



Breaking the Barrier of Language

by: Sarah Brown



As California continues to grow and many culture groups diversify our communities, we become aware of an increasing need to advertise toward customers who may not speak our language. Our cities have become populated with diverse cultures groups from India, Russia, Asia, and Mexico to pursue education, careers, and fulfill their lifelong dreams in California. Unfortunately, many of these people have not had the opportunity to learn the English language preventing them from receiving possible employment, health care, and general consumer resources; it is important to embrace the cultures from abroad and support their growth and vitality in America.

So what is available?

Certain steps have been taken to assist persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Currently, healthcare facilities are willing to accept patients with a family member and not request an interpreter to save money or time; or they may request a healthcare employee who is bilingual, not an interpreter, to assist the patient. However, numerous journal articles have been written verifying false information and incorrect diagnosis has occurred when healthcare facilities relied on children and bilingual employees.

Providing healthcare is vital to all human beings, no matter what language they speak. According to research found by Steven M. Weinberg (2008) that 70% of health care providers found “language barriers interfered with a patient’s understanding of treatment advice.” Weinberg (2008) also found that in California alone 40% of residents speak another language within their home other than English. According to a study done in October 2006, the Health Research and Education Trust found that almost 52 million people – more than 19 percent of the U.S. population – speak a language other than English. More than 75 percent said they most frequently used staff interpreters to translate.



Did you know that interpreters are available to any LEP patient – free of charge?

Many people are unaware of the growing industry of translation and interpretation but also the amount of agencies that carry out extremely different interpreting service **guidelines**.

What does our agency require?

International Language Interpreters, Inc. requires any potential interpreters and/or translators to complete a questionnaire and independent contract to verify experience and qualifications. Quality of service is our highest priority along with client satisfaction. We follow up all appointments with surveys to find out how our company has successfully carried out appointments and what could be improved.

It has come to our company’s attention that in the state of California, all healthcare facilities are going to be required to have their documentation published in **Spanish** and **Russian** in addition to **English** by Jan 1st, 2009. Regulations encompass surveying patients with LEP to find out their current needs, provide them with interpreting services at no cost to them, and also provide documentation in their language. Our company wants to help break the barrier of language within the healthcare industry but also within our own community networks and large corporations.

This is only the beginning.

International Language Interpreters, Inc. We Speak Your Language.

