

# Mercy Care Language Access Services Overview

Donna McHenry, Cultural Sensitivity Administrator

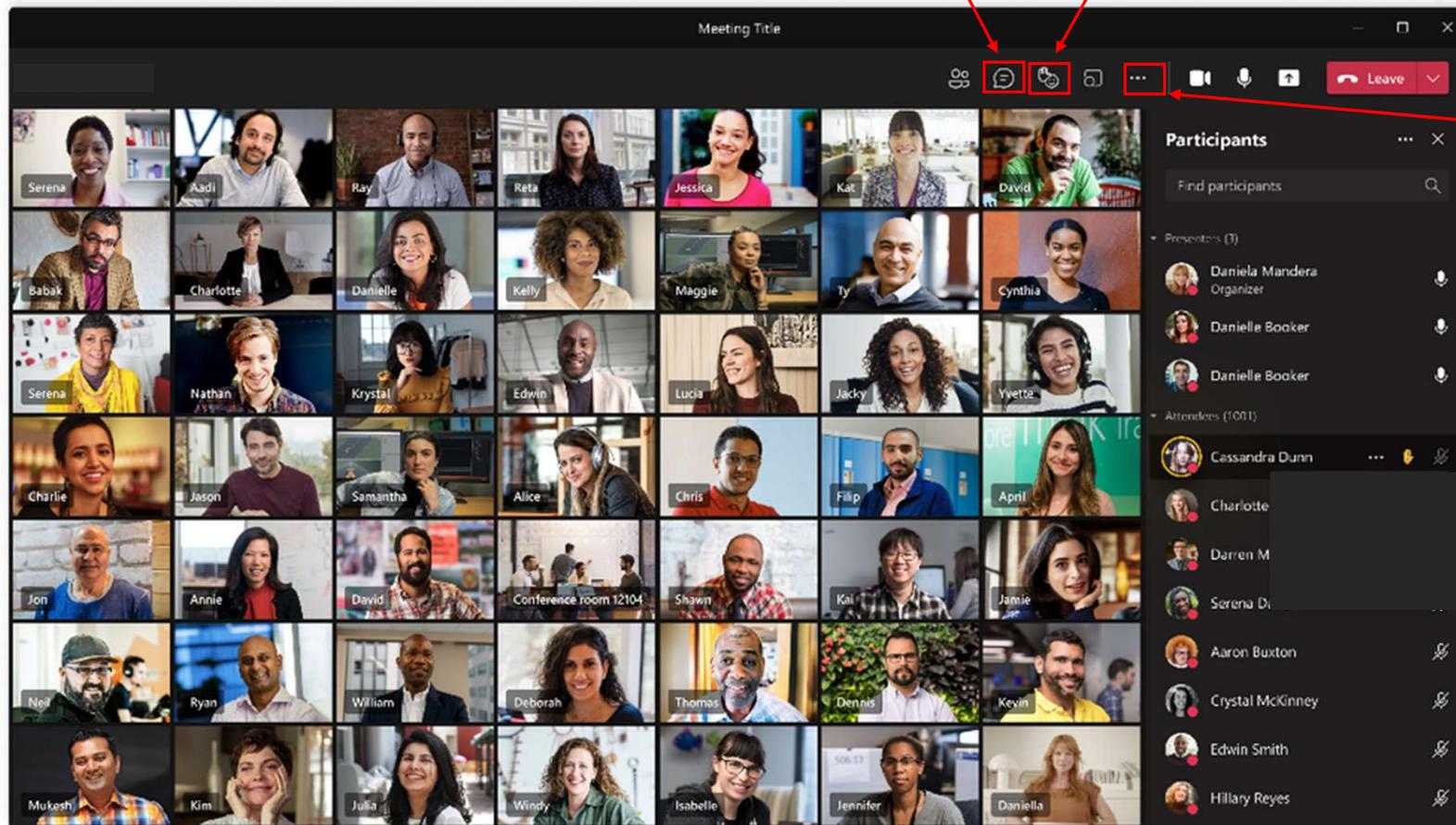
## Housekeeping

- We're hosting this webinar as a Teams event.
- Everyone other than presenters will be muted and off camera.
- If you have questions, you can enter them in the **Q&A** or **Chat** windows – we are monitoring these areas.
- You can also use the "**raise hand**" feature and we'll unmute your line.

