

# Interpreting Services (Practitioners)

No-cost interpreting services including American Sign Language are available to L.A. Care members 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## Provider Responsibilities - Important Regulatory Things to Remember

- Post translated signage (interpret poster) about no-cost interpreting services at all key points of contact.
- Offer no-cost face-to-face and telephonic interpreting services to patients.
- Never imply, request, or require patients to provide their own interpreters.
- Strongly discourage using friends, family members, and especially minors as interpreters, except in emergency situations.
- Document patient's preferred spoken and written language as well as request or refusal of interpreting services in their medical record.
- Maintain appropriate documentation on file for bilingual practitioners and office staff who communicate with limited English proficient (LEP) patients in a language other than English.
  - Use the no-cost interpreting services offered by L.A. Care if their language proficiency is not assessed, and they are not qualified.
- Ensure that the answering machine informs patients on how to access interpreting services after-hours.

## Telephonic Interpreting Services

1. Dial **1.855.322.4034**
2. Press:
  - 1 for Spanish
  - 2 for Other Languages
  - 3 for Operator
3. Provide:
  - Physician's National Provider Identifier (NPI)
  - L.A. Care member ID number
4. Document the interpreter name and ID # for reference.
5. Brief the interpreter, and give any special instructions.
6. Dial the patient into the call.



## Face-to-Face Interpreting Services

1. Call the phone numbers below to request an interpreter at least 10 business days prior to a patient's medical appointment. American Sign Language is also available for deaf and hard of hearing patients.

**IMPORTANT:** Call L.A. Care immediately if there are any changes to a patient's appointment.

L.A. Care		Plan Partners	
Medi-Cal, PASC-SEIU	1.888.839.9909	Anthem Blue Cross	1.888.285.7801
Cal MediConnect	1.888.522.1298	Care1st	1.800.605.2556
L.A. Care Covered	1.855.270.2327	Kaiser Permanente	1.800.464.4000

2. Provide the following information:

### Patient Information

- Patient's name
- L.A. Care member ID number
- Language requested
- Preferred gender of interpreter

### Appointment Information

- Date, time, and duration of appointment
- Doctor's name
- Address and phone number
- Purpose of appointment

## Limited English Proficient (LEP) Patients

Offer no-cost interpreting services to the patient in a respectful manner when you notice:

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

## How to Work Effectively with Interpreters

- Plan more time for a medical appointment or a call that will require an interpreter.
- Brief the interpreter on the purpose of the appointment or call.
- Talk directly to the patient. Speak in the first person.
- Speak in a normal voice, not too fast or too loud.
- Pause after a short sentence for the interpreter to interpret.
- Give information in small chunks and verify comprehension before you continue.
- Use plain language. Avoid acronyms, medical jargon, and technical terms.
- Do not say anything you don't want the patient to hear. It is the interpreter's job to interpret everything.



## Communicating with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Patients

- Dial **711** to access the California Relay Services. It is a no-cost relay services provided by the Federal Communications Commission.
- American Sign Language interpreters are available for medical appointments. Please call L.A. Care Customer Solution Center to request an interpreter.

## Tools and Resources

You can *order* the below tools through the Online Tool Order Form:

<https://external.lacare.org/HealtheForm/>

- Interpreting services poster
- Telephonic interpreting card
- C&L provider toolkit

Additional materials are also available for *download* from the L.A. Care's website:

<http://www.lacare.org/providers/provider-resources/tools-toolkits>

- Go to *Manuals and Forms* to download:
  - ICE employee language skills assessment tool
  - Health Education referral form (C&L appropriate community services)
  - Preferred language labels
  - Interpreting request/refusal labels
- Go to *Toolkits* to download:
  - C&L provider toolkit

## C&L Trainings

The following trainings are available to L.A. Care network providers at no cost:

- Communicating through Healthcare Interpreters (CME)
- Cultural Competency
- Disability Sensitivity

To receive more information about upcoming trainings or to schedule an on-site training session, contact us at [CLStrainings@lacare.org](mailto:CLStrainings@lacare.org).

## Contact Information

For more information about the L.A. Care's Cultural & Linguistic services, email us at [CulturalandLinguisticServices@lacare.org](mailto:CulturalandLinguisticServices@lacare.org).

