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Enhancing Healthcare Quality through Interpreter Tools: Bridging the Language Barrier

BACKGROUND

Background

- 25 million people in the U.S. have Limited English Proficiency (LEP).
- LEP patients are 2x more likely to experience adverse medical events.
- Language barriers lead to:
 - Miscommunication & misdiagnosis
 - Increased hospital stays & readmissions
 - Poor medication adherence
 - Reliance on family/children for interpretation → ethical & safety risks

THE ROLE OF INTERPRETER TOOLS

- Provide accurate, timely communication between providers and LEP patients.
- Support informed consent, medication teaching, care planning, and emotional needs.
- Delivered via phone, video, or in-person, accessible at all points of care.
- Required by Joint Commission & ACA Section 1557 standards.

Solution Implemented:

Propio Language Services

- 24/7 access to interpreters in 300+ languages.
- HIPAA-compliant platform with EHR integration.
- Real-time connection (<30 seconds) via mobile, tablet, or desktop.
- Certified medical interpreters ensuring accuracy & confidentiality.

“Communication is the foundation of safe, equitable care. But for millions of patients in the U.S., that foundation is shaky simply because they speak a different language.”

Implementation at Centerpoint Health (2024)

- Target populations: Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic-speaking patients.
- Integrated Propio ONE directly in EHR for quick video interpretation.
- Eliminated dependence on family members for interpretation.

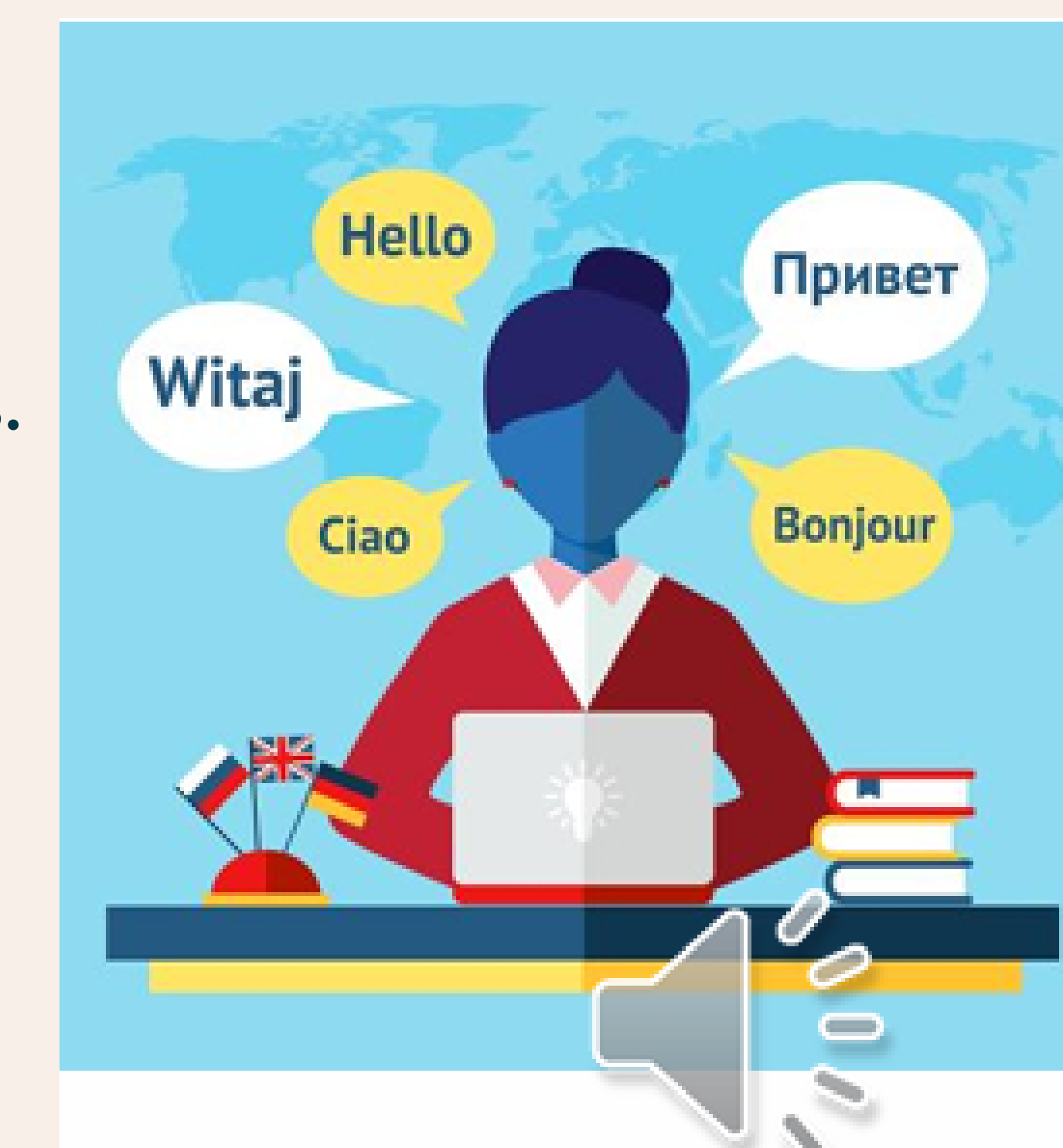
Benefits

Quality & Safety: Reduces errors and sentinel events.

Efficiency: Rapid connection supports workflow.

Compliance: Meets Section 1557 and Joint Commission standards.

Equity: Ensures all patients understand and participate in their care.



Impact Metrics

Metric	Before	After
Understanding discharge plans	62%	93%
Readmission rate (LEP patients)	15.6%	9.3%
Time to connect with interpreter	12 min	<30 sec
Medication adherence	58%	89%
Patient satisfaction	68%	95%
Provider satisfaction	54%	92%

Call to Action

- Audit current LEP patient encounters in your organization.
- Provide real-time interpreter services across care settings.
- Train staff on choosing appropriate interpretation modes.
- Monitor language utilization trends to guide resources.

References

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