The Bilingual Endorsement Program for Physician Assistants (BEPPA)

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HPA 430

Policy Action Plan

The Problem:

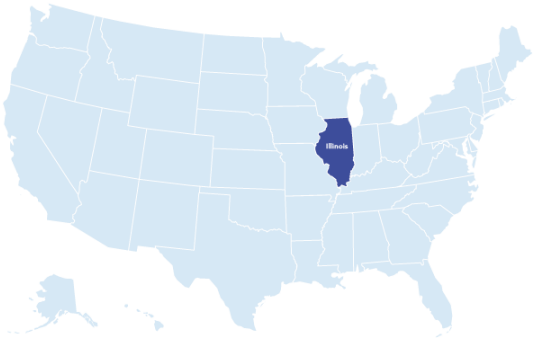
- Large number of individuals who have limited English proficiency (LEP), and many of which are uninsured and/or undocumented, seeking primary health care services in Illinois, leading to ineffective and inefficient health care due to language barriers and medical interpretation errors.

Background:

- 46 million Americans do not speak English as their primary language
- 22 million Americans have limited English Proficiency (LEP)
  - “individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient, or 'LEP.‘”

Background

- In 2007, 2,603,244 spoke a language other than English at home in Illinois
  - 1,177,007 spoke English less than “very well”
- Illinois has seen rising number of illegal immigrants in recent years, unlike the rest of the country
- By 2050, half of U.S. will be composed of minority groups, with an equal increase in numbers of those who speak a language other than English at home



Data:

- Ad hoc interpreters average about 31 errors per clinical encounter
  - 52% were omission errors
  - 16% were false fluency
  - 13% were substitution
  - 10% were editorialization
  - 8% were addition



- 63% result in potential clinical consequences
  - 19 such errors occur per clinical encounter
  - Omission of questions about drug allergies, antibiotic instructions

Data:

"A 12-year-old Latino boy arrived at a Boston emergency department with dizziness and a headache. The patient, whom I'll call Raul, had limited proficiency in English; his mother spoke no English, and the attending physician spoke little Spanish. No medical interpreter was available, so Raul acted as his own interpreter.

His mother described his symptoms:'La semana pasada a el le dio mucho mareo y no tenía fiebre ni nada, y la familia por parte de papá todos padecen de diabetes.' (Last week, he had a lot of dizziness, and he didn't have fever or anything, and his dad's family all suffer from diabetes.)

'Uh hum,' replied the physician.

The mother went on. 'A mí me da miedo porque el lo que estaba mareado, mareado, mareado y no tenía fiebre ni nada.' (I'm scared because he's dizzy, dizzy, dizzy, and he didn't have fever or anything.)

'Turning to Raul, the physician asked, 'OK, so she's saying you look kind of yellow, is that what she's saying?'

Raul interpreted for his mother: 'Es que si me vi amarillo?'(Is it that I looked yellow?)

'Estaba como mareado, como pálido' (You were like dizzy, like pale), his mother replied.

Raul turned back to the doctor. 'Like I was like paralyzed, something like that,' he said."

Data:

- Interpretive services can cost $279 per patient per year
- UC Irvine School of Medicine Study of 2,700 LEP patients:
  - Language barriers associated with decreased health education, poor patient-provider interactions, and overall decreased patient satisfaction
  - Presence of an interpreter did not compensate for having a shared common language
  - Direct verbal communication with physicians resulted in highest patient satisfaction

Data:

- Language barriers and interpretation errors cost health care system millions yearly:
  - $71 million settlement in preventable cause of quadriplegia that resulted from misunderstanding of the Spanish term “intoxicado”
  - Other cases related to:
    - issues of informed consent (e.g. $650,000 settlement)
    - discrimination claims (e.g. possible $3.25 million lawsuit)
    - inadequate documentation errors (e.g. $105,000 settlement)

Physician Assistants:

- Work on physician's guidance
- Work in variety of health care environments
- Abilities include:
  - Obtaining medical histories
  - Performing physician examinations
  - Ordering or performing diagnostic tests and obtaining laboratory results
  - Diagnosing and treating common medical problems
  - Assisting in surgery
  - Administering emergency care
  - Prescribing uncontrolled substances and controlled substances Schedule III-V
- Accessible in underserved regions and to underserved populations

Physician Assistants:

- The presence of physician assistants help to:
  - Reduce waiting times in health care centers
  - Increase patient-provider contact time (for questions, education, etc), resulting in increased patient compliance and understanding



The Bilingual Endorsement Program for Physician Assistants (BEPPA):

- Mission: To reduce health disparities in individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) in Illinois through policy advocacy geared towards improving accessibility to health care via the employment of bilingual health care workers in the state of Illinois and to reduce the costs to the health care system associated with errors that occur through language barriers.



