



IMIA eNews - October 2009



Enthusiasm is contagious. Be a carrier!

Susan Rabin



Letter from the President

Dear members,

This month I am almost in disbelief that we are going to launch national certification soon. After so many attempts to delay or distract our effort, the will of the interpreters prevailed! This marks a turn in our profession. What else is there to say but that our profession will never be the same! We will soon be able to more easily identify who is a professional medical interpreter and who isn't. All professional medical interpreters will have a chance to be qualified under the same standard - the first national standard of competency for medical interpreters - national certification.

Some might have seen that the NCIHC recently formed a new certification entity, the CCHI, which has incorporated and applied for 501c6 status to start a certification program. I am not surprised that the NCIHC decided to do just what we have already done, to form a neutral organization (but that also has for-profit organizations as part of the structure) to govern medical interpreter certification. After all, it's been said that imitation is the best compliment.

It is still unclear to me why the NCIHC would not recognize our historic instrument and the only other patent pending instrument developed by Language Line Services. Perhaps the best explanation is that they simply have a strong desire to oversee and govern their own process. I do not believe they have an instrument ready to deliver, preferring instead to announce their intention to start fundraising now to develop a second national certification process in the next few years.

Perhaps our patent pending instruments will be fully patented by then and we will certainly have NOCA Accreditation by the end of next year. Most importantly, we will have many newly certified interpreters in the field who will be the best promoters of national certification.

We have undergone a neutral and public independent selection process to achieve the new National Board, and although the entity was founded by IMIA and LLS, and as such are connected, IMIA and LLS will not have a majority in the governing body of this organization, whose sole purpose will be to oversee certification. By launching the certification process at a national level, we can focus on the important issues related to medical interpreter qualification and screening programs for minority languages, which will need new instruments, and of course, will be open to all organizations with national interpreter testing experience, for-profit and non-profit alike, without impinging on their intellectual property. We call this a "public-private partnership", others call it "vendor neutral". Most importantly our umbrella effort will be multi-exam, multi-credential, and multi-organizational, a true collaborative for a large national initiative.

We will continue to call for unity in the field and further coalescing of all efforts regardless of how many join the game at a later date.

Izabel S. Arocha, M.Ed.
IMIA President



Other News

New Educational Tool for Addressing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Care

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Center for Health Care Quality at The George Washington University have developed a short educational video and PowerPoint to explain to providers the importance of identifying and addressing racial and ethnic disparities in care.

Numerous studies document disparities in the care delivered to minority patients—even when income, education level, insurance

status and other demographic and socioeconomic factors are equal. Yet most hospitals, health systems and providers have not thoroughly assessed whether such disparities exist within their organizations. The video examines the definition of health care disparities and academic evidence of their existence and presents tested solutions to identify and address disparities from previous RWJF-funded initiatives. Watch the video here:

<http://rwjf.org/newsroom/product.jsp?id=44448>

Study Finds Racial Inequalities Cost U.S. Health System Over \$50 Billion a Year

Racial inequalities in health care access and quality added more than \$50 billion a year in direct U.S. health care costs over a four-year period according to a study by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington-based think tank. In this study, researchers at Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland found that over 30 percent of direct medical expenditures for African Americans, Asian Americans and Hispanics were excess costs linked to health inequalities. Between 2003 and 2006, these excess costs were \$229.4 billion. <http://news.prnewswire.com/DisplayReleaseContent.aspx?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/09-17-2009/0005095833&EDATE=>

Race, Ethnicity, and Language Data: Standardization for Health Care Quality Improvement

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) formed the Subcommittee on Standardized Collection of Race/Ethnicity Data for Healthcare Quality Improvement to examine approaches to standardization. In its 2009 report, Race, Ethnicity, and Language Data: Standardization for Health Care Quality Improvement, the subcommittee recommends collection of more granular ethnicity and language need according to national standards in addition to OMB race and Hispanic ethnicity categories. The presence of data on race, ethnicity, and language does not, in and of itself, guarantee subsequent actions in terms of analysis of quality-of-care data to identify health care needs or actions to reduce or eliminate disparities that are found. The absence of data, however, essentially guarantees that none of those actions will occur. <http://www.iom.edu/CMS/3809/61110/72796.aspx>

Note from IMIA: While the IMIA applauds the work done on this report, it submitted two comments to IOM, related to the subcommittee's recommendation on language data collection.

