



AMN Healthcare Study Tracks 45 Languages Spoken in Patient/Provider Encounters in U.S.

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Analysis of 204 million minutes of patient interpretation services underscores the ever-increasing complexity in navigating patient, provider encounters nationwide

DALLAS, Nov. 14, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Patient/provider encounters in the United States are conducted in an increasingly diverse set of languages beyond English and Spanish, according to the 2023 *Healthcare World Languages Index* compiled by AMN Healthcare, a leading healthcare talent acquisition and technology company, which tracked data showing the 45 languages most commonly spoken in clinical visits in the last 12 months.

The new report is based on more than 204 million minutes – or more than 142,000 days -- of language interpretation services the company provided via AMN Healthcare Language Services for patients in hospitals, medical groups, and other clinical settings. That's compared to 102 million minutes when AMN Healthcare compiled its inaugural report in 2021, a 100 percent increase in interpretation services provided.

"Language diversity in healthcare is exploding," said Jacobia Solomon, President of AMN Healthcare Language Services. "From Mandarin to Arabic to Swahili to Hmong, and many others, patients in U.S. healthcare facilities are speaking a broader array of languages than ever before, and providers are using evolving technologies and platforms to meet this ever-increasing need."

The report tracks 45 languages spoken in patient/provider encounters nationwide. After English and Spanish, the first among these are languages commonly spoken in China (Mandarin and Cantonese), followed by Vietnamese and Arabic (tied), Haitian Creole, American Sign Language (ASL), Russian, Portuguese, and Korean. Among other languages tracked in the report are Nepali, Swahili, Ukrainian, Somali, Amharic, Rohingya, Hmong, Bosnian and Kinyarwanda.

Spanish is the most commonly spoken language other than English in patient/provider encounters in 48 states, according to the report. The exceptions are Maine, where Arabic is number one, and Vermont, where Nepali ranks first. Portuguese is the second most spoken non-English language after Spanish in New Jersey, South Carolina and Utah, while Hmong is second after Spanish in Wisconsin, and Russian is second after Spanish in Washington state.

"Languages used in patient/provider healthcare encounters generally are regionalized based on migration patterns to the U.S." Solomon said. "Often, this can be a result of refugee resettlement programs like we've seen most recently in the evacuations from Afghanistan."

Underscoring America's status as a land of asylum, many of the languages tracked in the report are spoken in countries that have experienced violence or turmoil, including Ukraine, Haiti, Vietnam, Somalia, Myanmar, Democratic Republic of Congo, Bosnia, and others.

A Growing LEP Population

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 22% of people in the U.S. (roughly 73 million) speak a language other than English at home. This trend has resulted in a growing number of LEP patients – healthcare consumers with Limited English Proficiency who require interpretation services to ensure appropriate care. According to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), language barriers put 9% of U.S. patients at risk for an adverse safety event. To ensure equal access to healthcare, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act requires that interpretation services be provided to LEP patients at facilities that benefit from federal funding.

Use of American Sign Language

The report indicates that the use of American Sign Language (ASL) in patient/provider healthcare encounters is relatively common. ASL ranked fourth in the 2023 report when considered as non-spoken English and was used in 2.9% of all non-English patient/provider encounters. According to Communications Services for the Deaf, a global organization providing resources and technologies for the deaf and hard of hearing community, approximately 1 million people in the United States now use ASL as their primary way to communicate.

A copy of AMN Healthcare's 2023 *Healthcare World Languages Index* may be obtained at <https://www.amnhealthcare.com/amn-insights/language-services/blog/2023-healthcare-world-language-index/>

About AMN Healthcare

AMN Healthcare is the leader and innovator in total talent solutions for healthcare organizations across the United States. The Company provides access to the most comprehensive network of quality healthcare professionals through its innovative recruitment strategies and breadth of career opportunities. With insights and expertise, AMN Healthcare helps providers optimize their workforce to successfully reduce complexity, increase efficiency and improve patient outcomes. AMN total talent solutions include managed services programs, clinical and interim healthcare leaders, temporary staffing, permanent placement, executive search solutions, vendor management systems, recruitment process outsourcing, predictive modeling, language interpretation services, revenue cycle solutions, and other services. Clients include acute-care hospitals, community health centers and clinics, physician practice groups, retail and urgent care centers, home health facilities, schools, and many other healthcare settings. AMN Healthcare is committed to fostering and maintaining a diverse team that reflects the communities we serve. Our commitment to the inclusion of many different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives enables our innovation and leadership in the healthcare services industry. For more information about AMN Healthcare, visit www.amnhealthcare.com.

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