# Navigating Teams

Chat with panelists

Raise hand



More options for Q&A

# Content

- Cultural Competency Office
- Impact of language services
- Language Access Services
- Qualified bilingual staff
- On-demand services
- Scheduled services
- Provider's role
- Interpretation roles and requirements
- Standards of Practice and Code of Conduct

# Cultural Competency Office

- **Cultural Sensitivity Administrator**
  - Required position for all Mercy Care contracts
  - Responsible for implementation and oversight of Mercy Care's Cultural Competency Program and the Cultural Competency Plan
- **Health Equity Workgroup**
- **Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Committee**
- **Cultural Competency annual deliverable**
- **Cultural Competency Plan**
  - Workforce cultural and linguistic competency
  - Communication and language access
  - Health outcomes

# Who is impacted by language access limitations?

## Limited English Proficient (LEP)

Limited English proficient (LEP) individuals do not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English.

## Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)

Deaf individuals do not hear well enough to rely on their hearing to process speech and language. Hard of hearing includes individuals with conditions that affect the frequency or intensity of their hearing.

## Blind or Low Vision (BLV)

Blind or low vision (BLV) individuals include those who are substantially limited in seeing or some other major life activity because of their vision loss.

# Language Access and Communication Disabilities Data

## 2023 American Community Survey Arizona

- 25.9% speak a language other than English at home
- 8.1% speak English less than very well
- 19.2% speak Spanish at home
- 5.7% with a cognitive difficulty
- 3.7% with a hearing difficulty
- 2.5% with a vision difficulty

## Most common languages other than English Arizona

- Spanish 19.2%
- Navajo 1.2%
- Arabic 0.4%
- Chinese 0.4%
- Vietnamese 0.4%
- Tagalog 0.4%
- Other Native languages of North America 0.3%

# Mercy Care Membership

Language	2022		2023		2024	
	Members	%	Members	%	Members	%
<b>ENGLISH</b>	421,612	83.2%	439,183	81.9%	391,439	81.2%
<b>SPANISH</b>	63,756	12.6%	70,172	13.1%	63,919	13.2%
<b>UNKNOWN</b>	11,091	2.2%	15,818	2.9%	15,547	3.2%
<b>ARABIC</b>	4,100	0.8%	4,332	0.8%	4,227	0.8%
<b>No Language</b>	1,651	0.3%	1,705	0.3%	1,529	0.3%
<b>VIETNAMESE</b>	1,589	0.3%	1,635	0.3%	1,462	0.3%

