



Enhancing Language Access: Assessing Bilingual Health Center Staff Competency

Megan Martinez
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Developed by National Center Farmworker Health (NCFH)

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Today's Speaker



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National Center for Farmworker Health

The **National Center for Farmworker Health** is a private, not-for-profit organization located in Buda, Texas, whose mission is "To improve the health of farmworker families".

- Population specific data resources and technical assistance
- Workforce development and training
- Health education resources and program development
- Board Governance training
- Program Management

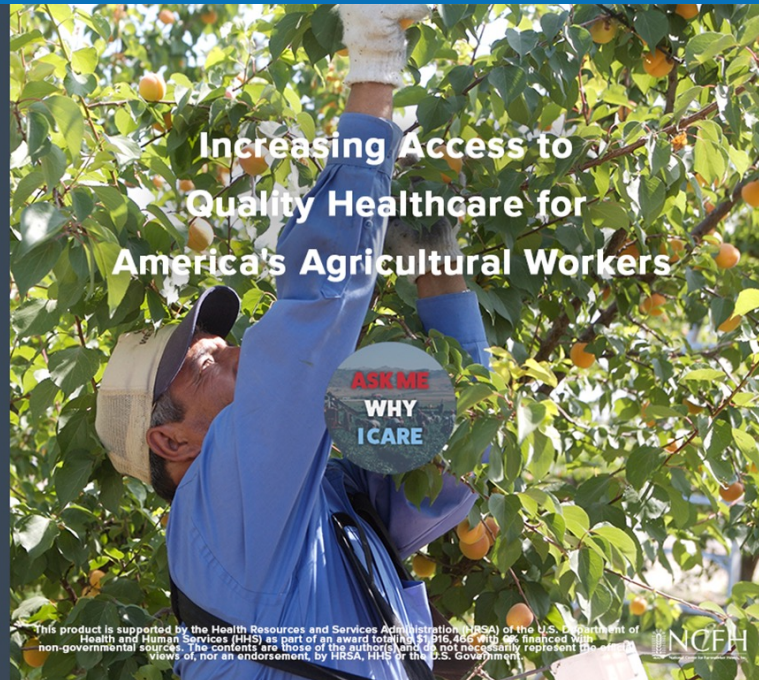





Ag Worker Access Campaign

A national initiative to increase the number of Migratory & Seasonal Agricultural Workers & their families served in Community and Migrant Health Centers.

<http://www.ncfh.org/ag-worker-access.html>



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Learning Objectives

- Recognize the importance of language access services and learn how to effectively evaluate the language competency of bilingual staff.
- Identify and distinguish different proficiency levels of language access services needed, while considering the specific language needs of their patient populations, including speaking, listening, writing, reading skills, and medical terminology interpretation abilities.
- Explore additional resources and tools, including NCFH's Assessing Bilingual Staff Competency Tool, for workforce development and competency assessments.

The Need
for
Enhancing
Language
Access





POLL TIME

Do you know if your health center currently has assessments in place to assess staff language competency and proficiency?





Importance of Assessing Health Center Staff Language Competency

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Closing the gap on language access in health care



Challenges of Language Barriers



Let's Chat!

- What types of challenges do you see your patients having due to language barriers?
- What have you done to address those barriers?
- What are some common challenges you have faced as health center staff due to language barriers?





Benefits on Addressing Language Barriers

Improved:

- Patient Communication
- Patient Satisfaction
- Health Outcomes
- Patient Retention



Lessons from the field

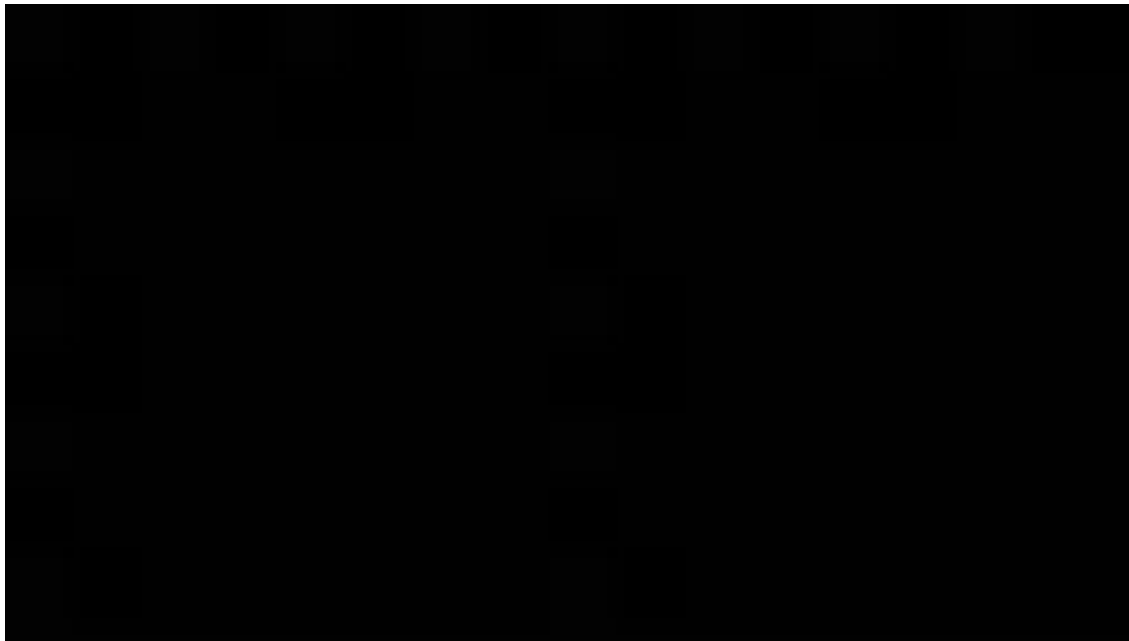


“A Case Study of the Impact of Language Concordance on Patient Care, Satisfaction, and Comfort with Sharing Sensitive Information During Medical Care”

By the National Library of Medicine



Case Study #2: Patient: Elena Sanchez





Assessing Competency: The Now

Evaluate the process in place.

