

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNICATION WITH PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

### **POLICY:**

Brooks Eye Center will take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in our services, activities, programs and other benefits. The policy of Brooks Eye Center is to ensure meaningful communication with LEP patients/clients and their authorized representatives involving their medical conditions and treatment. The policy also provides for communication of information contained in vital documents, including but not limited to, waivers of rights, consent to treatment forms, financial and insurance benefits forms, etc. All interpreters, translators and other aids needed to comply with this policy shall be provided without cost to the person being served, and patients/clients and their families will be informed of the availability of such assistance free of charge.

Language assistance will be provided through the use of competent bilingual staff, staff interpreters, contracts or formal arrangements with local organizations providing interpretation or translation services, or technology and telephonic interpretation services. All staff will be provided notice of this policy and procedure, and staff that may have direct contact with LEP individuals will be trained in effective communication techniques, including the effective use of an interpreter.

Brooks Eye Center will conduct a regular review of the language access needs of our patient population, as well as update and monitor the implementation of this policy and these procedures, as necessary.

### **PROCEDURES:**

#### **1. IDENTIFYING LEP PERSONS AND THEIR LANGUAGE**

Brooks Eye Center will promptly identify the language and communication needs of the LEP person. If necessary, staff will use a language identification card (or "I speak cards," available online at [www.lep.gov](http://www.lep.gov)) or posters to determine the language. Also, when records are kept of past interactions with patients or family members, the language used to communicate with the LEP person will be included as part of the record.

#### **2. OBTAINING A QUALIFIED INTERPRETER**

Staff members are responsible for:

Obtaining an outside interpreter if a bilingual staff or staff interpreter is not available or does not speak the needed language.

Language Line Solutions has agreed to provide qualified interpreter services. The agency's telephone number is (800)752-6096.

Some LEP persons may prefer or request to use a family member or friend as an interpreter. However, family members or friends of the LEP person will not be used as interpreters unless specifically requested

by that individual. If the family member or friend is not competent or appropriate for any of these reasons, competent interpreter services will be provided to the LEP person.

Children and other patients will not be used to interpret, to ensure confidentiality of information and accurate communication.

### **3. PROVIDING WRITTEN TRANSLATIONS**

**(a)**When the translation of vital documents is needed, each unit in Brooks Eye Center will submit documents for translation into frequently-encountered languages to Language Line Solutions. Original documents being submitted for translation will be in final, approved form with updated and accurate legal and medical information.

**(b)**Facilities will provide a translation of other written materials, if needed, as well as written notice of the availability of translation, free of charge, for LEP individuals.

**(c)**Brooks Eye Center will set benchmarks for translation of vital documents into additional languages over time.

### **4. PROVIDING NOTICE TO LEP PERSONS**

Brooks Eye Center will inform LEP persons of the availability of language assistance, free of charge, by providing written notice in languages LEP persons will understand. At a minimum, notices and signs will be provided in intake areas.

### **5. MONITORING LANGUAGE NEEDS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

On an ongoing basis, Brooks Eye Center will assess changes in demographics, types of services or other needs that may require reevaluation of this policy and its procedures. Also, Brooks Eye Center will regularly assess the efficiency of these procedures.