

# Cultural Competence Interpreter Services Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

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# Immigrants in Massachusetts

- As of 2004, 14.3% of Massachusetts residents (906,866) were born in another country, a large increase from 1980 when 9.4% of the population was foreign-born.

- Andrew M. Sum, Johan Uvin,  
● Ishwar Khatiwada, Dana Ansel, Mass Inc 2004 and U.S. Census Bureau



# Patient-Centered Communication

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Improved Communication has been linked to

- ✓ Improved outcomes
- ✓ Improved adherence
- ✓ Decreased rates of malpractice
- ✓ Improved patient satisfaction



# General Issues for Patients with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

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Language Barriers can lead to:

- Less access to primary and preventive care
- Lower patient comprehension
- Decreased patient adherence
- Diminished patient satisfaction



# General Issues for Patients with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

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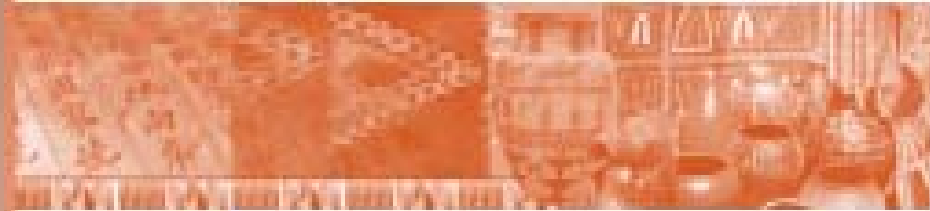
**Use of Trained Interpreters may :**

- Improve Communication
- Improve pt satisfaction
- Improve adherence





U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, OPMS  
Office of Minority Health



**National Standards for  
Culturally and Linguistically  
Appropriate Services in  
Health Care**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



March 2001  
Washington, D.C.



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# CLAS Standards

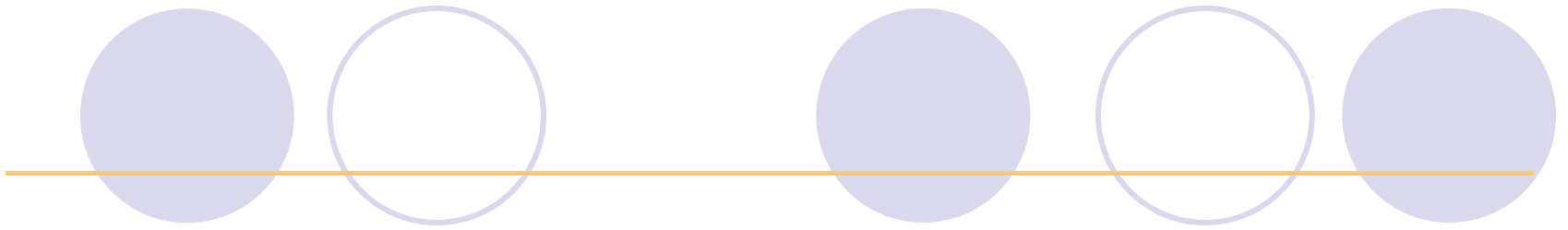
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- Health Care Organizations Must Offer and Provide Language Assistance Services, Including Bilingual Staff and Interpreter Services, at No Cost to Each Patient/Consumer With Limited English Proficiency at All Points of Contact, in a Timely Manner During All Hours of Operation

Accessible (October 2005) at <http://www.omhrc.gov/clas/finalcultural1a.htm#final1>



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**JCAHO** (Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals)  
regulations regarding informed consent:

*“ A patient should not be subjected to any procedure without his voluntary, competent, and understanding consent or the consent of his legally authorized representative”*



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# BIDMC

## Interpreter Services Policy Highlights

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- BIDMC STRONGLY DISCOURAGES the use of untrained interpreters, whether they are relatives and friends, other patients, or bilingual staff, and other patients.
- If all efforts to obtain a BIDMC approved medical interpreter have been exhausted, bilingual staff may act as interpreters in a **life threatening emergency**.
- All efforts to make arrangements for a trained and/or certified interpreter in-person or for telephonic or video interpreting services should be documented in the medical record
- Routine communication of a non-medical nature does not fall under this guideline.



