



**LANGUAGE**  
SERVICES



## EASY TO USE TECHNOLOGY IMPROVES CARE DELIVERY

How the reliance on communication  
experts streamlines provider workflows

# EASY TO USE TECHNOLOGY IMPROVES CARE DELIVERY

## How the reliance on communication experts streamlines provider workflows

### INTRODUCTION

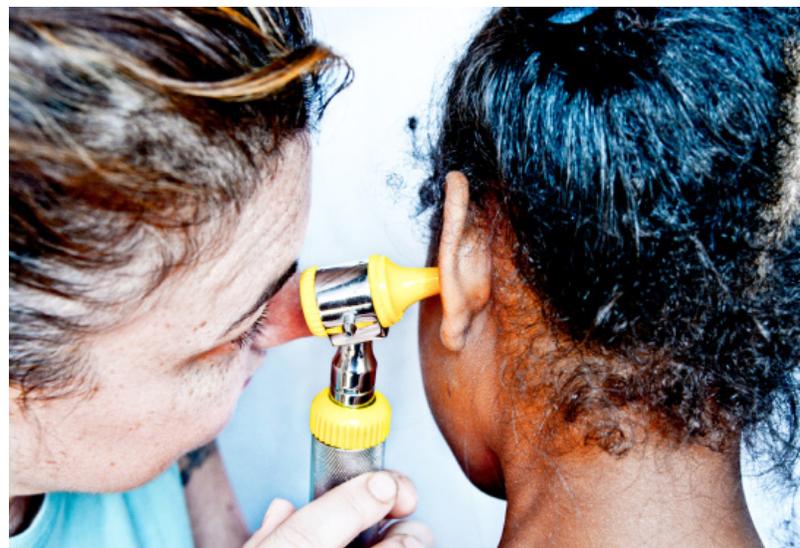
Simple, easy to use technology enables doctors to simply be doctors. By augmenting patient care with technology services, healthcare providers can focus completely on treating their patients, and can outsource things like communication assistance and cultural brokerage to outside experts. The implementation of mobile communications apps, patient engagement devices, and telehealth solutions have been shown to streamline provider workflows, allowing them to seamlessly focus on medical treatment.

When it comes to treating limited English proficient (LEP), Deaf and Hard of Hearing (HoH) patients, doctors need a fast, easy to use solution to effectively communicate. By investing in patient engagement technology and language services, healthcare providers never have to worry about the flow of communication with LEP and HoH patients. Additionally, the integration of language services into the healthcare workflow keeps hospitals and health systems in compliance with federal regulations surrounding language access in healthcare. Lastly, the use of professional language services has been proven to improve the LEP patient experience and reduce the likelihood of readmissions.

### VRI SIMPLIFIES LEP PATIENT CARE

The limited English proficient (LEP) patient population is on the rise. Each day, healthcare providers encounter an increasing number of patients in need of language services.<sup>1</sup> These patients require the assistance of a medically qualified interpreter to ensure meaningful access to healthcare information, as required by Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, among other federal regulations. If hospitals do not comply with regulations surrounding language access in care, they can be stripped of financial reimbursement.<sup>2</sup>

Fortunately, the days of scrambling to locate a medical interpreter in the language needed onsite have become an element of the past. Video remote interpretation (VRI) greatly simplifies the process of providing language services to patients.



<sup>1</sup>National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC). Serving Patients with Limited English Proficiency: Results of a Community Health Center Survey (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nachc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/LEPReport.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>Joint Commission. Advancing Effective Communication, Cultural Competence, and Patient and Family Centered Care: A Roadmap for Hospitals (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://www.joint-commission.org/roadmap\\_for\\_hospitals/](https://www.joint-commission.org/roadmap_for_hospitals/)

Instead of spending excessive amounts of time searching for a qualified interpreter, doctors can simply launch VRI from a computer or handheld device and select the language needed. Within 30 seconds, a qualified medical interpreter appears over HIPAA compliant video ready to facilitate effective patient provider communication. With quick access to language services at the provider's fingertips, doctors can focus more on treating LEP patients and worry less about communicating with them.

“With quick access to language services at the provider's fingertips, doctors can focus more on treating LEP patients and worry less about communicating with them.”

Due to its immediate connectivity and wide range of available languages, VRI is ideal for walk-ins, emergencies and other scenarios when patients do not have a preferred language on record other than English prior to the healthcare encounter.

## MEDICAL INTERPRETERS DEDICATED TO HIGH QUALITY CARE

When it comes to treating LEP patients, medical interpreters are the communication experts. Just as doctors are committed to effectively treating patients, medical interpreters are committed to facilitating meaningful understanding between healthcare providers and patients from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Medical interpreters are bound by a professional code of ethics that includes a commitment to accuracy, impartiality and confidentiality, all essential elements of communication in healthcare.