Source: Mercy Care Membership File/QNXT

Proprietary and Confidential

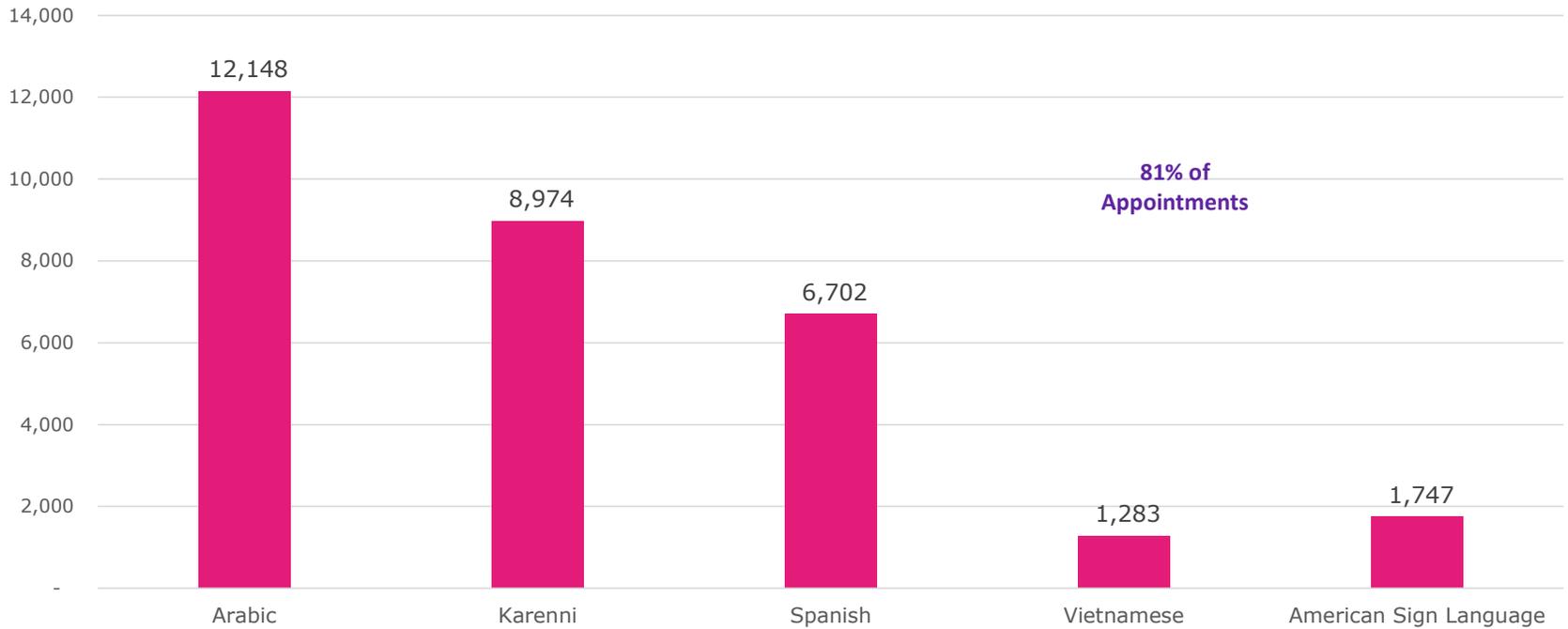


# 2024 Language Utilization

Language	ACC	RBHA	ALTCS	MCA	DDD	NTXIX	DCSCHP	All
Arabic	37.9%	18.1%	47.6%	2.0%	7.0%	1.1%	1.0%	32.0%
Karenni	33.2%	< 1%	27.8%	7.2%	2.0%	< 1%	< 1%	23.6%
Spanish	9.6%	28.2%	2.0%	61.5%	70.5%	95.9%	42%	17.7%
American Sign Language	1.8%	13.0%	2.6%	4.3%	5.8%	1.9%	41%	4.6%
Vietnamese	< 1%	16.2%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	1.0%	3.4%
Somali	4.3%	< 1%	1.7%	< 1%	6.5%	< 1%	< 1%	3.2%
Swahili	3.4%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	1.3%	< 1%	5.0%	2.4%
Tigrinya	< 1%	10.3%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	2.1%
Russian	1.0%	< 1%	7.5%	<1%	< 1%	< 1%	2.0%	1.3%
Kinyarwanda (Rawanda)	1.5%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	1.1%
44 other languages < 1%	6.6%	4.9%	9.7%	23.9%	6.3%	5.9%	9.0%	8.6%

Source: InterAct Report and Language Vendor Invoice files

# 2024 Top 5 Languages



Source: InterAct Report and Language Vendor Invoice files

# Common language access barriers

- Quality of care is lowered when:
  - Members do not understand their health care providers
  - Members and providers do not speak the same language
  - A provider's approach is not linguistically competent
- Barrier accessing health care services and understanding health information
  - Less likely to have a place to go when sick
  - Less likely to have preventive care visits in the past year
  - More likely to report a poor/fair health status
  - Challenges understanding health information
  - Proper medication use

# Interpretation -Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964

- Prohibits discrimination on the basis race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.
- Recipients of Federal financial assistance, such as Medicaid funding, must take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons. Recipients include, but are not limited to, managed care organizations, providers and subcontractors.

# Interpreter and translation services

Mercy Care contracted providers **are** responsible to comply with federal and state laws by offering interpreter and translation services, including sign language interpreters, to limited English proficiency (LEP) members.

While Mercy Care does provide these services for our members, as required, we are not a contracted provider's source for these services. When necessary, and as services are available, we do allow providers to utilize our services to ensure members needs are met. However, this does not exclude contracted providers from supplying their own services to the members.

Providers can contract out interpreter and translation services they do not offer or have accessible in-house, but this would be done directly with companies that provide these type of services. There is no such agreement or relationship with Mercy Care as we do not provide these services directly and we contract these services out.

