



June eNews

Enhanced Calendar of Events

Now you can post an event on the IMIA Calendar of Events! Please encourage others to post conferences and events such as webinars or meetings on our website. This service is open to any organization. To see the most comprehensive interpreting industry event list, visit us at <http://www.mmia.org/events/default.asp>

National Certification Efforts - Update

Expert Panel on Community Interpreter Testing and Certification - June 13-15, 2007

The IMIA believes it is important to inform members of the efforts that are taking place in regard to National Certification. This event is hosted by the Interpreting Stakeholder Group, an activity of the Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association (UMTIA), and administered through Century College and the University of Minnesota. It was funded by the Bush Foundation as part of the *Linking Voices* project to improve and expand interpreting services throughout Minnesota and is being organized by Bruce Downing. According to Bruce, "This meeting will be only one of the first of a series of national discussions that will be needed as we address and resolve the myriad of issues that arise on the way to a well-designed national certification process. Although this expert panel has no official status as an effort of a national organization or coalition, we feel that it is very important that we produce a fairly detailed record of our discussions and recommendations to inform future efforts that are already in the planning stages. Note-takers will be present during the workgroup and plenary discussions for a report that will be produced as a record of the experts' contributions to the panel."

IMIA Certification Committee Update

The Committee on Certification has been working towards creating a fair and authentic certification tool for medical interpreters for several years. Since last summer, the Certification committee has met several times with possible funders and the board of directors to move the process forward. Some of the highlights include the following points (from the presentation by Maria-Paz B. Avery Ph.D. and Jane Kontrimas M.S. at the MMIA 2004 Conference).

The Purposes of Certification:

- To determine basic entry level proficiency in medical

interpreting

- To provide a standard of quality for the profession
- To provide interpreters with an assessment of their proficiency

Our certification should conform to the following principles of test development:

Authentic - An authentic test measures concepts, knowledge, and skills that are actually used on the job in real life.

Criterion referenced - A test is criterion referenced when there are clear and publicly defined criteria for what counts as good performance (such as our standards of practice), and when the people who perform at the specified level pass no matter how many or how few achieve it.

Transparent - Transparent means everyone knows what kinds of things will be tested, how it will be scored, when training is available, and what learning resources may help learn what you need to know.

Validity - The test is valid when it measures what it is intended to measure and not some other skill or concept, and when the test does not eliminate competent people by including skills or knowledge that are not needed to do the job

Reliability - Test results are reliable when 2 or more scorers give the same grade to the same work. Test results are reliable when the test is given the same way to everyone. Test results are reliable when administrators and scorers are trained to standardize results so they are reliable.

The board has met several times this year with the certification committee and has endorsed (supports) these basic principles on which the work of the certification committee has so far been built.

Next steps - The Certification Committee and the IMIA Executive Board are having a Working Plan Retreat on July 13th from 9 - 2:30pm. This will be an important meeting that will produce an IMIA Certification Working Plan for the next 2-4 years. The goal is to produce an overview of a test development schedule together with funding requirements and possible resources.

IMIA to Endorse CHIA Standards

The IMIA board has voted to endorse the California Standards for Healthcare Interpreters, a publication of the California Healthcare Interpreters Association. We find the CHIA standards to be in harmony with the mission and vision of the IMIA. The CHIA standards were designed as a set of ethical principles and interpreting protocols that, when followed, can result in better access to healthcare for linguistically diverse

patients. We encourage our members to read the CHIA standards with a view to comparison with our own MMIA Interpreting Standards of Practice. See http://www.chia.ws/documents/publications/CA_standards_healthcare_interpreters.pdf

2007 Conference Committee Update - Registration to open soon!

The Call for Papers closed on May 24th. We are happy to report that the Program Committee has reviewed each abstract and we are currently responding to abstract candidates. This year we will have expert presenters from all over the country as well as Canada, Italy, and Japan.

