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LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SERVICE INTRODUCTION

Language interpretation services consist of Sign Language Interpretation Services (SLIS) for clients. SLIS will include (but not be limited to):

- ◆ Promoting the availability of interpreter services
- ◆ Providing interpretation services to deaf and/or hard of hearing individuals and their families to allow access to HIV/AIDS services
- ◆ Confirming appointments with clients at least 24 hours in advance
- ◆ Establishing and maintaining an active pool of HIV/AIDS trained interpreters

The goal of language interpretation services is to help deaf and/or hard of hearing individuals and their families access HIV/AIDS services.

SERVICE/ORGANIZATIONAL LICENSURE CATEGORY

All language interpretation services will be provided in accordance with procedures formulated and adopted by contracted programs. Programs will comply with all applicable federal, State, County and local laws and regulations governing the provision of language interpretation services.

SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS

General Considerations: Language interpretation services will respect the inherent dignity of each person living with HIV they serve. Services will be client-driven, aiming to increase a client's sense of empowerment and self-advocacy. All language interpretation services will be culturally appropriate to the target population.

Intake: Client intake determines eligibility and includes demographic data, emergency contact information, next of kin and eligibility documentation. When possible, client intake will be completed in the first contact with the potential client.

STAFFING REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Sign Language Interpretation Services (SLIS) Contractors will provide culturally appropriate services to clients infected with and affected by HIV and should be fluent in American Sign Language (ASL).

Programs will use qualified sign language interpreters certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) at a minimum level of Certificate of Interpretation and Transliteration (CI/CT), by the American Consortium of Certified Interpreters (ACCI) at a minimum of Level IV (Above Average Performance), or the National Association of Deaf Interpreters (NAD) at a minimum of Level IV.

In addition, sign language interpreters will be trained on specific topics including (but not limited to):

- ◆ Health care literacy
- ◆ Cultural competence
- ◆ The Americans with Disabilities Act
- ◆ Other relevant cultural and linguistic topics

All contractors providing interpretation services will participate in program orientation and HIV-specific training before providing training or interpretation and translation services.

Additionally, contractors should have experience providing interpretation services should have experience with HIV/AIDS-related issues and concerns and receive continuing education and training regarding interpretation services and HIV on a quarterly basis.

At a minimum, contractors should be knowledgeable about:

- ◆ HIV disease process and current medical treatments
- ◆ Psychosocial issues related to HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Cultural issues related to communities affected by HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Adherence to medication
- ◆ HIV/AIDS legal and ethical issues

Finally, all contractors must abide by ethical standards as outlined by their respective professional associations.



*SLIS helps
deaf and/
or hard of
hearing
individuals
and their
families.*

STANDARDS OF CARE

Los Angeles County Commission on

HIV



LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION SERVICES

SERVICE INTRODUCTION

Language interpretation services consist of Sign Language Interpretation Services (SLIS) for clients.

All programs will use available standards of care to inform clients of their services and will provide services in accordance with legal and ethical standards. Maintaining confidentiality is critical and its importance cannot be overstated. All programs must comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) standards for information disclosure.

Recurring themes in this standard include:

- ◆ Every effort should be made to provide care to deaf or hard of hearing people living with HIV.
- ◆ Language interpretation services should focus on helping deaf or hard of hearing people living with HIV access primary medical and health care services.
- ◆ The ethical standards of confidentiality, accuracy, impartiality and cultural responsiveness are of critical importance when providing language interpretation services.
- ◆ Persons providing language interpretation services must be well-trained and qualified to provide these services to people living with HIV. Ongoing training and education are necessary to maintain appropriate skill levels.

The Los Angeles County Commission on HIV and the Division of HIV and STD Programs (DHSP)—formerly referred to as the Office of AIDS Programs and Policy (OAPP)—have developed this standard of care to set minimum quality expectations for service provision and to guarantee clients consistent care, regardless of where they receive services in the county.