**It is not best practice standards to have a member's family or friends interpret their medical needs.**

## Mercy Care interpretative services

- Use nationally certified and licensed language interpreters
- Use qualified bilingual staff
- Ensure accurate and complete communication between a provider and member
- Ensure provider's message is delivered as intended
- Ensure members with limited English proficiency (LEP) can access quality care and engage in managing their health

## ACOM 405 – Accompanying adult

**Members are permitted to use an adult accompanying the member with LEP for translation and/or interpretation only:**

- 1) In an emergency when there is no qualified interpreter immediately available or,
- 2) When the member with LEP requests the accompanying adult to interpret or facilitate the communication, the accompanying adult agrees to provide the communication assistance, and reliance on the accompanying adult for assistance is reasonable under the circumstances.

Members are not permitted to rely on a minor child for translation and/or interpretation except in an emergency when a qualified interpreter is not immediately available.

## Provider's role

- Responsible for member's care and coordination of care
- Inform of the availability of language assistance services
- Offer language services at no cost
- Provider of service schedules interpretation service
- Cancel request in a timely manner
- Avoid using untrained individuals and minors as interpreters
- Verify interpreter's service time
- Direct incidents (such as fraud, waste and abuse) and quality concerns to Mercy Care

# Language Access Services

- Qualified Bilingual Staff
  - T1013 Code
- On-Demand Services
  - Over the Phone
    - Spoken languages
  - Video Remote Interpreting
    - American Sign Language
- Scheduled Services
  - Face to Face
  - Over the Phone
  - Scheduled Virtual Interpreting
    - Video-telecommunication service



## Qualified bilingual staff

- Proficiency score of **nine (9) or better** on the ALTA Language Test
  - Writing
  - Listening and speaking
- Deliver covered service in another language other than English
- Bill the T1013 code in addition to the covered service
- Providers responsible for testing expense

## On-demand services

- Access to an interpreter 24/7/365
- Spoken languages
  - Language Line Solutions
  - Over the phone
- American Sign Language (ASL)
  - TransPerfect Connect
  - Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)
    - VRI application or Web browser



## On-demand services: Spoken languages

- Refer to the Language Line Solutions Quick Reference Guide for call in details located on Mercy Care website [www.MercyCareAZ.org](http://www.MercyCareAZ.org)
- 4-Digit PIN Codes:
  - ACC, LTC, DD, DCS-CHP, and Mercy Care Advantage:
    - **Clinical - 1203**
    - **Non-Clinical – 1204**
  - Mercy Care ACC-RBHA:
    - **Clinical – 2076**
    - **Non-Clinical - 1205**