The ten conferences held to date have played an important role in documenting and motivating progress in this field, and have drawn the interest of attendees from all over the world. It has established the experts in medical interpreting practice and policy, who have strongly supported these meetings as an opportunity to share ideas with and lend moral support to each other. National health policy leaders have been invited to participate to share their points of view, and to be educated about the substance of and enthusiasm behind this movement.

Newcomers to the field, especially medical interpreters and interpreter managers, have come to learn more about and to gain practical information to take back to their organizations, states & countries. At each conference, plenary and workshop presentations highlight innovative strategies by reviewing the status of the profession. Special emphasis is placed on interactive presentations and skills-building workshops. The conference has grown to become 'the' annual conference on medical interpreting, and in 2007 will be a two-and-a-half day conference.

Register now and take advantage of our early bird rate. Even if an organization is sponsoring your registration, you still need to register yourself online. To register, go to <http://www.mmia.org/conferences/Conferenceregistration.asp>. This year, the Friday reception is included, as well as breakfast and lunch each conference day, special forums and working group meetings, as well as a job fair and enhanced entertainment. Many exciting innovations will make this conference a landmark in the history of the IMIA. Conference updates will be included in our eNews publications throughout the summer.

Provider Outreach Committee Update –Survey and Outreach Campaign Underway

The Provider Outreach Committee has developed a survey to send to providers with the goal of better understanding their opinions on working with interpreters. A second objective of the survey is to increase awareness of providers in regard to the IMIA and the professional interpreter movement. As a special feature of the survey, we are inviting providers to join our organization with a complimentary one-year provider membership. This outreach campaign will end at the end of August. We will soon send the survey to our members to help us disseminate it among providers. Join us in this important initiative to promote more collaboration between interpreters and providers.

Have You Updated Your Profile Recently?

Please access your online profile and review the information to make sure it is updated. You will notice that in the Members section there is now a 'View Directory Profile' <http://www.mmia.org/members/viewprofile.asp> which allows you to view the information that employers will be seeing about you when they look for an interpreter. You can now add your resume, and those interpreters that have posted resumes will have a higher chance of being called. At the last Worcester Regional Meeting, an interpreter mentioned she was offered a medical interpreting assignment in Massachusetts from a company in California that found her in the IMIA Interpreter Directory! This is the only national interpreter directory in the US and is serving as a model for rosters and registries being developed in other states.

Journal on Interpreting

In the September eNews of last year we mentioned that we wanted to develop a Journal on Medical Interpretation. We have since become aware of an international publication called *International Journal of Research and Practice in Interpreting*. The Executive Board decided at their last meeting that the IMIA would order one and review it before making any recommendations. If there is an established quality publication already in the market, the IMIA will promote it rather than attempt reinvent the wheel. Information about this journal can be found at http://www.benamins.nl/cgi-bin/t_seriesview.cgi?series=INTP

Multilingual Health Information

Refugee Health Information Network (RHIN) is a national collaborative partnership, managed by refugee health professionals, with the objective of providing quality multilingual health information resources for those providing care to resettled refugees. Refugee Health Information Network (www.rhin.org) has

compiled translated documents from across the nation and they have created a user-friendly search mechanism. See <http://www.rhin.org/findrec.aspx>

Powerful Speak Out Testimony - May 16 State House (Massachusetts)

Mr. Jose Bueno has given us permission to share his story, as told at the May 16th State House event. Dr. Bueno was a licensed practicing lawyer in the Dominican Republic. He came to the United States with his son and daughter some years ago with a serious health condition. Mr. Bueno initially suffered the consequences of not having access to qualified professional medical interpreter services. But since he has been enrolled in the Elder Service Plan Network, he has been served by a cohesive team of medical providers working with professional medical interpreters to facilitate the necessary treatment plan and ensure clear communication. Needless to say, Mr. Bueno's physical health, sense of safety, and well being have all increased dramatically. The difference in Mr. Bueno's quality of life is a testimony in itself - without the help of the Elder Service Plan and a team of qualified medical interpreters, Mr. Bueno would likely be in a nursing home right now.

The cost to the State to keep Standard Medicaid individuals in nursing homes is far greater than the cost of providing professional interpreter services. Only with the assistance of professional interpreter services can individuals like Mr. Bueno remain vital and healthy as community members.

