

Improved Access to Hepatobiliary Clinic for Patients with a Chinese Interpreter

The Problem

Long wait time for matching availability in the Hepatobiliary Clinic for patients with a Chinese interpreter. Wait time for a new appointment for patients with a Chinese interpreter was 98% longer than for patients without a Chinese interpreter

Aim/Goal

To decrease wait time for an appointment for patients with a Chinese Interpreter to be consistent with a patients without a Chinese Interpreter

The Team

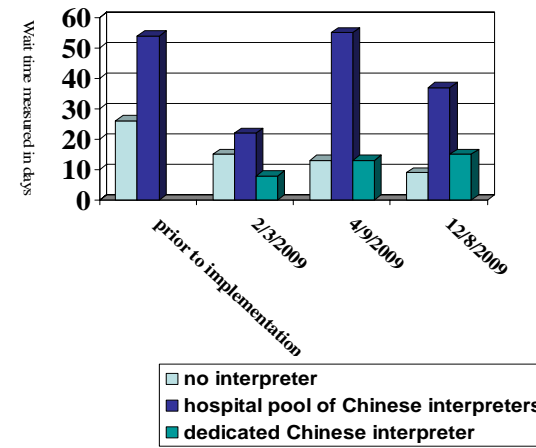
Tania Alvarez, Administrative Assistant III, Transplant Institute
Jerry Amirault, System Specialist, Ambulatory Education & Systems
Melissa Ball, HB Nurse Coordinator, Transplant Institute
Janice Chung, Coordinator, Chinese Interpreter Team
Shari Gold-Gomez, Director, Interpreter Services
Douglas Hanto, MD, HB Surgeon, Chief, Division of Transplantation
Linda Lentz, Director, Transplant Services

The Interventions

- Identified root cause:
 - Chinese interpreter schedule availability did not match the availability of the Hepatobiliary Clinic availability;
 - Special arrangements/workarounds were used to schedule patients earlier than CCC scheduling system allowed
- Used the “Spanish Optometry Clinic” as the best practice model to better align interpreter and surgeon availability
- Pre-assigned a Chinese Interpreter to the new “Chinese Hanto Clinic”; book all patients who need a Chinese Interpreter into this clinic
- Implemented new scheduling process; educated staff in Transplant Institute and Interpreter Services

The Results/Progress to Date

Wait time for appointment pre and post implementation of HB Clinic with dedicated Chinese interpreter



Lessons Learned

- Cooperation between 3 departments and using a proven model resulted in an effective solution without increasing staffing
- The effort was worth it--reduced workarounds to meet patient needs resulted in better use of time for Hepatobiliary Nurse and scheduling staff in Transplant Institute and in Interpreter Services
- Volume fluctuates; it is important to review and adjust the Chinese Clinic hours and dedicated time of the interpreter to ensure that the solution continues to be effective

Next Steps/What Should Happen Next

- Develop a mechanism to routinely monitor volume and adjust available hours as needed
- Use as a model for other high volume areas looking to reduce wait time for a large same language group of patients



Beth Israel Deaconess
Medical Center



A teaching hospital of
Harvard Medical School

THE SILVERMAN INSTITUTE
For Healthcare Quality and Safety

For More Information Contact
Shari Gold-Gomez, Director, Interpreter Services
(sgomez@bidmc.harvard.edu)