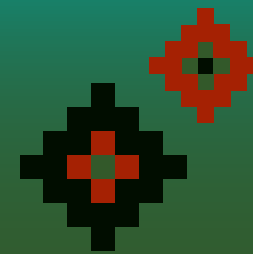


# When Your Medical Provider Doesn't Speak Your Language



To receive good medical care, you and your doctor need to be able to understand each other.

If your doctor cannot provide healthcare in your language, ask for an interpreter.

Most healthcare clinics, pharmacies, hospitals, and medical professionals that accept federal money—including Medicaid—are required to provide free interpretation. In the United States, the law says no one can be turned away from medical care because they do not speak English.



## Here are two ways to ask for an interpreter:

1. Tell a staff member that you need an interpreter by saying: **"No English, I speak Dari."**
2. You can also give the staff member a card telling them that you need an interpreter and in what language. You can take a picture of the card with your phone to save it.

### You can ask for a different interpreter if:

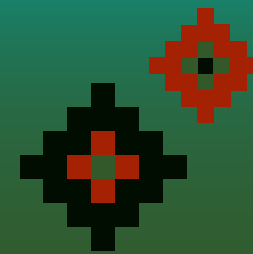
- + You don't understand your interpreter.
- + You would like an interpreter of a different gender.
- + You don't feel comfortable with your interpreter.
- + Ask clinic staff to add a note in your medical chart that you need an interpreter in your preferred language.

من دری حرف میزنم. من به  
ترجمان زبان دری نیاز دارم.

**I speak Dari.  
I need a Dari interpreter.**



# When Your Medical Provider Doesn't Speak Your Language



## Ask for an interpreter **early and every time.**

Medical interpretation is a specialized skill best done by trained professionals. Ask for an interpreter at the time you are scheduling a medical appointment. If you are unable to make an appointment or are seeking emergency care, tell front desk staff when you first arrive that you need an interpreter.

## You **deserve access to an interpreter.**

If you are being denied interpretation, remember that you have rights and choices.



Ask to speak to a manager so that you can repeat your request.



Call a caseworker, if you have one, and ask them to help you advocate for interpretation.



Ask if you can wait or reschedule an appointment until an interpreter is available.

## **Avoid** having your child, a friend, or an adult family member interpret for you.

Medical providers should not ask you to bring your own interpreter or have your child, friends, or family members interpret for you. Even if your child, friend, or family member knows English well, they may not be professionally trained and could interpret medical information incorrectly. Interpreting medical information may also be stressful for them. People who do not have professional interpreters may have worse health problems because of misunderstandings that can happen. A professional interpreter will interpret everything that is being said during your visit so that you can understand your diagnosis and treatment options for you to make the best choices for your health. If allowed, you can bring a friend or family member with you for support.

## You also have the **right to:**

- + Make a formal complaint with the medical facility if you are denied interpretation. Medical providers cannot treat you badly because you complain.
- + Tell the government what happened and file a formal complaint at <https://shorturl.at/nJTY5>.

