

Breakout Room 1 Participants

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Homework. Please discuss recommendations necessary to support language access and interpretive services that include:

- Strategies for increasing access to language access providers in rural communities and for languages of lesser demand,
 - Strategies for workforce resiliency including adequate workload and compensation, and
 - Standards of ethics and professional responsibility.
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- Make virtual/online tests more accessible for remote areas.
 - Demand fluctuates and more money is needed to cope with rapid increases in demand - travel costs are key. Consider premium rates for travel; consider ferry, bus rates, etc.
 - In-house strategies for verifying interpreter competency.
 - Increase access, transparency, communication with medical clinics; prevent travel for cancelations, etc.
 - Consider the unique needs and approaches of ASL (American Sign Language) as compared to spoken language.
 - Use of technology for appropriate reminders when possible. Is it possible for interpreters and clients to communicate ethically before a scheduled appointment?
 - Clinics should take responsibility for improved confirmation of appointments to help prevent unnecessary travel and time for canceled appointments.
 - Interpreters should not be given a client's private number for many reasons.

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Upon not hearing her ideas expressed during the breakout room recap, Ruiqin Miao, PhD, of DSHS' Office of Equity, Diversity, Access & Inclusion shared strategies for increasing language access in rural communities and for languages of lesser demand:

1. An important approach is to make testing available in rural communities and communities of rare languages through online/remote testing. In-person testing centers tend to be in densely populated areas, but remote testing can be easily accessible by candidates anywhere without the need for a long-distance drive.
2. Regarding another participant's view that interpreters should be paid for their mileage and through other means to increase compensation for their services: Compensation for mileage has been incorporated into the hourly pay in the current CBA (Collective Bargaining Agreement). It takes in-depth research to have a more comprehensive picture of what would be reasonable pay rates for interpreter services. It is hard to say whether Washington State agencies are paying lower or higher than they should.

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