

# PROTOCOL FOR HOW TO ACCESS INTERPRETING SERVICES

(Face-to-Face, Over-the-Phone & American Sign Languages)

## Why BFMG provides Free Interpreting Services?

“Federal Law requires that health care providers who see all government programs members provide free language assistance to limited English proficient (LEP) and hard-of-hearing or deaf persons. In order for you to meet this legal requirement, Care1st Health Plan is providing Over-the-Phone, Face-to-Face and American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting services at no cost to Care1st providers and members.”

## When is Over-the-Phone Interpreting Services recommended?

- ◆ When you identify a patient as being limited English proficient (LEP) and the patient is already present at the office, telephone interpretation should be used immediately to avoid any delay in service.
- ◆ Telephone interpretation is available 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK.
- ◆ When a LEP patient requests it.

## **A DURING BUSINESS HOURS:**

1. Call the members designated health plan

Please see attached:

- California LAP
- Health Plan Information Sheet

## **● AFTER BUSINESS HOURS:**

1. Call the members designated health plan.

Please see attached:

- California LAP
  - Health Plan Information Sheet
2. If your office has After Hours Answering Services: Please ensure that their staff members can speak languages other than English; please ensure that they know how to connect to an interpreter over the telephone.
3. If your office has On-Call Physicians/Nurses: Please ensure that they know how to connect to an interpreter over the telephone.
4. If your office has an answering machine: Please let the patients know that they need to call Pacific Interpreters.

## When are Face-to-Face and American Sign Language interpreting services recommended?

- ◆ To explain complex medical consultation or education (i.e. medical diagnosis, treatment options, insulin instructions, etc.) to a LEP or a hard-of-hearing or deaf member.
- ◆ When a LEP patient requests it.

All requests must be made with advance notice (amount of days may vary based on the company), please contact the members' Bakersfield Family Medical Group primary care provider (PCP) for further assistance.

**Please contact the Bakersfield Family Medical Group's Customer Service Department at least 48 Hours in advance if the appointment has been CANCELLED or RESCHEDULED.**

## When is LifeSigns (American Sign Language) recommended?

- ◆ In case of emergency or after business hours for American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter, please call: LifeSigns at 1-800-633-8883

## When is California Relay Service (TTY/Telecommunication Device for Deaf - TDD) recommended?

- ◆ When your office staff need to communicate with the hard-of-hearing or deaf patients, please call California Relay Service:  
**English 1-888-877-5379**  
**Spanish 1-888-877-5381**
- ◆ When your hard-of-hearing or deaf patients need assistance to call your office, please dial **1-800-735-2929 (Los Angeles)** or **711** and **1-866-461-4288 (San Diego)**.
- ◆ Bakersfield Family Medical Group has multiple Spanish speaking staff available. Please contact the Human Resources Department for information.

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### PLEASE KEEP IN MIND

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1. Always document the member's preferred language in the member's medical record.
2. Always document the request or refusal of interpreting services in the member's medical record.
3. Always post an "Interpreting Services Signs" at key medical and non-medical points of contact.
4. Please discourage patients of using friends and family members as interpreters unless the member requests it after being informed about the availability of the free interpreter services.

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