



Tips for communicating with members who speak limited English

- Speak slowly, not loudly.
- Organize what you want to convey first. Use short, simple sentences. Keep in mind, what is said at the beginning and end of a discussion is most likely to be remembered.
- Face members. Watch their facial expressions and body language. If these don't agree with their words, or if their expressions indicate they do not understand, slow down and start again.
- Try not to ask yes or no questions. Instead, ask questions requiring members to respond and volunteer information. For example, phrase questions to begin with why, how or what.
- Members' responses will help you determine whether they properly understand the question.
- Rephrase and summarize often.

Tips for working with interpreters

- Brief the interpreter in private before the members' visits. Provide relevant information about members.
- Encourage the interpreter to ask questions or clarify a message when necessary.
- Address members directly. Avoid directing all comments to the interpreter.
- Talk in short sentences. Discuss one concept at a time.
- Be patient. Careful interpretation may require the interpreter to use long phrases. It can take more words or time to describe a concept in another language.
- Avoid using medical jargon when possible. It may be difficult for interpreters and members to understand.
- Be aware of nonverbal cues from members such as nodding, smiling, body positioning, etc. Nonverbal cues may indicate how much the members understand.



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