

WI Coalition for Linguistic Access to Healthcare (WCLAH)

Overview – December 9, 2004

Vision:

A statewide system that leads to positive healthcare outcomes for populations with limited English proficiency.

Components of an ideal system of healthcare services for persons with limited English proficiency include:

1. A sufficient supply and distribution of qualified medical interpreters
 - sufficient number of trained, qualified interpreters
 - professional association for interpreters with opportunities for continuing education/discussion of issues
 - system that allows different options for training (private, technical college, provider consortium, community organization-sponsored, etc.)
 - training that is open to all interested bilingual individuals and places special emphasis on outreach to individuals “of the culture” whose native language is not English
2. A healthcare system that values/demands the availability of, and access to qualified interpreters (and understands how to effectively utilize interpreter services)
 - continuing education for providers and provider organizations, training for health professions students on effective use of medical interpreters
 - outreach to empower populations with limited English proficiency in accessing appropriate care
3. Oversight to assure quality, monitors effectiveness, provides means to link interpreters with health care organizations, and identifies/addresses unmet needs
 - system for certification/quality assurance/standards
 - accessible information on resources and best practices for providers and interpreters/individuals seeking training as interpreters
 - inclusion of all health care services (pharmacy, home health, etc.) in system
 - clearinghouse for providers to access available interpreters and for patients to access interpreter services
4. Policies and resources that support and provide funding for the ideal system
 - financial support for training programs
 - funding/reimbursement system for interpreter services and alternative strategies where needed