



July 2008 eNews

***The real leader has no need to lead - he is content to point the way.***

### **President's Message**

In the last few years, hospitals across the country and around the world have become more aware of the need to hire trained and tested interpreters. However, 'trained and tested' could mean trained for a day and tested in writing but never properly tested in language fluency or interpreting skills.

***Is interpreting a trade or profession? How would one know the difference?***

A profession:

- 1) Renders a specialized service based upon advanced knowledge and skill, and dealing with its problems primarily on an intellectual plane rather than on a physical or a manual labor plane.
- 2) Involves a confidential relationship between a practitioner and a client or an employer.
- 3) Is charged with a substantial degree of public obligation by virtue of specialized knowledge.
- 4) Enjoys a common heritage of knowledge, skill, and status to the cumulative store of which professionals are bound to contribute through their individual and collective efforts.
- 5) Performs its services to a substantial degree in the general public interest, receiving compensation through limited fees rather than through direct profit from improvement in goods, services, or knowledge.
- 6) Is bound by a distinctive ethical code in relationships with clients, colleagues, and the public.

I think these characteristics define medical interpreters quite well. Yet, medical interpreting is not fully respected or recognized by others as a profession. Medical interpreting, as our specialization has been called for over twenty years, still lags behind others, such as court, conference, or ASL interpreting. The difference between court, conference, or ASL interpreting and foreign language medical interpreters is certification. Certification achieves the following: it allows for the recognition of interpreting as a professional service and not a commodity, acknowledges the proper training and the skills required of a professional interpreter, and ensures that there is a way

for employers and patients alike to assess the competency of interpreters who perform critical work, usually where public health safety is involved. The patients we serve deserve competent services, it's the law and it's a human right: the right to equitable health care.

The purpose of associations like ours is to share information, new developments, and discoveries; to improve the profession's usefulness, efficiency, and service to humanity, and to educate the public about the qualifications of professional medical interpreters and encourage and assist those who want to enter the field. Our current focus is making certification available to our members as soon as possible.

Some language access representatives have spoken against or expressed concerns about the social consequences of the certification development process, mostly for fear that it will diminish interpreting availability to patients who desperately need language services. In addition, there are a few leaders in the medical interpreting field who think that the IMIA 'should not proceed' with the work that has been in development for over a decade because there is a new national effort to get to a national certification. We believe we've always been part of that national effort and that our work will benefit the longer term national collaborative work towards one single national certification.

In the past two years, we have been instrumental in forming a national certification movement, first through the national dialogue on certification at our conferences, then the CHIA-NCIHC-IMIA certification pilot, then through the National Medical Interpreting Task Force, and then through the National Coalition on Health Care Interpreter Certification. Our promotion and involvement with the national collaborative with other national stakeholders does not mean that we have to stop our own work. The IMIA believes that by finishing its work, it will benefit the field, interpreters, providers and primarily patients, and contribute to and serve as a foundation for the national certification.

Since its inception, the IMIA has been working on medical interpreter certification. Please spread the word that we are very serious about accomplishing the work our founders have laid out before us and that we appreciate everyone's support. To learn how you can help, please email us at [IMIACertification@gmail.com](mailto:IMIACertification@gmail.com)

Sincerely,

*Izabel Arocha, M.Ed.*  
*IMIA President*

### **The 2008 IMIA Salary Survey – Take it now!**

In order to better understand the interpreting profession, the IMIA is collecting aggregate data regarding the current wages and rates of medical interpreters and administrators of medical interpreting services in the United States.

Please be assured that the IMIA Interpreter 2008 Wages and Rates Survey is published in accordance with federal and state privacy and antitrust laws. It meets all the conditions set forth by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission that apply to compensation surveys. This survey is completely anonymous and strictly confidential. We do not collect personally identifiable information about respondents.

You are not violating any statute by submitting personal salary information, and you will not be asked to disclose the name of your employer. This survey will take five to ten minutes to complete, depending on the categories you answer. Please click 'Next' to begin the survey.

