

PURPOSE:

St. Mary Medical Center provides interpreter services to assure non-English speaking, limited English speaking, or deaf/hearing impaired patients of their right to understand medical treatment and procedures, as well as, to communicate their healthcare needs. It is the goal to provide these patients, families, visitors and staff with the same quality access to health care information and services. Interpreter Services organizes, in cooperation with other departments, cultural and ethnically informative programs to promote communication between staff and patients and to enhance the understanding of patient’s cultural practices and beliefs.

SCOPE:

Hospitalwide

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

- A. Interpreter Services is responsible for the overall function of interpreter services within St. Mary Medical Center and facilitates the following:
 - 1. Translation of hospital forms and other documents into Spanish
 - 2. Coordination of the translation of documents into other languages
 - 3. Securing of language resources to interpret when necessary including deaf and hearing impaired persons
 - 4. Training of bilingual volunteer interpreters to comply with new regulations

Definitions

Term	Definition
Limited English Proficient (LEP) Patient	An individual 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 services agencies.
Qualified Healthcare Interpreter	Defined not only as “a person fluent in English and in the necessary second language.” But also one who has the “ability to translate the names of the body parts and to describe competently symptoms and injuries in both languages.”
Translator	A person who is responsible for the translation of documents, hospital-signage, and educational material for patients, families, and staff, as well as, for revising such documents before final printing.
Bilingual Volunteer Interpreters	bilingual employees fluent in both languages but with limitations regarding technical or medical terminology or who are knowledgeable in the subject and terminology in both source and target language.
Role of Interpreter Services	<p>The role of Interpreter Services is to provide efficient and adequate communication between patients and families in their primary language when communicating in English is not possible or advisable. This includes services for patients/families who use/need sign language or Teletype for the deaf (TDD) to communicate.</p> <p>A. <u>Language Access Coordinator:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Language Access Coordinator is responsible for providing interpreter/translator services and/or obtaining

other language resources as well as instructing the hospital staff on how to secure an interpreter from the Language Resource Bank, Pacific Interpreters, or other resources available in the community. The Language Access Coordinator makes rounds on each of the units and visits the Spanish speaking patients and families to identify any concerns or needs. The Language Access Coordinator advises the staff regarding any communication barriers regarding language, cultural practices, etc. The Language Access Coordinator will also advise appropriate staff of educational or ethnically sensitive issues that may be important for the care of the patient or for the family.

B. Qualified Healthcare Interpreter/Translator:

1. The Qualified Healthcare Interpreter/Translator's role is to assist medical and non-medical personnel, interpreting and/or translating information as required. In the clinical areas, the Interpreter is not a substitute medical/nursing staff member and therefore, may not translate clinical information in the absence of the medical/nursing staff. The SMMC Qualified Healthcare Interpreters have participated in an extensive 40-hour training program.

C. Bilingual Volunteer Interpreters:

1. Bilingual Volunteer Interpreters are bilingual SMMC employees fluent in another language and willingly volunteer to assist health care personnel in the interpretation of necessary and required information. The Bilingual Volunteer Interpreters assist on a voluntary basis and the interpretation time has to be brief due to the volunteer interpreter's regular duties within SMMC.

Language Resource Bank

St. Mary Medical Center maintains a Language Resource Bank located on the shared drive S: Language Resource Bank Folder, containing the following information:

Name of employee, language spoken, shift, department, extension where the employee can be reached, category (FT, PT, On-Call, etc.), and a code level stating if the employee is familiar with medical terminology, and whether the employee speaks, reads and writes the language.

Graphic cards in Spanish.

The Nurse, as part of the admission assessment will also record the patient/family's primary language.

If the patient communicates in a language other than English, the admitting employee/nurse should obtain a qualified healthcare interpreter from:

- A. An "in-house" list of interpreters is located on Staff Hub by searching "interpreter list" in the search window.
- B. Pacific Interpreters for all other languages - 1-800-264-1552, SMMC Access Code 829674
- C. Rise Interpreters for the deaf hearing impaired (760) 245-4388.
 1. After hours contact House Shift Supervisor at extension 8171.
- D. The Language Access Coordinator can be reached at extension 8005, by requesting Language Access over the hospital's Vocera instant communication system or by pager at (760) 513-3606.

