



The National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters makes a difference for limited language patients by producing Certified Medical Interpreters

Press Conference

When: Friday, Jan. 18, 2013 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Where: Miami Beach Convention Center
Room A110
1901 Convention Center Drive
Miami Beach, FL 33139

January 12, 2013 • Miami Beach, Fla. - A Miami hospital lost \$71 million in a 1984 malpractice suit when a patient became a quadriplegic—all because of the misinterpretation of a single word “intoxicado” (intoxicated). Due to the lack of a professional interpreter at the hospital, the patient received delayed care and was paralyzed in both arms and both legs.

Costly malpractice cases can be avoided if professional medical interpreters are on hand at hospitals. Now, medical interpreters can become certified through an accredited program to assure that they provide the highest quality service.

The National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters (NBCMI) is pleased to announce that its Certified Medical Interpreter (CMI) program has been accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), thus joining an elite group of certifying bodies dedicated to public protection and excellence in certification.

“NCCA accreditation was one of the objectives the National Board set for itself at the very outset. The legitimacy of our program and process has now been recognized. With this recognition, we are confident that many more Certified Medical Interpreters in the nation will join those already serving in hospitals and clinics around the country and abroad,” said Tina Peña, National Board Chair.

The NCCA is the accrediting body of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence, and currently accredits 100 organizations representing over 260 programs. The Commission’s mission is to help ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the public through the accreditation of a variety of certification programs that assess professional competence.

Linda Joyce, Certification and Testing Director, said, “The National Board is very proud of our outstanding certification program. We worked very diligently to make sure that we followed the most rigorous standards in the industry. Achieving the NCCA accreditation is a milestone for the National Board, but we are not resting here. We have a plan to expand, enrich and constantly improve our program with the participation of medical interpreters nationwide and internationally.”

"A press release will be held in conjunction with the International Medical Interpreter Association (IMIA) conference taking place January 18 to 20, 2013 at the Miami Beach Convention Center, which is slated to draw medical interpreters from Argentina, Canada, India, Japan, China, Korea, Spain, England, Italy, and other nations to Miami Beach this weekend. Florida’s Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf is sending representation."

About the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters

The National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters is an autonomous certifying body, formed from an independent group of industry professionals who represent all key stakeholder groups, including professional medical interpreters, trainers, employers, providers, and regulators. The National Board developed the first comprehensive national medical interpreting certification program. The National Board is a special division of the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA) and has independent authority over all essential certification decisions. The purpose of certification is to ensure limited English proficiency patient safety by rigorous evaluation and assurance of the competency of medical interpreters, through written and oral exams. Those who pass the written and oral exams are bestowed the CMI credential, which stands for Certified Medical Interpreter. For more information, visit <http://www.certifiedmedicalinterpreters.org>.

Contact:

Tina Peña
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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Tina Peña, M.S., National Board Chair



Tina Peña, from Lima, Peru, is an associate professor of Spanish, coordinator of Spanish programs and a Medical Interpreter Trainer at Tulsa Community College. Tina is a host of *Temas en Tulsa*, a television program produced in Spanish that covers current events and topics of importance to Spanish speaking viewers. A TCC faculty member since 1992, Peña has pioneered the use of interactive television and distance learning to teach Spanish at TCC and has taught on the international campus, study abroad trips to Latin America and Spain. She is the coordinator of the Spanish Interpreting and the Spanish Service Learning Programs. Peña is the Oklahoma State Chapter Chair of the IMIA, a member of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, United Nations of Eastern Oklahoma, Governor's Task Force for the Advancement of Hispanic Students in Higher Education, Oklahoma Latinos Presentes en el Centenario, ACLU and the 2007 Pinnacle Award Winner.

Ken Anders, Board Member



Ken Anders is the Chief Operating Officer for TransPerfect Remote Interpreting, Inc. His technical background began as a sergeant in the United States Air Force in 1978. After an honorable discharge near the end of the cold war with the Soviet Union, Anders' technical expertise grew to include technical and management positions with General Telephone of California where he developed the first-of-its-kind automated analysis program designed to detect and identify faulty telephone systems. Following deregulation of the telephone industry in 1985, Anders worked for Hughes Aircraft Company as a Systems Engineer and then for The Walt Disney Company as a member of their Corporate Executive Team managing Disney's voice and data communications world-wide for nearly six years.

Anders brought his expertise and background to the language interpretation services industry becoming president and CEO for CyraCom International 1997. Following this, he continued enhancement of his technology experience by becoming CIO for Misys Healthcare and later creating his own firm where he provided consultation to health care, government and business developing language access programs using technology and other resources. Anders' passion for language access led him back to the industry in several consulting positions as well as positions with Language Line Services and finally an executive position with TransPerfect Remote Interpreting. In this position, he is responsible for evaluation, development and integration of leading edge solutions for the interpretation and translation service industry. He resides in Tucson, Arizona.