Proposed Legislation:

- Amend Section 15 of the Physician Assistant Practice Act of 1987 to include a new section (b) as follows:

  (b) It shall be the policy of the State of Illinois to improve the quality of health care by providing a career pathway for Physician Assistants interested in serving as bilingual interpreters. Beginning on January 1, 2012, the State Medical Licensing Board shall establish and implement a bilingual Physician Assistant endorsement, to be known as a Physician Assistant bilingual endorsement. Persons who meet the requirements of and successfully complete the requirements of the endorsement established under this Section shall be issued a Physician Assistant bilingual endorsement for serving in medical centers in this State. The endorsement shall be a career path endorsement but not a restrictive endorsement available to: (i) Physician Assistants who are certified through the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters; (ii) Physician Assistants who have completed at least 1 year of work as a medical interpreter; (iii) Physician Assistants who have completed an undergraduate or master's degree in any foreign language study; (iv) Physician Assistants who have graduated from a high school in a country where a language other than English is spoken; and (v) Physician Assistants who can demonstrate oral proficiency in a language other than English. A Physician Assistant who meets any of these clauses (i) through (v) of this Section shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements for the Physician Assistant bilingual endorsement. The State Medical Licensing Board may adopt rules that are consistent with this Section and that the State Medical Licensing Board deems necessary to establish and implement this Physician Assistant bilingual endorsement program.

Legislative Sponsors:

- Cynthia Soto (D) (Pictured)
  - Illinois House Representative from the 4th District
  - Has worked to dispense health and social service information
  - Sponsored FamilyCare
  - Sponsored immigration workshops which offered bilingual education
- Sarah Feigenholtz (D)
  - Illinois House Representative from the 12th District
  - Sponsored and passed FamilyCare bill
  - "Health care is a right, not a privilege."
- Elizabeth Hernandez (D)
  - Illinois House Representative from the 24th District
  - Appropriations-Human Services Committee
  - Health and Healthcare Disparities Committee
  - Opposed 10 anti-immigration bills introduced in the House of Representatives and the Illinois Senate
  - Co-sponsor of the Illinois DREAM Act



Legislative Sponsors:

- Greg Harris (D)
  - Illinois House Representative from the 13th District
  - Chairperson of the Human Services Committee
  - Member of the Healthcare Availability and Access Committee
  - Opposed 10 anti-immigration bills introduced in the House of Representatives and the Illinois Senate
  - Worked with the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR)
- Christine Radogno (R)
  - Illinois Senator from the 41st District
  - Minority Spokesperson on the Human Services Committee
  - Public Health Committee
  - Worked as a social worker at Mercy Center for Health Care Services
  - Has received numerous awards congratulating her commitment to health care and human services
- William Delgado (D)
  - Illinois Senator from the 2nd District
  - Vice-Chairperson of the Public Health Committee
  - Involved in promoting immigrants' rights in Illinois
  - Sponsored and passed Senate Bill 3568, House Bill 1598, which bars the use of state funds for the deportation of immigrants that are not deemed criminals

Legislative Sponsors:

- Iris Martinez (D)
  - Illinois Senator from the 20th District
  - President of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators
  - Fought for funding for the Gilead Outreach and Referral Center, which works to connect uninsured Chicago families with affordable healthcare programs
  - Has sponsored and passed several bills aimed at improving the health and welfare of those who need it most both in the 20th district and across Illinois
- J. Bradley Burzynski (R)
  - Illinois Senator from the 35th District
  - Health Facilities Task Force
  - Has led the effort to expand health care options in rural areas by licensing advanced practice nurses in Illinois

Stakeholders:







- Governmental
  - Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)
  - Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS)
  - Unites States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
  - Local Health Departments
  - Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
  - Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS)
  - Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
  - State of Illinois
  - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
  - U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Stakeholders:

- Non-Governmental
  - American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)
  - Association of Physician Assistants in Cardiovascular Surgery (APACVS)
  - Illinois Hospital Association (IHA)
  - American Hospital Association (AHA)
  - Association of Family Practice Physician Assistants (AFPPA)
  - Illinois Academy of Physician Assistants (IAPA)
  - Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS)
  - Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR)
  - Physician Assistants for Latino Health (PALH)
  - International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA)
  - The National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters
  - National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)
  - The Center for New Community's Midwest Immigration Health Project (MIHP)









Media and Marketing:





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