

Advisory Committee on Qualifications for Health Care Translators and Interpreters

Meeting Site:

Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)
Winters Building, Room 460W
Austin, Texas 78751

March 21, 2014
Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance:

Detra Stewart
Ryan Foley
Esther Diaz
Irma Rubio
Jacque Burandt
Tony Martin
Zee Broussard
Nancy Miller
Chris Moreland
Manuel Higginbotham (proxy for Edgardo Garcia)

Members Not in Attendance

Fabio Torres
Gel Detrick
Miguel A. Fuentes

Non-voting Members in Attendance:

Barbara Wright, Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS)
Randi Turner, Department for Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
Patricia Hosey, Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m. by Tony Martin, Chair.

2. Approval of minutes for the February 21, 2014 meeting.

Approved as amended.

3. Report on administrative action items from last meeting.

CRO: Will correct the HHSC website links to the committee's internet website, interpreterhelp.com.

Status: Completed.

Zee: Will find out if the committee can publish the Alabama Sign Interpreters Training program's bibliography on the interpreterhelp.com website.

Status: The program agreed to allow the committee to post the program's bibliography.

Zee: Will post a summary of the last committee meeting on the TSID list serve.

Status: Incomplete

Detra: Will bring a draft/sample of wording that can be posted in community/church newsletters about the committee's purpose and progress.

Status: Detra is seeking information from the hospital community. A Spanish radio station is interested in making announcements.

Whitney: Will send the committee her conference notes on Minnesota's interpreter registry.

Status: Completed. Esther relayed the information Whitney sent. Since 2009, medical interpreters are required to sign up to be on a roster for a one-time fee of \$50. The roster is a statistical databank. A bill was introduced in January 2014 that will require interpreters to be on a registry which will verify credentials, education, criminal background check, medical certification, etc. The registry will be run by the Minnesota Department of Health in the future. Interpreters must be certified to be on the registry, if available in their language. Interpreters who are not certified must have minimum required education and other qualifications (including training). The bill is supported by many colleges and universities, and Minnesota is home to 76 certified interpreters.

Whitney: Will send Paula corrections to the stakeholders list for the committee's vacancy.

Status: Completed.

Randi: Will see that the IFB is sent to Paula for distribution to the committee.

Status: Completed. Some members submitted comments.

Committee members: Will send the vacancy announcement to their contacts.

Status: Tony, Paula, and Blanca Madriz from HHSC External Relations will have a conference call the first week of April to select a representative to recommend to the Executive Commissioner.

Committee members: Will send Paula contact information on professional associations for publicizing the vacancy.

Status: Randi and Whitney sent information.

Committee members: Will send certification proposals and concerns to Paula by March 7th.

Status: Irma, Ryan, Zee, and Detra submitted proposals and concerns. See agenda item #4.

Paula: Will send reminder to committee to submit certification proposals by March 7th.

Status: Completed.

Esther & Tony: Will consolidate committee members' certification proposals for the next meeting on March 21st.

Status: See agenda item #4.

Other Action Items:

Esther corrected the title of the HHSC Civil Rights Office on the committee's progress PowerPoint presentation.

Paula sent Esther the committee's past agendas and meeting minutes.

4. Discussion on proposals for certification.

Esther introduced a draft proposal which she developed using the DSHS Promotora/ Community Health Workers certification program as a template. Ryan proposed that the required number of classroom hours be reduced from the 120 hours itemized in the committee's proposed requirements. There is a concern that tough requirements could be a barrier to entry for interpreters, especially for languages of lesser diffusion. Zee & Detra shared concerns they had about the certification proposal. The committee discussed the various proposals and feedback and edited the proposal. Esther will make the edits for the next meeting.

5. Discussion on disseminating information on the committee recommendations.

See agenda item #3, Detra: Will bring a draft/sample of wording that can be posted in community/church newsletters about the committee's purpose and progress.

6. Discussion developing a registry for health care interpreters.

The group referred to information from the Minnesota registry and discussed how credentials might be verified. Per Manuel Higginbotham, TAHIT Board has agreed to consider hosting the registry on its website.

7. Public comment.

Mr. Chris Corsbie from Clear Word Interpreting commented that he had shared with Representative Doggett that most of Mr. Corsbie's employees were not certified medical interpreters. Mr. Corsbie requested information from the committee. He also shared that Louisiana provides free interpreter training.

Other Discussion

Barbara Wright with DADS will maintain the committee's website, interpreterhelp.com.

ACTION ITEMS for next meeting

Esther: Will make edits to the draft certification proposal.

Next Meeting Dates and Locations

May 9, 2014, BH 4501
June 20, 2014 (Tentative) BH 4501
July 18, 2014, BH 4501
September 19, 2014 TBD
December 5, 2014 TBD

Any changes to the meeting schedule will be announced on the committee website.