



October 2008 eNews

Experts take something simple and make it complicated. Communicators take something complicated and make it simple.

John C. Maxwell

Message from President

The IMIA Conference was a wonderful success. It was great to hear the four keynote speakers Dr. Betancourt, Dr. Angood, Mr. Provenzano and Mr. Wilkinson, who gave truly inspiring speeches. You will soon see the keynote speeches and the 2008 presentations on our website. The positive energy was evident with new collaborative initiatives being conceptualized right before our eyes. The job fair, stakeholder meetings, and other events were successful as well as the over 40 workshops, all with incredibly informative speakers. New experts in the field were definitely introduced to the market.

The Third IMIA Annual Meeting was very well attended. We stand for a view of transparency where the current administration has the responsibility to inform its members of all of its activities. It also believes that all members, individual and corporate, have a responsibility to remain informed of our activities in order to further the cause together. This is an organization that enables plurality, contradictions, allows for disagreement or disparate approaches, while encouraging collaborations, and a spirit that promotes questioning and the proposition of new ideas. We are not a top-down organization but one with a grassroots bottom-up approach.

One of those wonderful initiatives was a podcast on patient safety. Please download this informative roundtable discussion, which can be used at meetings, presentations, and other client education activities. <https://backup.filesanywhere.com/fs/v.aspx?v=8c6d6a8e5c5ea179a499> ID line26

At the Annual Meeting, I had the privilege to give the IMIA Certification Presentation. We are so close we can almost taste it. 'Professional' medical interpreters will finally achieve professional recognition. The fruit of our work on certification is seeing more media coverage and

there is much better understanding of who is really leading this particular issue of certification globally. There seem to be two views out there in the public:

- 1) The country is not quite ready for certification because it is such a complex endeavor and that we need to wait until we set the standards for interpreter training programs and then for certification. The IMIA supports all standards, and they will continue to develop throughout the years.
- 2) That it's the other way around: we are ready globally and can't wait any longer. Certification in place & in the field will actually be what sets the standard for training and quality in medical interpreting. This is the IMIA view by setting the 40hr + minimal training standard as a pre-requisite to medical interpreter certification, in addition to very specific language proficiency requirements that can be found on our website.

What does that mean to you as an IMIA member? First of all that certification will come to you very soon because we have heard you loud and clear and we know that qualified interpreters want certification sooner rather than later. It also means that as we set up the registration process (and you will receive notices of this) you should register for certification. As the IMIA starts its campaign with the ***'Are you registered for certification?'*** campaign, please spread the word: the time for certification has finally arrived and every working interpreter should register. If you received your new IMIA ID card, you saw that it states that you are not registered for certification.

This is the first step of certification and we are getting ready to embark in this most important endeavor. We are now a global organization and this is a global initiative. As pioneers in medical interpreting, we are bound to be the pioneers in medical interpreter certification. Being the certifying body for medical interpreters is a huge responsibility and we are ready to take it on.

As we embark on the 2008 Elections, we ask that you consider running for office and definitely vote in this election. The beauty of this organization is that any active member can run for any board position, including the president's position. I am incredibly proud of that. As you think of running or who to vote for, I hope that you vote YES to certification, and that is what I intend to implement next year should I have the honor to continue this work and be re-elected as president of this great association.

Respectfully,

Izabel Arocha, IMIA President

WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health

The full report, including executive summaries, backgrounders, stories and multimedia, can be found at: http://www.who.int/social_determinants/en/

Study - Language Disparities and Timely Care for Children in managed Care Medicaid

This study published in the American Journal of Managed Care, explores the relationship between language of parents (among the variables) and timeliness of care. It reiterates the importance of parent ability to communicate and outcome for care for children and identifies that the use of an interpreter results in more timely access. Thank you to Brunilda Torres for bringing up this study. <http://www.ajmc.com/ArticleAbstractOnly.cfm?Menu=1&ID=10539&AbstractOnly=yes>

Office of Civil Rights Act of 1964 - Title VI Simplified

“No person in the United States shall, on grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation or denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal Financial assistance.”