This document represents a synthesis of published standards and research, including:

- ◆ *Language Services – Sign Language Interpretation Contract Exhibit*, Office of AIDS Programs and Policy
- ◆ *California Standards for Healthcare Interpreters*, California Healthcare Interpreting Association
- ◆ *Standard Practices Paper*, Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

SERVICE/ORGANIZATIONAL LICENSURE CATEGORY

All language interpretation services will be provided in accordance with procedures formulated and adopted by contracted programs. Programs will comply with all applicable federal, State, County and local laws and regulations governing the provision of language interpretation services.

Programs will use qualified sign language interpreters certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) at a minimum level of Certificate of Interpretation and Transliteration (CI/CT), by the American Consortium of Certified Interpreters (ACCI) at a minimum of Level IV (Above Average Performance), or the National Association of Deaf Interpreters (NAD) at a minimum of Level IV.

DEFINITIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS

American Sign Language (ASL) is a manual language with its own syntax and grammar, used primarily by people who are deaf.

Contractor is a person or agency contracting with service provider agencies to perform SLIS.

Sign Language Interpretation Services (SLIS) are interpretation services in American Sign Language (ASL) for deaf and/or hard of hearing people living with HIV (and their immediate families) who require special assistance in accessing HIV/AIDS services.



HOW SERVICE RELATES TO HIV

At the end of 2013, approximately 60,050 people were estimated to be living with HIV infection in Los Angeles County. Los Angeles County comprises 40% of the total AIDS cases in the State of California (Epidemiologic Profile of HIV in Los Angeles County, 2013).

Approximately 7% of the population experiences some measure of hearing disability (Van Oyen, Tafforeau & Demarest, 2001). Deaf or hard of hearing people living with HIV face many of the same barriers to receiving medical care as limited English proficiency (LEP) clients. In fact, pre-lingually deafened adults use health care in a pattern similar to LEP patients (fewer physician visits and less likely to have visited a physician in the past two years) (Barnett & Franks, 2002).

A small study of deaf gay men (Mallinson, 2004) describes these patients as “living at the intersection of multiple communities—the deaf, gay and hearing—each characterized by unique communication styles, cultural expectations and a propensity to marginalize outsiders” (p. 27). Participants in this study perceived medical providers as lacking compassion and ignorant to the needs of deaf persons. Printed HIV materials were considered by them culturally inappropriate, difficult to comprehend and ineffective.

*Interpreters
help clients
access
HIV/AIDS
services.*

SERVICE COMPONENTS

Language interpretation services consist of SLIS for deaf and/or hard of hearing people living with HIV (and eligible family members) who require special assistance in accessing HIV/AIDS services. Family will be broadly defined to include any individual affected by HIV disease through their relationship and shared household with a person living with HIV.

SLIS will be provided by a qualified interpreter fluent in American Sign Language (ASL). All people providing SLIS will maintain and hold in good standing certification by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), the American Consortium of Certified Interpreters (ACCI), or the National Association of the Deaf (NAD).

Recipients of these services will be medically indigent (uninsured and/or ineligible for health care coverage) individuals living with HIV and eligible family members residing in Los Angeles County. Also covered will be those deaf and/or hard of hearing people who are being tested for HIV at a Los Angeles County testing site.

SLIS

SLIS will include (but not be limited to):

- ◆ Promoting the availability of interpreter services
 - Update and mail information packet to AIDS service organizations (ASOs)
 - Maintain documentation of packet recipients
- ◆ Providing interpretation services to deaf and/or hard of hearing individuals and their families to allow access to HIV/AIDS services
- ◆ Confirming appointments with clients at least 24 hours in advance
 - Document confirmation
 - Make reasonable attempts to cancel services
- ◆ Establishing and maintaining an active pool of HIV/AIDS trained interpreters

