

Language Access for Advocates – (Adobe)

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>> Hello, everyone, thank you for joining us. Good morning, good afternoon, again to everyone. Today's webinar is Language Access for Advocates, we, the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims of Crime, NRC, for short are the host. NRC is a one-stop shop for information and guidance to enhance the capacity of victims and providers to serve all victims, especially those from communities that are underrepresented in healing services and avenues of justice.

Our webinar is being conducted as a tri-lingual training. English, American Sign Language, and Spanish. Simultaneous

Spanish interpretation is happening in a separate conference line. Interpreters will be switching every 20 to 30 minutes.

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If the issues cannot be resolved, we may have to cancel the webinar. If this happens, we will send a follow-up e-mail providing additional information to all attendees.

Before we begin, I have a few quick logistical items to go over. In this portion, we'll be reading a few instructions. Before I continue, for the presenters, interpreters, if you're not speaking at the moment, please mute your speakers, we hear some background noise, in the back. Participants are in listen-only mode, which means we're not able to hear you, but you should be able to hear us.

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If you have logged into Adobe on your computer, you will notice the raise your hand button on the top of your screen. Please test this now, by clicking the button to raise your hand.

You will also notice that we have a PowerPoint presentation, live captions, and an ASL interpreter on the screen. Please raise your hand to confirm that you can view the PowerPoint presentation on your screen. Thank you... please raise your hand to confirm that you can view the ASL interpreter. Please raise your hand to confirm that you can view the captions. Thank you.

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You can download the materials in the file box any time during the presentation. We plan to have time after the presentation for questions and comments. If you don't want to lose a question or comment during the presentation, feel free to enter in the Q&A pod. We will hold onto your questions until the

end. We are recording this webinar. The link to the recording will be sent to all participants within a week.

You will also receive a link to complete an evaluation after this webinar. We appreciate your feedback. So... please let us know if you need the evaluation or other webinar materials in ultimate format.

Just wanted to pause for a few seconds [noise on the line]. If we could just -- for the presenters, interpreters, who are joining us today, be sure to mute your speakers when you're not speaking, thank you.

Before passing the mic to our amazing presenters, organizations, that are joining us from Arizona and California, just wanted to pause to dream a little bit about what it would be to live in a world where the right to language is never denied. In this series or webinar, you will be invited to reflect on the lessons learned around ensuring meaningful and effective communication. Ana, I will pass it over to you.

>> Ana: Thank you, thank you so much for joining us. I'm project coordinator at Casa de Esperanza. I have the joy of sharing this information with two amazing advocates, of whom I learn so much from every day. Marina Jessop and Aparna. I'll let them introduce themselves.

>> Hello, good morning, or good afternoon to everyone. My name is Marina Jessop. And I work for Chicanos Por La Causa.

That would translate over to, basically Chicanos with a Cause or CPLC, for short. It was founded in the Civil Rights Movement to confront oppression in the Latino community in Phoenix. We are located in three states, have over 1,000 employees in various sectors. Thank you for allowing me to present today. It's my honor, thank you.

>> Hello! My name is Aparna Bhattacharyya. I'm with Raksha, which means "protection" in many languages. We're an Atlanta-based organization that provides advocacy, counseling and other support services to the south Asian community. It's a great honor to be here with you today.

>> Hello, again, my name is Ana De Carolis. I'm with Casa de Esperanza, it's an organization that started from a small group of Latina activists in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1982 with a mission to mobilize communities to end domestic violence, with the understanding that it is the community that will end domestic violence, not any system or organization. The National Latina Network for Health Families and Communities is a project of Casa de Esperanza and the National Resource Center that's working to end domestic violence and to promote the health and well-being of the Latin communities around the country. Thank you so much for joining us.

>> So... this is Aparna, and we're here to talk about our objectives. We want to share lessons learned from folks in the

field. We're going to do a slight review of the legal and ethical mandates for language access and some strategies that we can use, both within and outside of our organization to ensure language access. And talk about some meaningful collaborations.

We're going to do a really quick review. Some of the terminology we'll use will include LEP, which --

>> Aparna -- I'm so sorry -- can you please slow down just a little bit, thank you?

>> Okay. Thank you for that reminder.

So... some of the terminology that we will use include LEP... which means Limited English Proficiency, and we wanted to clarify the terms interpretation, which is spoken language. And translation, which is written language.

