



## Freestanding Clinic Provision of Patient Services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Hearing Impaired Patients

Date: January 10, 2012

### **Purpose:**

University of Colorado School of Medicine (SOM) free standing clinics are committed to diversity and equality in access to care for its patients.

In an effort to provide access to care to limited English proficient persons (“LEP”) and hearing impaired patients, free standing clinics and their respective staff must work together to assess patient needs, and to provide appropriate interpretation and translation services to address a patient’s individual communication needs.

### **Guidelines:**

Upon an initial intake or contact with a SOM free standing clinic, staff members should assist with or determine whether a patient needs interpretation or translation services. If necessary, staff will use a language identification card. All LEP persons will be immediately notified of the availability of language assistance, free of charge. In addition, if a LEP person needs interpretive assistance a note will be included in their medical record for future reference.

### ***On Demand Over-the-Phone Interpretation***

Staff members have access to over-the-phone translation from a third-party contracted service provider, “Telanguage”. Telanguage provides interpretive services for twenty plus languages. Information on how to use “Telanguage” services is available at the front desks of every clinic. While this guideline details the interpretation and translation resources that may be accessed through via phone, SOM free standing clinics place a premium on face-to-face interactions between patients and healthcare team members, which can be important to patient care. Given the diverse nature of our workforce, there may be health care team members fluent in various languages present to assist with the patient encounter.



***Family Members as Interpreters***

Some LEP persons may prefer or request to use a family member or friend as an interpreter. However, family members or friends of the LEP person will not be used as interpreters unless specifically requested by that individual and after the LEP person has understood that an offer of an interpreter at no charge to the person has been made by the clinic. Such an offer and the response will be documented in the person's file via a "waiver of interpretive services form" (available in Spanish). If the family member or friend is not competent or appropriate for any reason, competent interpreter services will be provided to the LEP person. Children will not be used to interpret.

***In-Person American Sign Language Services***

On-site interpretive services may be requested in advance (at least 3 business days' notice). University Physicians, Inc. (UPI) administrative support staff will help coordinate this service.

***Documents***

Vital documents will be made available in Spanish. If additional documents need to be translated, UPI can coordinate this effort.

***Ongoing Evaluation***

On an ongoing basis, UPI/SOM will assess changes in demographics, types of services or other needs that may require reevaluation of this guideline. In addition, UPI/SOM will regularly assess the efficacy of these procedures.