

Principles for Broad-Based Funding Mechanisms of Interpreter Services

Result of Interpreter Services Work Group Discussion November 28, 2007

1. A funding mechanism should support the delivery and accessibility of high quality health care.
2. A funding mechanism should support the measurement and evaluation of interpreter services, accessibility, and quality to ensure that the interpreter services are adding value to the health care delivery system.
3. A funding mechanism should be stable and adequate to meet the need for interpreter services.
4. A funding mechanism should encourage and support the efficient and effective provision of interpreter services to minimize the overall system costs of providing needed services.
5. A funding mechanism should be based on the actual cost (market rate) of providing interpreter services, which can often include activities and time other than the time a provider spends with a patient.
6. A funding mechanism should be equitable for all patients needing interpreter services regardless of their: A) income levels; B) insurance status (i.e., insured/uninsured); and C) payer type (e.g., public/private, health/workers compensation, etc.).
7. A funding mechanism should fairly distribute the costs of interpreter services to ensure that costs do not fall disproportionately on health care providers (and perhaps payers) serving higher percentages of deaf and hard of hearing patients or LEP patients.
8. A funding mechanism should be operationally simple with minimal red tape to avoid further fragmentation of our health care financing.
9. A funding mechanism should be designed to safeguard against fraud and abuse.
10. A funding mechanism should encourage interpreters to enter and remain in the health care field to facilitate equilibrium between the supply and demand for interpreter services.

11. A funding mechanism should encourage competitiveness by supporting new technologies and other advances in providing interpreter services that further supports meaningful access and patient care.