>> Thanks for that reminder. Jorge and, we'll start hearing from you. We want to hear from you. And... learn a little bit about who is in the room today. So... we're going to participate via chat box. And the first question for you, is what is your role at your organization? The purpose of this exercise, besides getting to know one another a little bit more is to identify areas of connection and opportunities.

So... feel free to enter on the chat box, Q&A box, we see that we have sexual assault advocates in the room, as well as attorneys, bilingual advocates, we have trainers in the room, DV advocates. So... we have a diverse group of advocates,

practitioners and... one of the purposes of these trainings, as well, is to highlight the fact that we all have a role in ensuring language access.

No matter if we're in a managerial position, if we're interacting with clients every day, if we're in a training capacity, right? Or whatever the setting of our work is, we all have a role in ensuring meaningful communication. Both... within and also outside of the organization and later on, we will talk about systems advocacy.

And now, we will continue to hear from you, but... through a poll exercise. And we just want to gather from you why this is important. Why are you here with us today? What is gathering us today and what's the importance of language access? Why is this something crucial to our work? We would like to hear from you.

So... please, feel free to enter your answers to this question in this poll box that you see. So language access is important because it gives a voice to the voiceless, thank you for that. To be able to provide the necessary resources, to our communities, because it is Civil Rights, it honors cultures, because it increases protection and safety. What else do we have? It's a matter of equitable access. Because, it's important that folks have the chance to express themselves in the language they're most comfortable in. These are all really, really important reasons,

so... thanks for sharing with us and reminding us of how important it is that we're going to discuss today.

So... having that background in what gathers us today... we'll do a brief reminder of both the legal mandate for language access, that was mentioned... by some of the chat bots or poll interventions or other important reasons that have to do with what you said around ensuring equitable access, as well as providing culturally-responsive resources.

So... I'll hand the floor over to Marina.

>> Great, thank you, everyone for participating. So... why language access? First of all... because it's the law. Title VI prohibits discrimination in programs and activities for those receiving federal financial assistance.

So... we have title VI, we have the Americans with Disabilities Act, the ADA, which ensures that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else. It's an equal opportunity law. It savings lives, it allows accessibility to healing and safety.

So... in a nutshell, anyone who receives federal funding must provide language access to individuals who need it. So... many federal programs, states, and localities have provisions requiring language services for LEP people.

So... LEP... Limited English Proficiency, that is individuals who do not speak English as their primary language, and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. These people are entitled to language assistance with respect to service.

So... all -- excuse me -- I'm going to backtrack, so... I was jumping a little ahead. So... language access makes communication possible. Deaf, uppercase D refers to an identity with its own culture, language, and diverse communities. American Sign Language, ASL, is predominant. So... deaf and hard of hearing are often misunderstood as a disability issue, but it's also a language access issue.

>> Marina -- can I just add?

>> Sure. Go ahead.

>> I just want to add in that within the Deaf Community, we must also be aware that there are different languages. Like... there is Mexican Sign Language, Japanese Sign Language, so, to keep in mind there's an intersection of other languages with sign language.

>> This is Ana. I also wanted to interject and say that when we're discussing the concepts of Limited English Proficiency, we're defining it as it appears in the legal background for spoken language access provision, but... we know that that's not a term that we necessarily want to use, you know... in our work as

advocates, because... it is focusing on, on a limitation to speak a certain language, as opposed to all, you know... the, the great background of knowledge that it means to, to speak a language. Right? A different language.

So... we think it's important to define it and mention it, because it is in the legislation, it is important to know the legislation as we do systems advocacy, for instance, as we advocate on behalf of our clients, but... we know that that's not the victims, the Survivors Center term that we want to lift up, necessarily.

>> Perfect, thank you. So... we're going to move on to poll number two. So... Marina?

>> Yeah... thanks again, I wanted to make some space for interpreter switch as we're approaching the 20-minute mark. Are we good to go? Awesome.

So... again, we talked about the importance of language access, right? And what ensuring meaningful language access enables us to do. But... we also want to talk about the consequences of not providing meaningful language access. As advocates, as folks who are on the ground, with survivors, what do you see? What do you see as the consequences that occur, for your clients, as well as for you, as providers, and... for organizations when language access is not provided? Or the language access provided is not meaningful. Or effective.

And responses, we have miscarriage of justice, I'd love to hear more, right... about that? And we will talk about that. In a minute. Victims will be the -- deterred from seeking services. That also causes frustration, not only on the survivors, but the workers, the advocates, the legal staff. It, basically, reproduces a cycle of inequity, we see there. It, again... the, the danger of being misunderstood, lack of access to resources, justice, and safety.