- What assessment is being used to assess competency, if any?
How is it being used?
- Does it accurately assess the skill set of the staff members based on their role in providing language access services?
- Who are the staff currently involved in administering these assessments?
- What needs to be revised to improve the process to fit current needs?



Assessing Competency: The Need

Identify proficiency levels that your health center staff needs to provide based on the language needs of your patient populations. To do so, you should:

- Assess patient language needs. Identify the languages spoken and the type of support needed through patient needs assessments, chart reviews, staff interviews/surveys, and screening for language barriers.
- Track the number of patients that need language access support and at what points during the clinical visit.
- Track the number of bilingual staff and their role in providing language access support.
- Define the levels of language proficiency to assign staff based on their skill set:
 - **Basic Level:** Staff can help with simple interpretation for scheduling appointments and talking on the phone after visits.
 - **Independent level:** Staff can do more, like explain health information and help patients understand the healthcare system better.
 - **Proficient Level:** Staff can interpret during clinical visits with providers and make sure the patient understands important medical information.



Assessing Competency: The What

Establish baseline criteria for each language proficiency level.

The main areas to be assessed for proficiency include:

- Speaking skills
- Listening skills
- Writing skills
- Reading skills
- Medical Terminology (for Independent to Proficient user levels)
- Medical Interpretation (for Pharmacists & Medical Providers or Certified Medical Interpreters (CMI) specifically)



Assessing Competency: The Who

Identify current and potential bilingual staff that can offer language access support and conduct assessment based on their proficiency levels.

Ways to test proficiency levels:

- Guided oral assessments
- Conduct written assessments
- Use verbal assessments



Lastly, designate staff based on their role and proficiency levels to provide language access support.





Extra Tips and Things to Think About:

- **Cultural Competency and Awareness:** Make sure staff can communicate well by understanding and respecting the patient's culture and background. It is important to give training on this for the language access program to work well.
- **Workforce Development:** Allow staff to get better at providing language support to patients. This includes providing training and learning opportunities to improve their language skills and keep any language service certifications they have.



Let's Practice



INTOXICADO (food
Poisoned)

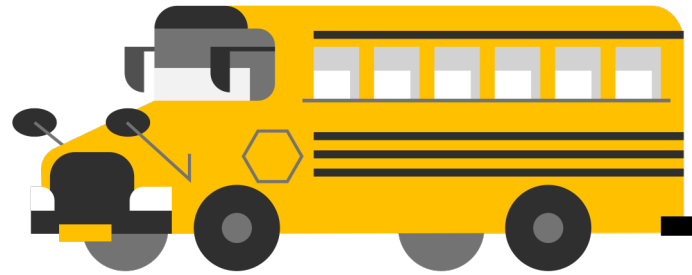


INTOXICATED (under
the influence of drugs
or alcohol)



Let's Practice

BUS



Camion, Micro



Guagua



Colectivo



Let's Practice

Physician: You will take Lisinopril medication twice a day.

Interpreter: Se tomara su medicamento dos veces al dia.

Is there anything wrong with this translation? What?



Omitted medication name

Sample Video Clip: Working with Professional Interpreters



Medical Interpreter Practice Video

Medical 8



English - Spanish



New Resource

Coming Soon!

**“Assessing Bilingual Staff
Competency Tool”**



Additional Competency Assessment Resources

- [Interagency Language Roundtable: Self-Assessment tool for speaking, reading, and listening](#)
- [National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services \(CLAS\) in Health and Health Care](#)
- [The Guide to Providing Effective Communication and Language Assistance Services](#)



Speaker Contact Information



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Thank you!

This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$1,742,242.00 with 0 percentage financed with nongovernmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.

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Q&A Discussion



Social Risks Factors: Food Insecurity Learning Collaborative



Social Risk Factors: Food Insecurity Learning Collaborative

4 Once a Week sessions, **February 2024** from **12:00-1:30 pm CST.**

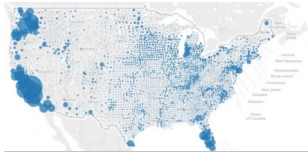
Register:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DDXBZN7>



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Governance Tools

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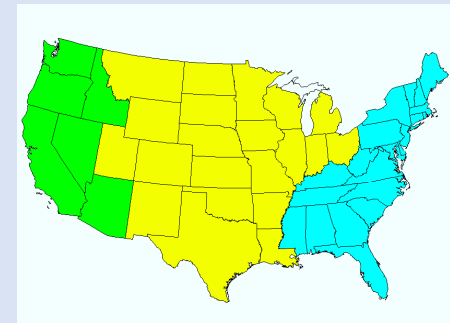
NCFH Additional Resources



COVID-19 [Resources for Agricultural Workers](#) and [Resources for Health Centers and Farmworker-Serving Organizations](#)



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on a year basis (West Coast, East Coast, and Midwest*)
Hosted by NCFH*

2024 Midwest Stream Forum CALL for ABSTRACTS

Deadline is Thursday 12/14.
Submit your proposal today!

#MIDWESTSF24

Visit <https://www.ncfh.org/midwest-stream-forum.html>
for more information

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- 1 The National Center for Farmworker Health proactively supports the work of health centers and the empowerment of

National Center for Farmworker Health, Inc. added an event. 58m · 🌐

WEBINAR

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