



**SAN BERNARDINO
COUNTY**

Behavioral Health

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Director

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CSAC Challenge Award - Video Interpretation Pilot/Implementation

Overview

San Bernardino County, Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) utilizes a Video Interpretation Service to provide high quality, culturally competent, secure and cost effective interpreter services.

Challenge

San Bernardino County is geographically the largest county in the nation which poses several challenge in delivering behavioral health services across the region. Additionally, the county's residents are diverse both culturally and linguistically, with a large number residents who have Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Due to the large geographic size of our county, DBH faces a high risk of interpreter service unreliability because contract interpreters may decline to travel farther than a thirty (30) mile radius on holiday weekends or in bad weather. This has a particularly significant impact in remote areas of the county.

Originality and Innovative Solution

In June 2016, DBH partnered with Health Care Interpreter Network (HCIN) to pilot the use of a video interpretation system to provide interpreter accessibility promptly, on demand, and in real time. During a pilot period in two major clinics, we found video interpretation access was an efficient use of time for clinicians and clients as no appointment is necessary, in addition to being user friendly for both the consumer and clinician. With the success of the Pilot Program, DBH permanently adopted and integrated the Video Interpretation system into its standard business practices.

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Cost Effectiveness

The video interpretation system has provided immediate cost savings in two areas; missed appointments or “no-shows” and expense per interpretation for appointments that utilize the video interpretation system. Utilization of the video interpretation system has reduced the expense associated with missed appointments for consumers. In a cost effectiveness analysis conducted in March 2018, it was found that 292 consumers received interpreter services provided through HCIN, representing a total cost of \$25,110. If in person interpreters had been utilized for these same 292 consumers using our most frequently utilized in person language service provider, the estimated cost would be \$48,604.

Results

The video interpretation system has been extremely helpful when the need occurs for an immediate translator for a broad spectrum of languages including American Sign Language (ASL). The benefits of implementing video interpretation services have include reduced cost, added convenience, reliability, increased productivity, and increased quality of care. This system has created a comfortable environment for clinicians and consumers, while increasing client satisfaction by providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services for LEP and deaf/hard of hearing clients. Overall, the Video Interpretation Pilot increases access to care and supports the department’s mission of providing seamless, accessible, and effective services that promote prevention, intervention, recovery and resiliency for individuals, families and communities.

Program Contact

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