



**INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL  
INTERPRETERS ASSOCIATION**  
Leading the advancement of professional interpreters

## **APRIL eNews**

### **Coming Soon! The MMIA Calendar Page**

Due to the increase in MMIA activities, a calendar of meetings and workshops will soon be posted on a new webpage called "MMIA Calendar". Suggestions for the calendar can be emailed to [yonessa.costa@gmail.com](mailto:yonessa.costa@gmail.com)

### **The MMIA goes International!**

At the Critical Link Conference in Sydney, Australia, we will again make history by announcing to the world our move to become the International Medical Interpreters Association. The MMIA Board believes this move will benefit all members in the long term by promoting the unified advancement of medical interpreters around the world. It also better reflects our mission and acknowledges our rapidly growing membership outside Massachusetts borders, both national and international.

Almost since its inception, the MMIA has been a national organization as members joined from all over the country to work together for the advancement of medical interpreters. The MMIA Standards of Practice were adopted by many organizations around the country and the MMIA Conference is attended by international multidisciplinary stakeholders, all with an interest in medical interpreting and in the mission of our organization.

The MMIA has always been a pioneer in the field, and has worked hard to promote collaboration and serve as a clearinghouse and catalyst for change in this specialized field. Now, the MMIA is again a pioneer in filling a void that has been present for a long time. Some countries are very advanced in healthcare interpreting, while others could benefit from what we have learned and have to offer. Most importantly this new structure will enable a more collegial collaboration among our international members. Please let your international colleagues know that there is now an international medical interpreter association, the IMIA. Our website will remain [www.mmia.org](http://www.mmia.org).

How will this affect the state of Massachusetts? It will allow Massachusetts to continue in its leadership role as an interpreter association, and allow us to continue to serve our membership and create opportunities for all to work together to achieve our local goals, as well better serving our out of state and international members. Our Rhode Island Chapter members, for example, will benefit from this change. While we may certainly feel a loss to not be called the Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association, we prefer to build on this organization's great history, and fulfill our fiduciary responsibility to the membership to lead the organization into the future.

If you're a state, out-of-state or international member, let us know how you feel! We know name changes can be emotional. We are honored that you voted for us to lead the organization to the next level, and that is what we are doing. This is a natural move for the organization. Comments about going international can be sent to Marzena Laslie, at [mmiaml@aol.com](mailto:mmiaml@aol.com)

### **Speaking Together**

Speaking Together: National Language Services Network is a national program funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation aimed at improving the quality and availability of health care language services for patients with limited English proficiency (LEP). Speaking Together integrates quality improvement with language services, and brings together hospitals to pilot new performance measures and test valuable techniques for reducing health care disparities associated with language barriers. The ten hospitals participating in this collaborative are listed at <http://www.speakingtogether.com/profiles>. In addition, each grantee is also collecting data on two clinical measures that involve language access. For more information on the project, visit [www.speakingtogether.com](http://www.speakingtogether.com)

Language Access Quality Measures currently being collected by the ten grantees:

- The percent of patients who have been screened for their preferred spoken language
- The percent of LEP patients receiving initial assessment and discharge instructions from assessed and trained interpreters or from bilingual providers assessed for language proficiency

-The percent of encounters where the patient wait time for an interpreter is 15 minutes or less

-The percent of time interpreters spend providing medical interpretation in clinical encounters with patients

-The percent of encounters interpreters wait 10 or more minutes to provide interpreter services to provider and patient

Joint Commission recommends strategies for addressing language and cultural challenges

A new report from the Joint Commission recommends strategies to address the language and cultural issues that challenge hospitals as they strive to deliver safe, effective care to diverse patient populations. For example, the report recommends that hospitals serving diverse populations establish a centralized program to coordinate services relating to language and culture; implement a uniform framework for systematic collection of data on race, ethnicity and language; and provide ongoing training to staff on how and when to access language services. The recommendations are based on a study of how 60 hospitals are providing health care to culturally and linguistically diverse patient populations. "These findings cannot be generalized to all hospitals, but they provide detailed information about many ways that culture and language issues are being addressed in hospitals," the authors say. Thanks to Lulu Sanchez and others for sharing this report.

### **Article of interest**

Here is the link to a very interesting article published this month in the Journal of Pediatrics  
<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/119/4/e920?eaf> Thanks to Fanny Tchorz for sharing this article.

### **Book of the Month - The World is Flat**

If you've already read it, read it again. This new edition of The World Is Flat is Thomas L. Friedman's account of the great changes taking place in our time, as lightning-swift advances in technology and communications put people all over the globe in touch as never before-creating an explosion of wealth in India and China, and challenging the rest of us to run

even faster just to stay in place. This updated and expanded edition features more than a hundred pages of fresh reporting and commentary, drawn from Friedman's travels around the world and across the American heartland--from anyplace where the flattening of the world is being felt. You can't help but think how it will affect the interpreter's work and the delivery of language services.

### **Membership Renewals**

We would like to remind our members that membership dues are \$30 and are renewable annually. In order to see your renewal date, please go to <http://www.mmia.org/members/getdate.asp>.

In the past the conference fee included membership renewal but in 2006 we budgeted for the conference separately. The costs of the conference cover conference costs, while the membership fees enable us to provide members with more programs and benefits. Those whose memberships expired after the conference are now getting notices of membership expiration and requests for renewal. Once your membership expires, you will stop receiving the monthly eNews and the other benefits that come with membership. What is important to note is that sending payment is not enough. Please visit our membership renewal process at <http://www.mmia.org/members/renewal.asp>, which prompts you for your password. If you forgot it, simply put in your email address and your password will be mailed to you. Online payment is now accepted. Please support the MMIA efforts through your membership fee.

Sincerely,

The MMIA Executive Committee