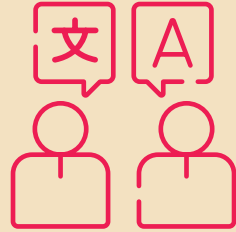


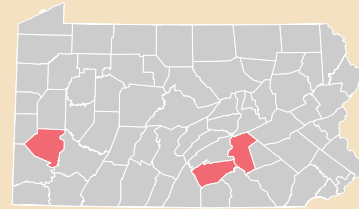
The Impact of Language Barriers on Patient Safety in Pennsylvania: A Review of 336 Patient Safety Events

Interpretation Challenges

- 82.4% of reports described a **challenge with interpretation** (i.e., verbal communication in the patient's native language)
- 6.5% of reports described a **challenge with translation** (i.e., written communication in the patient's native language)



- **57% of interpretation challenges** occurred because a certified interpreter was not available
- Nearly 1/4 of unavailable interpreters included Nepali interpreters, in **3 Pennsylvania counties**



Language barriers were associated with:

- Clinical process issues (e.g., unable to explain diagnosis or care plan)
- Impacts on patients (e.g., missed or delayed patient care)

Safety Strategies for Healthcare Facilities



Hire staff who are **bilingual** in English and the common language(s) of the facility's service area and ensure that these staff members are certified interpreters for the relevant language(s).



Update preferences and needs with contracted language services based on the population of the surrounding community.



Use **illustrations** and/or keep **pre-translated materials** or **prerecorded interpretations** of frequently used medical phrases and/or commonly performed procedures.