

Why to select Certified Healthcare Interpreters

The role of Healthcare Interpreters is to facilitate communication between people who speak different languages. However, poorly trained Healthcare Interpreters, who practice without proper training or assessment, demonstrate more errors- omissions, additions, and other changes in meaning- than those who are certified. These errors lead to higher treatment costs and can easily lead to potentially dangerous or deadly treatment mistakes.

There are currently two recognized organizations which certify Interpreters at the national level:

1. Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters (CCHI).
2. National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters (NBCMI).

Both of these certification programs include similar standards. The key differences are how the standards are managed and the organizations which sponsor and support them.

The benefits of choosing a certified interpreter are many:

- Reduced risk and potential liability caused by more accurate communications.
- Reduced treatment costs since clearer communications lead to more accurate diagnoses and treatment plans.
- Improved patient satisfaction
- Improved outcomes through better understanding and compliance
- Professional Recognition, by a national organization, indicating that the interpreter has passed a rigorous certification exam.
- Improved provider satisfaction due to the interpreter's qualifications and professionalism.
- A standardized designation which focuses on quality, consistency and professional ethics.

Certified interpreters enjoy higher pay, which is more than offset by the improvements in efficiency they generate. Interpreters also benefit through greater self-assurance and the satisfaction of helping patients communicate effectively.

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Dr. Jesus Oliva is an anesthesiologist with over 20 years of practice in Mexico and over 10 years of experience as an educator in the US. He frequently lectures on topics such as Spanish for Medical Professionals, Anatomy, and Interpreter Standards among others. He was one of the first recipients of the CHI designation, Certified Healthcare Interpreter.