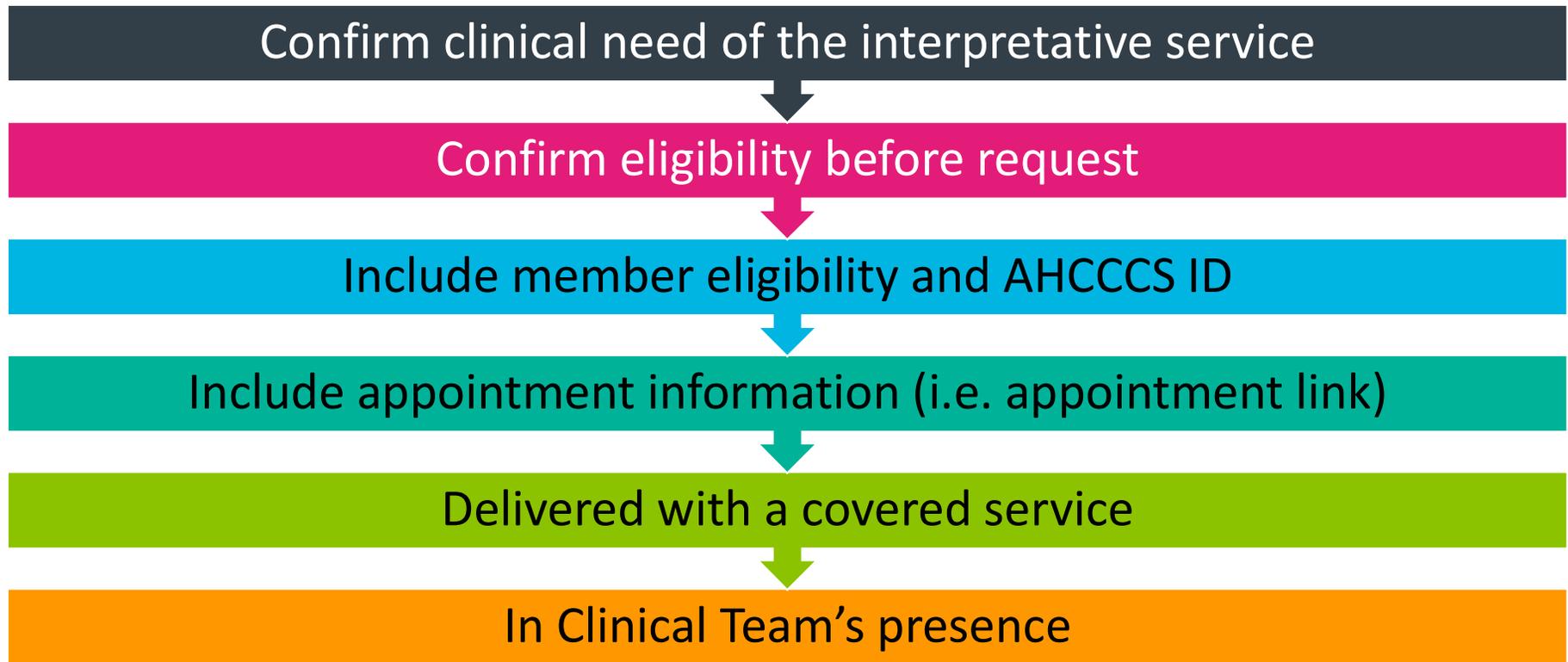
## On-demand services for Mercy Care members: VRI

- Prior setup required
- TransPerfect Connect VRI Application or Web browsers
- Connects interpreter service using a tablet, desktop computer or laptop
- Download on provider device, NOT on the member's device
- Client ID and Client PIN are unique to provider agency
  - One Client ID and Client PIN per provider
  - Email Mercy Care's Cultural Competency Office for more information and to request a username and password:  
[CulturalCompetency@MercyCareAZ.org](mailto:CulturalCompetency@MercyCareAZ.org)

