

How U.S. hospitals handle phone calls from Limited English Proficient patients

Survey Results

According to the Patient Flow Challenges Assessment conducted by the American Hospital Association (AHA), close to a third of all respondents have concerns regarding the provision of language services during the pre-admission and post-discharge phases.

During these Patient Flow stages, phone is a predominant form of communication. Providing interpretation services over-the-phone can improve the pre-admission process and reduce readmissions, which can lead to improved patient satisfaction and increased efficiencies in patient flow.

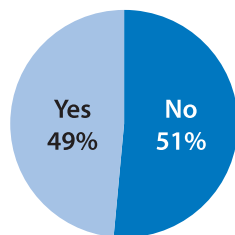
The AHA, in collaboration with University of Virginia Health System and CyraCom, conducted a webinar on April 12th, "Helping Limited English Proficient Patients Navigate the Healthcare System."

During the registration process, over 300 people answered questions concerning how they provide language services during the pre-admission and post-discharge phases. The results are shown below.

Do you currently have a way for Limited English Proficient (LEP) patients to call your hospital and receive information in their own native language?

When accessing healthcare services or information over-the-phone, a LEP individual needs to receive information in their native language. Only 49% of respondents surveyed actually provide this service, demonstrating that over half of surveyed providers are denying patients the ability to call a healthcare provider in their native language.

Do you have a way for LEP patients to call in, in their native language?



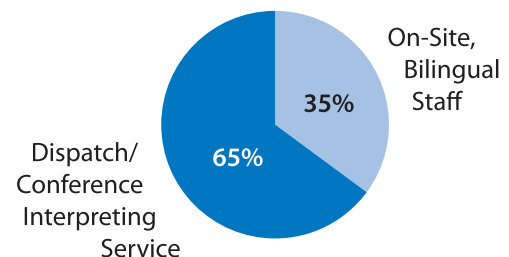
How do you currently handle non-English calls?

A growing problem for healthcare providers is how to provide service to non-English callers. Of the respondents who stated that they have a way for LEP patients to call in, 65% provide telephonic interpreting services, whereas 35% utilize on-site bilingual staff.

The use of On-site bilingual staff can introduce limitations on service provision as they can only serve a limited amount of languages and availability is often not guaranteed. According to Joint Commission standards, bilingual staff should also be assessed on their language skills. On-Site interpreters, in most cases, cannot be used as interpreters for incoming calls as they cannot serve as a caregiver and cannot effectively conference the caregivers into the call.

Dispatching interpreter services is an effective way for operators to access language assistance and provide services to the caller. However, if calls need to be transferred to a caregiver most telecommunication systems don't have the option to forward both the caller and the interpreter, thus creating the need for the caregivers to again locate an interpreter.

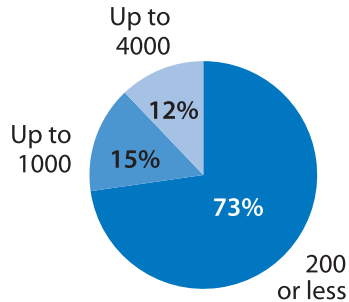
How do you Currently Handle Non-English Calls?



How many non-English calls do you receive per month?

Hospitals are receiving an increasing number of non-English calls every month, with 70% of respondents receiving up to 200 calls, 15% of respondents receiving up to 1,000 calls, and 12% of respondents receiving up to 4,000 calls, indicating the growing need for accessible telephonic language services in healthcare.

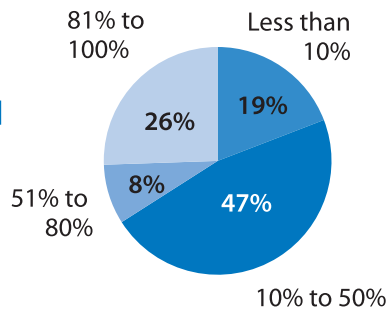
How many non-English calls do you receive per month?



What percent of Limited English Proficient (LEP) patients come in who could have been addressed by a phone call?

A common problem in healthcare is that LEP individuals often physically go to the hospital in unnecessary circumstances, when their issue could have been resolved by a phone call. Numerous respondents indicated the extent of this problem, with one-quarter of respondents indicating that at least 80% of walk-in LEP individuals could have been addressed by a phone call and almost half of respondents (47%) indicating that up to 50% of walk-in LEP individuals could have been addressed by a phone call. These high percentages indicate that because hospitals are failing to provide inbound telephone interpretation services correctly or communicating to LEP patients that inbound calling is available, time and resources are being inefficiently utilized.

What percent of LEP patients that come in could have been helped by a phone call?



To learn more about how CyraCom's comprehensive suite of language services, including Inbound Calling, can help increase patient satisfaction and increase efficiency in patient flow, contact us today.

CyraCom's inbound calling

With CyraCom's inbound calling enabled, LEP patients can easily call into your facility. Simply provide LEP patients with the toll-free phone number that is associated with the phone number of your facility or designated department. The number and access code can be promoted anywhere including:

- Patient discharge forms
- Response forms
- Your facility's website

About CyraCom

CyraCom provides a comprehensive suite of language services to ensure that Limited English Proficient patients have full access to healthcare services at any stage in the patient flow process.

We offer:

- Over-the-Phone Interpretation, including inbound calling
- Document Translation and Localization
- Video Remote Interpretation
- On-Site Interpretation
- Testing and Training

Contact us today to discuss how we can improve the quality of care for your Limited English Proficient patients.

Contact Us

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