

1 AN ACT concerning health facilities.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Language Assistance Services Act is amended
5 by changing Section 15 as follows:

6 (210 ILCS 87/15)

7 Sec. 15. Language assistance services.

8 (a) To insure access to health care information and
9 services for limited-English-speaking or non-English-speaking
10 residents and deaf residents, a health facility must do the
11 following:

12 (1) Adopt and review annually a policy for providing
13 language assistance services to patients with language or
14 communication barriers. The policy shall include
15 procedures for providing, to the extent possible as
16 determined by the facility, the use of an interpreter
17 whenever a language or communication barrier exists,
18 except where the patient, after being informed of the
19 availability of the interpreter service, chooses to use a
20 family member or friend who volunteers to interpret. The
21 procedures shall be designed to maximize efficient use of
22 interpreters and minimize delays in providing interpreters
23 to patients. The procedures shall insure, to the extent

1 possible as determined by the facility, that interpreters
2 are available, either on the premises or accessible by
3 telephone, 24 hours a day. The facility shall annually
4 transmit to the Department of Public Health a copy of the
5 updated policy and shall include a description of the
6 facility's efforts to insure adequate and speedy
7 communication between patients with language or
8 communication barriers and staff.

9 (2) Develop, and post in conspicuous locations,
10 notices that advise patients and their families of the
11 availability of interpreters, the procedure for obtaining
12 an interpreter, and the telephone numbers to call for
13 filing complaints concerning interpreter service problems,
14 including, but not limited to, a TTY number for persons who
15 are deaf or hard of hearing. The notices shall be posted,
16 at a minimum, in the emergency room, the admitting area,
17 the facility entrance, and the outpatient area. Notices
18 shall inform patients that interpreter services are
19 available on request, shall list the languages most
20 commonly encountered at the facility for which interpreter
21 services are available, and shall instruct patients to
22 direct complaints regarding interpreter services to the
23 Department of Public Health, including the telephone
24 numbers to call for that purpose.

25 (3) Notify the facility's employees of the language
26 services available at the facility and train them on how to

1 make those language services available to patients.

2 (b) In addition, a health facility may do one or more of
3 the following:

4 (1) Identify and record a patient's primary language
5 and dialect on one or more of the following: a patient
6 medical chart, hospital bracelet, bedside notice, or
7 nursing card.

8 (2) Prepare and maintain, as needed, a list of
9 interpreters who have been identified as proficient in sign
10 language according to the Interpreters for the Deaf Act and
11 a list of the languages of the population of the
12 geographical area served by the facility.

13 (3) Review all standardized written forms, waivers,
14 documents, and informational materials available to
15 patients on admission to determine which to translate into
16 languages other than English.

17 (4) Consider providing its nonbilingual staff with
18 standardized picture and phrase sheets for use in routine
19 communications with patients who have language or
20 communication barriers.

21 (5) Develop community liaison groups to enable the
22 facility and the limited-English-speaking,
23 non-English-speaking, and deaf communities to insure the
24 adequacy of the interpreter services.

25 (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) and
26 (b) of this Section, a hospital that services an area where 10%

1 or more of the population speaks a language other than English
2 must have an interpreter who speaks that language on staff
3 during all hours that the hospital is open or have arrangements
4 to make an interpreter available through telephonic, video, or
5 other means.

6 (Source: P.A. 95-667, eff. 10-11-07.)