

Where to Find an Interpreter

Collaboration

Agencies within a county or city that receive federal financial assistance have the same requirements for serving individuals with Limited English Proficiency. These agencies may collaborate to meet the needs of customers and to provide cost-effective language services, especially for languages that are uncommon in the community.

Some of the main players with whom to collaborate include local public health departments, private non-profit health agencies, local hospitals, medical clinics, mental health clinics, Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs), police and fire departments, Emergency Medical Treatment (EMTs), community based organizations (CBOs), faith based social services (Lutheran Social Services and Catholic Charities sponsor refugees), legal aid entities, and courts.

Areas of collaboration include:

- Information sharing
- Telephone interpretation services, video conference services and other technologies. The agency may have already opened an account with a telephone interpretation service.
- Pooling resources and standardizing documents (signage, translated brochures, and promotion of services)
- Interpreter language bank may work on the following areas:
 - medical interpreter Codes of Ethics
 - interpreter policies and procedures
 - interpreter workshops and social events
 - assessment tools for Spanish and Hmong interpreters
 - training bilingual staff

Community

Arrange for services of voluntary community interpreters who are trained in the skill of interpreting and demonstrate competence as interpreters. They must understand their obligation to maintain participant confidentiality. Ask around the community about available resources. Many communities have language interpreter businesses.

Contact agencies listed in the Collaboration section above. Other contacts may include school districts, foreign student associations, religious organizations, and refugee or ethnic associations, such as those for Hmong, Russian, and Latino people.

Contacts:

For Spanish interpreters: UMOS, Centro Hispano.

For Hmong interpreters: Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, refugee services and other organizations that serve refugees.

NOTE: Additional training may be needed for these interpreters on the topics of maternal and child health, nutrition and WIC.

Government

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services provides resources on the website:

<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/civilrights/LEPresources.HTM>

The website includes vendors that provide medical interpreter trainings for those seeking to become medical interpreters. A roster of those who were trained as medical interpreters is also on the website.