Understanding Medical Interpreters– Re-Conceptualizing Bilingual Health Communication

By Elaine Hsieh, Department of Communication, University of Oklahoma

This article emphasizes the differences between types of medical interpreters as well as the interrelationships among all participants in bilingual health communication. Interpreters should be categorized into different categories (i.e. chance interpreted, untrained interpreters, bilingual health care providers, on-site interpreters, and telephone interpreters) so that their characteristics can be better observed and understood.

Newly Published Study – Language Proficiency and Adverse Events in US Hospitals

Study by Chandrika Divi, Richard G. Koss, Stephen P. Schmaltz and Jerod M. Loeb

Objective. To examine differences in the characteristics of adverse events between English speaking patients and patients with limited English proficiency in US hospitals.

Setting. Six Joint Commission accredited hospitals in the USA.

Method. Adverse event data on English speaking patients and patients with limited English proficiency were collected from six hospitals over 7 months in 2005 and classified using the National Quality Forum endorsed Patient Safety Event Taxonomy.

Results. About 49.1% of limited English proficient patient adverse events involved some physical harm, whereas only 29.5% of adverse events for patients who speak English resulted in physical harm. Of those adverse events resulting in physical harm, 46.8% of the limited English proficient patient adverse events had a level of harm ranging from moderate temporary harm to death, compared with 24.4% of English speaking patient adverse events. The adverse events that occurred to limited English proficient patients were also more likely to be the result of communication errors (52.4%) than adverse events for English speaking patients (35.9%).

Conclusions. Language barriers appear to increase the risks to patient safety. It is important for patients with language barriers to have ready access to competent language services. Providers need to collect reliable language data at the patient point of entry and document the language services provided during the patient-provider encounter.

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Full text by subscription:

<http://intqhc.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/full/19/2/60>

Conflict Management in interpreting

You may find yourself making compromises to create harmony in your work relationships, but being agreeable all the time in order to maintain harmony is not honest. True diplomacy lies in the ability to work with the truth of a situation to find the right balance. You may find it easy to compromise on one thing but not another. If this is the case, you may need the finesse of a safecracker, listening closely for the right combination that will unlock the door to genuine cooperation. When this skill has been learned and practiced in our work environments, we can share it with others. Today, practice the steps of negotiation and peacekeeping in the midst of your interpreting work.

Harmony in relationships doesn't mean an absence of disagreements. Peace is a process of maintaining balance through skill and caring. Consistently giving up what we want or need will not keep our inner world or our relationships in harmonious balance. We have the choice to fight or to ask questions and offer suggestions. We

have the choice to expose what is not right. We can attempt to manipulate the situation to go our way or approach it honestly and calmly from the highest place within ourselves. By making the decision about how we choose to respond to differences of opinion or preference, we make the choice to create greater discord or greater harmony.

A Great Website Promoting the Interpreting Profession

This was developed by the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers. Although this site was designed with the ASL interpreter in mind, it is inspiring as an example of what we can do to promote our profession and attract new candidates to interpreter training. The IMIA applauds the work of our ASL colleagues! To see this wonderful website, go to:

www.Discoverinterpreting.com

Book of the Month

How Doctors Think, By Jerome Groopman

On average, a physician will interrupt a patient describing her symptoms within eighteen seconds. In that short time, many doctors decide on the likely diagnosis and best treatment. Often, decisions made this way are correct, but at crucial moments they can also be wrong -- with catastrophic consequences. In this myth-shattering book, Jerome Groopman pinpoints the forces and thought processes behind the decisions doctors make. Groopman explores why doctors err and shows when and how they can -- with our help -- avoid snap judgments, embrace uncertainty, communicate effectively, and deploy other skills that can profoundly impact our health. This elegant, tough-minded book recounts stories about how doctors and patients interact with one other and is very useful for medical interpreters who want to better understand the issues that affect patient-provider communication. Thank you to Greg Figaro, President of Culturesmart, IMIA Corporate member, for recommending this book.