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IMIA/NBCMI - This program is approved for 5 contact hours = 0.5 IMIA/NBCMI CEUs with verified attendance.

Registry ID 26-CF-1027

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Breakfast, Greetings and Announcements (8:30am–9:00am)

Session A (9:15am – 10:15am)

Compliance Speaks Every Language: Language Access Through an Accreditation and Civil Rights Lens

Tatiana Cestari, Director of Language Service Advocacy, Martti/Equiti



Tatiana Cestari

Healthcare accreditation, civil rights expectations, and language access requirements continue to evolve. To better serve patients and reduce legal, financial, operational, safety, and reputational risks, organizations must understand how regulatory standards shape language access practices. This session will examine key areas where the 2026 Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goals and the new U.S. Commission on Civil Rights language access report influence language access, both directly and indirectly.

Boundary Breakthrough: Mastering the Professional 'No'



Laisson DeSouza



David Namujimbo

Laisson DeSouza, CMI, MBA, System Manager of Language Access, UVM Health & David Namujimbo, Medical Interpreter, UVM Health

Interpreters often face situations where they must decline requests that conflict with their role, ethics, or professional boundaries. This interactive workshop provides practical strategies for saying “no” with confidence while maintaining professionalism and collaboration. Grounded in the Code of Ethics and National Standards of Practice, participants will examine real world scenarios and practice ethical boundary setting through guided role play and peer feedback. Attendees

will develop practical verbal formulas and a personalized boundary setting script they can apply immediately in healthcare interpreting encounters.

Community Centered Outreach to Multilingual Speakers: The Food Navigators Model



Mariana Sears



Avery MacLean

Mariana Lamaison Sears, Community Engagement and Outreach Lead, Hunger Free Vermont, and Avery MacLean, Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA Vermont)

Learn how the Food Navigators model is improving access to food programs and resources for multilingual communities in Chittenden County. This session highlights a community centered approach that trains and compensates bilingual community members to share information, provide referrals, and connect individuals with essential resources in their own languages. Attendees will explore

how this innovative model has increased engagement, strengthened partnerships, and reduced barriers to food access for diverse communities.

Exceptional Access for Patients Who Use Sign Language:Where Language Access, Disability Rights, and Interpreting Ethics Meet in Health Care



Cory Brunner

Cory Brunner, CI/CT, SR. VP for Vancro

Providing meaningful access for Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing patients requires more than securing an interpreter. This session explores the intersection of language access, disability rights, interpreter ethics, and patient centered care. Attendees will learn practical strategies for selecting appropriate communication support, understanding patient preferences, and ensuring compliance with legal and ethical standards. Through real world examples, participants will gain tools to strengthen communication access, improve patient experiences, and move beyond compliance toward truly equitable healthcare.

Session B (10:30am – 11:30am)



Alegna Zavatti

Mohini Joshi

Introducing the TIDE Protocol: Multilingual Discharge Instructions

Alegna Zavatti, Director of Interpreter Services, Boston Medical Center, and Mohini Joshi, Interpreter Coordinator, Language Access Services, University of Vermont Health Network

Effective discharge instructions are essential for helping patients safely manage their care after leaving the hospital. Yet providing timely, accessible discharge information in a patient's preferred language remains a significant challenge. This session introduces the Tools to Improve Discharge Equity (TIDE) protocol, an innovative

approach that uses audio recorded discharge instructions to provide patients with immediate access to critical care information in their preferred language. Participants will explore how this practical, cost-effective solution addresses common barriers to communication, improves patient understanding, supports safer transitions of care, and advances health equity for individuals with limited English proficiency.

Language Access Support for Multilingual Learners (MLs) in VT:Navigating the Educational System



Omara Vazquez

Soo Joung Kim

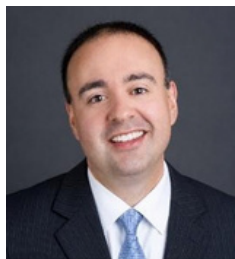
Vitaliy Kulapin

Omara Rivera Vazquez, Ph.D.; Soo Joung Kim, Ph.D.; Vitaliy Kulapin, Ed.D.; Saint Michael's College

This session presents preliminary findings from a research study examining language access services and support for multilingual students and families in Vermont. Through interviews with Multilingual Learner Directors and Multilingual Liaisons in the Burlington School District, the study explores family engagement, language access policies, instructional supports, staffing, compliance, and innovative practices. Attendees will gain insights into current challenges, promising strategies, and

recommendations for strengthening language access and fostering meaningful partnerships with multilingual families in educational settings.

Competency in Action: Performance-Based National Certification for Healthcare Interpreters of All Languages



Danilo Formolo

Danilo Formolo, CCHI Commissioner and Treasurer

National certification demonstrates an interpreter's knowledge, skills, and commitment to professional excellence. This session provides an overview of the certification pathways offered by the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters (CCHI), including written and performance based oral examinations for interpreters of all languages. Attendees will learn about eligibility requirements, exam content, performance expectations, and effective preparation strategies while gaining valuable resources to confidently pursue national certification and advance their careers in healthcare interpreting.