Note: By reason of participation in Medicare/Medicaid, virtually all U.S. healthcare providers are subject to Title VI.

COIA Update

The Consortium of Interpreter Association is a group of interpreter association leaders that meets monthly as a support group to unite the field of medical interpreting and to serve as a support for interpreter association leaders. It had its third annual face to face meeting at the IMIA Conference. Developing this network of organizations is key to creating an organized industry of medical interpretation associations.

While better attended in the past two years, associations from MA, RI, GA, and NH discussed topics that could be of interest to the future monthly conference meetings as well as how to get members engaged to participate. For those present, it was great to make new connections as well as better understand the importance of this initiative which was founded almost two years ago.

IMIA State Representatives Initiative

The IMIA held its first face-to-face meeting of IMIA State Reps to better define their role and responsibilities within the organization. There are 12 State Reps so far,

in the states for which we have state reps. Soon you will be getting an email with who represents the IMIA in your state and the initiatives these new reps will promote. This group agreed to meet monthly initially. We thank them for their commitment to our cause and values.

Resources for Interpreters

How can I start studying for certification?

1) Study your medical terminology

<http://www.xculture.org/catalog/index.php?cPath=24>

2) Study the five published interpreter standards

IMIA

<http://www.imiaweb.org/standards/standards.asp>

ASTM

<http://www.imiaweb.org/standards/ASTM.asp>

CHIA

http://chiaonline.org/images/Publications/CA_standards_healthcare_interpreters.pdf

NCIHC

<http://data.memberclicks.com/site/ncihc/NCIHC%20National%20Standards%20of%20Practice.pdf>

Canada

<http://www.imiaweb.org/uploads/pages/306.pdf>

International Registry of Certified Medical Interpreters

Language Line® University today announced the development of an online “International Registry of Certified Medical Interpreters.” The first industry resource of its kind, once launched the registry will give hospitals, healthcare organizations, interpreters and researchers access to a free online resource for identifying professional medical interpreters and reviewing their language skills and credentials. It will also serve as a professional development tool for the growing medical interpreting industry and a vehicle for raising awareness of the importance of the interpreting profession.

Although a standardized medical certification does not yet exist at the national level in the United States or internationally, there are several recognized medical interpreter certification programs currently available to interpreters. This registry will serve as a resource to raise awareness about these programs while drawing more focus on the need to establish a national medical interpreter certification.

A recently formed Global Advisory Council (GAC) will establish a review process for ensuring standards and credibility of the registry in which all participating organizations, including Language Line University, will

adhere to. The GAC consists of professionals and subject matter experts from the United States as well as several international locations.

The 2008 IMIA Salary Survey Presentation

In order to better understand the interpreting profession, the IMIA has been collecting aggregate data regarding the current wages and rates of medical interpreters and administrators of medical interpreting services on an annual basis. We thank all those that responded. <http://www.imiaweb.org/uploads/pages/386.ppt> to see the presentation of the results presented at the conference. To see previous year results please go to <http://www.imiaweb.org/about/default.asp> Soon you will be able to see the raw results of the 2008 Salary Survey as well, to be posted on the website.

IMIA Certification Update – Registration

The IMIA Certification Committee is primarily working on its Candidate Manual to be posted very soon. The group decided on specific language proficiency requirements and also grandfathering questions, which were approved by the board. We urge you to go to the certification section of the website to see all the information currently available. We also urge you to send us your comments to IMIAcertification@gmail.com so that the IMIA can get the feedback it needs from its members regarding this effort. While we want certification right away, it needs to be credible, reliable, and inclusive, and these are difficult tasks at hand that need to be thought out and vetted by many. This new registration process will help us gauge how many interpreters are interested in becoming certified at this moment.

