

# HERITAGE PROVIDER NETWORK



## Language Assistance: Provider & Staff Responsibility

The following guide summarizes all regulatory agency requirements including:

- ✓ Section 1557 Final Rules of Affordable Care Act
- ✓ Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964
- ✓ Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) contractual requirements
- ✓ Medi-Cal Managed Care Division (MMCD) Policy Letters
- ✓ Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
- ✓ National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)

### Provider Responsibilities - Important Regulatory Reminders

- ❖ **Inform and offer no-cost interpreting services to medical group members**
- ❖ **Interpreter Services Poster**
  - Post the “Free Interpretation Services including American Sign Language” sign at key points of contact. This sign informs members who are Limited English Proficient (LEP), hard-of-hearing or deaf that free interpreter services are available to them.
- ❖ **Language Preference**
  - Document the member’s preferred language preference in his/her medical record.
- ❖ **Request or Refusal of interpreter Services**
  - Discourage medical group members from using friends or family as interpreters.
  - Do not use minors to interpret unless there is an emergency.
  - If a member requests or refuses interpreter services after being informed of his or her right to free interpreter services – document the refusal in the member’s medical record.
- ❖ **Bilingual Providers and Staff**
  - Providers and staff who communicate with members in a language other than English or who function as interpreters must maintain appropriate qualifications on file, i.e. certification of language proficiency or interpretation training.
- ❖ **Cultural and Language Related Complaints and Grievances**
  - Medical group members have the right to file a complaint/grievance if they feel their cultural or language needs have not been met in your office.

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### Free Telephonic and Face-to-Face Interpreter Services

We provide over-the-phone, face-to-face and American Sign Language interpreter services for members who are LEP, hard-of-hearing, or deaf. These services are free to you and your medical group members.

#### ❖ Medical Group Members who are LEP

##### Applicable workflow for each Health Plan - *HPN Language Assistance Sheet*

- **Over-the-phone interpreter services:** These services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Please see the *HPN Language Assistance Sheet*
- **Face-to-Face interpreter services:** Please see the *HPN Language Assistance Sheet*

*\*After-Hours Access: Answering machines should inform members who are LEP about accessing interpreting services after hours*

#### ❖ Communication for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

- To communicate over the phone: You can place calls and receive calls from members using the California Relay Service (CRS). It is a no-cost relay service provided by the Federal Communications Commission.
  - English: 1(800) 735-2922 or 1(800) 855-7100 or 711
  - Spanish: 1(800) 855-3000 or 1(800) 855-7200 or 711
- The CSR is free and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### When You Identify a Limited English Proficient Medical Group Member

#### Offer interpreting services to a member in a respectful manner when you notice:

- ✓ The member is quiet or does not respond to questions.
- ✓ The member simply says yes or no or gives inappropriate or inconsistent answers to your questions.
- ✓ The member may have trouble communicating in English or you may have a very difficult time understanding what they are trying to communicate.
- ✓ The member identifies as LEP by requesting language assistance.

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### How to Work Effectively with Interpreters

**Speaking to members while using an interpreter is slightly different from speaking to members directly. Here are useful tips to make your interpreter encounters go smoothly:**

- ✓ Expect and allow more time for interpreted medical appointments.
- ✓ Talk directly to the member.
- ✓ Speak in a normal voice, not too fast or too loud.
- ✓ Be brief and use plain language.
- ✓ Avoid acronyms, medical jargon, and technical terms.
- ✓ Pause after a short sentence for an interpreter to interpret.
- ✓ Do not say anything you do not want the member to hear.

### C&L Trainings

The following training courses are offered to our network providers and staff at no cost.

#### ❖ Cultural Competency and Disability & Sensitivity Training

#### Cultural and Linguistic Contact

For more information or any questions regarding C&L services, please contact

**The Quality Management Department via email: [HDMG-QM-Dept@hdmq.net](mailto:HDMG-QM-Dept@hdmq.net)**

**Telephone: (661) 582-8573**

#### Referrals to Culturally Appropriate Community Resources and Services

If a member needs services from a community-based organization or social service agency, please reference [findhelp.org](http://findhelp.org) for local resources. Please document the referral in the member's record.

#### Availability of Member Materials in Threshold Languages and Alternative Formats

Medical group members may request materials in their preferred language and in alternative formats. Alternative formats include Audio, Braille, and Large Print.

#### Cultural Competency Training

We encourage you and your staff to attend disability sensitivity and cultural awareness competency training programs. These training courses can enhance your interpersonal and intra-cultural skills, which can improve communication with your culturally diverse members including seniors and People with Disabilities. Programs are available through the Office of Minority Health and other agencies.