

# FAQs...

## Frequently Asked Questions for Healthcare Interpreters

### Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters



**Effective communication  
is crucial to quality care...**

**Healthcare interpreters  
are a critical part of the  
equation**

#### **Why is it necessary to use certified healthcare interpreters?**

Certified healthcare interpreters provide the assurance of safety, accuracy, respect of boundaries, and transparency required in a healthcare setting. When it comes to facilitating communication in a clinical encounter between parties that don't speak the same language, there is a large difference between bilingual individuals and professional healthcare interpreters. Certified healthcare interpreters understand medical terminology in both languages and employ professional techniques to handle the complexities that arise with patients, families, and healthcare providers.

#### **How is interpreting in a healthcare setting unique?**

Healthcare interpreters make a difference one word at a time. They work as the bridge to effective communication between limited English proficient (LEP) patients and families and their healthcare providers. Healthcare interpreters are a valuable member of the healthcare team. They are a key partner in providing patient and family centered communication. Healthcare interpreters make it possible for LEP patients to participate in their healthcare decisions and reduce potential clinical errors and mistakes due to miscommunication.

#### **Why choose a career as a healthcare interpreter?**

The healthcare interpreter profession is filled with variety and flexibility. Anyone can enter the healthcare interpreting profession, at any age.

- **VARIETY** – Work in a hospital, clinic, other healthcare setting, or over the phone/via video conferencing in your own home.
- **FLEXIBILITY** – As an independent contractor, you can choose your work hours, make your own schedule.
- **JOB SECURITY** – The non-English speaking population is growing and medical assistance will always be needed.
- **BENEFITS** – Work opportunities range from full or part-time employment to being an independent contractor.
- **EDUCATION** – Gain firsthand knowledge of the latest medical technology and treatments, and understanding of the healthcare system. Increase your knowledge across an array of specialties.
- **CAREER PATH** – Advance to manager, supervisor, director or trainer through experience and professional development.
- **RESPECT** – Become a critical part of the healthcare team working with local doctors and healthcare staff.

#### **Is the healthcare interpreter profession projected to grow?**

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of interpreters and translators is projected to increase 46% between 2012 and 2022.



## Who should consider a career in healthcare interpreting?

- Bilingual graduate students
- Students with foreign language degrees
- Bilingual healthcare staff
- Refugees/Asylees/Immigrants
- Medical professionals from other countries who may be waiting for their U.S. credentials
- Foreign language teachers
- Bilingual individuals wanting to work from home
- Bilingual individuals re-entering the workforce
- Bilingual retirees looking for a place to make a difference

## How will CCHI certification benefit healthcare interpreters?

First of all, CCHI's certification is recognized and preferred by many healthcare providers requesting interpreting services as a valid and independent certification. As the healthcare profession increases its demand for professional interpreter credentials, healthcare interpreters recognize the value of making sure they have the experience, training or both to earn the certification. Likewise, certification also becomes recognized as a valuable and requested asset to an enhanced professional career and lifelong advancement opportunities.

## What is healthcare interpreter certification?

Established by Congress to develop standards for quality certification in the allied health fields, the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (formerly NOCA) says, *"The certification of specialized skill-sets affirms a knowledge and experience base for practitioners in a particular field, their employers, and the public at large. Certification represents a declaration of a particular individual's professional competence."*

## What is the Core Certification Healthcare Interpreter™ credential?

The Core Certification Healthcare Interpreter™ (CoreCHI™) credential is the entry point into professional certification for healthcare interpreters regardless of the language(s) in which they interpret. The CoreCHI™ certification measures the interpreter's core professional knowledge, including such vital healthcare concepts as safety protocols, universal precautions, and HIPAA. The CoreCHI™ examination also assesses the interpreter's critical thinking and ethical decision-making skills needed to perform their duties in any healthcare setting.

CCHI's CoreCHI™ examination is a computer-based, 100-question, multiple-choice examination in English that covers the basics of healthcare interpreting and focuses on the following categories of knowledge: Managing an Interpreting Encounter, Healthcare Terminology, Interacting with Other Healthcare Professionals, Preparing for an Interpreting Encounter, and Cultural Responsiveness.

## What is the Certified Healthcare Interpreter™ certification?

The Certified Healthcare Interpreter™ (CHI™) certification is a language-specific assessment of the interpreter's performance skills. Currently, the CHI™ examination is available in Arabic, Mandarin and Spanish. It is administered only during certain testing "windows" each quarter.

CCHI's CHI™ examination is an oral performance exam that includes a number of vignettes testing consecutive and simultaneous interpreting plus sight translation and translation skills in a specific language, and focuses on the following categories of knowledge, skills and abilities: Performing Healthcare Interpreting and Sight Translation / Translation of Healthcare Documents.

## What makes CCHI the right choice for healthcare interpreter certification?

CCHI's mission is to develop and administer a national, valid, credible, vendor-neutral certification program for healthcare interpreters. You have likely noticed that we use this sentence in everything we publish. That is because healthcare interpreting is our core and our strength and we are driven by the desire to serve the current and future needs of healthcare interpreters. We believe these four adjectives define our approach, guide our process, and are the critical elements that differentiate CCHI interpreters and the stakeholders who are counting on us to provide a trained, qualified, and certified population of healthcare interpreters.

CCHI's certification for healthcare interpreters is not branded to or licensed from any vendor of language services. We developed our certification from the ground up and did not rely on any commercially-oriented certification, training, testing or assessment developed by other organizations. CCHI's certification program was developed by CCHI which will retain sole ownership, as well as the ongoing responsibility for updating the program. CCHI is not derived from or related to a commercial owner/sponsor.

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CCHI serves the needs of bilingual, spoken-language healthcare interpreters committed to demonstrating their professional knowledge, skills and abilities by becoming certified based on national standards. At the same time, CCHI serves many stakeholders (healthcare providers and insurers, language agencies, training providers, government agencies, patients) who need a qualified, certified and competency-based population of healthcare interpreters to ensure effective communication between healthcare providers and insurers and their patients to ensure access to high-quality healthcare.

CCHI's certification program has been developed following the standards of the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), and CCHI received NCCA's accreditation for both CoreCHI™ and CHI™ certifications, fulfilling the validity criteria defined by the Institute for Credentialing Excellence.

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