made to obtain this information.
2. If the patient indicates that their preferred language for making healthcare decisions is a language other than English, a BLUE "Interpreter Bracelet" will be assigned and placed on the patient's wrist or elsewhere on the person as appropriate.
 - A. The bracelet will include the contact information for the Pacific Interpreters Telephonic Interpreter line and a blank space to write out the patients preferred language of communication.
3. Nursing will record patient's preferred language on the admission assessment in the electronic medical record.

D. Documentation

1. When an Interpreter is utilized to interpret, this will be documented in the medical record. The interpreter will document, name, date and time and on any form (s) that he/she interprets for a patient, i.e. authorization forms.
2. Whenever a telephone or video interpreter is used, the staff member must obtain the interpreters ID# and document it on the patient's medical record with the date and time. This includes recording ID # on any translated forms, i.e., COA's, authorizations.
3. Informed Consents: when an "In Person" Interpreter is used the Interpreter will sign the Consent form where indicated and indicate the date and time. For "telephone or video" Interpreters, record the Interpreter's ID #, and the date and time.
4. If the Healthcare provider and the patient share the same preferred language, conversation pertinent to health care provided in preferred language will be documented in the medical record in Shift event or physician's progress notes
5. If during the patient care process it is determined that an LEP patient was incorrectly labeled as an English-speaking patient, the Patient Access Department should be immediately notified to update the patient records indicating the appropriate language and to prompt the issuing of an "Interpreter Bracelet".

E. Other

1. Notices informing patients about the availability of interpreters will be posted in English, Spanish and Farsi in conspicuous places and include:
 - a. Local address and phone number of the Department of Health Services, Licensing and Certification
 - 681 S. Parker St. Suite 200, Orange, CA 92868
 - Phone 1-800-228-5234
 - FAX 714-567-2815
 - Contact: Hang Nguyen
 - Telephone number where complaints may be filed: 800.228.5234

F. Orientation and Education

1. New employees/ physicians will be oriented to language access services and resources at General Hospital Orientation/ New Physician Orientation
2. Ongoing education will be provided to employees as deemed necessary.
3. Each Employee/ Physician will receive an Interpreter Services Quick Reference Card, containing information on how to contact the different Interpreter Services resources that are available at Mission Hospital.
4. An Interpreter Resource Guide Book will be available at all patient care nursing stations.
5. Medical Interpreter classes will be offered once a year to qualify Spanish and Farsi language proficient employees as “Medical Interpreter Associates”.
6. Mission Hospital employees interested in the class must be in good standing and will require prior approval from their manager. They must meet the following criteria: They must be fluent in Spanish and English or Farsi and English. They must have been an employee for one year and work a minimum of 40 hours per pay period (0.5 FTE). Employees must successfully pass the IST (Interpreter Skill Test) administered by Language Line University.
 - Webpage Languageline.com
 - Phone 1-800-752-6096

G. Ongoing Assessment

1. On an annual basis a demographic assessment and language assessment of Mission Hospital’s service area will be conducted by the Interpreter Services Manager to determine what additional language resources might be needed.
2. Policy Review: The Interpreter Services policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the appropriate approval committees.
3. On an annual basis the policy shall be submitted to the State of California through the Providence St. Joseph Health System.
 - a. Address: Department of Health Services, Office of Civil Rights, PO Box 997413, MS 0009, Sacramento, CA 95899-7413

VI. REFERENCES

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); California Health & Safety Code 1259 (Kopp Act) Act

VII. COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Quality Operations Committee (QOC)

References

Reference Type	Title	Notes
Documents referenced by this document		
Referenced Documents	www.fcc.gov/guides/video-relay-services	

Signed by

	Cherie D Fox, Dir, Nursing (Pending) Jennifer Cord, CNO - Mission (Pending)		
Effective		Document Owner	Rodriguez, Horacio
Revised	[07/01/2010 Rev. 1], [02/06/2014 Rev. 2], [09/09/2016 Rev. 3], [04/11/2017 Rev. 4], [08/10/2017 Rev. 5], [02/02/2018 Rev. 6]		
Reviewed	[01/21/2013 Rev. 1], [09/09/2016 Rev. 3], [11/22/2016 Rev. 3], [12/14/2016 Rev. 3]		

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