

How a Great Language Services Program Boosts Hospital Performance

A Business Case for Hospital Leadership



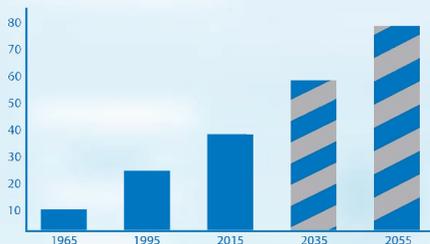
CYRACOM[®]
Language Solutions



Whether you already have an award-winning language services program or just want to build one, this document may help.

*You have the power to impact your patients,
organization, and community.*

Foreign-born
Americans to rise from
40 million to 80 million
by 2050



Shifting US demographics put language services in a strategic position:

Experts say the foreign-born American population will double by 2050 – from 40 to 80 million people. More immigrants are coming from Asia, and they're linguistically diverse.

Hospitals that invest in this population today may benefit for decades to come. The reason? Language services matter in areas like:



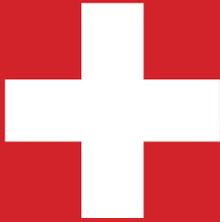
SAFETY



READMISSIONS



**SATISFACTION
GROWTH & RETENTION**



SAFETY

Great Language Services
Benefit Hospitals

Staff Adoption of Language Services May Improve Patient Safety

The Joint Commission classifies doctor/patient communication as “a core component of health care.” So limited-English proficient (LEP) patients face elevated risks when hospitalized:

- The Journal for Healthcare Quality learned that LEP patients suffer medication errors and lack of informed consent due to staff failing to use an interpreter¹.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics found that non-English-speakers suffer more adverse events and longer hospital stays².
- A review of 10.7 million Medicare records identified medical misunderstanding and miscommunication as the main driver of unnecessary readmissions³.

10.7 million

Medicare records identified medical misunderstanding & miscommunication

A quality language services program can help by improving patient communication - but only if your staff is able and willing to use it.

1. *Hospitals Often Ignore Policies on Using Qualified Medical Interpreters*, Modern Healthcare (2014) www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20140830/MAGAZINE/308309945
2. *Association Between Language, Serious Adverse Events, and Length of Stay Among Hospitalized Children*, Hospital Pediatrics (2013) hosppeds.aappublications.org/content/hosppeds/3/3/219.full.pdf
3. *Care About Your Care: Tips for Patients When They Leave the Hospital*, The Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care (2011) www.dartmouthatlas.org/downloads/reports/Atlas_CAYC_092811.pdf



What Factors Influence Staff Adoption of Language Services?

Comfort, convenience, and training impact staff adoption. Is your system easy to use? Ask yourself:

Is the service convenient?

Interpreter resources should be close and accessible.

Do staff know how to use the service?

Staff should receive regular training on using interpreters.

Is the service overly complicated?

Reaching an interpreter should be as simple as possible.

Is the service fast?

Staff should not have to wait a significant time for an interpreter.

Does the service work well?

Interpretation quality should be consistent and high.



What are Best Practices for Administering Staff Training?

Enlist Executive Support

Incorporate Language Services into Diversity Initiatives

Your organization likely holds diversity as a core value. Ask your executive team for support to improve language services. Explain that it enables patients with diverse backgrounds and languages to receive equitable treatment.

Set Expectations with a Language Access Plan

Outline when staff should use interpreters. Set clear expectations with a formal policy and obtain executive approval. Hold staff accountable if they fail to use language services.

Implement Regular, Mandatory Training

Integrate Language Services into Existing Hospital Trainings

Include information on your community's diverse populations and cultures in existing programs. Training should also cover why, when, and how to use an interpreter. Opportunities include new-hire training, nursing skills assessments, and annual compliance training.

Use Hands-on Demonstrations and Drills to Confirm Competencies

When applicable, training should include a hands-on component. Demonstrate to staff the process of accessing an interpreter. Consider requiring staff to show they can connect to an interpreter without assistance.

Utilize Partner Resources (Vendor materials, videos, etc.)

Your language services partner should help you with staff training during implementation. They may also provide materials – videos, instruction sheets, and best practices – for use in future training.





READMISSIONS

Great Language Services
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Improved Interpretation Quality May Reduce Readmissions

The Affordable Care Act mandates that hospitals cut unnecessary patient readmissions, and clear staff/patient communication is an important factor.