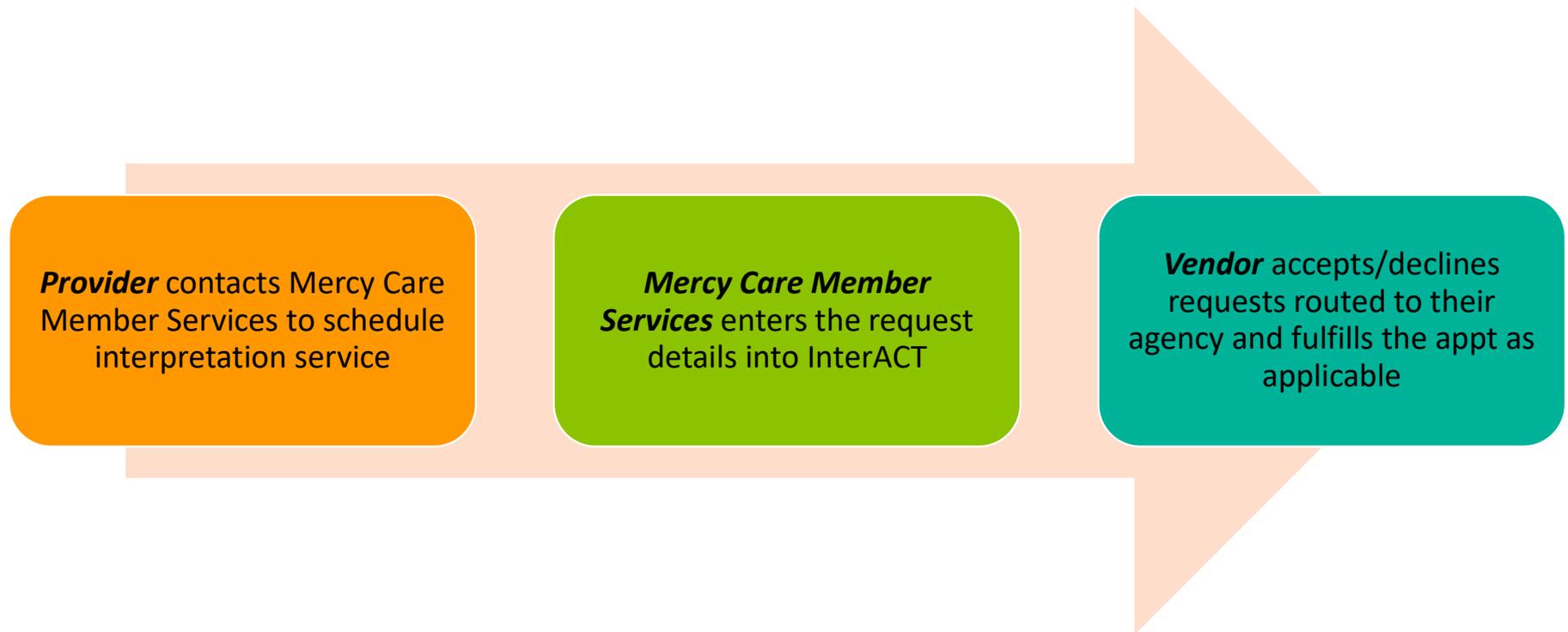
## Scheduled services

- Pre-scheduled interpretation services
- Direct request to Mercy Care Member Services
  - Mercy Care ACC/DDD/ALTCS: **1-800-624-3879**
  - Mercy Care ACC-RBHA: **1-800-564-5465**
  - Mercy Care Advantage: **1-877-436-5288**
  - Mercy Care DCS CHP: **1-833-711-0776**
- Member Services **will not** schedule appointments more than 30 days in advance
- Requests exceeding three (3) hours require clinical justification