- 1) Asking patients how well they speak English is not a culturally competent process of inquiry. A patient who speaks English less than Very Well, is also not necessarily an LEP patient. Identification of LEP needs should not be derived by fluency of an individual as the need for interpretation will vary from one encounter to another depending on its complexity.
- 2) It is of utmost importance that hospitals collect 'care language', also called 'preferred language of care' and while 'primary language' has its uses, it is less relevant when ethnicity is already being collected.



US News

Immigrants Cling to Fragile Lifeline at Safety-Net Hospital

If Grady Memorial Hospital succeeds in closing its outpatient dialysis clinic, Tadesse A. Amdago, a 69-year-old immigrant from Ethiopia, said he would begin "counting the days until I die." Rosa Lira, 78, a permanent resident from Mexico, said she also assumed she "would just die."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/24/health/policy/24grady.html?r=1>

California: Avantpage Releases Report on Medical Tourism

California, USA (Avantpage): Despite the proclamations by some that United States health care leaves much to be desired, the U.S. is the destination of choice for hundreds of thousands choosing to leave their countries for medical procedures each year. In response to the linguistic challenges that such tourism presents, Avantpage Translations recently released a special report called "Medical Tourism: A Linguistic Perspective."

<http://www.avantpage.com/Healthcare/medical-tourism-part-ii.html>

Missouri: MU provides virtual medical interpretation

Missouri, USA (KBIA): The MU Center for Health Policy is making it easier for those who don't speak English to seek medical attention. One of the center's newly funded projects will provide virtual medical interpretation through the Missouri Telehealth Network. Center for Health Policy Director Karen Edison says sometimes it is hard to find in-person translators.

www.publicbroadcasting.net/kbia/news.newsmain/article/1/0/1557205/KBIA.Local/MU.Makes.Medical.Care.Easier.For.Non-English.Speakers

North Carolina: State Community Interpreters Pilot Test

North Carolina, USA (Citizen Times): The University of North Carolina - Greensboro, Center for New North Carolinians (CNNC), is seeking volunteers to participate in the second phase of a pilot test for foreign language community interpreters Friday and Saturday at MAHEC at 501 Biltmore Ave. CNNC plans to include including Arabic, Hmong, Vietnamese, however, the pilot and early versions of the upcoming certification test will be offered for Spanish/English only. <http://www.citizen-times.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090923/LOCAL/90922032>

North Carolina: Symposium on National Certification

Charlotte, NC: Doris Hernandez, North Carolina IMIA Rep organized a great symposium which took place on September 19. Over 50 interpreters attended and were very interested in the process. Many stated their desire for a national process so that they could have a credential that would be recognized in several states in case they move from one state to the other. It also better fits the compliance needs of North Carolina hospitals to ensure that the remote interpreters they rely on from other states have the same qualifications. To reach Doris Hernandez go to IMIANorthCarolina@gmail.com

California: NSF, BBN and AT&T fund speech-to-speech translation system to help patients

California, USA (EurekAlert): At medical facilities around the country, care is delayed, complicated and even jeopardized because doctors and patients don't speak the same language. The situation is particularly dire in diverse megacities like Los Angeles and New York. Now, USC computer scientists, communication specialists and health professionals hope to create a cheap, robust and effective speech-to-speech (S2S) translation system for clinics, emergency rooms and even ambulances. For more information, please visit: www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2009-09/uosc-dy092109.php

Washington DC: Need an interpreter? Just pick up the phone

Washington, USA (NPR): Imagine being able to pick up a phone and connect to an interpreter in just about any language. Hospitals have long used such services. Now, such phone-based interpretation may also be gaining traction in the marketplace. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=113276566&ft=1&f=1006>