# Interpreter Services

## Interpreter Services Policy:

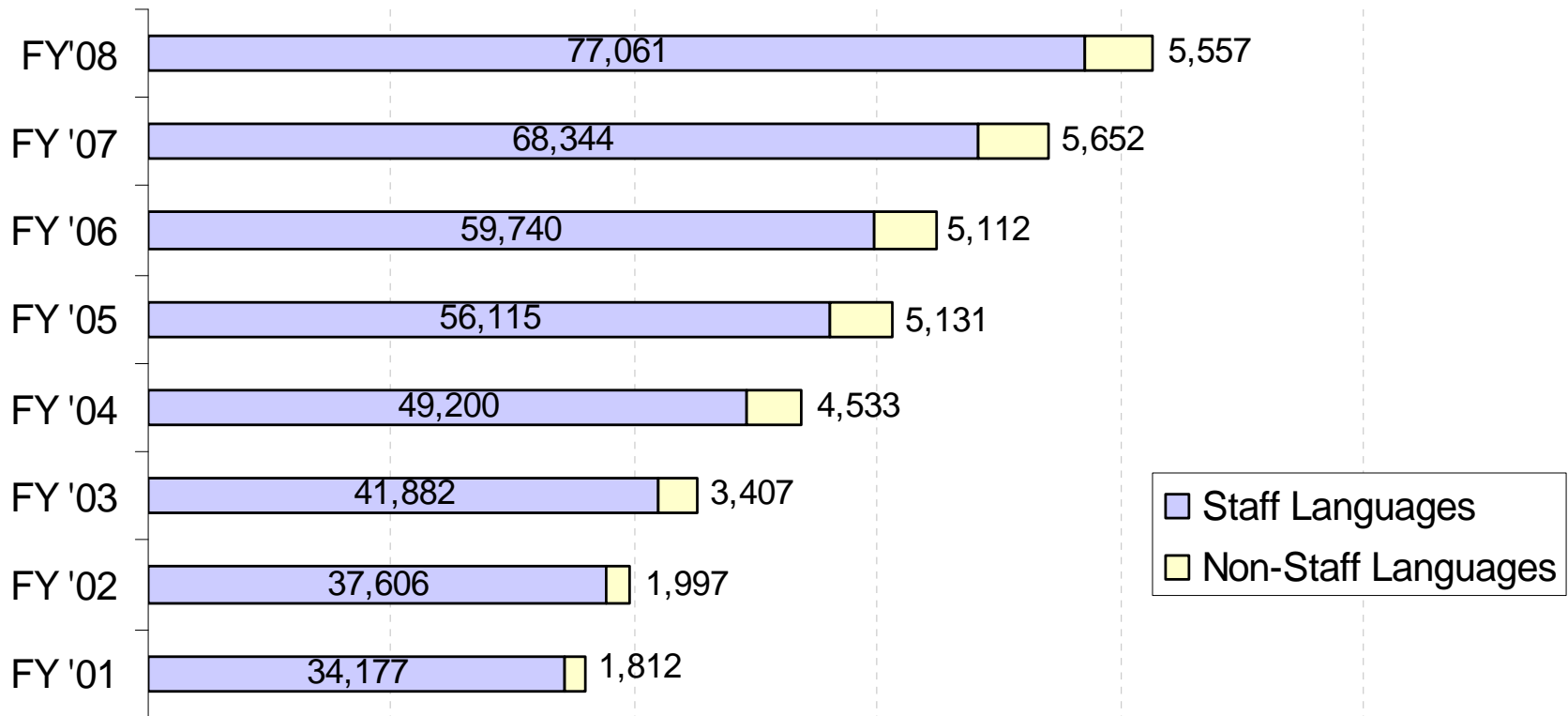
Facilitate Effective and Safe Patient Care with  
accurate communication

1. Minimize communication as an area for error
2. Comply with Regulatory Agencies and Legal Requirements
  - Massachusetts Law, July 2001
  - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
  - Federal Law, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973