## Interpretation request

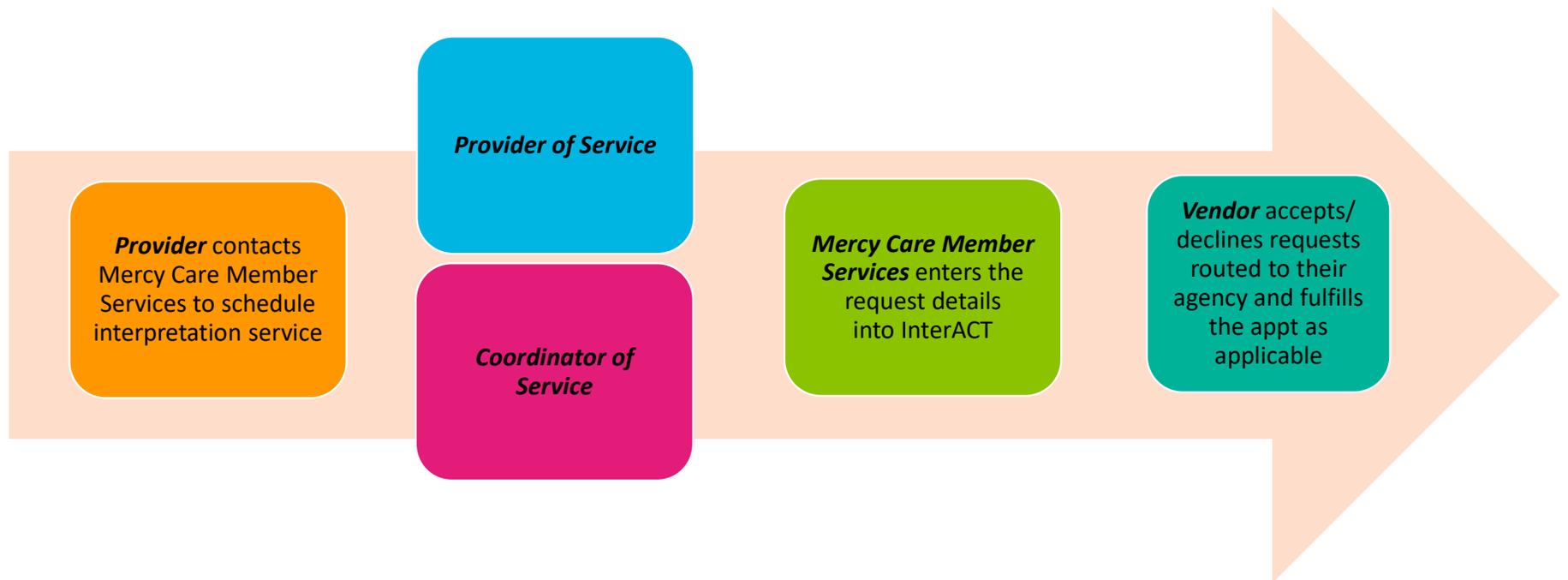


# Interpretation services for Mercy Care members



**Any scheduled interpretation services delivered outside of this scheduling process will not be paid by Mercy Care.**

# Interpretation services for Mercy Care members



# Appointment recommendations

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use OPI or VRI for all appointments lasting one (1) hour or less</li><li>• If face-to-face interpretation is needed for appts. lasting one (1) hour or less, try to combine services to make use of the time</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schedule meetings on holidays or when the agency is not open</li><li>• Whenever possible, do not schedule last minute appointments (no less than 48 hrs spoken languages, 5 business days for ASL) – cannot guarantee appointment will be filled in person</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take note of members with frequent cancellations – we are tracking them</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allow interpreters to schedule appointments</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use qualified bilingual staff to perform covered services whenever possible</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allow interpreters to provide transportation</li></ul>

**On Demand Services are available 24/7 to assist with continuity**

# Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



Arizona Commission  
for the deaf and the hard of hearing

Deaf | Hard of Hearing | DeafBlind | Family Services | Interpreters | Telecommunications | About ACDHH | Get Involved |  | 

Español

## Search the Directory

[Add your business to the directory](#)

By far, information and referral services make up the bulk of ACDHH efforts. Over the years, more than 1.2 million calls were received on a variety of topics. Requests for information come from both people with and without hearing loss.

The Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing distributes information as a public service. There is no implied endorsement, affiliation, or promise of accuracy of the information.

If your business is not listed in our resource directory and you would like to be, [click here](#).

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1. Select a Service:

Interpreter  
 Hard of Hearing  
 Deaf

2. Choose a Category:

3. Choose a City:

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## Preferred interpreter

- Interpreters are scheduled at time of request
- Request for specific gender
- Clinical exceptions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis
  - Submit to [CulturalCompetency@mercycareaz.org](mailto:CulturalCompetency@mercycareaz.org)
- On-Demand Services to ensure continuity

# Rare languages

- Languages that are not commonly spoken and available in the community
  - Check other common languages known and/or used by the member
  - Ask if other languages can be used for appointments
  - Document identified language as part of assessing the member's language need in their service plan
- The availability of services through Mercy Care **does not** absolve a provider's responsibility to ensure a member can access their program and activities.

## Group session

When scheduling interpretation for a group session or shared appointment involving multiple members who speak the same language:

- Schedule by time and not by member
- Use 3:1 ratio: 3 members to one interpreter

**Example:** Group session has five (5) members who speak Spanish, two (2) requests should be submitted to ensure members can have meaningful access to programs and activities.

## Team interpreters

**Submit one request per language** when interpretation is needed in two or more languages for a member's appointment.

**Example:** A member who is deaf and hard of hearing requests American Sign Language (ASL) and a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI), two (2) requests should be submitted to ensure members can have meaningful access to programs and activities.

## Cancellations

- Contact Mercy Care Member Services in a timely manner
- If rescheduling is required, notify Member Services of change
- Reason tracked by the provider