ADA	American with Disabilities Act of 1990/2009

POLICY:

- A. Patient and families are welcome to have bilingual family/friends with them. However, for the purpose of medical interpretation, the services of an SMMC Qualified Healthcare Interpreter are required, either by telephone or in person. The Qualified Healthcare Interpreters are considered as a Level IV Bilingual employee in the Language Resource Bank. Qualified Healthcare Interpreters shall sign and date documentation on the patient's medical record in the presence of the healthcare staff and patient.
- B. Language Resource Bank contains names of bilingual volunteer employees knowledgeable in the subject and terminology in both source and target language. These employees may perform interpretations and/or translations as needed in the technical level for which they qualify under the conditions described above. These employees do not sign any documentation on the patient's medical record and are considered as a Level I Bilingual Employee in the Language Resource Bank.
- C. The Language Resource Bank contains names of bilingual volunteer employees fluent in both languages with limitations regarding technical or medical terminology. These employees may help with brief interpretations of a non-medical or highly technical nature. These employees do not sign any documentation on the patient's medical record and are considered as a Level II Bilingual employee in the Language Resource Bank.
- D. Interpreters, translators or bilingual volunteer interpreters shall not act as a substitute for a staff member, medical, nursing or other. Interpreters are not allowed to convey information in the absence of healthcare staff.
- E. Language or communication barriers are determined during the preadmission/admission process and documented on the patient registration sheet and patient profile form.
- F. Resources that facilitate accurate and timely communication between limited or non-English speaking patients, as well as, deaf and hearing impaired, and staff, are available 24 hours each day.
- G. Notices in Spanish regarding the availability of interpreters are posted in conspicuous locations (i.e., Lobbies, Emergency Department, Patient Registration, and Outpatient Services). These notices include:
 - 1. Procedure to obtain an interpreter
 - 2. TDD number for the hearing impaired
 - 3. Hotline to file complaints
 - 4. Local address and telephone number of the Department of Health, Licensing and Certification Division
 - 5. TDD number for the deaf to contact for complaints concerning interpreter services provided by the hospital
 - 6. California Relay Services
- H. Interpreter Services are provided by:
 - 1. Healthy Communities
 - 2. Hospital staffs with multi-lingual fluency including staff that can accurately sign and read sign language.
- I. Pacific Interpreter Services is to be utilized when there are no employees available to interpret in the needed language. Pacific Interpreter Services telephones are located in each nurse manager's office.
 - 1. Pacific Interpreter Services: 1-800-264-1552, SMMC Access Code: 829674
 - 2. For deaf services, a Ubiduo device or an approved vendor to provide signing services.
- J. Translation Services
 - 1. The Interpreter Services is responsible for the Spanish translation of SMMC documents, hospital signage and educational materials for patients, their families, and staff, as well as for revising such documents before final printing.
 - 2. When a document is in the patient's/legal representative's language, an interpreter/translator fluent in that language is to prepare a written translation of the document for the patient. In those circumstances where time does not permit this to be done, the interpreter/translator is to read (sight translate) the document for the patient. Upon completion of the translating, the interpreter/translator is to document that he/she

did, in fact, read the document and that the patient appropriately understood the translation of the document.