Lack of trauma-informed care, so... we see some very, very serious consequences. We will also mention, and thank you for participating and reminding us how important this is. We have wrongful convictions also. And... as you know, probably, from, from this case, you're probably familiar with Daisy's case. Language access can simply be the difference between life and death.

Just like shelter services or first response, language access can be life-saving and lack thereof can have the opposite effect.

So... as you know, Daisy was a victim of domestic violence who lived in Queens, New York. This case happened in 2014 and... although she filed multiple police reports with the NYPD, the New York Police Department, those statements were not translated, as such, there was no further review of those complaints and in January, 2014, Daisy and her two daughters, were killed.

So... we see how important language access is and how outside of our organization, taken even more important role. Because... we're doing this important work of upholding this right, right? For our clients.

So... with that said, we're, we're going to move to the next slide. For the sake of time, I will not go in depth, but it's a testimony from a research study that was carried out --

>> Sorry... I'm seeing the pop-up that they're having technical difficulties.

>> Yes... thank you, Marina. If you can please hold for just a quick second. Okay... please continue, Marina.

>> Okay... great, so... immigrants face a high level of isolation, where they're in a foreign country, they don't have family, they, they usually don't have friends... so their level of isolation is very high. They face a huge degree of discrimination, they have language and cultural barriers and what we've also seen in our organization is there's a lot of fear, a lot of fear of the police, there's a lot of fear of immigration, we have clients afraid to walk their children to the bus in the mornings. They face the fear of repercussions from choices they make. Whereas, here in the states, we have laws that protect these individuals.

So... with that said, just to reiterate what Aparna had said, I do want to differentiate the difference between Mexican sign

language and Spanish sign language. As other countries -- all countries have their own variation and different sign languages.

>> The mandate for meaningful communication, with individuals, who have limited English proficiency -- I'll hold on due to technical difficulties.

>> We're trying to be sure we have full access with our captioning pod and video screen. If you can give us a couple minutes for our captioner to reconnect, thank you so much.

[Captioner is back].

>> Okay... thank you, everybody, for just bearing with us as we resolve some of the technology issues that we had. Again... thank you, everyone... and Aparna and Marina and Ana. I know sometimes it's difficult to stop the presentation. Okay... if you can proceed.

>> Thank you, Jorge, no... it's great, it's a teachable moment in terms of providing language access. It's an organization-wide commitment and sometimes it takes time. And it's important to make space for that time. So, thank you.

And because we don't want to spend too much time on the legal portion, we will highlight the most-important, as an advocate, at least to me, when I was serving in that role, it was helpful and important to know the federal mandates, the legal

mandates, in order to be able to, to educate systems about that, to hold systems accountable with that information. So... that information is in the slides. It's important to keep in mind that the mandates around providing meaningful access for individuals with limited English proficiency, which are based on Title VI, they apply for any recipient of federal assistance. And that includes federal grants, that includes sub-recipients, right? And... in terms of the legal obligation or the legal mandates for providing effective or ensuring effective communication with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, that's based on the ADA. And that is independent from funding source. That we are all required -- all places of public accommodation, are required to ensure that communication with people who are deaf or hard of hearing is equally effective as communication with, with people who are hearing.

So... that's important to know that the two different legal mandates, and keep that in mind as we do our work.

So... with that said... I'm going to switch over to Aparna and Marina.

>> Requirements for recipients of federal assistance, I think you've kind of really -- anybody who is on a grant or signed an MOU, even if they're not receiving funding, are required to follow these four factors. So... you need to know the number or proportion of limited English proficient persons who are eligible to

be served. So... are they in the community? And able to get your services or likely to be encountered by the program or grantee?

So... for example, while we may not have a high south Asian population, as an organization, that is our primary focus. So... they're going to be likely to be coming to our program because that's who we focus on. The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program. Will there be as high of a bar for Raksha? To provide [indiscernible] -- it's one of the key things to look at when you're looking at your language access plan.

The measure and importance of the program -- so... program that has higher severity is really critical and there's a higher expectation for them to provide language access than a program that isn't emergency-focused and what resources are there and what the costs are.

So... those are things to keep in mind when you come up with your guidelines. You could look at LEP.gov to get more information on that.

So... are you required to provide language access outside of the main languages spoken in your community? It's a group question -- so you all can answer. Look at the Q&A box. Everybody's saying yes.