Accuracy refers to the interpreter's faithfulness to convey the original message in its entirety without editing or omitting any of its meaning. Accuracy in communication is paramount, as an astonishingly high percentage of adverse events occur due to communication error.<sup>3</sup>

This number is particularly high with LEP and non English speaking patients. Studies demonstrate the use of a qualified medical interpreter significantly reduces the number of communication errors, improving both patient outcome and satisfaction with care.<sup>4</sup>

Impartiality requires the interpreter to refrain from interjecting any personal bias or opinion into the conversation. By acting as a funnel through which effective communication can flow, rather than a participant in the conversation, the interpreter facilitates effective patient provider communication.

When working with an interpreter, patients and providers speak to one another directly without saying "he said" or "she said". This builds the LEP patient's confidence in the delivery of their care and helps ensure the patient has meaningful access to their healthcare information.

Confidentiality requires the interpreter to maintain the confidentiality of the conversation at hand as well as to respect the privacy of the patient.

Our easy to use video remote interpretation (VRI) technology makes treating LEP patients as simple as language concordant encounters. By pressing a few buttons, providers can reach medically qualified interpreters in over 200 languages. The application is



<sup>3</sup>ImpactofTelehealthonPatientSelfmanagementofHeartFailure:AReviewofLiterature.JournalofCardiovascularNursing,(n.d.),Retrievedfrom [https://journals.lww.com/jcnjournal/Abstract/2012/01000/Impact\\_of\\_Telehealth\\_on\\_Patient\\_Self\\_management\\_of.6.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/jcnjournal/Abstract/2012/01000/Impact_of_Telehealth_on_Patient_Self_management_of.6.aspx)

<sup>4</sup>Karliner,L.S.,Jacobs,E.A.,Chen,A.H.,&Mutha,S.(2007,April).DoprofessionalinterpretersimproveclinicalcareforpatientswithlimitedEnglishproficiency?Asystematicreviewof the literature. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1955368/>

easy to use and can be accessed on any handheld device or computer over WiFi or 4G. Once a qualified interpreter appears, effective communication can begin.

## HOW TO USE A VIDEO REMOTE INTERPRETER: BEST PRACTICES

It really is simple!

We are committed to providing the best interpreting services for all patients and providers. No matter your access point, there are a few tips to keep in mind to best communicate with a medical interpreter. The following are effective communication strategies to help make communication between patients and providers a success.

### PRE-SESSION:

- Allow the interpreters to introduce themselves to the patient and their families/support persons.
- Provide the interpreter with any critical information that will help orient them to the nature of the encounter.
- If necessary, document the interpreter's ID number.
- Interpreters may talk briefly with the patient to gauge the patient's language fluency and register so they may best interpret for maximum comprehension.

### DIRECT COMMUNICATION:

- Look directly at the patient when talking.
- Speak directly to the patient; address all questions and comments to the patient.
- Use first person language. For example, "I would like to know..." and "Can you tell me how you're feeling..."

### COMMUNICATION DYNAMICS:

- Give the interpreter time to interpret by pausing.
- Speak in full sentences/thoughts/concepts.
- Interpreters may need to ask clarifying questions to the provider or patient.
- Anticipate slightly longer patient encounters due to the inherent process of interpreting.

### SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- Privacy screens are available during private exams. Interpreters will use privacy screens when providers step out of the room.
- Interpreters will work with patients, families, and providers to determine the best arrangement if anyone in the room is bi/multilingual.

The AMN Healthcare interpreting application currently provides access to medically qualified interpreters in 40 languages over HIPAA compliant video and over 200 languages over audio and can be accessed directly from patient bedside devices, hospital mobile communications apps and telehealth solutions. With VRI on hand, the process of reaching a medical interpreter is easy, so end users can focus more on their primary role as healthcare providers - to effectively treat patients.



## COMMUNICATION ACCESSIBILITY

### How Key Technology Partnerships Make Language Services More Available Than Ever

#### TELEHEALTH SOLUTIONS PROMOTE HEALTH EQUITY

Recent technology integrations between remote language services and telehealth providers have further simplified the process of treating LEP patients. For example, integrations with popular telehealth platforms allow our video remote interpreters to be accessed directly from within telehealth sessions. This greatly improves health equity for LEP patients, as they would not be able to effectively participate in telehealth programs otherwise.

Studies show LEP patients tend to delay care and experience more adverse effects in comparison to English speaking patients.<sup>5</sup> Telehealth sessions have proven to be effective in increasing patient adherence to care plans and reducing the risk of hospital readmission within 30 days of discharge.<sup>6</sup> By having the ability to access a healthcare provider over video and effectively communicate with the provider through a medical interpreter, LEP patients can take advantage of key patient engagement tools designed to improve adherence to care plans.



