
Providing Safe and Effective Care for Patients with Limited English Proficiency

Classroom Session 3: Improving Systems of Care

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Class Overview

- ◆ PowerPoint (15 min)
- ◆ Team activity 1: Improving systems of care for patients with LEP (45 min)
 - ◆ Work in teams to complete activity
 - ◆ Present to the large group
- ◆ Team activity 2: Advocating for patients with LEP (40 min)
- ◆ Call to Action (20 min)



Learning Objectives

Learning Goal: Explore the ways that systems of care can be enhanced to improve quality and safety for patients with limited English proficiency in a team environment.

Learning Objectives

1. Describe strategies for addressing root causes of medical errors among patients with LEP.
2. Design an intervention, policy change, or campaign to address systems level barriers to safe and effective care for patients with LEP.
3. Describe what you can do as a student to affect systems change and advocate for patients with LEP.



Systems and Strategies for Language Barriers

Create a more effective system to assure involvement of interpreter services

Ensure effective communication among team members to prevent communication errors for patients with LEP

Develop an approach for identifying and responding to errors and “near misses” among patients with LEP

Promote a “safety culture” for patients with LEP that empowers all members of the health care team to advocate when they notice the potential for error



Real World Example – Hospital A

Campaign to promote safe care for patients with LEP

- Posters and other marketing materials throughout hospital
- Mandatory education for all staff via e-learning program

All patients with LEP flagged in electronic medical record

Registrars trained to ask patients about language and to pre-arrange interpreters

Guidelines developed for when live interpreter versus telephonic interpreter should be used

- Additional live interpreters hired for high volume languages
- Interpreter phones and video units set up in key areas



Real World Example – Hospital A

Error reporting mechanisms updated to include focus on language and communication

- Staff – including interpreters – encouraged to use this
- Errors for patients with LEP reviewed and investigated

Quality and safety rounds adapted to include specific sessions emphasizing patients with LEP

Interpreters engaged in process of quality assurance with patients with LEP at high risk for errors



Real World Example – Community Health Center B

Live training sessions for all staff led by interpreter services department and medical and nursing champions

- Sessions specifically focused on building a culture of safety for patients with LEP

Educational materials provided to patients in multiple languages and basic literacy level

- Focused on patients' right to free interpreter services, how to work most effectively with an interpreter, and addressing FAQs

Interpreters trained to identify miscommunication and act as patient advocates and cultural brokers



Real World Example – Community Health Center B

Linked with other community health centers to create a bank of trained, live interpreters, as well as on call remote access by phone or video

Graduate medical, nursing, and public health students created a Quality Assessment and Improvement (CQI) project to assess and track medical errors experienced by patients who used the interpreter bank, as well as satisfaction with the services provided



Team Activity 1: Improving Systems of Care for Patients with LEP

- ◆ Review the case study and design an intervention to address systemic issues. – 20 min
- ◆ Each team presents its intervention and receives feedback from faculty and colleagues. Select a team member to take notes and report out to the class. – 20 min; 5 min per group



Intervention Design

- ◆ **Team A:** Design an intervention to create a more effective system to assure involvement of interpreter services in this hospital.
- ◆ **Team B:** Devise an approach to ensure effective communication among team members at this hospital to prevent communication errors for patients with LEP.
- ◆ **Team C:** Devise a policy for response to errors and “near misses” among patients with LEP in this hospital.
- ◆ **Team D:** Design a campaign to promote a “safety culture” for patients with LEP that empowers all members of the health care team to advocate when they notice a potential for error.



Team Reports

- ◆ Team A presentation & discussion (5 min)
- ◆ Team B presentation & discussion (5 min)
- ◆ Team C presentation & discussion (5 min)
- ◆ Team D presentation & discussion (5 min)



Team Activity 2: Advocating for Patients with LEP

- ◆ Review & discuss the case study your team selected from online assignment 2 – 20 min
 - ◆ What could you as a student do to advocate for the patient & ensure safe, effective care in this situation or one like it?
 - ◆ How could you as a student change the system so the patient in this scenario (or one like it) receives safer, more effective care?
- ◆ Each team shares highlights of their discussion with the class, with brief reactions/input from classmates and course instructors– 15 min; 3-4 min per group



Call to Action

- ◆ What are your thoughts about the actions proposed in this list?
 - ◆ What seems feasible?
 - ◆ What seems challenging?
- ◆ Is there anything you would add to this list?
- ◆ Consider committing to at least 1 action that you can take now in your role as a medical or nursing student to improve care for patients with LEP



Next Steps

- ◆ Call to Action!
- ◆ Continue to seek out ways to develop skills to provide safe and effective care for patients with Limited English Proficiency.
- ◆ Continue to develop capacity as members and leaders of interprofessional teams.