## Role of interpreter:

### Conduit

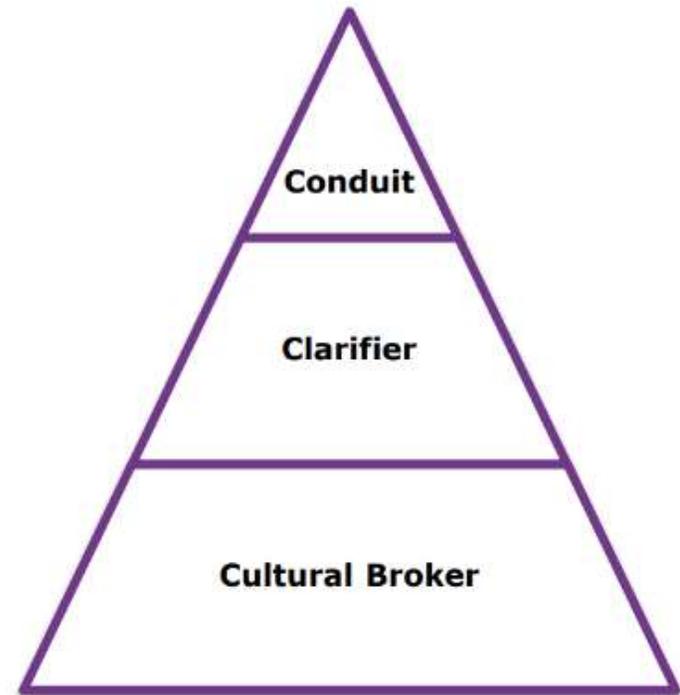
Ensures accurate and complete flow of communication and maintains the integrity of the interpretation through meaning for meaningful interpreting.

### Clarifier

The clarifier ensures resolution of any confusion or miscommunication due to the language used, including speaker's vocabulary and syntax.

### Cultural Broker

A cultural broker intervenes only to share or exchange cultural information with the intent of ensuring clear communication.



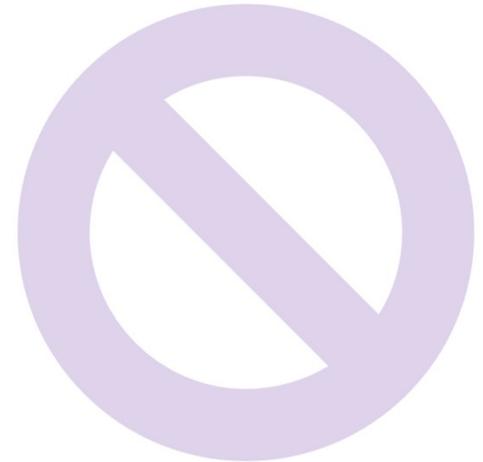
## Interpreter is NOT

- Advocate
- Companion
- Chauffer
- Babysitter
- BHT
- Member of clinical team

The interpreter is not responsible for the member's care or coordination of care.

## Interpreter should not

- Encourage to request them by name
- Engage member or provider outside the role of an interpreter
- Socialize or communicate with members with LEP outside of the presence of the provider
- Provide transportation or other support to the member
- Complete paperwork for members
- Discuss compensation with the doctor/provider/care coordinator/case manager/ member.



# Questions?

## **Mercy Care resources and support** (not for scheduling or rescheduling appointments)

**Cultural Competency:** [CulturalCompetency@MercyCareAZ.org](mailto:CulturalCompetency@MercyCareAZ.org)

**Network Management:**

[MercyCareNetworkManagement@MercyCareAZ.org](mailto:MercyCareNetworkManagement@MercyCareAZ.org)

**Ombudsman:** [OIFATeam@MercyCareAZ.org](mailto:OIFATeam@MercyCareAZ.org)

**Grievance System Department:**

602-586-1719 or 866-386-5794 (TTY 711)

**Fraud Hotline:** 1-800-810-6544

# Mercy Care provider manual and notices

- [AHCCCS Contractor Interpreter Process](#)
- [Provider Manual May 2024 Update](#)
- [Preferred Interpreter](#)
- [Interpreter Standards](#)
- [Phone Interpretation Services](#)
- [Interpretation Services completed in a physician's office](#)
- [Mandatory use of OPI or VRI for interpretation sessions one hour or less](#)



## Standards of Practice and Code of Conduct

Providers and vendors only use nationally certified or qualified language interpreters for language interpretation services.

Interpreters who serve Mercy Care members comply with the standards of practice for interpreters as set by the US Department of Health and Human Services by the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care, Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. (RID) and any requirements of government sponsor.

[National Standards of Practice for Interpreters in Health Care](#)

[National Code of Ethics for Interpreters in Health Care](#)

[NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct](#)

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# Thank you



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