



Origination	9/1/1989	Owner	Megan Stevenson: Environmental Health & Safety Specialist III
Final Approved	N/A	Policy Area	Disability Access (ADA)
Effective	Upon Approval	Applicability	Novato Community Hospital
Last Revised	12/13/2022		
Next Review	1 year after approval		

Language Assistance for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

PURPOSE:

To assure a level of quality care consistent with Novato Community Hospital's (NCH) goals and objectives. To provide verbal language interpretation to assist in communicating with limited or non-English speaking patients.

DEFINITIONS:

Translation: The act or process of turning written or verbal material into another language.

Interpretation: Conversion of the spoken word from one language to another.

Interpreting: The process of understanding and analyzing a spoken or written message and re-expressing that message faithfully, accurately and objectively into another language, taking the cultural and social context into account.

LEP – Limited English Proficient: Individuals who are "Limited English Proficient" (LEP) cannot speak, read, write or understand the English language at a level that permits them to effectively communicate with health care professionals.

Certified Interpreter: An employee or contractor of NCH who has been determined, through competency testing, to be fluent in English and fluent in either a second language. This person can accurately speak, read and readily interpret the second language.

Non-Certified Interpreter: An employee or person accompanying the patient who is fluent in the patient's primary language but has not been determined to be competent to provide effective interpretation through competency testing.

POLICY:

All patients identified as LEP will be offered interpretative services. Patient refusal for this service will be documented in the medical record.

NCH provides language assistance to Limited English Speaking (LEP) persons as necessary for effective communication related to treatment. Language services are provided at no cost to the patient, family member or patient representative 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The Hospital contracts with Language Line for certified remote language interpretation. Contact information is available in each department and on each nursing unit. Limited on-site interpreter services are available utilizing certified staff.

The LEP Patient may bring an adult family member of their choosing to interpret for them. The family member/friend should not be used to interpret any information that could affect the patient's health or decisions requiring informed consent. In this situation staff should consider issues of competence, appropriateness, conflicts of interest, and confidentiality. Non-certified interpreters may be appropriate for communicating basic information and instructions related to activities of daily living. Persons who the patient requests to serve as his or her interpreter may be used to interpret if staff reasonably believe the person is willing and able to provide effective communication and is appropriate to the situation.

All new employees will be educated regarding the Language Assistance Policy at the time of hire. Periodic training will be provided as deemed necessary.

Public notices are posted in all registration areas regarding:

- the availability of interpreter services
- notifying patients of their right to file a complaint about interpreter services
- the process for filing a complaint with NCH or the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) including CDPH address and phone number

PROCEDURE:

I. Registration:

- A. At the time of registration the patient's primary language is identified.
- B. Identified needs are recorded into the medical record.
- C. The RN will assess the patients ability level to read, speak and understand English at a level that permits them to effectively communicate with health care professionals.

II. Language Line

- A. Identify the patient's primary language.
- B. Start language line session on the tablet or workstation on wheels (WOW).

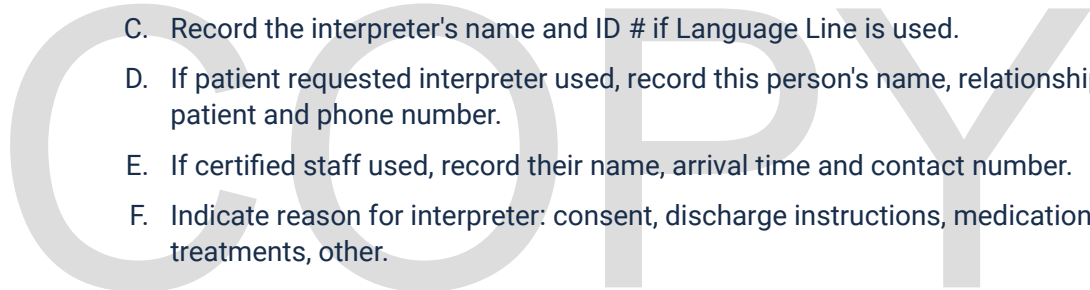
- C. Select the language needed.
- D. Give your name and your department.
- E. When the interpreter is connected, obtain their name and identification number.
- F. Advise the interpreter of the situation and the information you will be seeking.
- G. Request the interpreter advise the patient this service is provided at no cost to the patient.
- H. If repeat contact is needed, it is likely the vendor will provide a new interpreter.

III. Translation of Written Materials

- A. NCH provides some frequently used forms in Spanish.
- B. When necessary to ensure meaningful access to vital information, the hospital will use its best effort to provide timely, effective, oral interpretation of documents that have not been translated into the patient's primary language.

IV. Documentation

- V.
 - A. Identify Primary Language.
 - B. Record the date and time the interpreter was used.
 - C. Record the interpreter's name and ID # if Language Line is used.
 - D. If patient requested interpreter used, record this person's name, relationship to the patient and phone number.
 - E. If certified staff used, record their name, arrival time and contact number.
 - F. Indicate reason for interpreter: consent, discharge instructions, medication, treatments, other.



All Revision Dates

12/13/2022, 7/28/2021, 8/23/2016, 11/12/2015, 9/1/1989

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
Administration	Lisa Gammon: CAO & CNE, NCH	Pending
Owner/Manager	Sharon Marshall: Director, Nursing Program	12/27/2022