

IMPLEMENTING A LANGUAGE ACCESS PROGRAM

Health centers are required to take reasonable steps to provide Language Access Services (LAS) to all patients with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Use this step by step guide to implement a language access program at your health center.

Step 1: Determine current Language Access Services provided.

Complete the [Language Access Services Assessment and Planning Tool](#) in order to evaluate your current services and identify potential service gaps you may need to address.

Make sure to look at these critical components!



Patient Demographics



Policies and Procedures



Workforce Capacity



Resources & Budget



Staff Competency and Training

Step 2: Identify three priority areas based on the results of the assessment and create a plan of action.

Priority areas can include identifying patient language needs, implementing interpreter services and staff training. Answer these questions when developing your plan:

- What do you want to improve or change?
- Why is this important?
- How do you plan to address this priority?



Step 3: Engage leadership and other key players.



Step 4: Assess staff competency.

Evaluate your staff competency in order to provide LAS and identify what type of medical interpreter training your staff need to build their capacity through any of these tools:

- [The Language Competency Checklist](#)
- [Masterword Proficiency Test](#)
- [Language Assessment](#)
- [Language Line Proficiency Test](#)



Step 5: Provide medical interpreter training.

Although certification in medical interpretation is a great goal to strive for, it may not always be possible, but all staff providing LAS must STILL receive ongoing training. Some key components to consider in selecting a medical interpreter training program for your staff include:



- Interpreter role and responsibilities
- Language Access Laws
- Interpreter Ethics
- Confidentiality in Healthcare
- Settings for Interpreter Services
- Specialized practice areas (ex: pediatrics, mental health, dental health, etc.)

For a list of medical interpreter training programs, please go to the [International Medical Interpreters Association website](#).

Step 6: Evaluate your action plan!

In 6 months, use the same [LAS Assessment and Planning Tool](#) to evaluate the impact of your implemented action plan, and revise according to any new priority areas you choose to address.