Missing this metric carries serious consequences - in 2015, more than 2,600 facilities nationwide failed to meet the ACA's readmissions requirements. They now face Medicare reimbursement penalties totaling \$420 million in 2016⁴.

\$420 million

Hospital penalties for failure to meet readmissions requirements

The Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) estimates that avoidable readmissions cost Medicare \$17 billion a year because patients do not:

- Patients Do Not**
- Understand their diagnosis.
 - Know which medications to take and when.
 - Receive important information or test results.
 - Schedule a follow-up appointment with their doctor.
 - Get adequate care at home.

For LEP patients, a reliable language services program may prevent these misunderstandings and reduce readmissions.

4. Most Hospitals Face 30-Day Readmissions Penalty in Fiscal 2016
www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20150803/NEWS/150809981

How Are Interpreters Best Used for Reducing Readmissions?

Interpreters Should be Part of the Continuum of Care.



Interpreters Should Clarify Understanding Regularly by:

- Mitigating cultural barriers that might hinder doctor/patient communication.
- Asking the staff or patient to repeat, ensuring the interpreter fully understands.
- Using resources to confirm definitions of medical terminology.

Providers Should Maximize Interpreter Effectiveness by:

- Talking to the patient in the first person – “Mr. Wong, are you experiencing chest pain?” – since the interpreter will repeat what staff say in-language.
- Speaking in short phrases then pausing, allowing the interpreter to convey the message.
- Reducing jargon and speaking in plain English where possible, simplifying the conversation and improving understanding.



Pictured: CyraCom conducts interpreter hiring, training, certification, and monitoring in our large-scale US interpreter contact centers – like this one in Houston, Texas.

How Can I Choose a Language Services Partner for High Quality Interpretation?



Their hiring should be selective.

What background checks does the provider perform on their interpreters?
What level of education do they require?
How do they determine if candidates are truly bilingual?



Their training and certification should be professional.

What level of interpretation training do interpreters receive?
Does training include consecutive interpreting techniques, HIPAA privacy regulations, medical terminology, and basic medical procedures?
Does training result in interpreter certification?



Their interpreter work environment should create growth and accountability.

What coaching and ongoing training do interpreters receive?
How often are interpreters monitored in-language for ongoing accuracy?
Do the interpreters work in a secured, supervised environment?





SATISFACTION GROWTH & RETENTION

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Great Language Services Approach Patient Satisfaction, Growth, & Retention Like a Customer Service Leader

Today, potential patients have access to information, and they are likely to “shop” for a hospital. Since patients increasingly behave like customers, consider the impact professional interpreters have on customer satisfaction.

The International Customer Management Institute (ICMI) found that adding language services⁵:

72% Improves satisfaction with customer support.

70% Impacts customers that prefer a language other than English positively.

58% Increases loyalty to the brand.

Quality language services may boost patient satisfaction metrics like HCAHPS, where most of the questions relate to doctor/patient communication. Better surveys from LEP patients mean a better reputation online and in the community, building patient growth and retention.

5. ICMI Whitepaper – Press 1 for English
www.volance.com/news-blog/resource/icmi-whitepaper-press-1-for-english-language-interpretation-services-benefit-customers-and-contact-centers/



What Factors Impact Patient Satisfaction with Language Services?



Speed

How long do your LEP patients feel they are waiting for an interpreter⁶?

- Unoccupied time feels longer.
- Uncertain and unexplained wait times feel longer.
- Anxiety makes waits seem longer.
- Unfair wait times seem longer.

Cutting patient wait times for interpreters may result in improved patient perception and satisfaction.



Staff Adoption

How comfortable are staff using an interpreter for every LEP patient interaction? Staff who quickly and confidently connect to an interpreter may improve the LEP experience.



Visibility

How aware are LEP patients of interpretation services? Multilingual signage at admissions and near entrances can help, as can the presence of designated dual-handset phones. Displaying the availability of language services prominently on the hospital web site is another best practice.

6. *The Psychology of Waiting* – David Maister (1985), www.columbia.edu/~vww2040/4615513/Psychology_of_Waiting_Lines.pdf
Consumer Perception and Evaluation of Waiting Time: A Field Experiment – Antonides, Verhoef, and van Aalst (2002), www.rug.nl/staff/p.c.verhoef/conspsych2001.pdf
Understanding the Roles of the Customer and the Operation for Better Queue Management – Mark Davis and Janelle Heinke (1994), www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/01443579410056777



Common complaints and issues with CyraCom's competitor work-at-home models: lack of privacy and security controls against negligence or malicious intent, as well as noisy or uncontrolled environments.



