



SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

Certified Medical Interpreter

This is one of three job descriptions (associate medical interpreter, medical interpreter, senior medical interpreter) for you to adapt to your hospital needs.

Job Title: Certified Medical Interpreter

GENERAL SUMMARY:

Under the direction of the manager, the incumbent serves as a medical interpreter for patients and staff and supports the operations of the department, in the consecutive, simultaneous, and sight translation modes. Relays medical information between speakers of two different languages in compliance with all office and hospital policies and procedures, particularly relating to patient confidentiality and informed consent, passing performance of competencies listed in the IMIA Standards of Practice, and the Code of Ethics. Understands and abides by all published Standards of Practice and Codes of Ethics for Medical Interpreters. Also assists department with on-the-job training and mentoring of interpreter practicums

PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Helps facilitate successful delivery of services to linguistically diverse consumers. Explain hospital resources, office protocols, and limitations to clinicians and patients; make appropriate referrals; serve as a cultural and linguistic resource to both patients and providers to contribute to successful outcomes. Performs duties in a spirit of teamwork and cooperation. Adheres to hospital policies on customer relations and hospitality. Understands the hospital's system of service delivery.

Written translations as required in patient encounters such as filling out forms and medical instructions, and medication schedules; administrative translations such as letters to patients, documents, and patient materials.

Support the office operations by answering the phone, taking requests, calling patients to confirm appointments, document encounters on the interpreter tracking system, do data entry, verify and schedule future appointments when necessary, do general troubleshooting, filing and photocopying. Also assists department with on-the-job training and mentoring of interpreter practicums. Utilize on-line computer systems such as Outlook, and other hospital software. Work with special projects as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Fluency in English and one or more foreign languages, both oral and written, with a minimum of Advanced Mid proficiency level according to ACTFL - <http://www.actfl.org/files/public/Guidelinespeak.pdf>
- Ability to accurately work in consecutive mode and sight translate into and from working language(s).
- 3-5 years of experience in a healthcare setting as a medical interpreter with strong medical vocabulary (including vocabulary of medical specialties, to interpret for our medical specialties clinics)
- Bachelor's degree in any area related to science or human services
- Proof of medical interpreter training - minimum of 40 hours (college level interpreting training preferred)
- National Certification required (NAD-RID for ASL interpreters, National Board Certification for spoken language interpreters, see www.certifiedmedicalinterpreters.org)
- High level of customer service and a positive approach
- Familiarity and ability to work with diversity of cultural/socio-economic backgrounds
- General knowledge of cultural backgrounds of patients to be served
- Good interpersonal, organizational, and time-management skills
- Knowledge of computer systems

SKILLS/ ABILITIES/ COMPETENCIES REQUIRED:

Strong linguistic skills:

- understands variety of regional accents and linguistic styles and registers
- selects appropriate mode of interpretation for each situation
- interprets with highest degree of accuracy and completeness in consecutive, simultaneous and sight translation modes
- self-corrects, understands own linguistic limitations, seeks clarification and accepts correction
- picks up cues from encounter participants regarding level of understanding and/or need for clarification
- strong writing skills and understanding of translation process

Strong cultural awareness competencies:



- understands language as an expression of culture, recognizes the underlying assumptions of each party about medicine, the encounter, the illness etc.; uses this understanding to empower patient and provider to better understand each other.
- Intervenes as intercultural mediator when communication is compromised by culture-bound messages.
- avoids generalizations and stereotyping
- uses culturally appropriate behavior and is able to choose appropriate time to clarify or interject by respecting the goals of the encounter
- is aware of own personal values, beliefs and cultural characteristics which may be a source of conflict or discomfort in certain situations, is able to acknowledge these and/or to withdraw from encounters when these may interfere with successful interpretation

Strong interpreting skills:

- explains role of the interpreter to patient and provider
- recognizes the complexity of the clinical encounter and added factor of linguistic barrier
- sets tone of the patient/provider encounter to manage spatial configuration and flow of communication to preserve accuracy and completeness, and to assess and address potential areas of discomfort for patient (age, gender of interpreter, no previous experience with interpreters)
- encourages and fosters direct communication between provider and patient
- maintains professional distance and integrity
- diffuses conflict between parties by remaining calm and impartial
- clarifies instructions, follow up steps in a diplomatic, effective manner

Ethical competency:

- understands and abides by hospital policies on patient confidentiality, informed consent, non-discrimination and by interpreters code of ethics and standards of practice

Interpersonal and customer service skills:

- projects positive attitude about the department and the hospital, and offers services to ensure positive experience
- works as a team with colleagues and providers
- addresses concerns raised during or after an encounter by encouraging provider to make appropriate referral and/or assisting with making of appointment with right resource and booking interpreter as needed

Organizational skills:

- works well under pressure to manage stressful situations
- flexible to meet scheduling needs and handle often unpredictable changes
- sound judgment and confidence
- ability to handle multiple tasks
- detail-oriented and accurate

WORKING CONDITIONS:

Fast-paced clinical and office environment, with frequently changing priorities.

Physically demanding with a lot of walking and standing time.

Emotionally challenging, as some interactions may be highly stressful requiring maturity, composure & sound judgment.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY: NA

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY: NA

APPROVAL: VP / Director Date

The above is intended to describe the general contents and requirements of work being performed by people assigned to this classification. It is not intended to be construed as an exhaustive statement of all duties, responsibilities or skills of personnel so classified.

Adapted from Mass General Hospital-Medical Interpreter Services Department