

Introduction:

According to HHS, an individual with LEP is a person who does not read, write, speak or understand English as their primary language. Approximately 68 million people in the United States speak a language other than English, of those, 8.2% speak English less than very well. Research shows that patients who speak language other than English are less likely to continue care. Research shows that patients who speak a language other than English or who report financial barriers are significantly less likely to continue care.

Purpose:

To describe the demographics of parents and children from families with limited English proficiency (LEP), report the total cost of interpreter services utilization (ISU), cost per language and per visit type, and to assess satisfaction with these services.

Methodology:

A Retrospective electronic chart review was performed for children Ages 1 to 17 years, who received treatment and whose parents have LEP. Parental interviews were also conducted following dental visits. Data collection included child and parent demographics, parental satisfaction, and the cost of interpreter service.

Results:

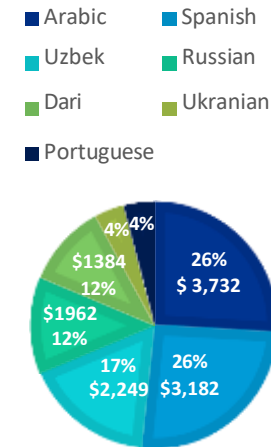


Figure1: Analysis of Interpreter Services Utilization (ISU) Trends, Language Distribution, and Expenditure

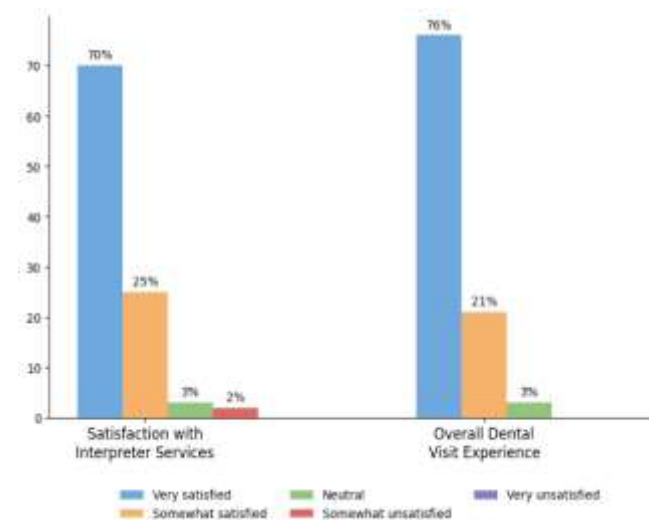


Figure 2: Satisfaction With Interpreter Services and Overall Dental Visit Experience Among LEP Families

Visit Types	Number of Visit	Average Length of Call per Visit	Average Charge per Visit	Total charge
Comprehensive Exam	26 (12%)	46	\$85.4	\$ 2219.61
Periodic Exam	54 (26%)	21	\$42	\$ 2269.35
Limited Exam	12 (6%)	30	\$55.3	\$ 663.51
General Anesthesia	10 (5%)	52*	\$100.5*	\$ 1004.63
Sedation	21 (10%)	23	\$46	\$ 963.09
Restorative	76* (36%)	12	\$27.1	\$2057.13
Preoperative Instruction Calls	11 (5%)	9	\$17	\$ 185.98
Total Number of Visit	210 (100%)	22	\$45 per Visit	\$ 9363.3
Total no. of children	108		#87 per child	

Table 1: Average Interpreter Services Charge per Visit per Patient Among 108 Children from LEP Families, 2025

Results:

One hundred eight parent-child dyads participated in the study. Arabic was the most frequently documented language, followed by Spanish, Uzbek, and Russian respectively. Arabic was the most documented language, followed by Spanish, Uzbek, and Russian respectively. Although Spanish and Arabic had similar call volumes and total durations, the charge for Arabic was statistically higher. 70% of parents expressed satisfaction with interpreter services and 76% of parents were very satisfied with their overall dental visit experience.

General anesthesia visits had the longest average calls and the highest average charges per visit. Average interpreter cost per child was 87 dollars.

Conclusions:

Despite increased visit durations and higher institutional costs per patient, parents expressed overall satisfaction with the Interpreter services.

References:

1. Twersky S, Jefferson E, Garcia-Ortiz L, Williams E, Pina C. Impact of Limited English Proficiency on Healthcare Access and Outcomes in the U.S: A Scoping Review. Healthcare. 2024;12(3):364.
2. Rowland ML. Enhancing communication in dental clinics with linguistically different patients. J Dent Educ. 2008; 72(1):72-80.