Janet Erickson-Johnson, M.A., CMI-Spanish, Board Member



Janet Erickson-Johnson, the certification manager for Language Line Services and Director of Interpreter Certification for Language Line University, has overseen the development and administration of certification testing since 2000, as well as language proficiency and interpreter skills assessments through Language Line University since 2002. She has also played a lead role in the development of basic interpreter training and Medical Interpreter Training, which she has delivered in the United States and abroad. She holds a master's degree in Translation and Interpretation from the Monterey Institute of International Studies, where she taught Medical Interpreting, completed a medical interpreting internship at Stanford University Hospital and worked as a professional freelance interpreter for 10 years prior to Language Line Services. In addition to being a presenter on various topics of interest to the profession at many professional interpreter conferences over the years, Erickson-Johnson was also an integral part of the Test Design Team that developed the National Medical Interpreter Certification Test in 2009.

Eric Hardt, M.D., Board Member



Dr. Eric Hardt is associate professor of Medicine at the Boston University School of Medicine and a member of the Geriatrics Section of the Department of Medicine at Boston Medical Center (BMC). He graduated from Yale University in 1970 and from Tufts Medical School in 1974. Prior to coming to Boston City Hospital in 1984, he worked at Harlem Hospital Center, Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center and Jacobi Hospital in the Bronx. He is board certified in Internal Medicine, Medical Oncology, Geriatrics and Palliative Care Medicine. He remains clinically active with a diverse group of elderly patients in their homes, in the Geriatrics Clinic and on the wards at BMC. He is an active educator of medical students, residents, fellows and interdisciplinary staff on clinical issues in geriatrics, home care, cross-cultural medicine, language barriers and medical interpretation.

Dr. Hardt's activities are well known around the country. He has produced videotape and print educational materials for medical interpreters and other health care workers. He has authored chapters and articles on the bilingual medical interview and related areas. He has published on issues of exclusion of non-English-speakers from medical research, on costs and outcomes related to language and on medical errors resulting from inadequate interpretation. He is regularly invited to speak to physicians and other providers on issues related to language barriers; he consults on educational and program development related to interpreter services.

He is a founding member of the International Medical Interpreters Association and currently serves as Chair of the Providers' Division. In 2011, he was honored as the IMIA's inaugural Provider of the Year. He is also a founding member of the National Council on Interpretation in Health Care, has served on its Executive Board and has co-chaired its Policy and Research Committee. For over 25 years he has served as Medical Consultant to Interpreter Services at BMC.

Linda Joyce, M.S., CMI-Spanish, Certification Director



Linda Joyce is a Language Access Specialist and a telephone and conference interpreter. Joyce presents workshops nationally and internationally on various aspects of best practices for providing competent language access. She is the IMIA West Virginia State Chapter Chair and served on the IMIA Board of Directors in 2010 and 2011. She is a member of the American Translators Association and the National Council on Interpreting in Healthcare. Joyce was the former Director of Language Interpretive Services at Grady Health System in Atlanta, Ga., and has worked for 25 years as an interpreter, trainer and educator; has lived and worked in Spain, Brazil and Portugal and speaks Spanish and Portuguese. She is an advocate for the continuing development of the medical interpreting profession and is passionate about issues related to equal access to healthcare. Joyce lives on a farm in Walton, W. Va.

Inna Persits-Gimelberg, M.S., M.Ed., Adviser



Inna Persits-Gimelberg is an independent Training Consultant working with companies to train and recruit medical interpreters as well as educating the broader community on cross-cultural issues in order to improve LEP clients access to health and public services. She is a former English/German teacher from Belarus in the former Soviet Union who has always had a passion for languages. Coming to the United States more than 20 years ago allowed her to realize her dream of becoming an interpreter.

Persits-Gimelberg began her career interpreting in Italy, helping mental health professionals communicate with their patients who were refugees. After arriving in the United States, Persits-Gimelberg taught Russian at the Boston Language Institute and interpreted at Harvard Community Health Plan. She later became one of the first interpreter supervisors at the Kenmore Center. While working at Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates, Persits-

Gimelberg received her master's degree in Health Care Administration. She moved on to become Director of Community Interpreter Services at Catholic Charities, where she trained and supervised interpreters.

Persits-Gimelberg taught Community Interpreter courses at Boston University and managed the oldest Medical Interpreting program at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation. In addition, she developed new CEU programs for interpreters in the field.

After serving her term as one of the original NBCMI Director, she now is a member of the Test Administration Committee of the National Board for Certification of Medical Interpreters, where she helps design policy and procedures that will be used to professionalize the role of medical interpreters, as well as recruit candidates for pilot testing in new languages that are added to NBCMI Oral Certification Exams. Persits-Gimelberg also serves on the conference committee of the Multicultural Coalition on Aging and is promoting National Certification at Industry Events and professional conferences.

Carlos García, Executive Director



Carlos García is a board certified medical interpreter and trainer in San Francisco, Calif. He was trained as an interpreter in the Healthcare Interpreter Certificate Program at City College of San Francisco and as a trainer at the Training of Trainers for the Healthcare Interpreting Profession Program at the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

He is an avid language access advocate, interpreter for the San Francisco Unified School District, Chair of the California Chapter of the International Medical Interpreters Association and past board member of the California Healthcare Interpreting Association, an organization that awarded him the distinction of Interpreter of the Year in 2012.