Vermont Language Justice Project: A Language Access Initiative

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Guiding Questions for Reflection

Use these questions to spark discussion or personal reflection before, during, or after the lecture.

Care Across Language

- What barriers can patients encounter when health care systems do not adequately address differences in language and communication? What tools or practices can help reduce those barriers?
- What are the strengths and limitations of different approaches to interpretation? What communication challenges can arise, and how might they be addressed?
- How can language access needs be met across different types of care, from primary care to specialists to emergency care?

Building Trust

- What factors might make someone hesitant to use language access services? How can health care professionals create an environment in which patients feel comfortable requesting and using these services?
- What is one way you could strengthen language access in your own role, practice, or organization?

This guide accompanies the lecture "Vermont Language Justice Project: A Language Access Initiative," presented as part of the Health C.A.R.E (Cultural Awareness, Research, and Education) Series and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences Intercultural Excellence Lecture Series. We invite you to reflect on the importance of accessible health information and the role language access plays in supporting high-quality, patient-centered care.

Recommended Resources

Explore these articles and tools to deepen your understanding:

Vermont Language Justice Project

The Vermont Language Justice Project allows people with language access needs the ability to make informed decisions about their health and safety, as well as navigating everyday life in the USA. We do this by creating public service videos in 22 of the languages spoken here in Vermont. This media is co-produced with trusted community members from Vermont's refugee, migrant, and immigrant communities.

Learn more at the Vermont Language Justice Project

Immigrants are Shaping Vermont's Health Care. We Belong Here.

Being an immigrant or refugee has taught us how to survive uncertainty, how to adapt, how to listen deeply and how to hold compassion even when the world feels divided. We belong here. Our voice matters here. And every time we speak, we carry forward not just our own story, but the stories of countless others who are still finding their way.

Read more at VT Digger

Language Access in Healthcare: Aligning Policy and Evidence to Improve Patient Experience Through Professional Interpretation and Language-Concordant Care

Many patients with limited English proficiency experience communication challenges that contribute to disparities in care quality, patient safety, and health outcomes. This paper presents a policy-oriented narrative review of peer-reviewed studies, federal regulations, and professional guidelines published between 2004 and 2025 focused on language access, interpreter services, and health system reform in the United States.

Read more at Journal of Patient Experience

Language Access Toolkit for Health Care Professionals

Family Voices and our partners at the American Academy of Pediatrics work alongside families with lived experience to develop educational tools and strategies for families, community health workers, and health care providers to improve the way they use language access services.

Read more at Family Voices