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=C1O2b3mumh0ShOxLjIRdrA\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=C1O2b3mumh0ShOxLjIRdrA_3d_3d)

### **IMIA Conference Update**

This year's conference promises to be like no other. We have scheduled some incredible panels and presentations. While there are so many conferences to choose from, the IMIA stands as the annual gathering for the field of medical interpreting worldwide, where the latest technology, achievements, thoughts and expertise in medical interpreting is presented. The job fair, test sittings and other activities, such as book signing and division meetings, make it a great networking gathering as well. Early registration ends August 8, so register now at:

[www.imiaweb.org/conferences/Conference2008Registration.asp](http://www.imiaweb.org/conferences/Conference2008Registration.asp)

Agenda: <http://www.imiaweb.org/conferences/agenda.asp>  
Sponsorship opportunities (new ad only option available) (deadline August 20) at:

<http://www.imiaweb.org/conferences/Sponsorship.asp>

### **New Certification Committee Chair - Bill Prenzno**

The IMIA is pleased to announce that Bill Prenzno is our new interim certification committee chair. He joined the committee last year and has been instrumental to furthering our certification efforts. Bill has broad experience in medical interpreting, including the design and implementation of formal testing and training programs for medical interpreters. Most recently, Bill was the Director of Product Management at CyraCom, overseeing the testing, training and quality of CyraCom's medical interpreters.

Bill has over 15 years experience designing, delivering and managing participatory adult education and training programs. He has designed innovative training courses across a wide variety of subject areas funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for professionals from Latin America, Asia and Africa. Additionally, Bill has served as a community interpreter for rural health programs in Central America, as well as having worked and traveled extensively throughout Latin America as an educator and promoter of positive technical change. Bill holds a Bachelors of Science from the University of Illinois and a Masters degree in adult education from the University of Arizona. He is a past president of the Tucson Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development. To welcome Bill, contact [IMIACertification@gmail.com](mailto:IMIACertification@gmail.com)

### **National Resource Center**

The nation's first online National Resource Center focused on the public health preparedness needs of culturally diverse communities was just launched at [www.DiversityPreparedness.org](http://www.DiversityPreparedness.org). A joint initiative of the Drexel University School of Public Health's Center for Health Equality and the United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, the National Resource Center will serve as a central clearinghouse of resources and an exchange site to facilitate communication, networking and collaboration among key players working to build resilience and eliminate disparities for culturally diverse communities in emergencies. The site features hundreds of cross-referenced annotated resources in over 40 languages highlighting research, training and education opportunities, measurement and evaluation tools, effective risk communication strategies, and other successful programs and projects.

### **New and Improved HLC Website**

The Joint Commission's Hospitals, Language, and Culture: A Snapshot of the Nation (HLC) study has updated its website with easier to navigate pages, downloadable reports and resources, additional links, and more! Read about the current HLC research projects, meet the staff and advisors, and access information on Joint Commission standards in support of language and culture issues. To visit the HLC website, go to <http://www.jointcommission.org/PatientSafety/HLC/> The Joint Commission will be presenting at the IMIA Conference.

### **Speaking Together Update**

Speaking Together: National Language Services, a national initiative funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, recently published two reports in its ongoing

effort to improve the delivery of language services to reduce health care disparities in America.

### **In Any Language: Improving the quality and availability of language services in hospitals**

[http://www.speakingtogether.org/media/file/GW\\_STReport\\_print.pdf](http://www.speakingtogether.org/media/file/GW_STReport_print.pdf)

### **Patients Give Feedback on Language Services at Ten Hospitals**

[http://www.speakingtogether.org/media/file/reportfinal\\_5\\_.pdf](http://www.speakingtogether.org/media/file/reportfinal_5_.pdf)

These reports demonstrate how hospitals can monitor performance and realize measurable improvements in the delivery of language services to patients. Speaking Together will be presenting at the IMIA Conference.