Missouri: Medical Interpreters Break Language Barriers

Missouri, USA (infoZine): Language barriers in health care settings can decrease access to quality care and diminish

comprehension for limited English proficient patients (LEP). These barriers compromise quality of care, and increase costs and inefficiencies. Now, the University of Missouri Institute of Public Policy, Center for Health Policy and Missouri Telehealth Network are partnering with the Language Access Metro Project (LAMP) and the Missouri Primary Care Association to provide medical interpreters to non-English-speaking patients who otherwise might not have access to live interpreters. For more information, please visit: www.infozine.com/news/stories/op/storiesView/sid/37520/

Pennsylvania: The Lehigh Valley Hospital Health Network

Pennsylvania, USA (Morning Call): Joanne Mendez is one of seven full-time medical interpreters who work in the three Lehigh Valley Hospital Health Network campuses. At noon Wednesday, Mendez was doing what she's been doing the past five years: ensuring that patients who don't speak English are able to relay critical information, such as Santos' allergy to a particular high-blood-pressure medicine.

New CCHI for Quality Medical Care

New York, USA (Medical News): A solution to help healthcare practitioners and limited English proficient (LEP) speaking patients focus directly on quality healthcare rather than an inability to communicate with each other is now at hand. A new organization is now working to assure competency in language interactions in healthcare settings -- the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters (CCHI). <http://www.news-medical.net/news/20090917/New-CCHI-for-quality-medical-care.aspx>

CAAG's Video Remote Interpreting Revolutionizes Interpreting for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Texas, USA (PRWEB): Millions of Americans are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and communicating with them both efficiently and cost-effectively has for many years challenged business, education and law enforcement communities, to name a few. Houston-based Communication Access Ability Group (CAAG) has unveiled a revolutionary new suite of products and services that meet and overcome this challenge.

For more information, please visit:

www.prweb.com/releases/sign_language/VRI/prweb2819574.htm

San Francisco doesn't abide by own translation requirements

California, USA (SF Weekly): A 2001 law authored by then-Supervisor Mark Leno and cosponsored by nearly all of his colleagues mandates most major city departments to translate official notices — or even provide translators at public hearings — into any language spoken by at least 5 percent of the population, or

about 10,000 residents. This would mean, for instance, posting news about street closures and planning hearings in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. But as Tran's experience suggests, this isn't happening. For more information, please visit:

www.sfweekly.com/2009-09-02/news/s-f-doesn-t-abide-by-its-own-translation-requirements/

Oregon Certification Council targeted for Elimination

Oregon, USA (KUOW): The translating service is required by federal law. But a State Council on Health Care Interpreters in Oregon is targeted for elimination by Governor Ted Kulongoski. The panel hasn't met in more than a year. But Samia Saad, who oversees the interpreting program at OHSU, says the council's mission is to certify medical interpreters, and she says that effort is just on hold. For more information, please visit:

kuow.org/program.php?id=18321

New Colorado increases penalties for working as interpreter

Colorado, USA (Denver Business Journal): Other new laws affecting businesses include measures that increases funding for clean-energy loans to businesses and one that increases penalties for people working as interpreters for the deaf without proper certification. For more information, please visit:

denver.bizjournals.com/denver/stories/2009/08/31/daily45.html

Washington DC: Moving One Step Closer to On-Demand

Interpreting Innovations Washington, USA (Global

Watchtower): The nature of communication is changing, and now more than ever, businesses and consumers want instant language capabilities in real time. So far, most of the industry's attention has been focused on machine translation for this purpose. However, as our ranking of the largest global providers shows, about a third of the biggest companies derive their revenue primarily or exclusively from spoken language interpretation services. For more information, please visit:

www.globalwatchtower.com/2009/08/31/lisa/#more-667

Utah: Sorenson Communications Partners with ASL

Interpreter Educator Carol J. Patrie

Utah, USA (Business Wire): Sorenson Communications®, the leading provider of Video Relay Service (VRS) for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals who use sign language to communicate, today announced that it is partnering with Carol J. Patrie, Ph.D., a pioneer in the field of American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter education, to further expand the expertise of its interpreter management and Professional Development group. Sorenson Communications, the leading employer of ASL interpreters in the

