Qualified Medical Interpreter Policy – Bilingual Employees

KentuckyOne Health Medical Interpreter Qualification Program for Bilingual Employees

A comprehensive program developed and implemented by Interpreter Services, a Division of Diversity & Inclusion, to qualify staff fluent in another language to interpret on an as-needed basis in their department/facilities.

Objective:

The Qualified Medical Interpreter Policy for Bilingual Employees demonstrates compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and standards, including but not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This policy also supports the mission of KentuckyOne Health “To Bring Wellness, Healing, and Hope to All” by serving to facilitate communication between patients and their health care partners, and KentuckyOne Health’s clinical and non-clinical staff and physicians. The Medical Interpreter Qualification Program for Bilingual Employees is an initiative of the Interpreter Services Department and is in place in an effort to minimize potential disparities stemming from specific language and/or cultural needs.

Procedure:

Bilingual employees who are qualified through this program will be available to serve as interpreters in the department/area in which they are assigned/work. Participation in this program is voluntary – however those individuals who do not participate or do not successfully complete the program will not be deemed qualified to serve as interpreters. Qualified bilingual employees should be used to meet the immediate communication needs (stopgap measure) of our patients/health care partners and providers in the language(s) for which they are approved. In most cases, qualified employee interpreter encounters should last a maximum of 30 minutes – Interpreter Services staff/resources should be contacted for encounters lasting longer than 30 minutes. Qualified bilingual employees are not to leave their regularly assigned work area to provide interpreter services except in emergency situations and with manager approval.

Program qualifications (each bilingual employee must meet/maintain the following):

1. Be in good standing with the organization and have successfully completed 90-day probationary period.
2. Have direct manager/director approval (see Acknowledgement Form).
3. Proven proficiency in both English and the target language – formal assessment proctored by Interpreter Services staff, must meet minimum score/rating. *program currently for spoken languages ONLY (not ASL)*
   a. Interpreter Services provides the first assessment at no cost to staff. If the employee does not meet minimum score/rating, they have the option to retake the assessment, but will be responsible for the cost.
4. Attend and successfully complete an internal 40-hour medical interpreter training program (Bridging the Gap).
   a. Interpreter Services provides this training at no cost to current employees. Employees will be paid the 40 education hours that they spend in the class. The employee’s Leader is responsible for entering these hours for payment to the employee. These hours will be charged to the employee’s home cost center.
   b. Employees must obtain prior approval from manager if normally scheduled to work during training dates.
5. Follow and adhere to the Interpreters Code of Ethics (see attached).
6. Wear the interpreter badge provided by Interpreter Services (in addition to KentuckyOne Health badge).
7. Submit interpreter encounter information quarterly by completing survey sent electronically by the Interpreter Services Department.
8. Successfully complete annual mandatory competency on LEARN and/or in person, by assigned due date.
IMIA Code of Ethics

1. Interpreters will maintain confidentiality of all assignment-related information.
2. Interpreters will select the language and mode of interpretation that most accurately conveys the content and spirit of the messages of their clients.
3. Interpreters will refrain from accepting assignments beyond their professional skills, language fluency, or level of training.
4. Interpreters will refrain from accepting an assignment when family or close personal relationships affect impartiality.
5. Interpreters will not interject personal opinions or counsel patients.
6. Interpreters will not engage in interpretations that relate to issues outside the provision of health care services unless qualified to do so.
7. Interpreters will engage in patient advocacy and in the intercultural mediation role of explaining cultural differences/practices to health care providers and patients only when appropriate and necessary for communication purposes, using professional judgment.
8. Interpreters will use skillful unobtrusive interventions so as not to interfere with the flow of communication in a triadic medical setting.
9. Interpreters will keep abreast of their evolving languages and medical terminology.
10. Interpreters will participate in continuing education programs as available.
11. Interpreters will seek to maintain ties with relevant professional organizations in order to be up-to-date with the latest professional standards and protocols.
12. Interpreters will refrain from using their position to gain favors from clients.

NCIHC Code of Ethics for Interpreters in Health Care

- The interpreter treats as confidential, within the treating team, all information learned in the performance of their professional duties, while observing relevant requirements regarding disclosure.
- The interpreter strives to render the message accurately, conveying the content and spirit of the original message, taking into consideration its cultural context.
- The interpreter strives to maintain impartiality and refrains from counseling, advising or projecting personal biases or beliefs.
- The interpreter maintains the boundaries of the professional role, refraining from personal involvement.
- The interpreter continuously strives to develop awareness of his/her own and other (including biomedical) cultures encountered in the performance of their professional duties.
- The interpreter treats all parties with respect.
- When the patient’s health, well-being, or dignity is at risk, the interpreter may be justified in acting as an advocate. Advocacy is understood as an action taken on behalf of an individual that goes beyond facilitating communication, with the intention of supporting good health outcomes. Advocacy must only be undertaken after careful and thoughtful analysis of the situation and if other less intrusive actions have not resolved the problem.
- The interpreter strives to continually further his/her knowledge and skills.
- The interpreter must at all times act in a professional and ethical manner.

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