#### BEDSIDE DEVICE INTEGRATION ENABLES LEP PATIENT ENGAGEMENT

Recently developed technology has also enabled the integration of VRI with several patient engagement tools, i.e., patient bedside devices.

Serving as a mode of communication, bedside devices provide patients with a secure, convenient way to instantly connect with their providers and care teams. They also serve as an essential educational tool, providing patients with vital healthcare information in an easy to use format. When patients are well informed, they tend to be more engaged in the development of care plans, resulting in better patient satisfaction and outcome.<sup>7</sup> By having a bedside device loaded with relative educational information, providers can reinforce important information to patients like medication management, symptoms to watch for and more.

Bedside devices also enable patients to control certain elements of their stay, like ordering food, adjusting the room temperature and selecting entertainment, all from the same handheld device. By enabling the patient to carry out these activities without the assistance of medical staff, it not only empowers the patient but also relieves healthcare staff of having to shift focus from treating the patient to complete non-healthcare related tasks.

Hospitals using patient engagement technology can also access VRI directly from patient bedside devices, eliminating the need to locate an onsite interpreter, VRI stand or audio equipment. As with any handheld device, doctors simply reach for the bedside device, launch the language services application, select the language needed and briefly wait for an interpreter to appear.



<sup>5</sup>Karliner, L.S., Jacobs, E.A., Chen, A.H., & Mutha, S. (2007, April). Do professional interpreters improve clinical care for patients with limited English proficiency? A systematic review of the literature. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1955368/>

<sup>6</sup>Martin, L.R., Williams, S.L., Haskard, K.B., & Dimatteo, M.R. (2005, September). The challenge of patient adherence. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1661624/>

<sup>7</sup>Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Improving Patient Safety Through Provider Communication Strategy Enhancements (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://www.ahrq.gov/downloads/pub/advances2/vol3/advances\\_dingley\\_14.pdf](https://www.ahrq.gov/downloads/pub/advances2/vol3/advances_dingley_14.pdf)

## DIRECT ACCESS FROM MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS APPS

When it comes to improving communication in the healthcare workplace, another recent trend has arisen. Many hospitals are replacing conventional methods of communication, e.g., pagers, desktops and land lines, with HIPAA compliant mobile communications apps. Mobile communications apps enable providers to collaborate with one another from remote locations, on a secure platform through video, phone and text. Some apps extend communication to patients as well. Accessibility is key here. Healthcare communication can now safely happen directly from a provider's smartphone.

Unanswered messages on landlines are replaced with direct HIPAA compliant text messaging that enables the transfer of images. Audio calls are replaced with face-to-face video calls which enable the transfer of any nonverbal cues. Mobile communication apps provide every healthcare provider with a smartphone in hand, a direct, HIPAA compliant way to instantly consult with another provider or patient at anytime from anywhere.

Thanks to a recently developed interface, healthcare providers can now access VRI directly from their mobile communications applications. With just a few presses of a button, providers can add a spoken or sign language video interpreter to the conversation. These additional access points further expand the LEP patient's access to language services. They also further simplify the process for the provider to connect with a medical

interpreter.

Innovative, easy to use technology simplifies the delivery of patient care. A win-win for providers and patients: providers spend less time completing non-healthcare related tasks and patients engage more with care plans. By utilizing qualified, external resources for certain tasks, providers can focus more on their primary role as doctors to effectively treat patients. With VRI on hand, doctors can leave the task of facilitating language concordant communication to a qualified, medical interpreter. Thanks to recent application and device integrations, doctors can reach video remote interpreters from additional access points, including patient bedside devices, hospital mobile communications apps and telehealth solutions.



AMN Healthcare is the leader and innovator in healthcare total talent solutions to healthcare facilities across the nation. The Company provides unparalleled access to the most comprehensive network of quality healthcare professionals through its innovative recruitment and staffing strategies and breadth of career opportunities. With insights and expertise, AMN Healthcare helps providers optimize their workforce to successfully reduce complexity, increase efficiency and improve patient outcomes. AMN delivers managed services programs, healthcare executive search solutions, vendor management systems, recruitment process outsourcing, predictive labor analytics, revenue cycle management, credentialing solutions, and other services. AMN Healthcare is committed to fostering and maintaining a diverse team that reflects the communities we serve. Our commitment to the inclusion of many different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives enables our innovation and leadership in the healthcare services industry.

Acquired by AMN Healthcare in 2020, Stratus Video is now serving clients under the AMN Language Services name. We exist to support the mission of healthcare organizations to provide the best possible care for all patients. By eliminating communication barriers between your patients and providers, Limited English Proficient, Deaf or Hard of Hearing patients attain increased health literacy and realize improved health outcomes. When you partner with AMN Language Services, each of your providers is equipped with immediate access to thousands of professional interpreters who are all culturally competent, medically qualified and extensively trained in medical terminology.