

Draft Recommendation

Language Access Work Group: Draft Recommendation for how the State of Washington can support having more qualified medical interpreters.

1. Testing Entities:

Washington State Community and Technical Colleges have placement and testing centers on their campuses. These testing centers are set up to meet state and national testing standards. Some of the tests that are currently being administered at community colleges are: GED, TEAS, TOEFL, NCMA, STAMPS Language Testing, WEST B & E Exams, Pearson VUE Exams, and ParaPro Assessment. Community college testing centers have the resource (staff, technology, physical setup) to be able to meet medical interpreter testing requirements. The testing centers regularly collaborate with third-party testing entities to ensure the test administered are up to date and that the technology and physical setup meet testing standards. The centers have the ability to offer exams both in-person and online and the technology in the centers are maintained and updated routinely. Washington State Community and Technical Colleges' testing centers are well equipped to administer industry accredited tests and national exams.

2. Technology

The testing centers at community colleges are set up and already providing services virtually. The testing centers have websites where individuals can learn about and schedule an exam online 24/7. Online and virtual testing is available, with virtual proctors and ID verification in place. As state agencies, community colleges base testing fees on the set industry standard with the goal of making the cost as affordable as possible.

3.a Prerequisites and screening

The Puget Sound Welcome Back Center is located at Highline College. "The Puget Sound Welcome Back Center builds bridges between the pool of internationally trained professionals living in Washington and the need for linguistically and culturally competent professional services. Its goal is to assist these professionals to make the best use of their professional skills through respectful, innovative, and individualized career counseling and educational services." The Welcome Back Center could be a resource in supporting individuals with having their lived experience and training/ education in one's home country evaluated.

Community Colleges have a large number of ESOL students, over a third of Highline College's student body are ESOL students. The higher level ESOL students are well suited to be trained to become medical interpreters.



The Continuing Education departments within Community Colleges are well set up to offer training in interpreting skills as well as test prep classes. These courses could be taught either for credit or non-credit.

3.b Test Content

This is not Community College's area of expertise. Our testing centers could work with a third-party to administer their test.

3.c Test Quality

This is not Community College's area of expertise. Our testing centers can work with third-party accreditors to ensure that the test and testing environment meets accreditation standards.

4. Resources to support clients and healthcare providers

The Continuing Education departments within Community Colleges have the ability to easily offer CE training courses. As self-support departments within the college, they are customer service focused and manage their own registration systems. They are set up for students to register for classes online, over the phone or in-person. They are also set up to either offer classes for credit or non-credit and can award CEUs.

Submitted by Gabrielle Bachmeier, Dean of Workforce Partnerships and Extended Learning, Highline College