



Overcoming the Language Barrier by Assisting Families via Interpretation (Spanish)

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COMMUNITY PARTNER

A leader in pediatric care since 1875, St. Christopher's Hospital for Children's nationally recognized programs and pediatric specialists provide exceptional care to children from throughout the Greater Philadelphia area and around the world. The mission of St. Christopher's Hospital for Children is to provide quality pediatric services in a caring, progressive environment. St. Christopher's Hospital is committed to quality through teamwork, technology and service in a child-friendly, family-oriented environment.

<https://towerhealth.org/locations/st-christophers-hospital-children>

PROJECT

This experience removed a language barrier to increase access to healthcare in Northern Philadelphia, an historically underserved area.

An interpreter is present for direct patient to provider interactions in a clinical setting as requested. The purpose is to interpret speech and also serve as a liaison between cultures and ensure understanding in both directions. Healthcare workers were instructed on best practices when using a interpreter services. Supplementary assistance was provided in the form of translations of written documents and navigating throughout the hospital as needed.



PROJECT RESULTS

After 7 weeks at the hospital for a total of 22 days seeing patients there were 92 different families that were directly helped with medical interpreting. The specialty breakdown is as follows:

Emergency:	41	This demonstrates where a medical interpreter was most used while at the hospital during normal business hours. If there were no more planned appointments time would be spent in the emergency department which shows the greatest need.
Orthopedics:	19	
ENT:	9	
Short Procedure:	8	
Hematology:	6	
Neurology:	6	
Oncology:	2	
Ophthalmology:	1	

REFLECTION

Working alongside doctors and nurses gave me a lot to look forward to as a current medical student. I can now better picture myself working with the community as I continue to improve my medical knowledge. I witnessed countless pathologies that helped retain the material I had learned as a first year medical student. I am more motivated to be a better physician now that I understand the flaws with the current system and look forward to do what I can to correct inequalities in the healthcare field.

There is a large population of patients that require accommodations, not by choice, and we need to work to remove barriers for the community. This experience inspired plans to promote more medical students becoming certified medical interpreters so that, during their training to become physicians, they can serve the community of non-English-speaking patients.