United States, is the only VRS provider to offer such a program on this scale. For more information, please visit:

finance.yahoo.com/news/Sorenson-Communications-bw-1409911593.html?x=0&.v=1



International News

Canada: Commissioner Improves services in 11 languages:

Northwest Territories, Canada (CBC): People in the Northwest Territories must be able to access health care and other basic services in any of the territory's 11 official languages, Languages Commissioner Sarah Jerome reminded MLAs on Monday. Jerome said people in areas such as the Beaufort Delta can't always access government services, or even hire interpreters for those services, in the language of their choice. For more information:

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/north/story/2009/09/29/nwt-languages.html>

France: Response to "Lack of Translators Still Hampers

Intelligence" Rouen, France (Intranews): There have been a number of letters responding the report published in yesterday's issue of Intranews entitled "Lack of Translators Still Hampers Intelligence". Links to these reactions are provided below.

<http://www.themoderatevoice.com/44886/shortage-of-linguists-hurting-us-war-on-terror-surprisednewsblaze.com/story/20090831122356mcut.nb/topstory.html>

Interpreter Association (IMIA) Appoints Brazil Representative

WASHINGTON, Sept. 3 /PRNewswire/ -- The International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA) appointed a representative for Brazil to continue building the organization's international structure. The IMIA is proud to announce Mylene Queiroz, medical interpreter, as the IMIA Representative for Brazil. A medical interpreter trained in the United States, she has moved to Brazil and is now undergoing a Masters Program at Santa Catarina Federal University - UFSC, with a thesis focusing on Medical Interpreting in Brazil. Mylene Queiroz is empowered to lead the IMIA Brazil Chapter. Brazil is still in its infancy in the development of the community interpreting profession, although there is a rich diversity of immigrants in this country with cross-cultural public service needs. For more see,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/pressRelease/idUS136260+03-Sep-2009+PRN20090903>

Belgium: Project REACH112 includes remote interpreting services

Brussels, Belgium (PRLog): The European emergency number 112, which is used to contact emergency services free of charge all over the EU, is currently not accessible to the majority of disabled people. However this is set to change with the start of REACH112, a new five-country initiative in France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Spain and the UK, which will introduce improved communication solutions for disabled people, allowing them direct access to emergency services, a potentially lifesaving feature. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.prlog.org/10330827-start-of-the-project-reach112-responding-to-all-citizens-needing-help.html>

Professional Association Launched in Argentina

Buenos Aires, Argentina (Latin American Herald Tribune): The International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters was launched Wednesday in Argentina to promote ethical standards and combat the negative repercussions of globalization. The association's president, Aurora Humaran, told Efe that the initiative has been two years in the making and is designed to "respond to the negative effects of globalization on the profession". For more information, please visit:

<http://www.laht.com/article.asp?ArticleId=344753&CategoryId=14093>

Canada: Long hours, but rewarding days with Multilingual Community Interpreter Services

Toronto, Canada (Financial Times): My work as a strategy consultant with the Multilingual Community Interpreter Services in Toronto has required me to use chunks of teachings from 75 per cent of the courses that comprised the first year of my MBA program at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto. MCIS is a non-profit, social enterprise organization. It provides interpretation and translation services for non-English speaking people, so that they can use government and charitable social services. For more information, please visit:

www.ft.com/cms/s/0/cc36c674-95c4-11de-90e0-00144feabdc0.html?nclink_check=1

Canada and US: New VRI for ASL Services

Washington, USA (PR Web): TCS Associates, a total solutions provider for people with Disabilities, has launched TCSteps On-Demand, a comprehensive Video Relay Interpreting (VRI) service providing Sign Language Interpreting for Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing people throughout the United States and Canada. For more information, please visit:

news.yahoo.com/s/prweb/20091001/bs_prweb/prweb2963504_1;

