

Breakout Room 5 Participants

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Homework: In what ways can the State of Washington support having more qualified medical interpreters?

- Please see [Information Sheet: Preliminary Elements of Medical Interpreter Testing and Certification](#) for examples as well as preliminary elements of medical interpreter testing and certification to be considered in a recommendation
 - Participants are encouraged to use the [Language Access Work Group: Draft Recommendations Form](#), which includes elements from the [Information Sheet](#), as they draft their recommendations
- Pre-COVID system was very effective. Majority of interpreters were using LTC system. Go back to using state test. More accessible than other systems.
 - Turnover rate stood out. No data on this. Need to keep interpreters in system once certified. Could do state or national certification before. Will continue to have the issue of certified interpreters moving out of system. We don't know as we don't have data.
 - Exam and testing should be through the state. Easier for the state to pay. That will help with retention of interpreters. They need to have an affordable test.
 - As soon as people get certified in anything else, they leave. For example, the court system pays much better. They also get paid mileage and drive time. Pay is huge. Once they can get paid more, they leave. It should be equal pay for equal work.
 - In San Francisco, at UCSF, they pay equal or better at the state as compared to court interpreters. It's easier to not deal with the courts if pay is equal.
 - Fifteen years ago, we had enough interpreters; a core of interpreters. Later, the pool of interpreters increased. The good ones then left because there was not enough work. Couldn't get enough jobs. Was fighting with union to update the test. It wasn't where it needed to be. It wasn't robust enough.
 - Washington State certification needs to be updated.
 - We need GOOD interpreters, not just interpreters.
 - Right now, you don't know if you will get an interpreter.
 - Benefits – like caregivers have – if you have a certain number of hours.

- Communities need to know how to get certified.
- Students are always asking about how to get certified. Need a clearer explanation of the certification process.
- In California, they don't have medical certification at the state level, only national certification. Medical certification is only required for workers' compensation. Legal certification is required in the courts. For hospitals, it's hospital by hospital.
- At UCSF in California, they do a lot of events around interpreters. Marketing. Newsletters. Celebrate interpreter month.
- UCSF staff interpreters have to have certification.
- No certification for offshore interpreters. Sometimes they use a video interpreting platform, so the state has no control. They should be subject to Washington law. But is it better to have an interpreter or not have one?
- Create a better system of delivering interpreters.

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