USA News

Concord Hospital Enters into Settlement

Concord, New Hampshire - United States Attorney Tom Colantuono announced that Concord Hospital agreed to enter into a settlement agreement to resolve allegations that it violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) by failing to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services (such as sign language interpreters) that were necessary to ensure effective communication with deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. As part of the settlement, Concord Hospital, which cooperated in the investigation, has agreed to establish a program to ensure that it provides effective communication to deaf and hard-of-hearing patients in the future. The hospital also has agreed to pay a total of \$100,000.00, which will be divided among several complainants.

www.cmonitor.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20081014/OPINION/810140340/

Department of Defense paying more for translators

Washington, USA (Strategy Page): The Department of Defense has created several programs to get more translators. The Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus Program, pays troops a monthly bonus if they speak certain languages. But the monthly bonus is paid only when the language is used. For example, the U.S. Navy will now pay French speaking sailors an extra \$500 a month if they are involved in a part of the world (like Africa) where French is a common second language. For more, please visit: www.strategypage.com/htm/htintel/articles/20081015.asp

Kaiser Health Disparities Report:

A Weekly Look at Race, Ethnicity and Health

New York, USA (Kaiser): Greenwich Hospital has worked to improve services for immigrants by hiring a medical translator who helps patients speak to physicians and nurses, and helps them apply for emergency Medicaid payments or develop a repayment schedule. The hospital also has organized health fairs to promote nutrition and preventive health. However, Lindsay Farrell -- president and CEO of Open Door Family Medical Center in Connecticut, which provides outpatient care to many immigrants -- said that Greenwich Hospital does little to address the lack of specialists willing to see low-income patients. www.kaisernetwork.org/daily_reports/rep_index.cfm?DR_ID=54963

Over-the-Phone Interpreters Help Non-English-Speaking Patients Receive Better Care

VOA News, Washington (DC) Going to the doctor can make many people nervous. But when patients cannot communicate with their health care providers because they don't speak the same language, the situation is not only stressful and frustrating, it becomes potentially life-threatening.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/AmericanLife/2008-10-10-voa20.cfm?renderforprint=1&textonly=1&&TEXTMODE=1&CFID=52866324&CFTOKEN=55640604>

Washington: Medicaid to cut interpreter services

Washington, USA (Stateline): Doug Porter, Washington state's Medicaid director, said he has been given a goal of reducing expenses by 15 percent over the next two years. He said he will first cut new services provided by the state, such as interpreters for clients. After that, he would consider cutting payments to doctors, like the 48 percent hike to pediatricians the state enacted last year

after years of increasing payments only by 1 or 2 percent. The last resort would be tightening eligibility for Medicaid, he said. For more information, visit: www.stateline.org/live/details/story?contentId=344539

How the financial crisis is affecting translation companies

Washington, USA (Columbian): Roberta Barger, owner of CTS Language Link: "I'm nervous about the economy, but more on a personal basis than as a business owner. You're not informed if you're not nervous. A lot of our interpreting and translation service is based on contracts. We haven't noticed a hit yet; we're flat. Our costs are all up, but we're not raising our prices at all. "The real estate market might affect us, as building owners, if we were planning on selling, but we aren't. We have long-term tenants." For more information, please visit: www.columbian.com/article/20081005/NEWS02/810049961

Alabama: State and nation sees shortage of sign language interpreters

Alabama, USA (Dolthan Eagle): American Sign Language is indeed a distinct language from English — it has its own syntax and grammar, and sign language in general varies from country to country. High schools offer ASL as a foreign language. Alabama requires interpreters to be licensed or permitted. But there is still a shortage of interpreters both in the state and nationally who can bridge the gap between the hearing and deaf communities. For more information, visit: www.dothaneagle.com/dea/lifestyles/local/article/state_nation_sees_shortage_of_sign_language_interpreters/38333

Staten Island: Reductions language-translation services under consideration

New York, USA (SILive): While city agencies search for ways to trim already lean budgets, the cost-cutting measures probably won't include layoffs -- so says the man who told them to make those cuts this week. [...] Reductions in school administration and language-translation services, and shifting city employees who evaluate welfare cases to other departments in the city Human Resources Administration were just some of the ideas that have started to gain momentum around City Hall. For more information, please visit: www.silive.com/news/advance/index.ssf?/base/news/1222343109166440.xml&coll=1