World Standards Week

World Standards Week 2009, the American National Standards Institute's annual series of meetings and events for the standards and conformity assessment community, will be held Oct. 5-8 in Bethesda, Md. This year's theme of the U.S. celebration of World Standards Day, which is on Tuesday, Oct. 7, is "Standards for Environmental Stewardship." For a schedule of events, visit www.ansi.org

Transatlantic Translations Launches LangCommLingo Telephone Interpreting Service

New York, USA & London, UK (Business Wire): Transatlantic Translations, a leading provider of translation services to organizations worldwide, launches LangCommLingo. An "on demand" Telephone Interpreting service designed with the traveler in mind. Transatlantic Translations, through its trading subsidiaries, has provided Telephone Interpreting services to commercial organizations across the world for some time. Now, with the launch of LangCommLingo, vacationers, student travelers, tourists and business travelers alike have 24/7 access to their network of interpreters previously only really available to companies and public sector organizations.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/pressRelease/idUS207566+03-Sep-2009+BW20090903>



IMIA News

IMIA International Code of Ethics for Interpreter Educators – Open for Public Review

The IMIA International Code of Ethics for Interpreter Educators was developed by a number of educators from around the world who met on several occasions in 2007 and 2008 at the IMIA Trainers Calls. It has undergone several revisions with additional educators and is open for public review in 2009. This Code of Ethics was designed for all interpreter educators, not solely for medical interpreter educators. See document at <http://www.imiaweb.org/uploads/pages/492.pdf>

All comments should be emailed to info@imiaweb.org.

IMIA Conference Around the Corner!

To Register go to:

<http://www.imiaweb.org/conferences/confreg2009.asp>



Other Related News

Civil Rights Enforcement Article

Seven months after taking office, Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. is reshaping the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division by pushing it back into some of the most important areas of American political life, including voting rights, housing, employment, bank lending practices and redistricting after the 2010 census.

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/01/us/politics/01rights.html?_r=1&hpw

Invisible Immigrants, Old and Left With Nobody to Talk To

(By PATRICIA LEIGH BROWN) Older immigrants, cut off from society by language and culture differences, now make up America's fastest-growing immigrant group. For the full article go to:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/31/us/31elder.html?emc=eta1>

Worlds Apart 4 Part Video Series Cultural Competency Training

If you are looking for a good learning tool check out "Worlds Apart" - It is a 4-part series on Cross Cultural Healthcare available from Fanlight Productions. Each section is anywhere from 10 - 14 minutes long and can be used to move the audience from CLAS as "theory" to how implementing CLAS could help the clinical situations that are in the film scenarios. They are also real life scenarios that were followed by the creators. It comes with a facilitators guide and I have found this to be much less "canned" than some videos I have seen. Available at www.fanlight.com



IMIA Book of the Month

Health Professional and Patient Interaction

by Ruth B. Purtilo, Amy M. Haddad

Textbook. \$50.00 ISBN-13: 9781416022442

The revised and updated seventh edition of Health Professional and Patient Interaction emphasizes respectful interactions in a wide range of health care settings. Strategies for effectively communicating with patients of all ages, as well as abusive, depressed and impaired patients, are illustrated through examples and various scenarios. This is a great book for interpreter training programs to include in their curriculum and also for practicum. Interpreters will benefit from it no matter how many years they have of experience.

- A framework of respect and ethics is presented to drive decision making in patient communication
- Patient stories introduce the patient's point of view to illustrate the principles described in each chapter.
- Individual chapters detail advice for effective, respectful interaction with newborns through toddlers, children and adolescents, adults, and older adults.
- Questions for Thought and Discussion ending each section engage students in applying their knowledge to a variety of situations.
- Updated information highlights the importance of professionalism and values.



About the IMIA eNews

The IMIA eNews is an industry-wide 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, as well as IMIA news. 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