

<p>Section 9 Clinical Policies Section 9.3 Patients Rights Policy 9.3.35 Patient-Centered Communication</p>	<p>08/06/12-Originated -Reviewed w/ changes -Reviewed w/o changes 08/06/12 -Effective Patient Services -Author</p>
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Patient-Centered Communication

Definitions

Family: As used in this policy, family is defined to include a spouse, a domestic partner (including a same-sex domestic partner), siblings, children, other family members, or a friend. *This definition should not be confused with the definition of “family” as contained in other IHOP policies; for example, for issues regarding consent or refusal to treatment, please refer to the appropriate IHOP policies.*

Limited English Proficiency (LEP): Individuals with a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English.

UTMB Interpreters and Translators:

1. *Proficient Bilingual Staff and Providers:* UTMB providers and staff who have passed a UTMB Spanish Language competency test, ensuring sufficient fluency in conversational Spanish and English.
2. *Medical Language Interpreters (MLI):* UTMB staff who were hired specifically to provide interpretation services for Spanish-speaking LEP patients. MLI staff will be strongly encouraged to pass a UTMB-approved external assessment. Caregivers who pass the UTMB approved external assessment or who are graduates of health professions educational programs in which the secondary language was the language of instruction will also be allowed to function in this capacity.
3. *Language Specialist:* Individuals who provide translations of written materials, as well as coordinate and conduct medical terminology training courses for UTMB providers and staff.

Policy

UTMB is committed to ensuring that individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or who are hearing impaired have meaningful access to services and an equal opportunity to participate in services in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. UTMB strives to meet the unique needs of populations served while appropriately managing available resources.

For Spanish-speaking LEP patients, only Proficient Bilingual Staff and Providers may interpret health information. However, in “declared situations” (defined below) only Medical Language Interpreters should be used.

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**Policy,
continued**

UTMB staff fluent in both English and Spanish and who meet the requirements to be considered Proficient Bilingual Staff may communicate directly with Spanish-speaking LEP patients without assistance regarding health care concerns **unless** the discussion involves 1) an invasive procedure which requires a written consent, 2) a diagnosis of a life threatening condition, or 3) end of life issues. In these “declared situations” a Medical Language Interpreter (MLI) or a contracted telephone language interpretation service should be used.

Contracted interpretation services are available for Sign Language, Spanish and other languages.

In order to ensure the communication of accurate unbiased information, patients should be discouraged from relying solely on interpretation or translation assistance from their family and friends, and should be encouraged to utilize approved UTMB language assistance resources. A person less than 18 years of age will be allowed to interpret only in extraordinary circumstances.

Procedures

RESPONSIBILITY:	PROCEDURES:
Clinical leaders	Ensure that communications promoting the availability of language services are easily/visibly available to LEP individuals.
UTMB staff and providers	<p>Inform patients and their families of the availability of free language/hearing impaired services as soon as it is evident to UTMB providers or staff that a patient or family member is hearing impaired, has limited English proficiency, or requires communication assistance.</p> <p>Spanish medical language interpretation and translation resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the following order of preference: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Call the UTMB Language Assistance office for interpretation services at 409-747-2121. b. If a UTMB Medical Language Interpreter is not available, contact the UTMB paging operator to request the contracted interpretation resource line. 2. Non-emergent patient communication circumstances when UTMB Medical Language Interpreters should be used (“declared situations”):

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**Procedures,
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Responsibility:	Procedure:
<p>UTMB staff and providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Invasive procedures that require a written patient consent (<i>see</i> IHOP Policy 9.3.17 Patient Consent – Overview and Basic Requirements). b. Diagnosis of a life-threatening condition c. End of Life discussions <p>3. In circumstances other than those just described, it is acceptable to solicit assistance with Spanish language interpretation by Proficient Bilingual Staff and physicians who have passed a UTMB Spanish Language competency test.</p> <p>Other language interpretation and translation services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact UTMB Language Assistance office at 409-747-2121 to be transferred to contracted language line. 2. If you cannot access the Language Assistance office, contact the UTMB paging operator (409.772.4004) to request assistance from contracted interpretation resources. 3. For help with written translations, contact the UTMB Language Assistance office. <p>American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A certified ASL interpreter can be obtained for UTMB patients, including the Texas Department of Corrections Hospital Galveston, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. During regular business hours, contact the Department of Patient Services at 409-772-4773 to schedule an interpreter. To best meet the patient’s needs, it is recommended the interpreter appointment be arranged at least 3 days in advance, when possible. b. After regular business hours and during weekends call the hospital operator at 409-772-1011 and ask for the American Sign Language contracted resource to arrange for an interpreter. c. Texas Department of Corrections Hospital Galveston makes arrangements for ASL interpreters directly with the vendor

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**Procedures,
continued**

Responsibility:	Procedures
<p>UTMB Staff and Providers</p>	<p>If the services of an interpreter are utilized in communicating with a patient or their family members or other companions, the physician or health care provider should include the name of the interpreter or the use of the contracted language line in the clinical notes, medical record, or dictation.</p> <p>If a patient refuses the use of a UTMB Medical Language Interpreter, Proficient Bilingual Staff member, or other interpretation service offered by UTMB:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reassure the patient that UTMB will provide an interpreter at no additional personal cost; 2. Document the patient or family refusal in the patient’s medical record; 3. Document any non-UTMB interpreter’s name and relationship to the patient/family in the patient’s medical record; and 4. If at any time during the visit a non-UTMB interpreter is frustrating or jeopardizing effective communication, or is suspected of not providing an objective word-for-word interpretation, insist the patient/family secure one of the UTMB resources instead (to interpret, or to audit the non-UTMB interpreter’s interpretation for the UTMB provider).
<p>Clinical Leaders</p>	<p>Clinical care document translations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When Spanish translation of vital documents is needed, submit original documents in final, approved form, for translation to UTMB Language Assistance. 2. Documents currently available in both English and Spanish include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consent forms b. Advance directives c. Patient’s Designated Representative d. Selected patient education materials

References

[IHOP Policy 9.3.1 Resources Available for Patients with Disabilities](#)