

For Further Information

Please contact any of these resources if you have any questions about state or federal laws that require healthcare facilities to provide appropriate language services: Their multilingual staff is standing by to assist you.

1. HHS, Office for Civil Rights
1 (800) 368-1019
<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/>
2. National Health Law Program
1 (310) 204-6010
<http://www.healthlaw.org/>
3. Central California Legal Services
1 (800) 464-3111
<http://www.las.org/>
4. "I Speak" Cards in many languages can be found at:
<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/Pubs/ISpeakCards.pdf>



If you need language assistance, be sure to ask for it.

What is CHIA....?

In 1996, a small group of interpreters in California started a professional organization to help set professional standards for healthcare interpreting. Today that small group has grown to become the California Healthcare Interpreters Association—CHIA. Our members include interpreters, translators, teachers, doctors, lawyers, nurses, and many other professionals.

CHIA is a nonprofit organization working to improve access to healthcare. CHIA's **mission** is "to increase equal access to healthcare by developing and promoting the healthcare interpreter profession; advocating culturally and linguistically appropriate services; and providing education and training to healthcare professionals."

Anyone who supports our mission can join us as members. If you wish to have more information, call us, write to us, or visit our Web site.

CALIFORNIA HEALTHCARE INTERPRETERS ASSOCIATION

CHIA Office:
One Capitol Mall
Suite 320
Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: 916 669-5305
Web Site: <http://www.chia.ws>

CALIFORNIA HEALTHCARE INTERPRETERS ASSOCIATION

Interpreters and Your Health

Promoting Crosscultural
Communication



Tel: 916 669-5305

Communication is a Right

Proper communication with your healthcare provider is your **right**.... and also your **duty**. Your health is primarily your responsibility; and if you have minor children, their health is your responsibility as well.



Proper communication in healthcare is a right... AND a duty!

When you talk to your healthcare provider (a nurse, a doctor, a psychologist, and so on), your provider will expect that you will effectively communicate all the relevant details about your health and the health of your minor children. If you don't know English, it is your responsibility to let your provider know that you need language assistance. That is something easy to do. Simply say to your provider, "I do not know English. Please provide me with an interpreter." It is as simple as that, and there is no cost to you. Why? Federal law says so.

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What Federal Law Says....

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects people from discrimination based on their **race, color, or national origin**. This protection also covers people who have limited English proficiency. If you cannot speak English well enough to take care of your healthcare needs, in most cases your healthcare provider will make sure you have the language assistance you need.



If you need language assistance, Federal law makes sure you get it.

But unfortunately a lot of people with limited English proficiency are not aware that these services are available. They are afraid to go to the doctor or to the hospital. But all you have to do is tell your healthcare provider, "I do not Speak English. I need an interpreter. My language is Hmong (or Burmese or Punjabi, etc.)." But it is your duty to let your healthcare provider know that you need language assistance.

My daughter can interpret....

Would you ask your young daughter to change a tire on your truck? Well, medical interpreting is a lot harder. It requires preparation and specialized training. Besides, who would want to discuss intimate details of their personal life in front of their child? What you need is proper language assistance, and your healthcare provider will take care of that for you.

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Points to Remember...

- Just as it is illegal to discriminate against someone because of their nationality, it is also illegal to discriminate because of their language.
- All "persons" in the United States are covered by this law, including those who do not have a legal immigration status.
- When language assistance is provided, it must be at no cost to the person receiving it.
- Minors should not act as interpreters.
- Always carry your "**I Speak**" Card. Below is a sample of a card.



I SPEAK

I NEED LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE, PLEASE.

The Policy Guidance of the Office for Civil Rights has determined that encouraging language minority clients to provide their own interpreters or to rely on their minor children to interpret for them during visits to a health or social service facility may violate Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

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