STANDARD	MEASURE
SLIS will be provided by qualified interpreters fluent in ASL and certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, the American Consortium of Certified Interpreters or the National Association of the Deaf.	Interpreters' resumes and qualifications on file at provider agency.
Recipients of SLIS will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Medically indigent deaf and/or hard of hearing individuals living with HIV ● Eligible family members residing in Los Angeles County ● Deaf and/or hard of hearing people being tested for HIV at a Los Angeles County testing site 	Client intake detailing eligibility information on file at provider agency.
SLIS will promote the availability of interpreter services.	Promotion plan, materials and documentation of recipients on file at provider agency.
Interpreters will provide SLIS to deaf and/or hard of hearing individuals and their families to allow access to HIV/AIDS services.	Client files to detail purpose for interpretation services.
Programs will confirm appointments at least 24 hours in advance.	Client files to detail confirmation calls.
Programs will maintain an active pool of HIV/AIDS-trained interpreters.	List of active HIV/AIDS-trained interpreters on file at provider agency.

PROGRAM RECORDS

Programs providing SLIS will maintain client files that include (but are not limited to) the following:

- ◆ Documentation of number of interpretation hours
- ◆ Date, location, source of request and type of service
- ◆ Intake form
- ◆ Client identification number
- ◆ Case manager name, address, and telephone number
- ◆ Name of interpreter providing services
- ◆ Next appointment and confirmation follow-up information

In addition, SLIS programs will maintain documentation of each interpreter’s certification level and hourly pay scale.

STANDARD	MEASURE
Programs will maintain client files for SLIS.	Documentation on file at provider agency to include (but not be limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of number of interpretation hours • Date, location, source of request and type of service • Intake form • Client identification number • Case manager name, address, and telephone number • Name of interpreter providing services • Next appointment and confirmation follow-up information
SLIS programs will maintain documentation of each interpreter’s certification level and hourly pay scale.	Employee/consultant files to document.



*Interpreters
will be
fluent in
ASL.*

INTAKE

Intake is required for all clients who request or are referred to HIV services. Client intake determines eligibility and includes, at minimum, demographic, emergency contact, and eligibility documentation. The intake process also acquaints the client with the range of services offered and determines the client’s interest in such services. Client intake must be completed in the first contact with the potential client to ensure eligibility. The complete intake process, including registration and eligibility, is required for every patient at his or her point of entry into the service system. If an agency or other funded entity has the required information and documentation on file in the agency record for that client or in the countywide data management system, further intake is not required.

As part of the intake process, the client file will include the following information (at minimum):

- ◆ Written documentation of HIV status
- ◆ Proof of Los Angeles County residency
- ◆ Verification of financial eligibility for services
- ◆ Date of intake
- ◆ Client name, home address, mailing address and telephone number
- ◆ Emergency and/or next of kin contact name, home address and telephone number

Required Forms: Programs must develop the following forms in accordance with State and local guidelines.

Completed forms are required for each client:

- ◆ Release of Information, as needed (must be updated annually). New forms must be added for those individuals not listed on the existing Release of Information (specification should indicate the type of information that can be released).
- ◆ Limits of Confidentiality (confidentiality policy)
- ◆ Consent to Receive Services
- ◆ Client Rights and Responsibilities
- ◆ Client Grievance Procedures

STANDARD	MEASURE
Intake process is begun during first contact with patient.	Intake tool in patient file to include (at minimum): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of HIV status • Proof of Los Angeles County residency • Verification of financial eligibility • Date of intake • Client name, home address, mailing address and telephone number • Emergency and/or next of kin contact name, home address and telephone number
Confidentiality policy and Release of Information is discussed and completed.	Release of Information signed and dated by patient on file and updated annually.

STAFFING REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

SLIS contractors will be able to provide culturally appropriate services to clients infected with and affected by HIV. All contractors providing interpretation services will participate in program orientation and HIV-specific training before providing training or interpretation and translation services.

Additionally, contractors should have experience with HIV/AIDS-related issues and concerns and receive continuing education and training regarding interpretation services and HIV on a quarterly basis.