3. Documents that contain technical, sensitive or legal material are to be translated in this manner only on an "emergency basis" since these documents require formal and careful translation and revision process with reference materials at hand.
 4. To ensure uniformity and quality of translation, all documents to be translated are forwarded to the Language Access Coordinator.
 5. When a translation is done by an agency and/or person outside of St. Mary Medical Center, the translation is sent to the Language Access Coordinator for review and approval before printing.
 6. When a document needs to be translated in a language other than Spanish, the Language Access Coordinator will contact a reliable outside translator. The Department requesting the translation is responsible for the fees.
- K. Requesting and Providing Interpreter Services in Languages other than Spanish
1. Requests for interpreters other than Spanish anticipated to be in excess of 15 minutes are to be made at least 24 hours in advance (except for emergencies). This enables the Language Access Coordinator to research its resources and to contact an appropriate interpreter.
 2. Interpreter Services will make every effort to secure an interpreter from the Language Resource Bank. When necessary, the Language Access Coordinator will contact a reliable outside interpreter/translator. The Department requesting the translation is responsible for the fees.
- L. Prioritization of Services
1. Interpreter Services will prioritize requests for language services and translations according to need, not demand.
- M. Use of Interpreters
1. Staff members requesting interpreting services will address the patient and family in the same manner as if he or she were talking to any English-speaking patient or family. Address the patient and family directly and maintain eye contact. When possible, especially when bilingual volunteer interpreters are used, the staff member requesting interpretation will furnish the interpreter with a brief account of the situation and what is expected of the interpreter.
 2. The healthcare staff member must be present at all times for the interpreter to convey the needed information. The interpreter is a liaison and will not substitute healthcare staff regarding questions, information, instructions, whether in person or by telephone conversation.
- N. Consents and Discharge Instructions
1. Consent for procedures and discharge instructions must be given in the patient's primary language. Interpreter Services is to be contacted to assist SMMC whenever needed.
 2. When a consent form has not been prepared in the patient's/legal representative's language, a translator may prepare a form for that purpose. If time does not permit translation of the document, the interpreter must do a "sight" translation of the form and ask the patient/legal representative if he/she agrees. If the patient/legal representative agrees with the statements in the consent form, he/she must sign. The interpreter must document the following on the form:
"I have accurately and completely read the foregoing document to (insert name of the patient/legal representative) in (identify language), the patient/legal representative's primary language. He/she understands all of the terms and conditions and acknowledges his/her agreement thereto by signing the document in my presence."
The interpreter shall sign and date the statement in the presence of the patient and healthcare professional responsible for the care of the patient.
 3. If the patient, after being informed about the availability of SMMC Interpreter Services, chooses to use a family member or a friend instead, the patient's preference must be documented within the medical record. For sensitive information, staff is encouraged to have a qualified healthcare interpreter in addition to the "family/friend" interpreter.

PROCEDURE/GUIDELINES:

A. Requesting an Interpreter

1. The SMMC Qualified Healthcare Interpreter's contact information is located in Staff Hub by searching "interpreter list."
2. Contact the Language Access Coordinator by calling ext. 8005 or pager # 760.513.3606, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
3. When requesting interpreter services, have the following information available:
 - a. Patient's name and room number
 - b. Language requested
 - c. Nature of the request (i.e., consent, admission, questions, family conference, teaching, etc.)
 - d. Date and time when interpreter will be needed
 - e. Length of time interpreter is going to be used
 - f. Name and extension of person making the request
4. After hours, weekends and holidays:
 - a. Utilize the Language Resource Bank to determine if there is a SMMC employee available to interpret in the needed language.
 - b. Request that the employee be made available to provide interpretation.
 - c. Contact the Administrative Coordinator or staffing office to assess the need to assist with coverage while the employee provides the needed interpretation.
5. Telephonic Interpretation to Obtain Consent:
 - a. The Staff member obtaining consent will have all necessary documentation at hand before calling Pacific Interpreters.
 - b. Procedures to use Pacific Interpreters are outlined in the Language Resource Bank.
 - c. When the interpreter is on the line, the staff member is to:
 - i. Obtain the Interpreter's number
 - ii. Read the consent in English to the interpreter, who will then interpret it into the patient's or legal representative's language
 - d. After the patient/legal representative has given consent, the staff member is to document, 'consent was obtained via Pacific Interpreters'. Include the interpreter's number in the documentation.

DOCUMENTATION:

Not applicable.

REFERENCES:

- A. CMS - Center for Medicaid and Medicare
- B. Title 22
- C. American Disability Act (ADA)
- D. CHIA, Consent Manual
- E. SJHS Language Access Guideline
- F. CMS Patient's Rights CoP §482.13(a) and 482.13(a)(1)
- G. California: Section 1259 Health and Safety Code

RELATED ITEMS:

Not applicable.

Referenced Documents

Reference Type	Title	Notes
Signed by	(02/13/2015 04:58PM PST) Judy Wagner, VP Mission Integration	
	(02/15/2015 09:46AM PST) Kelly Linden, Chief Operating Officer	
	(02/16/2015 09:37AM	

PST) Karen Belleville,
Administrative Assistant

Effective

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Document Owner

Linden,
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