

HEALTH PLAN OF SAN JOAQUIN		
Subject: Proficiency of Interpreters		
Department: Member Services		Policy #: C&L 04
Applies to: Medi-Cal, HF, Commercial		Scope: MS
Effective Date: 1/1/2005	Revised Date: 6/01/08	Approved by: <i>Signature on file</i> Chief Operating Officer

PURPOSE

To ensure that limited English proficient (LEP) members have access to interpretative services as appropriate for medical, pharmaceutical, and non-medical points of contact in the member’s preferred spoken language.

DEFINITIONS:

Interpretation means the act of listening or something spoken or reading something written in one language (source language) and orally expressing it accurately and with appropriate cultural relevance into another language (target language).

Limited English Proficient or LEP member means a member who has an inability or a limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand the English language at a level that permits that individual to interact effectively with health care providers or plan employees.

Point of Contact means an instance in which a member accesses the services covered by HPSJ, including administrative and clinical services, and telephonic and in-person contacts.

POLICY:

- A. HPSJ will assist its contracted providers to access 24-hour interpretive services. In addition to telephone interpretation and when appropriate and feasible, HPSJ will provide live interpretation, by mobilizing qualified staff (including per diem interpreters) or contact a qualified interpretive agency, or language appropriate community-based organizations (CBO) to meet its interpreting needs.
- B. HPSJ will assess the language proficiency of providers, HPSJ staff, or contracted services who provide interpretive services to HPSJ members.

PROCEDURE:

- A. HPSJ will update the language capability of the providers annually by requiring documentation of whether it is the provider or office staff that has the language skills and documentation of linguistic competency of individuals providing interpretative services.
- B. The Provider Services Department will enable providers to self-certify their language proficiency through an annual language certification as defined in C&L 10 – *Provider Language Assessment*.
- C. HPSJ bilingual staff who interface with members and may provide interpretive services will be evaluated on an on-going basis, by a qualified outside contracted service to assess their linguistic proficiency.
- D. HPSJ will use the following methods to evaluate quality and appropriateness of linguistic services:
 - Member satisfaction surveys
 - Member grievances
 - Focus groups
 - Community Affairs Committee
- E. HPSJ reports its monitoring system for interpretative services to DHCS and/or MRMIB . Monitoring should include a record of performance measures (written and/or oral testing of bilingual skills, attendance at relevant training programs and number of years interpreting).

REFERENCE

- A. Civil Rights Act of 1964: Title VI
- B. H&S Code 1367.04
- C. Title 28, 1300.67.04
- D. MRMIB Contract, Exhibit A, Section III. C. 1. (f)
- E. DHS Contract, Exhibit A, Attachment 9, #13
- F. DHS MMCD Policy Letter 99-03

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