

# Assessing the Impact of Interpretation Experience and Training on Patient Satisfaction Levels at JayDoc Free Health Clinic –A QI Needs Assessment

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**Introduction.** Effective communication between patients and interpreters is crucial for ensuring high-quality, patient-centered healthcare. This research explores how different levels of interpreter experience and language fluency influence the satisfaction of patients at the Jaydoc Free Health Clinic (JFHC), a volunteer-run clinic that primarily serves a Spanish-speaking, underserved demographic in Kansas City.

**Methods.** This study utilized a descriptive, qualitative design conducted from August to November 2023. Data were gathered through surveys completed by both interpreters (n = 10) and patients (n = 40). The interpreter survey focused on their background, fluency levels (measured using the ALTA scale), and professional training. The patient survey assessed factors such as communication comfort, understanding of medical instructions, and overall satisfaction with the encounter.

**Results.** Most interpreters (60%) had accumulated over 100 hours of experience, and 50% achieved a score of at least 11/12 on the ALTA Fluency Scale. However, no direct link was observed between interpreter experience and patient satisfaction. Notably, interpreters with higher fluency levels (11/12) were associated with higher patient comfort and better understanding of their treatment plans. In terms of patient feedback, 92.5% reported satisfaction with how comfortable they felt during the encounter, and 80% indicated confidence in understanding their prescribed treatment.

**Conclusions.** The findings suggest that while overall interpreter experience does not guarantee improved patient satisfaction, fluency plays a more significant role in enhancing patient comfort and understanding. These results advocate for targeted interpreter training to improve patient outcomes, particularly in free clinic environments like JFHC, where resource limitations often exist.