CyraCom's contact center model: Interpreter supervisors have raised stations to provide support to their team members in the rare event that help is needed on a call. Center management regularly walks the floor to enforce CyraCom's clean desk policy.



How can I Avoid Wait Times and get an Interpreter Fast – Within Seconds?

Does the language services provider primarily use large-scale contact centers or home-based interpreters?

Most phone or video interpretation providers rely on at-home interpreters who make their own schedules, which may lead to availability gaps, long wait times, and (as a result) decreased patient satisfaction.

In a large-scale contact center model like CyraCom, the provider hires and schedules employee interpreters based on call demand, which may improve coverage and availability.





LANGUAGE SERVICE MODALITIES

Hospital leaders have several language services options available, depending on what best fits their organizational needs:

Phone and Video Interpretation



Phone interpretation is a three-way conference call with the patient and a live, human interpreter who acts as a bridge for communication.



Video interpretation is the video chat equivalent of phone interpretation. It provides the advantages of face-to-face interpreting for the most sensitive medical scenarios. Deaf patients, children, and patients with mental or behavioral health issues also benefit from video.





WARNING:

“Free” translation tools may be helpful in certain situations, but they waive all liability resulting from mistranslations. These services also keep all information entered into them, meaning there is no assurance of privacy or confidentiality.

Translation and Localization

Translation and localization provides LEP patients with online and print resources in their own languages. Due to the Affordable Care Act and immigration trends, translation may also play an increasingly vital role in major healthcare initiatives - reducing patient harm and readmission rates and increasing patient satisfaction.

A quality translation provider can help hospitals with:

Marketing

- Websites and Patient Portals
- Brochures and Community Outreach
- Content to attract global healthcare patients
- E-Learning Videos (closed captioning, voiceover, and subtitles)

Risk Management

- Intake forms
- Notices of Rights
- Financial Assistance Policies
- Letters of Notices that require responses
- Complaint forms

ADA Compliance ADA Compliance

- Braille
- Large print documents
- Section 508 related projects

FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A LANGUAGE SERVICES PARTNER

Interpreter work environment, training and certification, and geographic location may impact service delivery. Leading language service programs look at the quality and information security of their interpretation partners as they would their own bilingual staff.

Potential language services partners should explain:



Interpreter location

Secured US facilities may produce superior data privacy and HIPAA compliance.



Interpreter training

Interpreter hiring, training, and certification may affect the quality of the service they provide.



Interpreter availability

Long wait times lower patient satisfaction, so time spent at each step to reach an interpreter – should be minimized.



CyraCom phone and video interpreters work in our large-scale interpreter contact centers across the continental US. Interpreters complete 120 hours of initial testing and training, achieving certification. They work on supervised teams and receive regular coaching and quality monitoring. CyraCom schedules interpreters as-needed based on client need.

About CyraCom

CyraCom is the leading provider of language interpreting services to healthcare. Whether in-person or via phone, video, mobile app, or written text, CyraCom bridges communication gaps for healthcare organizations that need rapid access to language assistance. The Company supports hundreds of languages and operates 24/7. CyraCom impacts the lives of millions in the United States by connecting those with limited English proficiency to healthcare services.

In business since 1995, CyraCom services thousands of healthcare clients throughout the US, including many Fortune 500 healthcare providers – hospitals, systems, and insurers. Over 95% of CyraCom's customers say they would recommend CyraCom's interpreting services to others.

CyraCom's interpreters work in the most extensive network of large-scale interpreter contact centers: all HIPAA-compliant and located in the continental US. Most other providers primarily use at-home or offshore interpreters.

CyraCom's interpreters receive 120 hours of initial, in-person training in the centers – three times longer than is typical in the language service industry. Training includes medical terminology, anatomy and physiology, and other topics essential for healthcare interpreting, culminating in certification.

The Company's dedicated onboarding staff ensure a seamless transition to CyraCom from other language service companies: managing training, IT, and other requirements for hundreds of new clients annually.

Contact us at getstarted@cyracom.com to learn more about what we can do for you.



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