

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH A QUALIFIED INTERPRETER

WHY SHOULD I WORK WITH A QUALIFIED INTERPRETER?

According to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and UCSF Health Policy, we are required to make all our services accessible to patients with limited English proficiency (LEP) and patients who are deaf or hard of hearing. Working with qualified interpreters instead of family or friends ensures accurate and unbiased interpretation (read more [here](#)). Importantly, qualified interpreters can provide cultural context to ensure patients fully understand what you are saying.

I AM FLUENT IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE. CAN I INTERPRET MYSELF?

Interpreting is a skill that requires training, but you can speak to your patients directly about their care once you pass a language assessment designed for the medical setting. Please email Bilingual@ucsf.edu to set up the language assessment. Once you are certified, you can simply document “Certified Bilingual Clinician” in APeX (this is an option in the rooming flowsheet and the Smartphrase).

HOW DO I DOCUMENT THAT I USED INTERPRETING SERVICES?

Interpreter documentation is required for in-person and telehealth visits (video and scheduled telephone encounters). You will not be able to close the encounter without appropriate documentation. We recommend documenting for all patient-facing encounters.

There are two ways for members on the care team to document interpreting services in APeX for an ambulatory encounter 1. Smartphrase (“.interpreter”) and 2. rooming flowsheets. Either way is acceptable and anyone on the care team (MA, RN, LVN, APP, MD) can document.

If you copy forward a note, the Smartphrase will need to be entered again (.interpreter) to fulfill the documentation requirement.

SMARTPHRASE: “.INTERPRETER”

Yes-

The screenshot shows the APeX Smartphrase interface for documenting interpreter services. It includes a dropdown menu for 'Interpreter Used' with options 'Yes' and 'No'. Below this, there are radio buttons for 'Yes' and 'No', each with a corresponding icon. To the right, there is a section for 'Interpreter Used: Yes -' which includes a dropdown for 'Source' (set to 'Source'), a dropdown for 'Language' (set to 'English'), and a dropdown for 'Interpreter Name/ID' (set to 'Interpreter Name/ID(Optional)'). Below these, there is a list of options for the interpreter type: 'Video Interpreter', 'Telephone Interpreter', 'On-Site Interpreter', 'Clinician/Staff Certified in Patient's language for Direct Communication', and 'Other- ***'.

Interpreter Used: Yes/No -

☐ Yes - Yes

☐ No - No

Interpreter Used: Yes -

Source: Source -

Language: English

Interpreter Name/ID: Interpreter Name/ID(Optional) -

☐ Video Interpreter

☐ Telephone Interpreter

☐ On-Site Interpreter

☐ Clinician/Staff Certified in Patient's language for Direct Communication

☐ Other- ***

No-

Interpreter Used: No -

No -

- ☐ Emergency/None available
- ☐ Patient or guardian/surrogate decision maker declined for patient
- ☐ Guardian/surrogate decision maker or caregiver declined for self
- ☐ Not offered
- ☐ ***

ROOMING FLOWSHEET

The screenshot displays the 'Rooming' tab in a medical software interface. The patient information at the top reads: '5/9/2024 visit with Aris H Oates, MD for FOLLOW UP - ***CCS visit? PT @ DH Hypertension secondary to other renal disorders I15.1...'. The 'Interpreter' section is active, showing a form for recording interpreter information. The form includes fields for 'Time taken' (5/10/2024, 0827), 'Responsible' (Show Row Info, Show Last Filed Value, Show Details), and 'Interpreter Available?' (Available, Emergency/None available). Below these are checkboxes for 'Patient or guardian/surrogate decision maker declined for patient' and 'Guardian/surrogate decision maker or caregiver declined for self'. A list of reasons for not using an interpreter is provided: 'Caregiver cannot decline for patient unless they are the surrogate decision maker', 'Family/Friends are highly discouraged for medical interpretation unless it is a medical emergency', and 'For informed consent, a qualified medical interpreter needs to be present'. Links for 'UCSF-Policy-Interpreter', 'RCH OAK-Policy-Interpreter', and 'M+MC-Policy-Interpreter' are also visible. The 'Interpreter Name/ID' field is empty. The 'Interpreter Source' section has options for 'Video Interpreter', 'Telephone Interpreter', 'On-Site Interpreter', and 'Clinician/Staff Certified in Patient's language for Direct Communication'. The 'Language needed for interpretation' section lists various languages: Arabic, Chinese - Cantonese, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese - Mandarin, Nepali, Malayalam, and Khmer (Cambodian). At the bottom are buttons for 'Restore', 'Close', 'Cancel', 'Previous', and 'Next'.

IN PERSON INTERPRETATION IS BEST FOR:

- Delivery of complex diagnosis and care plan
- Cognitive impairment
- End of Life and other Emotionally Difficult Conversations
- Hearing impairment or Speech Difficulties
- Teaching requiring hands-on instruction

HOW TO WORK WITH AN INTERPRETER EFFECTIVELY

- If possible, let the interpreter know what to expect during the encounter
- Address the patient, not the interpreter
- Maintain primary eye contact with the interpreter
- Keep a comfortable pace allowing time for interruption
- Teaching requiring hands-on instruction
- Utilize “teach back” to confirm patients understanding of the content

HOW TO ACCESS INTERPRETING & TRANSLATION SERVICES FOR PATIENTS/FAMILIES

ON-DEMAND VIDEO MEDICAL INTERPRETING (VMI)

Use the iPad on the VMI cart or the App on the AIO computers in your clinical area

ON-DEMAND TELEPHONIC INTERPRETING

Call 415.353.2690, option 1, then say the language you need

HOW TO INVITE AN ON-DEMAND INTERPRETER IN A TELEHEALTH VISIT

1. Ascertain patient language.
2. In a Telehealth visit, start your Zoom meeting, click Participants, then Invite, click Room System, then the Call Out tab.
3. Choose the language in the drop-down, and call.
4. The interpreter should appear in your Zoom meeting or waiting room.

For more information, visit <https://ucsf.app.box.com/v/OnDemandVideoInterpreting>

HOW TO REQUEST IN-PERSON INTERPRETER OR DOCUMENT TRANSLATION

To request an in-person interpreter or submit a document translation request, go to Carelinks
(<https://carelinks.ucsfmedicalcenter.org/>)



MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO REQUEST AN INTERPRETER AND OTHER RESOURCES

Visit Interpreting and Translation Services intranet site at
<https://experience.ucsf.edu/department/interpreting-services>