



OFFICE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS & INCLUSION (OLAI)

ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2023



OLAI: WHO, WHAT & WHY

OUR WHY: “WE SERVE AS A TRUSTED COMMUNICATION BRIDGE BETWEEN THE HEALTH SYSTEM AND OUR COMMUNITIES, SO THAT TOGETHER WE REALIZE MEANINGFULLY ENGAGED CARE.”

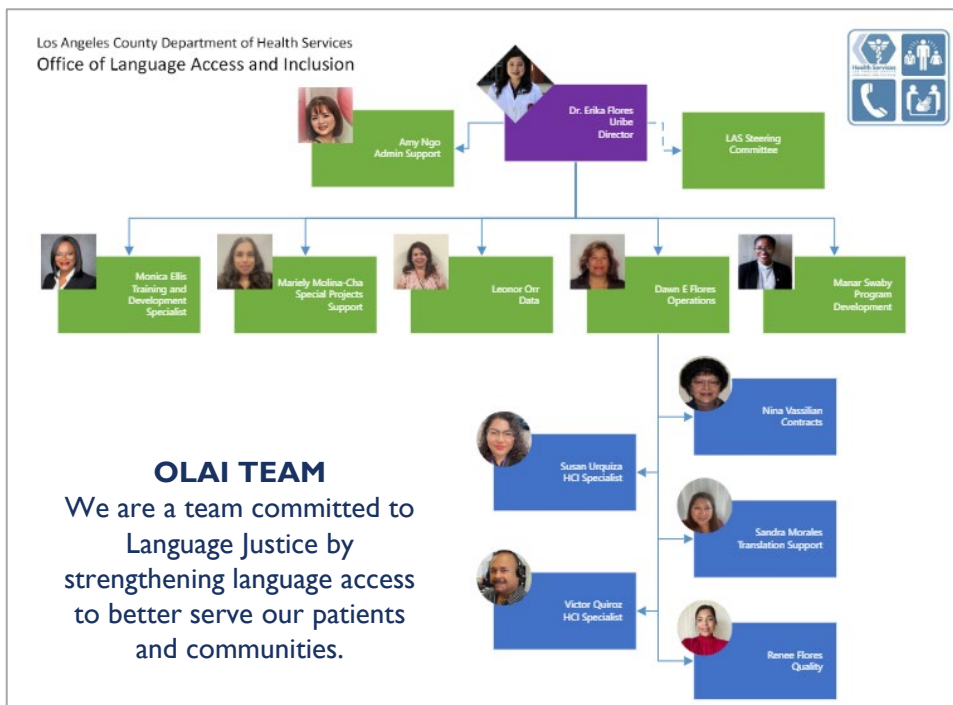
OUR PATIENTS

At LA Health Services, over 54% of our visits are for patients who prefer that their care be provided in a language other than English. Spanish is our largest preferred language, by volume, followed by English. Over the last year, there were over 100 different languages spoken by our patients. This makes the availability of language services critical to caring for our communities.

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS AND INCLUSION (OLAI)

The Office of Language Access and Inclusion (OLAI) provides strategic direction and leadership on language access across LA Health Services sites and programs, in order to meet our patients service needs. OLAI develops policy and procedures to ensure LA Health Services-wide compliance with the mandated requirements of Title VI-Civil Rights Act and other Federal regulations, State policies, and accreditation requirements of regulatory oversight entities for language assistance. OLAI works in parallel with LA Health Services healthcare sites and other LA Health Services teams, as needed to:

- Support their individual approaches to strengthen and advance language access;
- Assist with the ongoing review of language access priorities and strategic goals;
- Guide development of training materials and resources to adequately provide LAS;
- Identify system-wide needs and opportunities to improve LAS service delivery.



