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Owner: Eugene Patrizio: CEO, MMC
Policy Area: Administrative
References:
Applicability: Memorial Medical Center
Modesto

Language and Sign Language Interpreter Services Procedure

PURPOSE:

- A. To ensure that Limited English Proficient persons and persons with hearing or visual impairments have equal access as well as awareness as to possible options for all services offered by Memorial Medical Center.
- B. To meet State and Federal requirements for the provision of language assistance to all Limited English Proficient and hearing and visually impaired persons as necessary for effective communication in connection with treatment rendered by Memorial Medical Center.

POLICY:

- A. It is the intent of Memorial Medical Center (MMC) to provide equal access to the services it provides, regardless of language abilities. MMC will provide, at no cost to the patient, family member, or representative, language assistance to Limited English Proficient and hearing and visually impaired persons as necessary for effective communication in connection with the treatment rendered.
- B. Patient identity shall be verified by comparing patient name and date of birth on identification band with same identifiers on applicable health information documents prior to initiating this policy/procedure. (refer to Tools/Help-D.1.)

SCOPE:

- A. All hospital staff, physicians, patients, families and significant others.

DEFINITIONS:

- A. Translation: Conversion of written text from one language to another.
- B. Interpretation: Conversion of words and meanings between spoken languages or between a spoken language and a sign language.
- C. LEP - Limited English Proficiency: Individuals who are "Limited English Proficient" cannot speak, read, write or understand the English language at a level that permits them to effectively communicate with health care professionals.
- D. Language or communication barriers: Spoken language barriers are those experienced by individuals

who are limited English-speaking or non-English Communication barriers are impediments experienced by individuals who are deaf and whose primary language is sign language, or those persons who have sight impairment.

- E. Bilingual employees: Employees who speak a language in addition to English.
- F. Patient appointed interpreter: An individual designated by the patient or family (when the patient lacks capacity to consent) to provide for language or sign language interpretation needs and has completed the form as outlined in section Procedure-B. of this policy.
- G. TDD: Telecommunications Device for the Deaf

PROCEDURES:

- A. Notices are posted in the Emergency Department, Entrances, and outpatient areas regarding availability of the interpreter services described in this document. These signs indicate that interpreter services are available.
 - 1. Patients/visitors have a right to file a complaint regarding the provision of language assistance services. These complaints can be registered by calling (209) 525-3111. Patient/visitors complaints regarding interpreter services may also be directed to the California Department of Health Services (refer to Tools/Help-D.3.).
- B. The patient has the right to appoint someone to interpret for him/her. In these cases, the patient MUST sign the Memorial Medical Center "Patient Appointed Language and Sign Language Consent" Form. (MMC Intranet Portal → Resources → Forms & Tools → Enterprise Forms → Sutter EHR Forms --> All Units)
- C. Staff will be utilized only for simple interpretations such as those dealing with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) and simple patient care related issues.
 - 1. Staff will not translate for conversations dealing with medical issues, i.e., diagnosis and/or treatment, risks and benefits, informed consent, etc.
 - 2. Use of family members or companions as interpreters is discouraged, except for the most extraordinary circumstances, such as medical emergencies. Use of any of these individual may violate patient confidentiality and may compromise care. Staff may not rely on a minor child to interpret or facilitate communication.
- D. In the absence of a Memorial Medical Center employee who is able to speak the language spoken by the patient for the interpretation needs as outlined in Procedure-C., and/or the absence of the Patient Appointed Interpreter, the employee shall access the Sutter Health approved language interpreter service by calling Cyacom at 1-800-276-2519, and entering the account number and the unit specific pin number, as indicated. INTERPRETERS are available twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days per week.
 - 1. Dual Hand-set phones for the language service are available at most nurses stations.
 - a. When a phone is requested it is plugged into the existing phone line and used in the same fashion as a regular phone. In cases where there is no existing phone or phone line, the nurses stations will have a language services dual handset cordless phone.
 - 2. Hospital-issued Cisco phones may be used with speaker mode.
- E. Memorial Medical Center will conduct a nursing admission assessment of the communication needs of each patient served and record the patient's needs in the medical record, using EHR functionality:

Admission Navigator → Admit Info → Interpreter Used for Patient. The assessment will include:

1. **Preferred** language
 2. Hearing impairment
 3. Sight Impairment
 4. Need for interpreter services
- F. Strictest confidentiality of information shall be maintained by all persons who interpret for Limited English Proficient persons and persons with hearing and visual impairment as required under HIPPA for all patient Protected Health Information (PHI).
- G. The hospital has interpreter services available for patients who are deaf, hearing or speech impaired. All patients who present with deafness, hearing or speech impairments will be offered access to sign language interpreter services as guaranteed by the Americans with Disabilities Act. This is especially important when information is being exchanged with a patient to ensure confidentiality and accuracy. This includes, but not limited to, communication concerning patient care, privacy rights, obtaining medical history, explaining surgical procedures and explaining consent forms, confidential information, conferences, and health education/training sessions provided to the public. Refer to Tools/Help - D.2. when consulting patient or visitor about his/her need for communication assistance.
1. Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) allows patients who are deaf and/or hard-of-hearing to communicate through a certified sign language interpreter, as well as spoken language interpretation, via a web-based computer software, 24/7. Refer to Tools/Help - C.3.
 2. To access a sign language interpreter:
 - a. Notify the department manager and/or Administrative Supervisor of the need to access a sign language interpreter.
 - b. Play a request with one of the SH approved interpreting services:
 - i. Eaton Interpreting Services
 1. Call 916-721-3636
 2. Provide scheduler with Customer # 28332.
 - ii. Wilder Interpreting Services (916-483-4751)
 - a. Complete "Scheduling Service Request" form (refer to Attachment A). Fax from to 1-800-349-4790 and await further instructions.
 - c. If neither of the above SH approved interpreter services are available within a reasonable amount of time and/or for patient safety, contact NorCal Service for Deaf and Hard of Hearing at 916-349-7525 or, after usual business hours, at 916-236-1184. (Refer to Attachment B).
 - i. When it has been necessary to utilize NorCal, notify the department manager and Administrative Supervisor.
 - ii. FAX NorCAI Request for Services Form (refer to Attachment A).
 - d. Keep patient informed of sign language interpreter estimated time of arrival.
 - e. VR lmay be used as a gap measure to minimize delay of care until an in-person interpreter arrives if the patient agrees.
 - f. Inform patient that there will be a delay in getting an on-site interpreter; this could be 4 hours or more.

3. The hospital will provide Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf (TDD). One TDD is located in the Emergency Room and another is located at MMC's north and south entrance. An additional TDD is available to be placed in a patient room so that a patient who is deaf can be in contact with friends and family. Hospital employees can secure a TDD for a patient by calling the Switchboard Operator. The TDD will be installed in the deaf patient's room by the appropriate staff.
 4. Incoming calls from deaf or hearing impaired persons are routed through the TDD/California Relay service at (800) 735-2929. Dial 711 to place a call using the California Relay Service.
- H. Employees are educated on the availability of interpreters and the hospital's commitment to offer interpreters to all patients.
1. Any use of any interpreter services should be documented in the patient care record, using EHR functionality (Admission Navigator → Interpreter Used for Patient), with the following:
 - a. Reason for service (i.e., consent for surgery, etc.)
 - b. Agency used
 - i. Cyracom
 - ii. Video Remote Interpreting
 - iii. Eaton Interpreting Services
 - iv. Wilder Interpreting Services
 - c. Name and/or ID number of the interpreter.
- I. Document use of interpreter/services in the patient record using EHR functionality (Admission Navigator --> Interpreter Services Used for Patient), with the following information:
1. Reason for Service
 2. Agency used (i.e., VRI)
 3. Name and ID number of interpreter
- J. This procedure will be reviewed/revised as per MMC P&P guidelines and as necessary to ensure that language assistance services are provided to all patients with language or communication barriers. This will include, but not limited to:
1. The identification of the percentage of people that speak the same primary language and comprise at least five percent of the population in the geographic area served by the facility or the actual population of the hospital.
 2. The forms that will be translated into Spanish and the assessment of whether standardized picture and phrase sheets are appropriate.

TOOLS/HELP:

- A. AUTHOR: Luis Louis, Julie Meyers
- B. REVISED BY: Marsha Lovelace RN BSN and Karin Berg ADA Coordinator 11/2018
- C. Notices in English, Spanish, and other languages, as appropriate, will be posted in the Emergency Department, the admitting area, hospital entrances, and the outpatient areas regarding the availability of the interpreter services located at Memorial Medical Center.
- D. Related Policies and Procedures:

1. Identification: Patient Armband/Patient Verification
2. Patients/Visitors with Disabilities: Communication Assistance
3. Video Remote Interpreting
4. Patient Rights
5. Patient and Family Complaint/Grievance

E. Resources:

1. Phone numbers:
 Cyracom 1-800-481-3289
 Eaton Interpreting Services 1-916-721-3636
 Wilder Interpreting Services 1-916-483-4751
 NorCal 1-916-349-7525 (after hours: 1-916-236-1185)
2. Memorial Medical Center "Patient Appointed Language and Sign Language Interpreter Consent" Form - Enterprise Forms

REFERENCES

- A. Comprehensive accreditation manual for hospitals: the official handbook. (2018). Rights and Responsibilities. Oakbrook Terrace, IL: The Joint Commission.
- B. Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USC 12181, Title III. Office of Civil Rights, Department of Justice. Retrieved on 5/18/16
- C. California Health and Safety Code, §1259.
- D. U.S. Census Data. (2017). Specific to Stanislaus County, CA. Retrieved on 8/10/17.
- E. ADA Amendments Act of 2008.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Wilder Interpreting Services Scheduling Service Request form
- B. NorCal Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Communication Services Request Form

Attachments:

- [A - Wilder Interpreting Services Scheduling Service Request form](#)
- [B - NorCal Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Communication Form](#)

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
IPPC	Marsha Lovelace: Coord, CVSA Inter Prac Mod	12/18/2018
	Marsha Lovelace: Coord, CVSA Inter Prac Mod	12/18/2018
Med Exec	Judith Brennan-Thompson: Medical Staff Coordinator	12/18/2018
Administrative Team	Helen Mc Kinsey: Senior Exec Assistant	11/29/2018

Step Description	Approver	Date
	Eugene Patrizio: CEO, MMC	11/9/2018
	Helen Mc Kinsey: Senior Exec Assistant	11/9/2018

Applicability

Memorial Medical Center Modesto

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