At a minimum, contractors should be knowledgeable about:

- ◆ HIV disease process and current medical treatments
- ◆ Psychosocial issues related to HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Cultural issues related to communities affected by HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Adherence to medication
- ◆ HIV/AIDS legal and ethical issues

STANDARD	MEASURE
SLIS contractors providing language interpretation services will be able to provide culturally appropriate services to clients infected with and affected by HIV.	Staff resumes and qualifications on file at provider agency.
Contractors will participate in program orientation and HIV-specific training before providing interpretation services.	Documentation of orientation/training on file at provider agency.

STANDARD	MEASURE
Contractors should possess knowledge about the following (at minimum): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV disease process and current medical treatments • Psychosocial issues related to HIV/AIDS • Cultural issues related to communities affected by HIV/AIDS • Adherence to medication • HIV/AIDS legal and ethical issues 	Staff resumes, qualifications and documentation of trainings on file at provider agency.
Contractors will receive continuing education and training regarding translation/interpretation services and HIV on a quarterly basis.	Documentation of orientation/training on file at provider agency.

SLIS

Qualified sign language interpreters should be fluent in ASL. All people providing SLIS will maintain and hold in good standing certification by at least one of the following:

- ◆ **RID** at a minimum level of Certificate of Interpretation and Transliteration (demonstrates ability to interpret and transliterate between American Sign Language and spoken English in both sign-to-voice and voice-to-sign)
- ◆ **ACCI** at a minimum of Level IV – Above Average Performance (demonstrates performance is consistent and accurate, fluency is smooth, and the interpreter is competent and able to interpret in any situation.)
- ◆ **NAD** at a minimum of Level IV.

In addition, sign language interpreters will be trained on specific topics including (but not limited to):

- ◆ Health care literacy
- ◆ Cultural competence
- ◆ The Americans with Disabilities Act
- ◆ Other relevant cultural and linguistic topics

Finally, all contractors must abide by ethical standards as outlined by their respective professional associations. Included among these standards are:

- ◆ **Confidentiality:** All assignment-related information is strictly confidential
- ◆ **Accuracy and completeness:** Messages shall be delivered faithfully, conveying the content and spirit of the speaker’s words
- ◆ **Impartiality:** Interpreters will not counsel, advise or interject personal opinions
- ◆ **Scope of practice:** Assignments shall be accepted using discretion regarding the skill, setting and consumers involved
- ◆ **Preparedness:** Interpreters will strive to further knowledge and skills through trainings, interaction with colleagues and reading current literature in the field
- ◆ **Cultural responsiveness:** Interpreters will work to understand how diversity and culture impact health care encounters



Contractors should be knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS issues.

STANDARD	MEASURE
Qualified sign language interpreters will be fluent in ASL.	Staff resumes and qualifications on file at the provider agency. Program manager to monitor quality of performance.

STANDARD	MEASURE
<p>Interpreters will maintain and hold in good standing certification by one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) at a minimum level of Certificate of Interpretation and Transliteration • The American Consortium of Certified Interpreters (ACCI) at a minimum of Level IV – Above Average Performance • The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) at a minimum of Level IV 	<p>Certification on file at provider agency.</p>
<p>In addition to meeting general requirements, contractors who provide SLIS will be trained on specific topics, including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care literacy • Cultural competence • The Americans with Disabilities Act • Other relevant cultural and linguistic topics 	<p>Documentation of training on file at provider agency.</p>
<p>Contractors must abide by ethical standards outlined by their respective professional associations, including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality • Accuracy and completeness • Impartiality • Scope of practice • Preparedness • Cultural responsiveness 	<p>Program manager to monitor ethical practice.</p>

UNITS OF SERVICE

Unit of service: Units of services are defined as the number of service hours provided in SLIS.

◆ **ASL interpretation units:** calculated in number of service hours providing interpretation

Number of clients: Client numbers are calculated using figures for unduplicated clients in a given contract period.

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ACCI	American Consortium of Certified Interpreters
ASL	American Sign Language
CI/CT	Certificate of Interpretation and Transliteration
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LEVEL IV	Above Average Performance
NAD	National Association of Deaf Interpreters
RID	Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
SLIS	Sign Language Interpretation Services
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease