

What You Can Do to Help Secure Reimbursement for Medical Interpreters

**6th Annual National Medical Interpreter
Certification Forum**

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Overview

- Federal Advocacy Goals
- Congressional and Agency Outreach
- Proposed Medicare/Medicaid Reimbursement Demonstration Project
- What You Can Do to Help
- Next Steps

Key Goals of Federal Advocacy Effort

- Advocate for the reimbursement of medical interpreters with a near-term focus on a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Medicare & Medicaid demonstration project
- Raise the profile of medical interpreting, including the need for nationally certified medical interpreters at the federal level by establishing and developing relationships with key congressional and agency decision makers

Key Congressional Supporters

- Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) and Chair, Congresswoman Judy Chu (D-CA)
- Congressional Hispanic Caucus and Chair, Congressman Charlie Gonzalez (D-TX)
- Senate Hispanic Task Force/Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ)
- House Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Health
- Senate Finance Committee
- Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA)
- Rep. Michael Capuano (D-MA)

Obama Administration Outreach

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) & Innovation Center – Reimbursement
- Office of Minority Health (OMH) –National Plan for Action/National Stakeholder Strategy for Achieving Health Equity
- HHS Assistant Secretary Dr. Howard Koh
- HHS Office for Civil Rights & Office of Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights (OEOCR) – National Certification
- White House White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders – Reimbursement

Demonstration Project

- Best prospect for reimbursement is to secure a pilot to prove that reimbursing for medical interpretation reduces health care costs, improves patient safety and patient health
- The Innovation Center was created through the Affordable Care to test Medicare and Medicaid payment and care models and scale up successful models
- We are working to create a compelling proposal to include a retrospective chart review of patients to compare cost-savings and health outcomes of LEP patients who received vigorous interpreter services versus those who did not
- We continue to look for opportunities and partners in this effort

What You Can Do

- We need your help to make ensuring language access through Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement a priority for Congress and the Administration
 - Write (*Email*) your Members of Congress to let them know that you want their help securing Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement (Draft letter provided)
 - <http://www.house.gov/> - Enter your Zipcode to find your Representative, click on the link with your Representative's name which will bring you to their website. Click on the Contact (Rep. name) link to access a page for emailing your Rep.
 - <http://www.senate.gov/> - Enter your state to find your Senators and follow similar process for emailing your Senators
 - Work to get an article about the need for reimbursement in your local newspaper, submit a Letter to the Editor

Election Year Opportunity

- We are in a Presidential election year and we need your help to get ensuring language access on the candidates agenda
- The Presidential candidates are going to need the support of the LEP community and what better way than announcing support for ensuring access to language services in a swing state like Florida or Arizona!
- We need your help to get this issue on their radar screen
 - Write letters to the Presidential Candidates asking for their support (Draft letters provided for President Obama and Governor Romney)
 - <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/submit-questions-and-comments>
 - www.mittromney.com/forms/suggestions
 - Join Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders for Obama or Latinos for Obama at www.barackobama.com and participate in their conference calls and events
 - If you can find a similar group for the Romney Campaign, find out what they are up to and educate them on the need for medical interpreters

We Need Your Help Growing Partnerships

- We need your help securing the support of local and national LEP advocacy organizations. This effort shouldn't be limited to interpreters
- Do you work with a local organization that advocates on behalf of the LEP community? If so, ask them to join our federal campaign
 - Suggest a Letter to Congress
 - Ask that they include reimbursement on their organization's list of priorities
 - Direct them to the IMIA website so they can list their organization as a supporter of reimbursement:
www.imiaweb.org/advocacy/reimbursement.asp
 - Send me the organization's contact information so that I can follow up
- Work with your partners to organize local rallies/media events throughout the country to call attention to this issue

Next Steps

- Continue to build support in Congress and within the Administration for reimbursement and to recognize the need for national certification
- Continued work with HHS to ensure that the language access goals of the Disparities Action Plan and National Stakeholder Strategy are met
- Increased advocacy for national certification and Medicaid reimbursement at the state level
- We hope to build our network of advocates to join us as we work for reimbursement. To be successful, we need your help