### **Other Words, Other Meanings**

By Alexandre Bischoff, Louis Loutan

This handbook offers an approach for bilingual medical consultations. It is designed to help health professionals and patients who do not have language in common. The handbook is intended to assist health professionals working in hospitals or in primary care as well as in international settings (relief operations, humanitarian programs, non-profits, etc.), and is the result of combined experience and reflection on the part of interpreters, physicians, nurses, social workers, psychiatrists and teachers. Enjoy "Other Words, Other Meanings", and the experience of working with an interpreter! Please order at: [info.medint@hcuge.ch](mailto:info.medint@hcuge.ch)

### **Interpreter Training of Trainers**

Training of Trainers is a joint program with the Graduate School of Translation and Interpretation, Monterey Institute of International Studies, and the National Foreign Language Center, University of Maryland. This course is designed to address the needs of current and future instructors of interpretation wishing to enhance their teaching skills. Participants will review fundamental principles of interpreting pedagogy and apply them to the design and development of courses for their instructional settings.

- Day one: Course design and development
- Day two: Assessment and feedback
- Day three: Lesson planning
- Day four: Case Studies

To Register contact Rachel Christopherson at [rachel.christopherson@miis.edu](mailto:rachel.christopherson@miis.edu) or call 831-647-6422.

You may also download a registration form at our website: <http://translate.miis.edu/ndp/>

**Course Tuition:** \$ 1000.00

**Monterey Institute Alumni Tuition:** \$600.00

**Book Costs:** \$120.00 estimated

### **News from around the World – ASL interpreting featured!**

#### **Pakistan: Call to recognize Pakistani Sign Language, provide access to skilled translators**

Maryland, USA (John Hopkins Magazine): Zara Husain, now 27, has spent the last 10 years working for change, and plans to continue that work for the rest of her life. Her vision: that Pakistan's deaf get the assistance and education they need. There must be equal education for the deaf from elementary school through college, development of intervention programs to reduce communication problems among the deaf, increased recognition of Pakistani Sign Language, and access to skilled interpreters. For more information, see [www.jhu.edu/~jhumag/0608web/hearing.html](http://www.jhu.edu/~jhumag/0608web/hearing.html)

#### **Australia -The sorrow and success of a sign language interpreter**

Sydney, Australia (Manly Daily): Judy Clews' work as an interpreter had exposed her to some very distressing situations, such as court cases involving young deaf children, but one of the hardest experiences had been accompanying her mother to a medical consultation and having to pass on the diagnosis that she had breast cancer. [www.manlydaily.com.au/article/2008/06/10/10534\\_news\\_feature.html](http://www.manlydaily.com.au/article/2008/06/10/10534_news_feature.html)

#### **Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf (ENDA) inaugurates a new dictionary of sign language**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: The Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf (ENDA) on Friday inaugurated a new dictionary of sign language for use by people born with or affected by the physical impairment in the country. For more information, please visit: [allafrica.com/stories/200806240300.html](http://allafrica.com/stories/200806240300.html)

#### **China - Disturbing new interpreter regulations prior to Olympic Games**

Beijing, China (Reporters without Borders): The Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (BOCOG) has been insisting since January 2007 that the foreign media recruit professionals chosen by official intermediaries as translators. For more information, see [www.rsf.org](http://www.rsf.org).

#### **UK: Less than one qualified interpreter available for every 100 users of British sign language**

London, UK (Guardian): With less than one qualified interpreter available for every 100 users of British sign language, deaf and hard-of-hearing children do not always

get the support they need in school to communicate with their peers and teachers. Not every local authority is doing badly. While councils in London and the East Midlands are doing reasonably well in identifying deaf blind children, barely 10% are being identified in Yorkshire and Humberside or the southwest and even fewer in the northeast.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.education.guardian.co.uk/egweekly/story/0,,2287066,00.html>

#### **Gambia has only four sign language interpreters**

Banjul, Gambia (All Africa): Mr. Dodou Loum, the Executive Director of Gambia Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (GADHOH), has lamented that the deaf community in The Gambia are depending on only four (4) sign language interpreters countrywide to facilitate communication between the deaf and the rest of the hearing population. For more information, please visit: [allafrica.com/stories/200806240783.html](http://allafrica.com/stories/200806240783.html)

