Translating Medication Labels: Launching An Interprofessional Grassroots Advocacy Campaign for Health Equity

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BACKGROUND
I - CAN

INTERPROFESSIONAL CARE ACCESS NETWORK

Old Town
Monmouth
West Medford
Gresham
Southeast Portland
Klamath Falls
Rockwood
La Grande (2018)

I-CAN
Partner sites

School of NURSING

OHSU
STUDENT WORK
PROJECT IMPETUS
Limited English proficiency (LEP) correlates with:

- **Education**
- **Poverty**
- **Health Insurance**
- **Health Literacy**
Language barriers may affect the delivery of adequate care and rivals lack of insurance in predicting health service use.

– Institute of Medicine, 2006
Medication errors harm 1.5 million people every year costing close to $3.5 billion annually.

“The rate of adverse events associated with medication errors is 2.5 times greater in limited English proficiency patients compared to English speaking patients.”

– International Journal for Quality in Health Care
STEP ONE

15% of Oregonians speak a language other than English at home.

23% of people in Oregon do not speak English “well” or “at all.”
STEP ONE

COLLECT DATA ON LEP POPULATION

STEP TWO

IDENTIFY SYSTEM GAP ASSOCIATED WITH ACCESS TO PHARMACIES BY PEOPLE WITH LEP

CLIENT

MEDICATION KNOWLEDGE

More than 75% of SE Portland I-CAN clients are not taking medications as prescribed

PHARMACY

EFFICIENCY AND EFFICACY

Only 1 in 10 SE Portland I-CAN clients knew the name, purpose, and frequency of all their medications.

"I spend so much time explaining what a medication label says that I run out of time to address other important health needs."
“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”

– George Bernard Shaw

“Knowing enough English to nod can be dangerous.”

– Marius Ibuye

“Most LEP individuals endure the consequences of ineffective communication in silence.”

– Language Services Guide for Pharmacists
ACTION

HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUE

EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUE

CONTRIBUTE TO HIGH HEALTHCARE COST
STEP ONE
COLLECT DATA ON LEP POPULATION

STEP TWO
IDENTIFY SYSTEM GAP ASSOCIATED WITH ACCESS TO PHARMACIES BY PEOPLE WITH LEP

STEP THREE
NARROW FOCUS AND DRAFT WHITE PAPER
STEP ONE
COLLECT DATA ON LEP POPULATION

STEP TWO
IDENTIFY SYSTEM GAP ASSOCIATED WITH ACCESS TO PHARMACIES BY PEOPLE WITH LEP

STEP THREE
NARROW FOCUS AND DRAFT WHITE PAPER

STEP FOUR
CONDUCT INTERVIEWS AND ATTEND RELATIONAL MEETINGS WITH ADVOCATES AND STAKEHOLDERS

STEP FOUR
IDENTIFY SYSTEM GAP ASSOCIATED WITH ACCESS TO PHARMACIES BY PEOPLE WITH LEP

APANO
Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon

ONA
Oregon Nurses Association Voice of Oregon Nurses Since 1904

Causa
Oregon's Immigrant Rights Organization

UFCW
a VOICE for working America

uniteoregon
NARROW FOCUS AND DRAFT WHITE PAPER

SEIU Local 49
Over 13,000 workers in Oregon and Southwest Washington Rising Up Together

Health Equity Circle
“Health is More Than Healthcare”

OHEA
Oregon Health Equity Alliance
STEP ONE

STEP TWO

STEP THREE

STEP FOUR

STEP FIVE

IDENTIFY SYSTEM GAP ASSOCIATED WITH ACCESS TO PHARMACIES BY PEOPLE WITH LEP

STUDY CURRENT OREGON LAWS AND SEEK LEGAL EXPERTISE

CIVIL RIGHTS ISSUE

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

The denial or delay of medical care because of language barriers constitutes discrimination and requires that recipients of Medicaid or Medicare funds provide adequate language assistance to patients with limited English proficiency.

“must offer and provide language assistance services, including bilingual staff and interpreter services, at no cost to each patient/consumer with limited English proficiency at all points of contact, in a timely manner during all hours of operation.”

Affordable Care Act Section 1557

Requires that health care organizations use “qualified” interpreters to communicate with LEP patients.
The need to understand prescription information can literally be a matter of life and death. For those New Yorkers who do not speak English as a first language this agreement will ensure they have the medical information needed to protect their health and well-being and that of their families.” – Governor Cuomo of New York

In August 2009, the New York City Council passed the Language Access Pharmacies Act (LAPA).
15 directions in Chinese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

“Upon the request of a patient or patient’s representative, a dispenser shall provide translated directions for use, which shall be printed on the prescription container, label, or on a supplemental document.”

In January 2016, California passed the Prescription Drug Label bill (AB-1073).
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STEP SIX
FORM A CORE TEAM

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… and OHSU I-CAN nursing students

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Form a core team

Meet with legislators

“This is a no-brainer.”

Rep. Sheri Malstrom
Rep. Teresa Alonso León
Rep. Rob Nosse
Rep. Mitch Greenlick

Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer
Sen. Laurie Monness Anderson
Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
**STEP EIGHT**

- **FORM A CORE TEAM**
- **MEET WITH LEGISLATORS**
- **UNDERSTAND AND ADDRESS CHALLENGES**

1. SOFTWARE
2. LIABILITY
3. COSTS
4. EFFICIENCY
5. LABEL SIZE
6. CULTURE
"To date, research and regulatory requirements for medication safety in the US have attended insufficiently to the patient-safety risk inherent in providing complex, English-language labels to non-English speaking families."


Leann Knapp
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Questions?

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