English Only... to cut down on translation costs

Maryland, USA (News8): Another Maryland community is considering making English its official language, but opponents are planning a fight. "I'm in opposition of English only because there are residents who speak more

than one language and English isn't their primary language," said Hilda Barfield. Councilman Jack Perry's proposal will be considered by the city council Tuesday night. He says it could ultimately save the city up to \$5,000 a year in translation costs. For more information, please visit: www.news8.net/news/stories/0908/555874.html

Iowa: Single Spanish interpreter straining County Courthouse

Iowa, USA (Iowan): The Johnson County Courthouse is still relying on a single interpreter while its employees attempt to address what officials say is a growing language barrier with Spanish speakers. A state-funded program offering beginning Spanish classes to court employees no longer exists, said Steve Davis, the court communications officer with the Iowa Judicial Branch. "That grant is complete, and there is not additional funding," he said. For more information, please visit: www.dailyiowan.com/home/news/2008/09/25/Metro/Single.Spanish.Interpreter.Straining.Johnson.County.Courthouse-3452357.shtml

Note: while this story is not about medical interpreting, we know of many hospitals who also rely on a single interpreter, some are even tasked with being the interpreter, coordinator, basically being a one person language department!

The Payment Practices™ of translation agencies

On The Web (Payment Practices): The Payment Practices™ database contains information on more than 4,000 translation agencies and clients worldwide. Agencies are rated by the responses of freelancer translators: the PP Reliability Score (PPR Score™) shows the translation agency's reliability in terms of on-time payments; the Translator Approval (TA Score™) is assigned to each response based on the freelance translator's willingness to work with that agency again. Used together, these two scores make it easy for freelance translators and interpreters to decide whether to work for a particular translation agency or client. www.paymentpractices.net/

Guantanamo lawyers doubt interpreters' skills

Washington, USA (UPI): Defense lawyers at the U.S. detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, are raising concerns about the quality of the Arabic interpreters offered inmates. The attorneys say a lot is literally being lost in translation as they confer with their clients, who include prisoners charged in connection with the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States. www.upi.com/Top_News/2008/10/14/Gitmo_lawyers_doubt_interpreters_skills/UPI-93181224001275/

International News

Interpreters honored for service during Beijing Olympics, Paralympics

Beijing, China (Xinhua): China on Thursday gave awards to more than 1,700 interpreters and translators for "outstanding contributions" to the Beijing Olympics and Paralympics. The Beijing Olympic organizing committee and the China Translators' Association (CTA) also honored 13 organizations, including the Foreign Ministry and China International Publishing Group. A team of more than 1,700 translators and interpreters, including 400 professionals and 1,300 volunteers, provided simultaneous interpretation, consecutive interpretation and written translation for some 2,000 international conferences and press conferences in up to 44 languages during the games, said Zhao Huimin, an official with the committee. For more information, news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-09/25/content_10109426.htm

UK: Thousands of deaf patients struggling to access basic health care

London, UK (EurAlert): Thousands of Deaf patients are receiving inadequate healthcare because they are struggling to communicate with healthcare professions, say experts on BMJ today. [...] It is estimated that there are nearly nine million people in the UK who are hard of hearing —almost a sixth of the population. Yet studies have shown that 70% of Deaf patients have no interpreters in A&E consultations and 28% of Deaf people avoid going to see their general practitioner because of poor communication. For more information, www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2008-09/bmj-tod092908.php

Tanzania Association of Sign Language Interpreters has no office or equipment

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (IPP): The Tanzania Association of Sign Language Interpreters (TASLI), has said that since its establishment and registration in 2006, it has no office and faces a drastic shortage of equipment. This was revealed at the weekend by a Lecturer of Interpreters and former acting Chairman of TASLI, Geden Singo, when addressing more than 26 interpreters at their first meeting in Kibaha, Coast Region. For more information, visit: www.ippmedia.com/ipp/guardian/2008/10/02/123754.html

India: How to ensure the quality of translations in vernacular languages

New Delhi, India (Hindu): We are reliant on our vernacular partners to provide the expertise in translations. We haven't begun looking at original vernacular language publishing but when we do, we will

adopt global standards for this too. There are very few serious players in the market and since the business itself is closely held it is difficult to estimate what the market actually pays authors. For more information, please visit: www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/006200810141647.htm