OUR LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES (LAS) AND HEALTHCARE INTERPRETER (HCI) TEAMS



Olive View-UCLA Medical Center



High Desert Regional
Health Center



Martin Luther King, Jr. Outpatient
Center



Rancho Los Amigos National
Rehabilitation Center



Harbor-UCLA Medical Center



LA General Medical Center

Department of Health Services Office of Language Access and Inclusion (OLAI) CY 2023 – By The Numbers



1.4M Patient Visits Non-English Preferred Language

114K

Face-to-Face
Interpretation Sessions

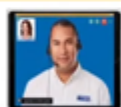


896K

Phone Interpretation
Sessions

53K

LLS Insight (Interpreter)
App Sessions



32K

Video Interpretation
Sessions

700

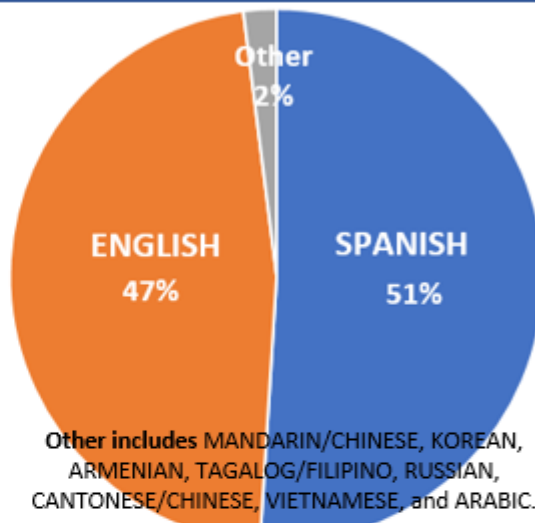
LLS Virtual Desktop Infrastructure
(VDI) Sessions



88

DHS Healthcare Interpreters

Top Ten Languages (CY 2023)



1M*

Interpretation Services Sessions

250K*

Interpretation Service Hours

4.4/5

Average Satisfaction Rating

178

Enterprise-wide Document Translations

4K

Bilingual Bonus Recipients

email: Olaifeedback@dhs.lacounty.gov

*Of note, "Interpretation Services" include Qualified Healthcare Interpretation Services provided by vendors through telephonic and video remote interpretation, as well as services provided by DHS Healthcare Interpreter staff only. The data above reflects services utilized across DHS medical centers, health centers, and programs.



OLAI ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Across its healthcare facilities and programs, LA Health Services serves a growing cultural and linguistically diverse patient population. In 2023, LA Health Services sites cared for over 1.4M Non-English Language Preferred (NELP) patient visits, where over 54% of patient visits at LA Health Services prefer to receive their health care in a non-English language. As such, language access is critical to our LA Health Services mission in the provision of healthcare services. Because clear communication directly relates to patient safety, quality of care and health outcomes, LA Health Services views language access as a critical component of our operations. The OLAI Annual Report 2023 highlights the accomplishments throughout the system and site facility level, in direct response to feedback patients and staff provided.

Program Enhancements & Expansion

Major Million Milestone

LA Health Services Language Access Services hit a major milestone in 2023 – qualified healthcare interpreter sessions reached 1,000,000. In FY 2019-20, there were just over 400,000 sessions, so this is an amazing achievement. Qualified healthcare interpreter sessions include services provided by vendors through audio and video remote interpretation, as well as services provided by our very own LA Health Services Healthcare Interpreter staff. Part of this increase was due in part to The Language Access in Virtual Healthcare Program (LAVHP) and an increased awareness of Language Access Services through system-wide educational campaigns.

Language Access in Virtual Healthcare Program (LAVHP)

The Language Access in Virtual Healthcare Program (LAVHP) was implemented in 2021. The goal of the program was to increase the number of Qualified Healthcare Interpreter sessions and thus reduce the practice of working with ad hoc (untrained) interpreters by making it easy for staff to access language services. Prior to 2019, staff accessed approximately 314,000 qualified healthcare interpreter sessions, while in CY 2023, we accessed 933,556 qualified interpreter sessions, of which over 82,000 were done exclusively through the LAVHP. Components of the LAVHP included the elements below:

- Language Access integration into Video Visits
This created new access by integrating language services including American Sign Language (ASL) as part of the healthcare system video visit platform.
- Language Access integration into Virtual Healthcare patient communications
This created new and expanded language access patient portal interface, patient outreach messaging (SMS, email, postcards), electronic visit forms and so on.