So... for the culturally-specific organizations... Norma, I see you there. So... do you have the same requirements? To provide languages outside the languages of your culturally-specific community? I see one, yes. Anybody else? I know we have more than one culturally-specific organization participating. All yeses, so... you are correct. Even as culturally-specific organizations... we do need to provide the same access for other communities that may not be our -- I guess, the community that's mentioned in our mission.

Okay... so... next, we need to look at reasonable steps for meaningful access. We have to have a proactive plan. Even though we may not serve folks who speak certain languages as a culturally-specific organization, we still have to have a plan to address the needs of any survivor that calls us.

And of course, we have language line, which is great for the emergency, but... what about the follow-up? Knowing what is considered a reasonable bar for the community, but also, knowing that that reasonable bar may change with time. And there'll be a higher expectation as you're working with a survivor of a different language than what you're used to serving. Okay...

Next slide.

>> Thank you, Aparna, this is Marina. As an advocate, I know we have different roles, professionals, here on this webinar, but... what can you do? So... we need to remind organizations,

and coworkers about our federal obligations, so... you know... it looks like everybody has a pretty good understanding, but not all coworkers, not even supervisors, can be aware of our legal obligations or our responsibilities for LEP individuals.

So... we need to remind people, remind other programs and organizations who, who call on us for help. So... it's about being aware, ourselves, and... also, informing other individuals as well.

>> This is Ana, before we move on, we'll do a quick interpreter switch. All right... I think we can keep going, thanks so much, Marina.

>> Okay... great. So... cultural responsiveness and responsibility is important. It's more than just having a language access plan, it's more than having a contract with a language line or multilingual staff, it's about learning about culture, creating meaningful partnerships with other organizations. Shifting policies and practices to meet the needs of the community.

So... as advocates and organizations, it's our responsibility. So... also, for the rebuilding and adaptation of the cultural identification, so... you know, we have to factor in the needs of our clients, their culture, their language, all of that, and being respectful as well.

So... I'm going to skip along to -- so... cultural responsiveness begins with ourselves. It begins with examining ourselves. So... as professionals, we need to be aware of our

identities, privileges, biases and examining factors, related to stereotypes across groups, and individuals.

So... being aware of that, allows us to work with diverse cultures and allows us to be more sensitive to other cultures.

Okay... so, when I worked as an advocate, I had a really unique situation come up. I had a client who was deaf, ASL was not her primary language. She grew up in Mexico, she spoke Spanish and self-taught her own sign language. She self-taught her own gestures. What I was told as an advocate at the time, we didn't have the funds to hire an interpreter and that maybe we could use a friend or family member to help do the translating.

So... after doing some research, now... granted, I wasn't as informed at that time, but after doing the research, found out that we were legally-bound. Being a recipient of federal funding, to hire a certified interpreter. Once I came back, that's what we did. There were no Spanish sign language or Mexican interpreters available at the time. We had to hire a certified American Sign Language interpreter who was also deaf and hard of hearing. Needless to say, it was difficult and challenging to try to communicate with the client because the interpreter and the client were having a hard time understanding each other, since the client only lip-read Spanish.

So... eventually -- working with the client, I began to learn her gestures and she could read my lips very well. I began to be able to communicate with the clients better than the certified interpreter did.

So... with this experience, quick question... did the advocate take reasonable steps to provide language access?

>> I think I was supposed to jump in and do that one -- did Marina do everything to provide reasonable language access? I'm asking all of you -- no? A Spanish-speaking interpreter. Some say yes. It seemed very reasonable -- we have different opinions here. I think if it was working for the client, she took every measure -- she even got technical assistance to try to find the right interpreter, I'm not sure if that got lost in the story, but as long as she documents why she did what she did and continues to look for the appropriate interpreters. Okay... so... Linda's saying they were not qualified interpreters.

How easy, Linda, I'm going to put you on the spot, would it be to find a qualified Mexican sign language interpreter for home signs? Very difficult. In these difficult situations, it's hard to find a lot of interpreters in languages that we're working with. What I can say is Marina did take many steps to ensure meaningful access, of course, she has more information now, and probably more resources, but at that time, because it's -- do we put a survivor off, based on us not being able to find it, or do we do the

best to continue working until we find the appropriate services. Those are the questions I'm going to ask. Ana, I think you're next.

