

Paving the Way 2022
What can Doctors and Interpreters learn from each other?
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Break out scenario 1

MD: You need a low salt diet

Patient: I never add salt to my food. I don't even have a salt shaker on the table.

Interpreter: (thinks: the traditional diet in the country the patient comes from includes salty ingredients and adds salt during cooking, so there is no need to add salt at the table.)

Examples might include :

Processed or preserved foods: canned vegetable, meats, fish & soups, frozen dinners, dry salt fish, corned beef, and more...

Fermented or pickled foods: fermented black beans 豆豉, kimchi, soy sauce, hot sauce, pickled vegetables, and more...

Discussion Questions:

Choose someone to report the pros & cons your breakout section discussed.

What should the interpreter do?

What are the pros & cons of each of the following options?

- Interpret accurately & completely, nothing more
- After the appointment, give the patient diet advice
- During the appointment, share with patient and MD information re: traditional diet & salt, so they can discuss
- After the appointment, find the MD and advocate for the MD to refer the patient for a nutrition consult.
- Are there other options you can suggest?

Break out scenario 2

Physician: uses lots of abbreviations, high register and medical terminology.

Interpreter: maintains the high register.

Patient: smiles and nods.

Interpreter: (thinks: "I suspect the patient does not understand.")

Discussion Questions:

What are the pros & cons of each of the following options?

What should the interpreter do?

Choose someone to report the pros & cons your breakout section discussed.

- Interpret accurately & completely, nothing more
- Ask the MD, "would you like to ask the patient to "teach-back," that is, sum up what they understood.
- Convey the meaning to the patient using understandable language
- Tell the MD the interpreter's proposed understandable language, & if approved, convey the meaning to the patient.
- Are there other options you can suggest?