

UTSHC Policies and Procedures

Policy 1-300 Pages 1-2 Patient Rights and Responsibilities Translation/Interpretation Services (1.A.2.)	Effective: 5/9/2018 Revised: <i>Click here to enter a date.</i>
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Policy

The Student Health Center (UTSHC) shall ensure meaningful communication with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) patients and their authorized representatives regarding their medical conditions and treatment. As such, UTSHC will take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with LEP have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in all services, activities, programs and other benefits of the Health Center, including the communication of information contained in vital documents. These documents include but are not limited to, the privacy policy, waivers of rights, records requests, consent to treatment forms, financial and insurance benefit forms, etc.

Access to translation/interpretation aids needed to comply with this policy shall be provided without cost to the person being served. Patients/students and their families will be informed of the availability of such assistance.

Procedures

Identifying a LEP Person, Their Language, and Their Healthcare Needs

By virtue of their interactions with a student/patient, any UTSHC employee can assist in recognizing patients with LEP. Actions shall be taken by the identifying staff member to promptly identify the language and communication needs of the individual. If necessary, staff may use a language identification card or "I speak" cards/posters to assist in this identification.

Administrative/Business Needs Only:

LEP patients with needs limited only to administrative issues or business shall be referred to the SHC Administrative Office for assistance.

Clinical Needs without an Appointment:

In order to facilitate appropriate communication of medical needs, only clinical staff members will schedule an appointment for an LEP patient at the SHC. Dependent on the circumstances, these may include a Triage Nurse, Clinic Nurse, or Provider.

Clinical Needs with an Appointment:

Upon arrival to the SHC, LEP patients who already have an appointment will be directed to the Nurse of the Provider with whom the appointment is scheduled.

Translation/Interpretation Options

Patients identified by administrative/clinical staff as having LEP shall be offered the use of translation services commensurate with their level of English proficiency. Administrative/clinical staff that may have direct contact with LEP patients will be trained in effective communication techniques, including the appropriate and effective use of translation services.

Web-based translation services

Administrative and clinical staff may utilize web-based services, such as Google Translate, when minimal translation assistance is required. Staff shall take all necessary measures to ensure that no patient identification information is utilized in the use of these services.

Family member or friend

LEP patients may request to use a family member or friend as an interpreter. However, family members or friends will not be used as interpreters unless specifically requested by the LEP person and only **after** the LEP person has understood that their friend or family member may be provided with confidential personal health information during the interaction. If the LEP person chooses to use a family member or friend, issues of competency, confidentiality, privacy, and conflict of interest should be considered. A child is not considered a competent, confidential communication resource. *The request to use a family member or friend and these considerations shall be documented in the patient's medical record.*

If the family member or friend is not deemed competent or appropriate, then competent translation services will be provided by use of telephone-based translation services.

Telephone-based translation services

With patients identified as having a greater need for translation services wherein potentially identifying protected health information must be utilized and wherein no family member or friend deemed competent or appropriate is available, administrative and clinical staff may use the language assistance of the telephone-based LanguageLine® services. *The use of LanguageLine® shall be documented in the medical record.*

Note: Subsequent to their first clinical encounter, the language used to communicate with the LEP patient shall be documented as an "Alert" in the electronic medical record (EMR).

LanguageLine® Services: 1-(866)-874-3972

UTSHC has contractually engaged Language Line Solutions® to provide qualified translation services when needed. Use of LanguageLine® is limited to administrative and clinical staff. Once a Language Line Solutions® representative is contacted, administrative/clinical staff shall ensure the appropriate bilingual interpreter is selected via the telephone prompt.

Providing Notice to LEP Persons

UTSHC will inform LEP persons of the availability of cost free language assistance by use of notification signs stored/posted in intake areas and other points of entry, including but not limited to the front desk/check-in stations, examination rooms, and nurse stations, as well as posting notices in SHC literature and on the UTSHC website.