>> Yes... so... thanks, Aparna. That's an interesting testimonial. That's, Marina for sharing. It shows something very real, right? We are advocates, we need to communicate with our clients, language access. We've not only for the clients -- language access is for all of us, right? And sometimes we get this, this information from our own organizations, saying we don't have the funds.

That is where knowing the legal requirements comes in, because... as we saw before, they're providing effective, ensuring effective communication with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, is a mandate that is regardless of funding source. Doesn't matter if it's federal funds or not, any place of public accommodation has the obligation to do it.

So... also, the example shows the advocates resourcefulness, right? Maybe without having had the opportunity, an organization, why language access, training, or maybe she's getting into learning about language access provision, the commitment is there. Right? To serve the clients and to research and to learn more.

As we saw before, right? What's reasonable -- yeah... we can say this was reasonable at the time, with the existing

information, but it's also the first step that we take, right? When we encounter a situation like that, when we are finally able to communicate with our client, it's not the end of the, of the situation, it's the beginning. It's where that -- that level of what's reasonable starts going up. And we want to get to our ceiling for language access provision and not stick to the floor or what we are required to just comply.

I will slow down and I apologize, this is when I get really excited with the content so... I will pause and... thanks, interpreters, for your patience.

So... these are, as I said, the moments where we start to connect how language access is one intrinsic part of culturally-responsive services.

It's not just reacting to that specific case and solving that specific issue -- it's the beginning of our planning process. Language access is not just a contract with language line, or with a video remote interpretation provider. It's, the time when we -- it's -- it involves, sorry... creating relationships with interpreters.

For example... beginning research, and learning, like... oh, you know... American Sign Language is not the only sign language that is used, even here in the United States. We have folks who use Mexican sign language, for example, as in this example. So... that's when we begin creating and we should be

proactive, right? Not wait until we need it, but be proactive and doing research. Who are interpreters that are certified in Mexican sign language, but I can start contacting and start interviewing and add it to a list, so... that when the time comes, I'm able to call them up and I don't have to be reactive, right?

Who are certified deaf interpreters who can support with ensuring communication, with folks who use a home sign language, right?

So... to start, and that's where collaborations and meaningful partnerships come in. That's, in my own personal experience, that's when I call up folks who I know will have more knowledge than myself, for example... I may call the Vera Institute and send an e-mail, I may ask them, do you know any Certified Deaf Interpreters, CDI, because I'd like to begin starting a relationship with interpreters who can support me when it's necessary.

So... language access is about creating this relationship, it's about moving away from having one bilingual staff member who will be starting all of the population, who speak or who are users of deaf language, other than English because that's not fair. For the bilingual staff member and that doesn't show the community that we are committed to having that relationship with the community.

Language access is more than translating a brochure, it is translating key materials, but it's also making sure that they speak to the community that they are using the terms the community uses, that they're culturally-relevant, that they're, according to reading, they're, basically... at a good reading level, so... that they're accessible. And it's a commitment to the community. It is not just contacting language line, although... like, telephonic interpreters or video remote interpreters can be great for connecting the first time, but... then, it's important to build relationships with the communities, right?

To go where they're at, to connect with the elders in the community, with the community leaders, right? And again, it's seeing the survivor as a whole, like, that's something we see as an example that Marina brought. It's about seeing the intersection and all the different aspects that make up what the person is. Right? And what the person -- how they identify themselves.

So... that being said... we're going to move to this very real question... and I will give the floor to my companions, my partners.

>> Language access is also more than intake. It means do we have equal access to counseling services and healing. I don't think it's fair that one individual cannot have access [indiscernible], but because of language access, another one

doesn't. We talked about how this needs to be -- how we need to increase our ability to provide these services, but at the same time, keep in mind the safety of the survivor. Sometimes it may not be safe to have the live survivors in the room, during a counseling session, or other places and we have to do the proper screening and make sure that the survivor is okay with that. And that it is safe to do that.

We have to have many-layered approaches to accessing all of our services and what Marina didn't share, was that we have to sometimes push our supervisors and our leadership to ensure language access. And Marina had to do a lot of advocacy to make sure her leadership is on the same page. We have to make sure we implement that in our plans for each year that we're planning our new programming.

>> Can I interject?

>> Absolutely.

>> Sorry... another thing that I didn't mention was -- you're right... I did have to do that and also... I really expended a lot of energy in looking for certified interpreters and actually, Jorge, who first introduced us on this PowerPoint, was one of my TAs at the time. So... I went to him directly and he provided a lot of valuable resources, so... you know... whoever your TAs are is a good resource to turn to as well for guidance and assistance.