OLAI ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Language Access integration into the virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI)
This created new access to 250+ languages on all video/audio capable devices including all LA Health Services workstations at each site and optionally to all personal provider devices.
- Language Access on personal smart devices
This created new access to 250+ languages on personal devices (smartphones, tablets, laptops, etc.).

Since the program was implemented, the number of qualified language access sessions have increased every year demonstrating an organizational cultural shift towards language access.

2024 NACo Award Recipient

The National Association of Counties (NACo) awarded OLAI with a 2024 Achievement Award for the Language Access in Virtual Healthcare Program (LAVHP). The LAVHP was an important and significant endeavor as it is innovative in the approach to addressing gaps in equitable access to critical healthcare services and programs for some of our most under resourced populations.

Quality and Continuous Improvement

Initiated the Video Remote Interpreter (VRI) Standardization Project

OLAI partnered with LA Health Services IT to sponsor and work on standardizing Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) equipment throughout our sites. This project replaces all non-operational, obsolete, end of life VRIs with a new standard, operational VRI model. By replacing devices with standard equipment, it is easy for staff to identify and use regardless of site. Deployment has been initiated for the over 400 VRIs and will be completed in 2024.

Developed Service Catalogue/IT troubleshooting pathways for LAS service lines

Language Access Services (LAS) issues can now be reported through the Enterprise Help Desk (EHD) as of September 1, 2023. Issues reported can include language vendor-related service (quality of interpretation, wait times, etc.), IT hardware/software, and connectivity. This system allows for better tracking and management of language services concerns to support staff in meeting our patient language needs. Additionally, various staff trainings were developed to provide Language Center, OLAI and IT staff step-by-step guidance on how to manage EHD service tickets.

Workforce Development & Support

Creation of a Healthcare Interpreter Career Ladder

On November 21, 2023, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors (Board) approved 2 new classifications: Senior Healthcare Interpreter and Language Services Supervisor. OLAI and LA Health



OLAI ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Services Human Resources, in partnership with Chief Executive Office (CEO), worked on developing a standardized Healthcare Interpreter (HCI) Series Staffing Model, including the creation of senior and supervisory roles that did not exist prior. This standardization will allow each site or program to provide appropriate supervision roles (administrative and technical) for a team of HCIs, senior HCI roles (highly specialized service provision and lead HCI work), and ultimately more effectively and efficiently meet patient and programmatic language assistance needs.

Establishing the HCI series structure allows our LA Health Services staff to grow and develop their skills with the opportunity to elevate up a career ladder. Furthermore, establishing this career ladder creates much needed support for recruitment and retention efforts for Language Access staff.

Bilingual Qualification Program: Initial Phase Implemented

LA Health Services has over 4,000 employees who are Certified Bilingual in thirteen different languages. Research shows that language concordant care provided by qualified Language Services, including Certified Bilingual Staff, leads to improved patient satisfaction, quality and health outcomes. In partnership with Human Resources, OLAI launched the first phase of updates to the Bilingual Qualification and Bonus Program (BQBP) to optimize the program. The updates to our BQBP project will strengthen the current language proficiency process and bonus program to better meet our patient needs, improve workforce experience, and also better meet regulatory standards. The project will be implemented in phases. In 2023, the initial phase of the program was implemented through the automation of the Bilingual Pay Request Form on Persinda to improve efficiency in the request process.

“It’s easy to find and quick to complete. Saves a lot of time. I like that it has clear instructions and defines use of language,” said Claudia Mata, an Assistant Hospital Administrator at LA General Medical Center, about the automated Bilingual Pay Request Form.

