



May 2009

Dear Spoken Language Interpreting Agency Director,

We would like to call your attention to the new Minnesota Roster of Spoken Language Healthcare Interpreters. In 2008, Minnesota passed a law requiring the Department of Health to develop a voluntary statewide roster of people who are available for healthcare interpreting.

This law was designed to increase access to quality care, especially in rural areas. This roster will be the foundation for developing a verified registry of qualified healthcare interpreters. Currently, the roster is open to anyone who submits an application and pays a \$50 fee. Interpreters of all spoken languages who have experience or are interested in working in health care are invited to sign up. Healthcare providers who need an interpreter can search the roster by going to [www.health.state.mn.us/interpreters](http://www.health.state.mn.us/interpreters) and click on "search" or use the link below: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/pgc/hci/hcisearch.html>

**We would like to ask you to encourage interpreters you work with to add their names to the roster, and become part of a movement to professionalize the interpreting field.**

You may have hesitations regarding this roster. If your concern is that the roster provides a means to by-pass the agency and contact interpreters directly, the history of the court roster provides an interesting perspective. Its introduction increased the use of agencies, because the courts could require agencies to send certified and rostered interpreters, and they could now contract with only a few agency vendors. Indeed, some counties now use agencies exclusively.

Similarly, a roster, and eventually registry, will give healthcare organizations increased confidence in the qualifications of agency interpreters, enhancing the value of being able to contract with an agency. In addition, interpreters you work with can list your agency name and phone number in their roster entry.

Please be assured, the roster is designed to assist all organizations in raising the quality of interpreting services. The link for additional information and an application is:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/pgc/hci/index.html>

Sincerely,

Interpreting Stakeholder Group (ISG) Executive Committee:

Carol Berg , Health Plan representative  
representative

Russ Hastings, Interpreter agency

Michelle Chillstrom, Hospital representative

Kathy Huntley, Rural area representative

Idolly Fajardo, Interpreter representative  
Tara Gibbs, Interpreter education representative  
(UMTIA)

Connie Nelson, Health Plan representative

(The ISG is a collaborative whose mission is to improve the quality and delivery of spoken language interpreter services in Minnesota. Please see attached handout to find out more.)

**Some terms are defined using the definitions provided by the National Organization for Competency**

**Assurance (NOCA) (from *The Terminology on Healthcare Interpreting: A Glossary of Terms*, NCIHC 2008)**

<b>certification</b>	a process by which a governmental or professional organization attests to or certifies that an individual is qualified to provide a particular service. Certification calls for formal assessment, using an instrument that has been tested for validity and reliability, so that the certifying body can be confident that the individuals it certifies have the qualifications needed to do the job. (NCIHC)
<b>professional certification</b>	the voluntary process by which a non-governmental entity grants a time-limited recognition and use of a credential to an individual after verifying that he or she has met predetermined and standardized criteria. (NOCA)
<b>licensed</b>	having official permission or authority to perform some professional role, such as interpreting.
<b>licensure</b>	the process of obtaining an official license or authorization to perform a particular job. A mandatory process by which a governmental agency grants time-limited permission to an individual to engage in a given occupation after verifying that he/she has met predetermined and standardized criteria. (NOCA)
<b>registration</b>	the governmental process by which a governmental agency grants a time-limited status on a registry, determined by specified knowledge-based requirements (e.g., experience, education, examinations), thereby authorizing those individuals to practice, similar to licensure (NOCA—one of three basic meanings)
<b>registry</b>	a listing of persons who are registered (see registration)

ADDED CATEGORY – no official status

<b>roster</b>	a simple <u>listing</u> of individuals or a <u>database</u> of individuals including personal information supplied by each individual
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NOTE: The CHIA “Interpreter Registry” is actually a roster of interpreters, since the only requirement for listing is to be a member of the California Healthcare Interpreters Association. The Minnesota Court Interpreter “Roster” is technically a registry, since various requirements must be met in order to be listed, and the Court checks to make sure that those requirements are satisfied.

NOTE: The NOCA definition of “registry” above assumes that one who is registered is licensed to practice a certain profession, with the implication that individuals NOT on the registry cannot practice. But alternatively it is possible to separate registration from licensure (authorization), just as certification of competence does not necessarily entail authorization or exclusion from practicing the profession. In any case, a person who has satisfied certification requirements can use the label “certified interpreter” and a person who has satisfied registration requirements may call him/herself a “registered interpreter”.