

LAC+USC MEDCAL CENTER POLICY

Subject: INTERPRETER SERVICES	Original Issue Date: 10/20/08	Policy # 226
	Supersedes: 2/11/14	Effective Date: 4/12/16
Departments Consulted: Office of Human Resources Patient Financial Services Nursing Office of Regulatory Affairs Medical Center Administration	Reviewed & Approved by: Attending Staff Association Executive Committee Senior Executive Council	Approved by: (Signature on File) Chief Medical Officer (Signature on File) Chief Executive Officer

PURPOSE

To ensure compliance with regulatory requirements that protect the patient's right to access basic health care when limited by language or hearing impairment.

POLICY

The LAC+USC Medical Center shall provide interpreter services when a patient is Limited English Proficient (LEP), non-English speaking or sign language services when a patient is hearing impaired. Interpreters are utilized as needed to assist in effective communication and are free of cost to the patients and/or their families. Interpreters will be made available on the premises or accessible by telephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

PROCEDURE

The LAC+USC Medical Center staff will identify the language of the LEP patient using in one of the following methods, 1) Hospital Electronic Medical Record System (ORCHID) 2) "Point to Your Language" card or 3) language interpreter rights poster. The "preferred language for discussing health care" is collected and updated in the Electronic Medical Record System by registration staff and other staff performing patient registration. This information is located in the Patient Demographic section of the Electronic Medical Record.

Hospital staff will use one of the following certified categories, 1) certified bilingual employees, 2) health care interpreters, 3) certified signing employees or 4) certified bilingual volunteers working in the immediate area to interpret in clinical care areas. Non-certified bilingual employees and volunteers may use their language skills in non-clinical encounters with patients, their families or visitors.

When no local area certified bilingual employee is available, staff must use a certified bilingual employee from another area found on the bilingual bonus list that is annually updated and distributed to supervisors, managers and administrators. The certified bilingual employees or certified sign language employees contacted may be asked to perform interpreter services in other areas. Release of these employees from their regular work duties shall receive clearance by their supervisor prior to providing interpreter services in other areas.

When certified bilingual staff or certified in-person interpreters are not available, staff should use the Healthcare Interpreter Network (HCIN) equipment or call ext. 3600 or ext. 9-3600 for telephone interpreters. Three-way calls where the patient is at a remote location may be done by requesting Medical Center Operator assistance.

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	Chief Executive Officer's Initials: (Initials on File)		

Certified Sign Language interpreters are available through the HCIN or for in-person, through the County contracted agency vendors. Arrangements for the in-person sign language interpreters are made through Supply Chain On Line Requisition (OLR) or directly with the vendor during emergencies, followed by OLR documentation on the next business day.

If an in-person interpreter is needed, call your nursing office or the Culture and Linguistic Resource Center for further assistance.

Use of patient's family, friends, or other non-LAC+USC Medical Center personnel for interpreter services will be prohibited unless expressly requested by the patient or in emergency circumstances. Such decisions, including the patient's input, will be documented in the patient's medical record and a certified bilingual staff will be present to support safe and effective patient communication. **It is prohibited to use minors as interpreters in any situations.**

Patients have a right to free timely interpreter services and every reasonable effort will be made to minimize wait for interpreter services. The goal is to provide interpreter services in 10 minutes or less.

The Cultural and Linguistic Resource Center is available for consultation and assistance during regular business hours by calling (323) 226-5515 or (323)226-3987.

ANNUAL SUBMISSION

LAC+USC Medical Center, Office of Regulatory Affairs shall submit on an annual basis policies and procedures to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Licensing and Certification. These policies and procedures shall provide a description of its efforts to ensure adequate and speedy communication between patients with language or communication barriers and staff.

REFERENCES

Bilingual Compensation, LAC+USC Medical Center Policy 577
 Bilingual Bonus Plan, DHS Policy 731
 Translation of Written Material, LAC+USC Medical Center Policy 111
 Non-English and Limited English Proficiency, DHS Policy 318
 California Health and Safety Code Section 1259 (c) (2), AB 389 (Chapter 327, Statutes of 2015)
 Joint Commission Standards RI.01.01.03, RC.02.01.21
 Executive Order 13166, President Clinton 2000
 Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
 Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act
 Hill-Burton Act of 1964

REVISION DATES

October 20, 2008; September 19, 2010; February 11, 2014; April 12, 2016