

The California Endowment Grant: Language Access Expansion and Evaluation

Background

Sutter Health received a prestigious two-year grant from The California Endowment Medical Leadership Council in May 2005. The grant awards our current programs that improve services for patients with limited English proficiency (LEP). It recognizes the integrated, systemwide approach Sutter Health is taking to enhance our organization's cultural competence.

Needs & Benefits

According to Census 2000 data, 1.5 million residents (32.8%) within the communities our affiliates serve can be categorized as LEP and speak languages other than English at home.

Culture and language influence:

- Health, healing, and wellness beliefs
- Delivery of health services by providers
- Behaviors of patients/consumers
- Perceived disease causes and cures

Grant Components

Staff Interpreter Evaluation

- Additional sessions for interpreter competency of dual-role staff interpreters and bi-lingual staff.
- Expand current evaluation sessions to include interpreter skills training.

Online Library

- Develop online library populated with quality, linguistically and culturally appropriate patient education documents in multiple languages for health care providers systemwide.
- Post patient educational documents for the general public through Sutter's external website.

Telephone Interpreter Services

- Standardize telephone interpreter services regionally.
- Incorporate training and evaluation in each affiliate's telephone interpreter services.

Cultural Competence Action Plan

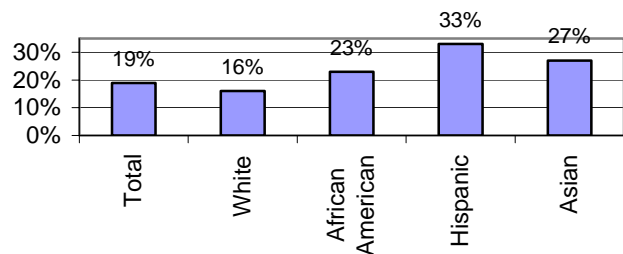
- Develop an action plan in response to a cultural competence (CC) assessment project.
- Action plan will collaborate with community organizations and utilize local resources.

Accomplishments

- Organized and implemented Interpreter Skills Training for evaluated staff - held quarterly.
- Created on-library with over 150 documents in multiple languages - open to all affiliates.
- Developed competitive process to select recommended vendor - 11 proposals received.
- Completed secondary data collection (policies, etc.) in CC assessment - primary in progress.

Minorities Face Greater Difficulty in Communicating with Physicians

Percent of adults with one or more communication problems*



*Problems included understanding doctor, feeling listened to, had questions but did not ask. Source: The Commonwealth Fund 2001 Health Quality Survey.