



INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL
INTERPRETERS ASSOCIATION
Leading the advancement of professional interpreters

First-Ever International Job Analysis Survey of Medical Interpreters Commissioned by the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters

Washington, DC (January 18, 2010) A U.S. job analysis survey of medical interpreters completed with great success in 2009 will now be applied globally, in order to compare the tasks undertaken by medical interpreters worldwide and further advance the profession at an international level. The international job analysis survey, commissioned by the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters, will be conducted in the following months with expected participation from many countries.

Medical Interpreting is the youngest specialization of the interpreting profession, which is more established in the conference and legal settings. In some countries, medical interpreting is not yet recognized as a unique subset of interpreting, but it is a growing specialization where many translators or interpreters are freelancing at hospitals and other medical settings.

"We need 500 survey responses to ensure statistical and scientific validity, but we are confident that number can be surpassed with the assistance of our colleague interpreter and translation associations worldwide," said Nelva Lee, Chair of the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters. "It was important to do this in a modular format as the needs of the US may be very different to an aggregated international scope. The first phase was strictly devoted to analyzing the needs of the nation. In this next phase, the goal now is to expand on the important information that was obtained through the U.S. survey and collect similar data globally."

The U.S. job analysis survey of medical interpreters was conducted in January 2009 by Language Line University, International Medical Interpreters Association and PSI Services, a nationally renowned testing company. Of more than 1,500 respondents, 86 percent were medical interpreters working as staff interpreters for hospitals or health care systems, members of interpreter associations, freelance and remote medical interpreters, and interpreters working for health insurance companies across the country. Other respondents were administrators of health care interpreters and language services, educators and others. The data from the survey supported the establishment of the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters and informed the certification tests.

"By participating in the first international survey of its kind within the medical interpreter community, survey respondents will play an important role in standardizing the profession worldwide," said Louise Behiel, Manager of Interpretation and Translation Services with Alberta Health Services in Calgary, Canada. "The survey will inform the field if medical interpreters are engaging in the same activities or not, regardless of geographic location."

Results will be analyzed, in conjunction with the leading testing services provider PSI, and shared with participating interpreter/translator associations. The ultimate goal is to establish an international standard for medical interpreters. Stakeholders interested in contributing to this effort or wish to become directly involved should contact the National Board at staff@certifiedmedicalinterpreters.org.

About the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters

The National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters is a non-profit organization, formed from an independent group of industry professionals that represent all key stakeholder groups including professional medical interpreters, trainers, employers, providers, and regulators. The National Board serves as the certifying entity and has independent authority over all essential certification decisions. The purpose of certification is to ensure limited English proficiency patient safety by evaluating and assuring the competency of medical interpreters. The formation and structure of the National Board of Certification adheres to the standards and requirements for certification program governance mandated by the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) - formerly NOCA. For more information, visit www.certifiedmedicalinterpreters.org.

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