

I am a Spanish/English interpreter representing clients in schools and immigration proceedings with the desire to expand my practice into the medical interpreting field. As you are likely aware, the working conditions facing the interpreter community can be quite difficult. There is a lot of travel and coordination that must occur for each patient visit. There are times when the expectations for empathy, inter-cultural respect, and specialty knowledge are not met. With the advent of new technologies and the timely sharing of information, we as a state, are most assuredly capable of doing much better. But the legislature needs to support the professionalization of the interpreting field with real financial support.

First of all, we need many more well-trained medical interpreters to serve the Latinx population of our state. We do not need more medical visits where the interpretation service is being provided by family members or children rather than certified professionals. The Latinx grew by 72% between 2000 and 2016 according to the Oregon Community Foundation. If we are to improve the health outcomes in this state, _____especially for BIPOC and immigrant communities, we need more support for Covid-19 vaccinations for our interpreters. We cannot wait.