Analysis and Utilization of Interpreter Services via Telephone Language Line in a Hospital Based Dental Clinic



NYU Langone Dental Postdoctoral Residency Programs

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INTRODUCTION

Providing adequate translator services to achieve proper informed consent is an ongoing challenge for hospitals and health centers alike. More than 25 million Americans speak English "less than very well" and more than 60 million speak a language other than English at home.¹ Patients with limited English proficiency are much more likely to have adverse effects from drug complications, poor understanding of diagnoses, low health literacy, and a greater risk of being misunderstood by their physicians.² Most English-speaking clinicians in the United States have never had the experience of explaining their illness symptoms to a health professional who didn't speak their language.³

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to evaluate usage of the translator services in a hospital based dental center. The language line data will provide more information into the diverse population a community dental center serves in an urban environment. Understanding this information will aid in improving translation services and provide insights into a unique patient demographic in a dental setting.

cost (mean (SD)) 19.23 (17.67) 4.10 (NA) 32.57 (22.99) 20.50 (16.24) 19.68 (NA) 3.28 (NA) 4.57 (2.41) 6.07 (1.49) ience of n't speak Portuguese Russian Somali Spanish Swahili Tigrinya Turkish Ukrainian Vietnamese 1 7 8 22 8 2 3 1 1 rvices in a more serves in an oving

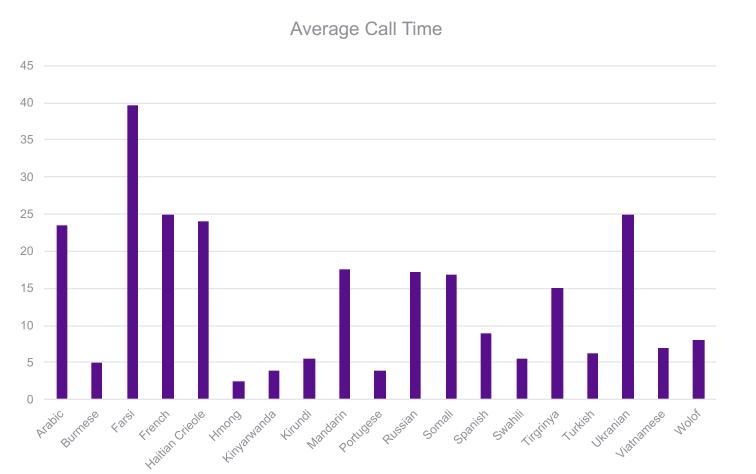
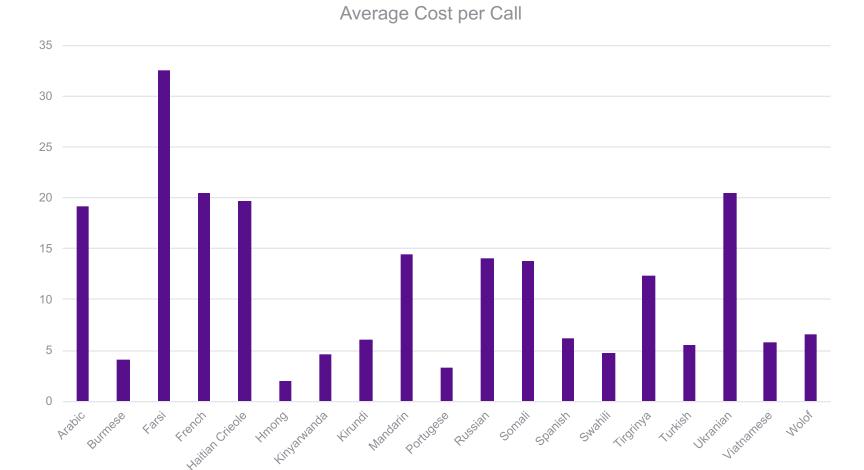


FIGURE (FOR PLACEMENT ONLY)



RESULTS

117 translator service calls met the inclusion criteria. 19 different languages were represented in the data. The languages most often translated using the language line included Arabic (n=29), Spanish (n=22), and Swahili (n=8). The average time for which telephone translator services were used was 13.41 min per call with an average cost of 10.456 USD per call. Farsi (n=7) accounted for the most time per call (39.71 min) and highest cost per call (32.57 USD) followed by Arabic (n=29) with 23.45 min per call and 19.23 USD per call.

CONCLUSIONS

The results highlight the diverse population that frequents an urban hospital based dental clinic and confirms the need for easy access to quality translation services. The results also suggest that certain languages may require more time to translate to English via telephone thus resulting in increased cost. It should also be noted that the clinic at times employed bilingual personnel which may have resulted in underrepresented data for certain languages.

REFERENCES

U.S. Census Bureau. American community survey. http://www.census.gov/acs/www. Accessed Augus 2014.
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METHOD

Data was collected through a retrospective chart review of calls placed for translator services through the language line from 7/1/19-7/31/20. 117 calls were met the inclusion criteria. Data points included the following:

- -number of calls placed monthly
- -length of call

-language spoken

-cost of service to the dental center.