

## **Cultura y (ataque de) Corazón: A Training for Health Professionals needing Medical Interpretation Services**

### **Abstract for Conference Program**

This session describes a training program designed to teach health professions students how to properly use a trained medical interpreter with a Spanish speaking patient.

### **Presentation Description**

Limited English proficiency is a known barrier to quality health care outcomes (Green 2017, Helmi 2021). Inclusion of a certified language interpreter during health care encounters improves outcomes among ESL (English as a Second Language) patients (Karliner, Jacobs, Chen, and Mutha 2007). Interpretation with a certified interpreter promotes understanding between patients and their medical providers, and advances both health and race equity (Foiles Sifuentes, Robledo Cornejo, Castaneda-Avila, Tija, and Lapane 2020). Most health care workers receive no formal training in how to use an interpreter with limited English-proficiency patients. Located in the Hispanic Heritage District of an increasingly Latine mid-sized city in New York State, our training focuses on Spanish speaking patients.

### **Methods**

This innovative program uses simulation to teach learners how to use an Interpreter. Learners watch vignettes, and then debrief with faculty. Vignettes point out pitfalls of not using a certified interpreter, such as using a Spanish-speaking janitor, or family member. Vignettes were built in collaboration between the Spanish, MFA, and Physician Assistant programs at the University. During the session, learners also play a game of our invention. This game imitates the feeling many non-English-speaking patients have of being misunderstood and misunderstanding; building empathy for the fear of leaving a medical appointment without full comprehension.

### **Results**

Results of pilot pre- and post- test data show statistically significant improvement in students' understanding of how to use a medical interpreter, why to use one, and their likelihood of requesting formal interpretation services in future encounters. The students also enjoyed the experience and would recommend it to peers. The implications of the training may increase access to high quality health care for non-English-speaking community members, better health equity, and decrease pay inequity for multilingual health professionals. A more engaged community is a healthier one, and this training helps achieve that goal.

### **Learning Objectives**

1. Participants will be able to describe the benefits of using only a trained medical interpreter
2. Participants can describe how it feels to misunderstand or not understand terms used during a medical appointment
3. Participants will be able to describe how using a trained interpreter can improve health equity among those at risk for poor outcomes
4. Participants can describe the benefits of using licensed interpreters for medico-legal purposes

### **References**

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