

**Advisory Committee on Qualifications for Health Care
Translators and Interpreters**

Meeting Site:

Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)
909 West 45th
Austin, Texas 78751
July 24, 2015

Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance:

Jacque Burandt
Gel Detrick
Esther Diaz
Miguel Fuentes
Nancy Miller
Fabio Torres
Detra Stewart
Whitney Gissell
Irma Rubio
Manuel Higginbotham

Members Not in Attendance:

Chris Moreland
Tony Martin
Zee Broussard

Non-voting Members in Attendance:

Barbara Wright, Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS)
Patricia Hosey, Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

Visitors in Attendance:

Teresa Williams, Austin/Travis County Integral Care
Waleska Ghini, International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA) - Texas.

1. Call to order

Esther Diaz called the meeting to order at 10:18 a.m.

2. Approval of minutes for March 27, 2015 and May 29, 2015 meetings (vote required)

Approved, with one abstention by Fabio Torres.

3. Discussion on legislative charge to the committee and status of committee work.

Paula explained about the summary prepared by Civil Rights Office staff on the status of the committee's work. As of September 1, 2015, 23 HHS committees are abolished under SB 277. However, the bill allows the Executive Commissioner to decide which committees will continue, and he has until November 1, 2015 to make the decision.

Esther led the discussion on this item. Members agreed that they have completed many of the tasks assigned by HB 233, the bill creating the committee. However, there is work remaining on the tasks listed in the status report.

1(d). Standards of Practice. The committee could endorse the standards of the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC).

1(e). Requirements, content and administration of certification examinations. The committee does not need to address this because of its recommendation to recognize national certification through Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters (CCHI) or the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters (NBCMI), or the alternative recommendations for experience and training.

1(g) Reciprocity agreements with other states. If people from other states take one of the recommended national certification exams, they would be qualified under the committee recommendations. But the committee needs more research on what other states require and which state have qualification requirements and which would Texas recognize. Whitney will compile the information.

3. Make recommendations for legislation. This implies the committee would suggest legislation on qualifications and certification. Legislators have considered such bills, but nothing has been passed.

Relevant to reciprocity, members discussed the recommendation for a registry of interpreters. Whitney Gissell asked: if an interpreter was on another registry, could he or she be included in the Texas registry? The committee's recommended training requirement is 120 hours, and most other states require only 60 hours of training. There are questions about how interpreters get on the registry. Ryan Foley provided a sample page of a website for the registry.

Members also discussed where a registry could be housed and where the group could be housed if the committee is not continued. The Texas Association of Healthcare Interpreters and Translators (TAHIT) could adopt the group. If TAHIT hosted the registry, it could require people to pay the \$40 membership fee to be on the registry. Manuel will present the idea to the TAHIT board to adopt the group, perhaps as a subcommittee of the Outreach Committee.

It is also possible that IMIA Texas could consider hosting the registry.

4. Discussion on disseminating information on the committee recommendations

Jacque led the discussion on this item.

The group needs to update the website and possibly rename it, perhaps *Best Practices in Health Care Interpreting and Translating*.

The group approved a mission statement, which could be included on the website or the back of the business cards:

"The advisory committee is a team of experts who help people get the highest quality health care by facilitating communication in their native language. We promote best practices in interpreting and translating by setting the gold standard and raising awareness of the need for qualified language professionals. Check out our gold standard at: www.Interpreterhelp.com."

The group approved an "elevator speech" to convey quickly the purpose of the recommendations:

"I help people get the highest quality health care by facilitating communication in their native language. This could be by interpreting, translating, advocating, and educating.

Comment [ED1]:
Where does the quote end: after *native language* or after *educating*?

Methods of outreach:

Print marketing: Business cards, flyers, posters, brochures.

Electronic marketing: hoodies with #tags, html

Live presentations: at professional association and other meetings

Media: Videos, PSA (radio). As an example, Jacque showed her 30 second presentation of staff training at University Health System.

Outside the box: Oprah, side of a bus, NFL commercial, blimp, tote bags, fortune cookies.

Communication Kit: press release, FAQ's, Bios of committee members, Contact Info, DVD

5. Discuss goals and work plan for committee.

If the committee is not continued, the group may continue to meet as it chooses. Teresa Williams, Austin Travis County Integral Care, has a good meeting room and Teresa volunteered it for the September 18 and December 4, 2015 meetings.

The group could continue to work on the dissemination plan and revamp the *Interpreter Help* website.

6. Public comment

Mr. Rubio stated he was impressed with the work of the committee. Because his wife, Irma Rubio, is on committee he has learned to embrace all people. The committee has a vision and has planted seeds. This committee is just the beginning.

Nancy shared a story of a deaf man brought to the hospital who had been wielding a knife; the police arrested and handcuffed him, taking away his ability to communicate by sign language. Nancy was able to communicate with him and asked that he be un-cuffed. Otherwise, hospital staff were going to sedate the patient when it was not needed or helpful. Nancy was able to be insistent about the need for an interpreter.

Other Discussion

This was Nancy Miller's last meeting; she has resigned from the committee and was presented with a certificate from HHSC.
Barbara Du Kett was introduced as new CRO staff.

Action Items

Paula: will contact ASTM to ask for the new standards.

Esther: will review the previous standards to assess what has changed.

Whitney: will compile information on what qualifications other states require for both sign language and foreign language interpreters.

Paula: will find Ryan Foley's suggestions for the website.

Paula and Jacque: will find the notes on brainstorming for the dissemination plan.

Teresa: will schedule meeting rooms for September and December.

Waleska Ghini: will prepare agendas and minutes.

Manuel: will announce the agenda for the next meeting through TAHIT.

Upcoming Events

IMIA - April 23 - 26, 2015 in Maryland; 2016 in Boston; and in 2017, in Houston, Texas.

TAHIT Symposium, September 25 - 26, 2015.

San Antonio Health Literacy conference, October 9, 2015.

International Language Services Conference, October 9, 2015, Houston.

Next Meetings (tentative)

September 18, 2015, TBD

December 4, 2015, TBD