Aligning ADA and Title VI: Practical Steps for Ensuring Vital Digital Communications are Accessible and Multilingual



Kristen Rengo

Kristen Rengo, Equal Opportunity and Accessibility Manager, Vermont Department of Labor

As digital accessibility standards continue to evolve, organizations must ensure that online content is accessible not only to people with disabilities but also to individuals with language access needs. This session explores practical strategies for integrating language access into digital accessibility initiatives, including the use of plain language, accessible formatting, and multilingual communication tools. Attendees will learn how to align ADA and WCAG requirements with Title VI obligations while creating more inclusive and equitable digital experiences for all users.

LUNCH & VENDOR FAIR2026 (11:45am – 1:00pm)

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Language Access AI Hot Topics Panel: The Present and Future of Interpretation (1:00pm–2:00pm)

Join regional and national language access leaders in a discussion of the current status of the profession and the opportunities and challenges ahead. The discussion will focus on how to preserve human-centered relationships, trust, and equity that are essential to effective communication and quality care. Panelists will explore the current expectations and standards of interpretation, strategies for strengthening training and professional development, and the growing impact of AI and other language access technologies. The conversation will also examine how to balance the language access needs of individuals and communities with the operational demands of healthcare organizations.

Session C (2:15pm – 3:15pm)

Beyond Interpretation: Community-Based Partnerships That Advance Equitable Language Access in Healthcare

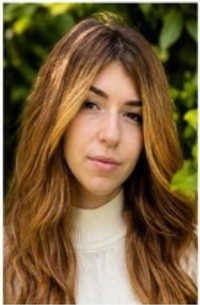


Thato Ratsebe

Thato Ratsebe, Associate Director and Programs Manager at the Association of Africans Living in Vermont (AALV)

Effective language access extends beyond clinical encounter. This session explores how partnerships between healthcare organizations and trusted community-based organizations can address cultural, linguistic, and social barriers that impact patient care. Attendees will learn practical strategies for building sustainable collaborations that complement professional interpreting services, strengthen patient engagement, improve communication, and promote equitable health outcomes while maintaining interpreter ethics and professional standards.

Building Trust Across Immigrant Populations: Trauma-Informed and Culturally Responsive Practice



Viktoriia Lutsenko



Sofia Mendez



Ramiza Peco

Viktoriia Lutsenko, Sofia Mendez and Ramiza Peco; U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants

Providing effective services to refugee and immigrant communities requires an understanding of the impact of trauma, culture, and communication on the patient experience. This session explores trauma informed and culturally responsive approaches that foster trust, promote healing, and support meaningful engagement across diverse populations. Attendees will gain practical strategies for avoiding cultural assumptions, strengthening communication, collaborating effectively with professional interpreters, and

delivering equitable, person-centered care while respecting interpreter ethics and patient autonomy.

Beyond Compliance: Building a Culture of Alignment Through a Deaf Lens



Corey Axelrod

Corey Axelrod, Founder & CEO, 2axend

Creating meaningful communication access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing patients requires more than meeting regulatory requirements. This session explores how healthcare organizations can move beyond compliance to foster inclusive, patient centered environments that prioritize effective communication, cultural awareness, and equitable care. Through real world examples and practical strategies, attendees will learn how to identify communication barriers, strengthen collaboration between clinical teams and language access professionals, and implement best practices that improve the healthcare experience for Deaf and Hard of Hearing patients and their families.

Strengthening Interpreter Services Through Your Existing Workforce: A Community Health Center Case Study



Nicole Tavarez



Autumn Furnish

Nicole Tavarez, VP of Testing Operations, Analytics, and Development and Autumn Furnish, Director of Training, ALTA Language Services

Healthcare organizations increasingly rely on bilingual staff to bridge communication gaps, yet language proficiency alone does not ensure readiness for medical interpreting. This session explores an evidence-based approach to identifying, assessing, and training bilingual employees as qualified dual role interpreters. Drawing on a successful healthcare case study, attendees will learn practical strategies for implementing objective language assessments, establishing proficiency

standards, and developing sustainable interpreter training programs that strengthen language access, reduce clinical risk, and improve patient outcomes.

Keynote Speaker and Closing Remarks (3:30pm – 4:30pm)

Rooted in Culture, Guided by Ethics: Shaping the Next Generation of Language Access



Geera Demers

Geera Demers, Director of Culture and Experience, University of Vermont Medical Center

Language access is about more than providing interpreters. It is about creating equitable, culturally responsive experiences that foster trust and improve health outcomes. This interactive session explores how culture, ethics, and language access intersect in healthcare, using real world scenarios to examine communication challenges and ethical dilemmas. Attendees will gain practical strategies for applying cultural humility, strengthening equitable language access practices, and balancing professional standards with the unique needs of diverse patients and communities.