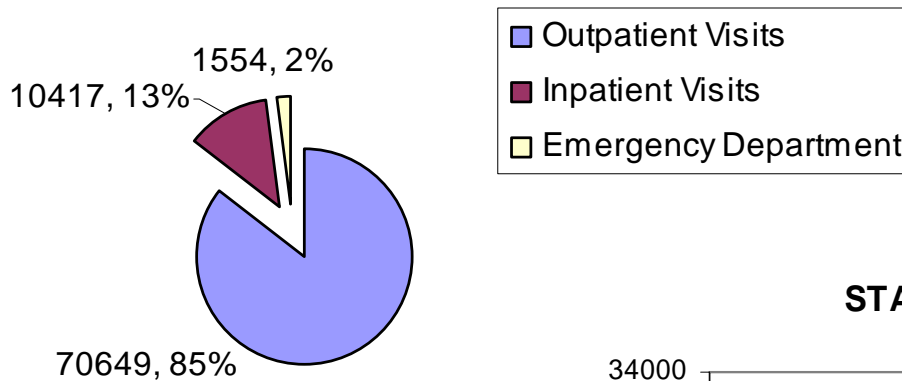
# BIDMC Interpreter Services

## Interpreter Services Total Encounters FY 2001-2008

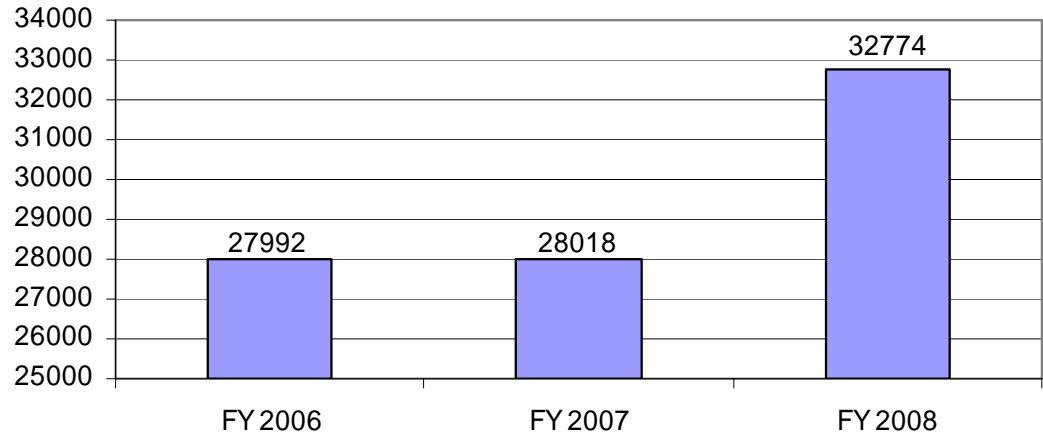


# BIDMC Interpreter Services

## BIDMC Interpreter Services FY 2008



## STAFF LANGUAGE PHONE CALLS

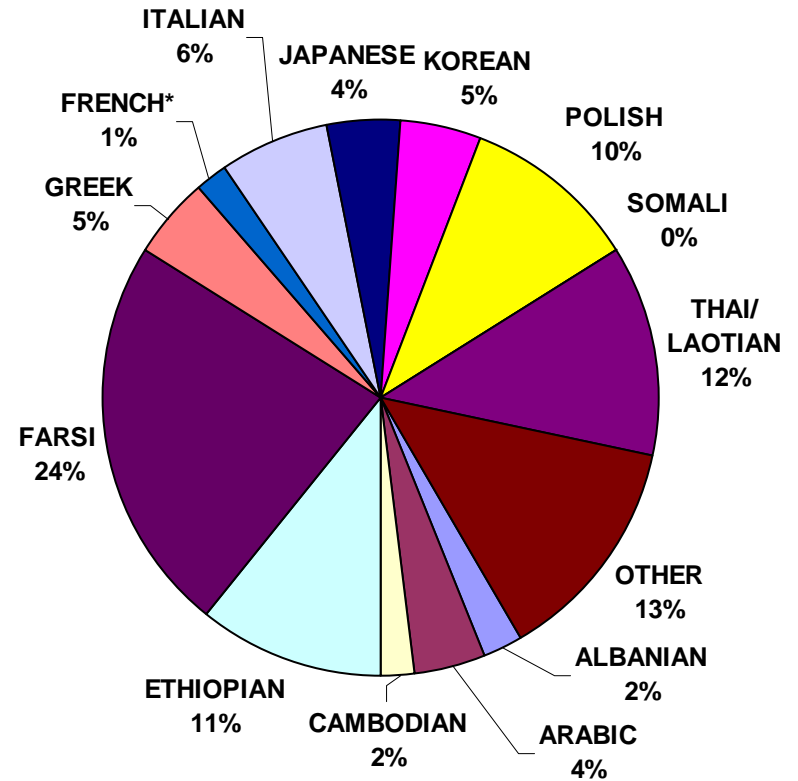
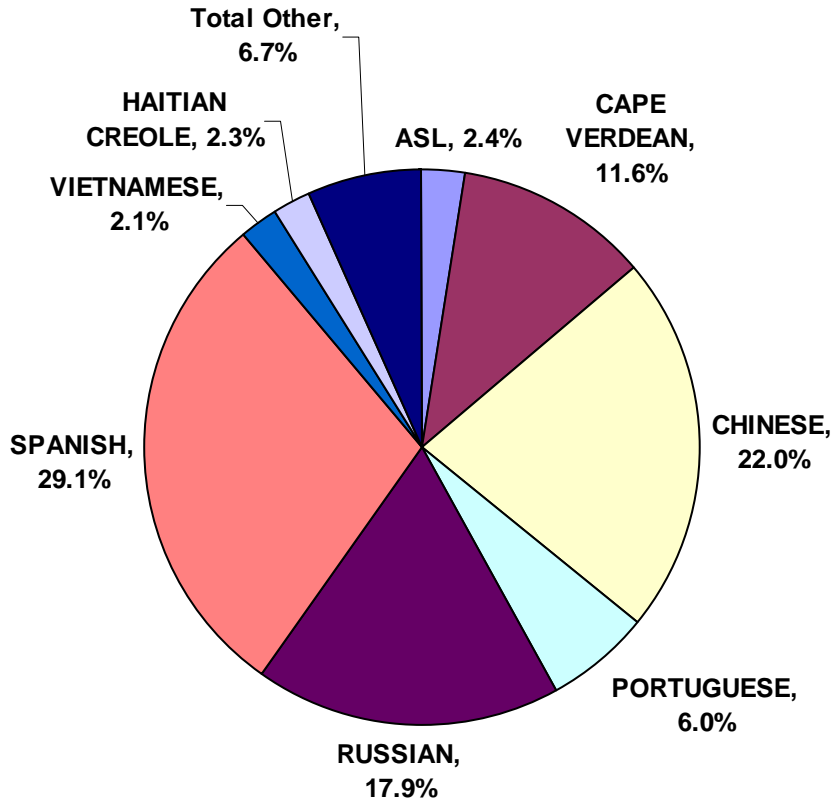


# LANGUAGE BREAKDOWN

# FY 2008

Staff Languages FY'08

"Other" languages- breakdown FY '08



# Staff Languages on Site Daily

*1979: 1 Interpreter for Russian*

*2008: 50 staff interpreters for 10 languages*

American Sign Language

Cantonese/Mandarin Chinese (24/7)

Cape Verdean Creole/ Portuguese (24/7)

Haitian Creole

Russian (24/7)

Spanish (24/7)

Thai

Vietnamese

Other languages



# PAGING TIPS

A decorative graphic at the top of the slide features five circles in a horizontal row. The first, third, and fifth circles are solid light purple, while the second and fourth are hollow with a light purple outline. A thin yellow horizontal line runs across the bottom of the circles.

- Dial your call back number in slowly and carefully
- Interpreters have TEXT pages



## TIPS TO WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER

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- Suggest the use of an interpreter along with the family member