#### **EU: Pressure mounting to introduce translation and interpretation for Welsh, Catalan and Basque**

Brussels, Belgium (Euractiv): Pressure is mounting on the EU to reconsider the status of regional and minority languages and introduce translation and interpretation for Welsh, Catalan and Basque. Part of the controversy is linked to the costs of translation and interpretation. €11 million were spent in 2005 to cover language facilities in EU institutions, while last year a report by former Finnish MEP Alexander Stubb questioned the need to have every EU document translated into lesser-spoken languages such as Finnish, Swedish and Maltese. For more, see [www.euractiv.com/en/culture/mep-launches-appeal-welsh-official-eu-language/article-173088](http://www.euractiv.com/en/culture/mep-launches-appeal-welsh-official-eu-language/article-173088)

#### **Uganda: Plea for sign language interpreters at health centers**

Kampala, Uganda (All Africa): People with disabilities have asked the health ministry to train health workers in sign language and recruit interpreters to help deaf expectant mothers access information, especially during antenatal services. Safia Nalule Juuko, an MP for the disabled, said disabled women could not access quality services because they could not express themselves. "Let there be at least one sign language interpreter at a health centre, so as to enable people with disabilities, especially the deaf, to access information." For more information: [allafrica.com/stories/200806040048.html](http://allafrica.com/stories/200806040048.html)

#### **China: Foreign visitors create demand for instant, on-demand interpreting services**

Hong Kong, China (GoKunming): The challenges faced by foreign visitors to China have given rise to demand for instant, on-demand interpreting services, rather than hiring

a bilingual guide who requires food, lodging and transportation and can become a significant expense on long trips. Hong Kong-based telephone interpreting service provider ChinaONEcall established its Kunming office in January 2007, entering the rapidly growing on-demand interpreting industry in Mainland China. For more information, please visit, [gokunming.com/en/blog/item/600/interview\\_answering\\_the\\_call\\_for\\_ondemand\\_interpreting\\_in\\_china](http://gokunming.com/en/blog/item/600/interview_answering_the_call_for_ondemand_interpreting_in_china)

#### **Japan: Network of medical interpreters urgently needed**

Tokyo, Japan (Japan Times): When visitors to Japan fall ill, finding a doctor who can communicate with them in their mother tongue can be a difficult task. Medical professionals, interpreters and local government officials addressed the problem at a symposium in Tokyo on May 31. Building a network of medical institutions, pharmacies and interpreters is urgently needed as the number of foreign travelers here is on the rise, said Toshimasa Nishiyama, professor in charge of the foreign patients section at Kansai Medical University in Osaka Prefecture. For more information, see [search.japantimes.co.jp/rss/nn20080607f2.html](http://search.japantimes.co.jp/rss/nn20080607f2.html)

#### **UK: Language barrier adds confusion to pre-natal testing**

London UK (Politics): Researchers found language difficulties added a great deal of misunderstanding about the nature and cause of disorders. While earlier studies have found that similar confusions are common among the general public as well, the difficulties of interpretation can make minority groups, such as the Bangladeshis, especially vulnerable to such misunderstandings. See [www.politics.co.uk/opinion-formers/press-releases/opinion-former-index/health/esrc-language-barrier-adds-confusion-pre-natal-testing-\\$1226481\\$365399.htm](http://www.politics.co.uk/opinion-formers/press-releases/opinion-former-index/health/esrc-language-barrier-adds-confusion-pre-natal-testing-$1226481$365399.htm)

#### **British Columbia: Critical shortage of sign language interpreters overcome**

British Columbia, Canada (Canada): A new U.S.-based service designed to help the deaf make phone calls is contributing to a critical shortage of local sign language interpreters in British Columbia, says the president of a B.C. interpreters group. The new technology, called video relay service, allows the deaf or hard of hearing to contact an operator through a videophone hooked up to the Internet. One such company, Utah-based Sorenson Communications, has set up a call centre in Burnaby, B.C., and hired local interpreters to field calls from customers. [www.canada.com/victoriatimescolonist/news/story.html?id=6c57b928-a729-4802-931d-5b9531487977&k=75582](http://www.canada.com/victoriatimescolonist/news/story.html?id=6c57b928-a729-4802-931d-5b9531487977&k=75582)



## **Ghana: Appeal to train sign language teachers to serve as interpreters**

Accra, Ghana (Joy): Ms. Monica Siaw, Agona West Municipal Officer of the Department of Social Welfare, has appealed to the government to assist in the training of sign language teachers to serve as interpreters at health facilities, courts, churches and other public places for hearing impaired persons. She said these persons found it difficult to tell their stories at such functions, especially at hospitals any time their children fell sick. For more information:

[www.myjoyonline.com/news/200806/17455.asp](http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/200806/17455.asp)

## **News from the United States**

### **Global Market for Outsourced Interpreting Services Hit US\$2.5 Billion in 2007, New Common Sense Advisory Research Report Reveals**

Common Sense Advisory calculated that the global market for outsourced interpreting services hit US\$2.5 billion in 2007, with telephone interpreting representing a significant percentage of this amount. In 2007, the global telephone interpreting market was worth US\$700 million, with an estimated US\$500 million generated in the United States. The firm estimates that this number will increase to US\$1.2 billion by 2012. The findings are detailed in June 2008 research entitled, "Telephone Interpretation." [http://www.commonsenseadvisory.com/news/pr\\_view.php?pre\\_id=60](http://www.commonsenseadvisory.com/news/pr_view.php?pre_id=60)

### **Medical Interpreters Break Down Language Barriers for Hospitals and Patients**

Source: EthnicNewz.org Writer: Eduardo A. de Oliveira. For thousands of patients in New England, the services provided by medical interpreters are priceless. "Nothing can be more terrifying than being really sick, or involved in a car accident and not being able to explain what happened to a doctor," said Elaine Ullian, CEO of Boston Medical Center. Ullian has the hospital expenditures to back up what she says. Boston Medical Center (BMC) invests \$3.5 million annually for interpreter services. See <http://www.ethnicnewz.org/en/medical-interpreters-break-down-language-barriers-hospitals-and-patients>

### **New York State Hospitals Embrace Video Interpreting to Improve Access to Care For Deaf and Hearing Impaired Community**

New York, USA (Business Wire): Language Line Services, the leading provider of language interpreting

services, is working with New York State hospitals to help them communicate with deaf and hearing impaired patients via its Language Line® Video Interpreter Service, providing quick connection to live, certified American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters through a portable video monitor. For more information, see [www.businesswire.com/news/google/20080611005105/en](http://www.businesswire.com/news/google/20080611005105/en)

### **Sign language technology expands at Frederick Memorial Hospital**

Maryland, USA (Gazette): Video remote interpreting contacts off-site sign language interpreters who translate spoken words for deaf patients from a video screen as if they were in the room. Although the technology has been available to deaf patients at FMH for eight years, the service is now wireless, making it accessible building-wide. The Patient Relations Department at the hospital hopes to provide more equal access to health care for deaf patients with this move, spokeswoman Nan Principe-Crockett said.

[www.gazette.net/stories/061208/frednew183043\\_32371.shtml](http://www.gazette.net/stories/061208/frednew183043_32371.shtml)

### **Arizona: Using volunteers to cut down on municipal translation costs**

Arizona, USA (Tribune): Mesa resident Ed Gonzalez said America has given him so many opportunities that now he wants to give back. The 30-year-old Costco baker has begun volunteering about 16 hours a week to translate Spanish calls for Mesa police 911 dispatchers. The city is hoping to bring in other volunteers like Gonzalez and expand the volunteer program to save money on costly translation services. For more information, please visit: [www.eastvalleytribune.com/story/118081](http://www.eastvalleytribune.com/story/118081)

### **Minnesota: Medicare survey on medical interpretation**

Minnesota, USA (Public Radio): More and more seniors and people with disabilities who are eligible for Medicare are electing to receive their health care coverage from a private provider through Medicare Advantage. About 20 percent of Medicare recipients had Medicare Advantage plans in January of this year, up from 11 percent in 2004. We're interested in learning why more Americans are signing up, what's keeping the other 80 percent in their traditional Medicare plan, and, simply, how Medicare Advantage is working in the real world. [www.publicradio.org/public\\_insight\\_network/forms/cij/form\\_display.php?form\\_code=fa5922c89626](http://www.publicradio.org/public_insight_network/forms/cij/form_display.php?form_code=fa5922c89626)

