



National Coalition on Health Care Interpreter Certification: A Progress Report

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On behalf of
National Coalition Coordinating Committee

Medical Leadership Council
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Understanding Certification

- **Certification:** a certifying body guarantees that the certified individual has the capacity to perform a particular set of skills up to an established standard.
 - **Certificate of (successful) completion:** awarded to a candidate upon completion of a training program, usually by passing a final exam. Such exam often does not require demonstration of actual skills.
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The Foundations of a Valid Certification

- Clear concept of role
 - Code of Ethics
 - Standards of Practice
 - Standards for Training programs
 - Certification
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The Movement Towards National Certification

- 1995 WA State becomes the first state to certify Medical Interpreters
 - 1996 MMIA & EDC publish first Standards of Practice
 - 2001 NCIHC publishes paper on interpreter role
 - 2001 Oregon passes law to develop qualification/certification of medical interpreters
 - 2002 CHIA publishes Standards of Practice
 - 2003 MMIA, CHIA, and NCIHC co-pilot a certification test for Spanish interpreters
 - 2003 Indiana sets up a commission to develop a certification process
 - 2004 NCIHC publishes National Code of Ethics
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The Movement Continues

- 2005 MMIA expert group meeting in Boston
 - 2006 TCE publishes "*A Primer, a Status Report, and Considerations for National Certification*"
 - 2006-07 NCIHC holds 12 forums across the country
 - May 2007 LLS National Medical Interpreter Certification Forum in Boston
 - June 2007 Expert Panel convened by the Minnesota Interpreter Stakeholder Group in MN
 - Oct. 2007 NCIHC receives grant from TCE to advance national certification
 - Oct. 2007 Panel presentation on national certification (ATA/CHIA/IMIA/NCIHC) at IMIA Annual Conference
 - Dec. 2007 National Coalition Coordinating Committee formed
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National Certification Guiding Principles

...commitment to the development of a credible, inclusive, transparent certification process with the ultimate goal of improving access to health care for limited-English speaking communities.



The Coordinating Committee Members

- **American Translators Association (ATA)**
 - **California Healthcare Interpreting Association (CHIA)**
 - **International Medical Interpreter Association (IMIA)**
 - **National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC)**
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National Coalition's Role

- ❑ **Guiding** the development of a coherent, comprehensive and fair certification process
 - ❑ **Identifying** the expert workgroups that are needed
 - ❑ **Establishing and overseeing** the work of the expert workgroups and/or contractors assigned to investigate and make recommendations on specific aspects of the certification process, such as the technical aspects of the assessment/testing instrument, criteria for eligibility, regulatory issues, and so on
 - ❑ **Developing** a plan for implementation of the certification process on a national level
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Stakeholder Groups

- ❑ Interpreting associations
 - ❑ Language companies and agencies that hire or contract with interpreters
 - ❑ Interpreter employers or purchasers of interpreting services (i.e. hospitals, health plans, county health systems)
 - ❑ Healthcare professionals who work with interpreters, as represented by their professional associations
 - ❑ Interpreter educational programs and organizations
 - ❑ Government entities involved with language access
 - ❑ Accrediting organizations
 - ❑ Advocacy groups representing linguistically and culturally diverse communities
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Accomplishments

- Bi-weekly 1.5 hour conference calls since Dec. 2007
- March 14, 2008 Call for Application
- March 25, 2008 Applicant Informational Conference Call
- May 7, 2008 Announcement of Coalition members
- May 9, 2008 Press release – Formal Coalition

Next Steps

- **May 29-30, 2008**
 - First meeting of the Coalition with funding from The California Endowment
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