- Look at the patient when you speak (not at the interpreter)
- Use simple phrases without too many sub-clauses
- Ask interpreter for their “take” on things



# TOOLS AVAILABLE

- Interpreter “Cards”
- Make Use of TEXT PAGERS
- Translated Patient Education on Portal
  - Click on the “Patient Education” Tab
    - Left hand upper quadrant “Patient Handouts”
      - BIDMC Fact Sheets
      - Select Language
- Bedside “Flash Cards” available on the Portal
  - Click on the “Clinical Tab”
    - Right hand upper quadrant: Patient Care Services
      - Click on : Last item “Translated Phrases”



# Interpreter CareLink Locations



Stoneman Basement  
Secluded and Fixed  
Location



Mobile  
Throughout  
Medical Center

Emergency Department  
and  
Pain Management Center



# Case Examples

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**A Florida hospital paid out \$71 million malpractice settlement for a case where a 22-year-old man asserted that a group of paramedics, doctors and emergency room workers at a South Florida hospital had misdiagnosed a brain clot.**

**The patients' relatives, serving as interpreter(s) used the Spanish word "intoxicado" to describe his ailment. They meant that he was nauseated, but the medical staff interpreted the word to mean intoxicated, a valid meaning in some cultures, and treated him for a drug overdose.**