Denmark: Better job could be done of using interpreters

Århus, Denmark (Sermitsiaq): The number of Greenlanders in Århus, Denmark's second largest city, who are socially disadvantaged is inordinately high, according to Århus City Council. The city has prepared a report on the subject in connection with the Århus Social Services Agency's 'Greenlander Project'. The study was conducted between 2005 and March 2008. [...] It said more time should be used on social work in the Greenlandic community. It also said a better job could be done of using interpreters. For more information, please visit: sermitsiaq.gl/indland/article59073.ece?lang=EN

Anger over EU's traveling circus

Strasbourg, France (Herald): To critics, the European Parliament is the European Union's travelling circus. By some estimates, the to-and-fro costs the 27-member block is €203 million (\$429 million) each year, comprising transport bills, payments to freelance interpreters and a fixed allowance to Parliament staff of about 1000. The Green Party says the commute also adds about 20,000 tons of carbon dioxide (CO2) to the atmosphere, an embarrassment for the continent that styles itself as the world's spearhead against global warming. For more information, please visit: http://www.nzherald.co.nz/government/news/article.cfm?c_id=49&objectid=10533579&ref=rss

Nordic Council: Funding for interpretation

Copenhagen, Denmark (Norden): The Nordic Council Presidium has decided to allocate DKK 455,000 to give the Nordic Youth Council more money for interpretation and translation in the future. NYC decided at its meeting in April this year to speak in English in the situations where it wasn't possible to understand each other in the Nordic languages. For more information, please visit: www.norden.org/webb/news/news.asp?id=8090&lang=6

UK: Cutting interpreter costs with flash cards

London, UK (Daily Mail): A police force is dealing with so many foreign crime victims that it has armed its officers with Guess Who? - style picture cards to beat the language barrier. Sussex Police - which has more than 10,000 Eastern European immigrants on its patch - say the cards allow officers to discuss crimes without waiting for a translator. The force is hoping to save cash

on interpreters - after it was blasted for last year spending £102,000 on them. For more information, please visit: www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1053523/Police-use-Guess-Who-flash-cards-help-migrants-identify-criminals.html

U.S. frees Afghan fixer after 10-month detention

Kabul, Afghanistan (Globe&Mail): His excellent language skills and physical fitness made him an ideal candidate when the U.S. Special Forces arrived in southern Afghanistan looking for translators. Mr. Ahmad spent the years after 2001 roaming the country with elite troops, who gave him the nickname Jojo and a rich network of connections in the new regime. He eventually left the military for better pay as a freelance security consultant, and started working full-time as a media translator in 2006, mostly for CTV. For more information, please visit: www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20080922.wafghanfixer22/BNStory/Afghanistan/home

Somalis left lost in substandard Translations

Mogadishu, Somalia (Press review): In this multilingual, interdependent global world, languages serve as the best vehicle in bridging peoples of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. However, while languages may ease the gap of communication between diverse peoples, they are often prone to misinterpretation that could entail confusion and misunderstanding. A flawed interpretation may not only be misleading but often inexplicable and can be a cause for serious misunderstanding. For more information, please visit: www.somalipressreview.com/view.php?articleid=893

Book of the Month

Telephone Interpreting: A Comprehensive Guide to the Profession by Nataly Kelly

While it may be a new concept for many readers, telephone interpreting has been successfully used to enable speakers of different languages to communicate for more than three decades. With time, the field has evolved to ensure that high levels of quality can be obtained, both in terms of connectivity and quality of interpretation. However, in spite of its 30-year history and widespread use throughout the world, very little has been written about telephone interpreting. In this, the first book devoted entirely to the subject, the author provides readers with long-awaited transparency and insight into the field, in order to promote the highest possible standards of quality. The publication serves as a practical guide for interpreters, a resource for educators, a reference text for researchers and a comprehensive

handbook for consumers of interpreting services everywhere. To order please go to: <http://www.trafford.com/08-1015>

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.

Please send suggestions and comments about the eNews to Izabel Arocha at iarocha@imiaweb.org