### **Hospitals striving to expand, standardize translation services (IMIA mentioned)**

Massachusetts, USA (Boston Globe): Just 15 or 20 years ago, area hospitals would routinely pull in someone from the housecleaning staff to help the medical staff communicate with a patient, according to Beth Donnelly,

spokeswoman for MetroWest Medical Center. It is a potentially dangerous practice when someone's health is on the line, she said. Around 1998, the medical center, formed by the merger of Leonard Morse Hospital in Natick and Framingham Union, made it hospital policy to use only professional interpreters, she said. Then in 2002, it became a state law to use only professionals in emergency rooms and mental health departments. Now a Boston-based group, the International Medical Interpreters Association, is pushing for a national certification program. For more: [www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2008/06/05/in\\_an\\_emergency\\_it\\_cant\\_be\\_left\\_open\\_to\\_interpretation](http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2008/06/05/in_an_emergency_it_cant_be_left_open_to_interpretation)

### **Diversity emergency in California's Health Care**

California, USA (NAM): A Chinese-American woman who took her elderly mother to a local hospital was asked by the doctor to serve as an interpreter for her. "Ask your mother if she is sexually active," the doctor told her. The younger woman looked shocked and embarrassed. In her culture, she told the doctor, daughters never ask their parents such questions. For more information: [news.newamericamedia.org/news/view\\_article.html?article\\_id=57dcaa2961867815f140c283a330a6c](http://news.newamericamedia.org/news/view_article.html?article_id=57dcaa2961867815f140c283a330a6c)

### **Newly translated web content gives high-risk audiences access to vital health information\**

Texas, USA (PRNewswire-Hispanic PR Wire): Two hundred thirty pages of widely used heart disease and stroke information has been translated into Spanish, Vietnamese and Simplified Chinese and is now available on the American Heart Association's Web site at [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org). Traditional Chinese is coming soon. For more information, please visit: [www.hispanicbusiness.com/news/2008/6/12/newly\\_translated\\_web\\_content\\_gives\\_highrisk.htm](http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/news/2008/6/12/newly_translated_web_content_gives_highrisk.htm)

### **Massachusetts: Results of State survey on medical interpreters**

Massachusetts, USA (Boston Globe): A state survey of area hospitals found varying demand for medical interpreters in 2007, based on the languages most often requested by patients. This article provides the results, hospital by hospital. For more information, please visit: [www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2008/06/05/putting\\_symptoms\\_diagnoses\\_into\\_simple\\_words](http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2008/06/05/putting_symptoms_diagnoses_into_simple_words)

### **Book of the Month**

#### **Cultural Proficiency in Addressing Health Disparities**

Sade Kosoko-Lasaki, MD, MSPH, MBA, Cynthia Theresa Cook, PhD, Richard L. O'Brien, MD, FACP  
**ISBN-13:** 9780763751746

This book has important information and current statistics on health disparities within the United States. It identifies

our most vulnerable populations and offers guidelines on how to avoid cultural incompetence and promote cultural proficiency. ***Cultural Proficiency in Addressing Health Disparities*** will help us to address Healthy People 2010, which challenges individuals, communities, and professionals to take specific steps to ensure that good health, as well as long life, is enjoyed by all. This demands the ability to relate effectively to persons of many different cultures to assure collaborative participation in research (that must include minorities), clinical patient care and disease prevention. Thank you to Janet Bonet for sharing this book with us. For more information, see <http://www.jbpub.com/catalog/9780763751746/>

### **About the IMIA eNews**

The IMIA eNews is our monthly news brief. The purpose and intent of this publication is to advance the medical interpreting profession by providing our members with the latest local, state and international news and reports, as well as provide monthly updates on useful websites, toolkits, and available trainings/resources. We know our members do not have time to read everything that comes across their desks or emails, so we actually take the time to select, from a myriad of sources, and condense it into a summary of the most updated, relevant, useful and interesting news about the field on a monthly basis.

The IMIA eNews' goal is to provide technical value and serve as a clearinghouse of information as stated in our bylaws and offer an institutional record of what is happening in the field of medical interpretation around the world. Please pass this newsletter to colleagues who might become interested in the work of the association. Please send suggestions and comments about the eNews to Izabel Arocha at [iarocha@imiaweb.org](mailto:iarocha@imiaweb.org)