Created LAS Operational Support Resources and Tools

OLAI added some valuable tools and resources to support LA Health Services staff in effectively carrying out their language service-related duties:

- Accessing Telephonic Interpreter Services Decision Tree
- DHS Translation Glossary

The [Accessing Telephonic Interpreter Services Decision Tree](#) provides LAS Teams guidance in accessing services. The [DHS Translation Glossary](#) provides a list of approved standard Spanish translations for certain terms and phrases. This glossary promotes accuracy and consistency, aiding staff in reducing editing time and helping the audience understand and recognize the messaging.



OLAI ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Awareness & Communications

Language Access System-Wide Education and Awareness Campaigns

To engage and educate LA Health Services staff (clinical and non-clinical) more broadly on Language Access policies, plans, and procedures, OLAI has developed several awareness campaigns. These educational campaigns are ongoing throughout the year and cover topics such as:

- Patient rights to qualified Language Assistance Services (LAS)
- Identifying preferred language and documenting how language needs were met
- Accessing LAS and related resources
- Where to go for support
- Responding to language access complaints

These campaigns leverage a wide range of communications, including both in-person (townhalls, discipline specific trainings), and digital and paper-based communications (flyers, email blasts, screensavers) throughout the year. For example:

- Every September-October, OLAI leads a campaign in observance of the National Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month that focuses on language access and the provision of Language Assistance Services.

Such educational awareness campaigns are critical to engage the LA Health Services workforce to better understand the patient communities they serve, how they can best support patients during and beyond the visit in their scope of work. In addition, these campaigns serve as regular and frequent platforms to share updates to language services (e.g., plans, policies, and procedures).

First Annual Language Access Services Week

On September 26, 2023, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors (Board) officially proclaimed the first annual Language Access Week from September 24, 2023, through September 30, 2023. In the proclamation, the Board instructed LA Health Services to “recognize the commitment of Healthcare Interpreter staff to language justice and advancing the health of our patients and communities, by providing extraordinary service in the patient's preferred language of care.” The Board also highlighted our program’s work as “valuable and vital to ending healthcare barriers and improving patient health outcomes.”

Along with celebrating this success, we also honored International Interpreters/Translators Day on September 30, 2023, and Latinx Heritage month (September 15 – October 15).



LA HEALTH SERVICES FACILITY SPOTLIGHTS/ ACCOMPLISHMENTS

<u>Community Programs</u>	Expanded access to language services to all programs.
Correctional Health Services	Expanded remote language access services including audio/telephone services and launched video remote interpreting services on standard devices.
<u>Harbor-UCLA Medical Center</u>	Expanded access with Pocket Talkers for improved effective communication with Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing patients and provided in-service to all departments on the use of Pocket Talkers.
<u>High Desert Regional Health Center (ACN)</u>	Added a Healthcare Interpreter (HCI) FTE to be the sole on-site interpreter at South Valley Health Center.
<u>Los Angeles General Medical Center</u>	Developed partnerships with imaging clinics, Violence Intervention Program (VIP) clinic, and several critical clinics by providing In-Person interpreters to assist with interpretation, critical conversations, and consents.
<u>Martin Luther King, Jr. Outpatient Center (ACN)</u>	Implemented weekend In-Person (Face-to-Face) interpretation for the Urgent Care.
<u>Olive View-UCLA Medical Center</u>	Implemented In-Person interpretation 7 days a week in the Emergency Department, including Holidays.
<u>Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center</u>	Provided monthly introduction to interpreting ethics training.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all our partners who have collaborated and championed with us in continuing to strengthen Language Access Services (LAS) for our patients and staff: LA Health Services Executive Leadership, LA Health Services Language Access Services Steering Committee (LAS Administrators and Clinical Partners), Office of Patient Access, Patient Family Advisory Council and Community Partners, Human Resources, IT Teams, Internal Services Department (ISD) Teams, Communications Teams, Contracts and Grants, Risk Management, and of course, to our Healthcare Interpreters and all LA Health Services Language Access Champions!

We are very grateful for your valuable contributions and unwavering support, guidance, and efforts. We could not have achieved what we have without you and look forward to accomplishing so much more together.

Thank you for your commitment to language justice and to the advancement of health of our patients and communities by providing extraordinary care.