>> Can I just elaborate that TA means technical assistance provider?

>> Thank you.

>> I think, Ana, you talked to a lot of this already.

>> I did cover a lot of this and highlight the importance of what you just said, Aparna. Of doing that advocacy, not only outside, but also within the organization and getting that supervisor buy-in. Sometimes, you know, it's difficult, but it's so important to be able to share with our supervisors in our agency, what our obligations are, right? There's a lot of material out there and our organizations can support facilitating informational sheets with the key information on legal mandates, so... that can be presented, right? To management, in an organization and also, knowing, again, that... not -- it is, of course, it's a matter of prioritizing budget and funds. It's doable, though, it's doable to add a line in budget for language access, for translation, for interpretation, that's like the number one thing in order to be proactive, is to budget for it. And also, to know that it's not only, you know... having a contract line, but it's also developing these partnerships with culturally-specific organizations, if you're a mainstream organization. Where you can get that cross training also from culturally-specific organizations, who let you know more about what the needs are of the community are and what they think in their own words are the best ways to address those.

So... for time sake, we will move on to the next slide.

>> When we're doing language access, that it's practical. And it makes sense. How many are familiar with your language access plans? Okay... do you feel like it's practical for every day? Usage? We have practical access plans that are easy to use. How many of you feel you got the training you needed to do your work? Was that part of your onboarding? You're having issues with the interpreters not being good and how do you identify that? And some people don't anticipate using it often. This should be a whole thing with how do you identify a language, right? Some of the things we're experiencing in Atlanta is at least within my community, a lot of folks aren't aware of the languages that we serve. That Raksha serves. We have hotlines and they may not -- the folks on the other side have never heard of those languages. That makes it close to impossible to be able to get language line in a reasonable amount of time. I think in some situations, we even had survivors that have been hung up on, when they're trying to access shelter.

So... thinking about, are you aware of the dialects that are spoken in your community? Do you know some of the other languages outside of Spanish? And then... how, how are you trained to identify those languages and problem solve around that?

So... sometimes they're from the same community and the survivor doesn't -- trying to see if I can read all this -- feel comfortable. You have to have a plan for when you have an interpreter that may know them. And the interpreters aren't very good, so... how do you intervene? If you're worried if they're translating, are you finding a way to interrupt and check in and make sure they're doing their job well.

>> Can I interject, just one second, whenever the time is right?

>> Yeah... I saw one question from Shafiq, that I couldn't read fully. I was trying to find that one. Yes? If you want --

>> So... in the meantime -- yeah... I was reading the questions that popped up. And... reflecting, like... I saw, sometimes we think that the language access plan is a document. Right? It's a policy that what's written and it's in a drawer somewhere. Sometimes we get trained on it, sometimes we don't. But... a language access plan is more than a document. It's an organization-wide commitment, right? It's something that we share in how we do things, that we are all aware of what our obligations are, what our responsibilities are and what procedures do I need to follow in order to ensure that access.

So... I was reading some really, really important things like... you know... I noticed sometimes, I'm not sure whether the interpreter is interpreting everything. Or... I'm not sure if they, the quality of the interpretation is good. Or... what if it's a

smaller community and... the interpreter happens to know the survivor or the perpetrator, right? Those are all questions that come up in practice and that's where we go back to our language access plan and we update it, basically in, in light of those issues that come up in practice.

So... language access plan is a live document and it's a live commitment, so... we do go back and, and we sit down and we address like, okay... how are we going to vet interpreters, right? What's out there? Who could support us? Who could provide technical assistance on that? Organizations? Are certainly a resource for you. For all of these matters, that we may or may not be able to cover during this webinar.

>> And... I just want to give one story -- we recently had a situation where the police went out and made a call to a family and they wrote down the language as Mongolian. And luckily... the advocate from the court felt that this probably wasn't the right language and called me up and said... does this sound right? And given the name of the victim, we identified that the actual language was Bengali.

But... if you are talking to someone who speaks Bengali, which can be said as Bangla or [indiscernible] which means, I am Bengali.

>> This is Marina, they're going to do an interpreter change.

>> Thank you, so much, we're experiencing technical issues on the Spanish interpretation line. If you could please give us a few minutes, we can kind of wrap up and answer some of your questions, I think in this moment... as we are on hold and stand by, if you have any questions that have come up... you're listening to this amazing webinar by Aparna, Marina and Ana, you can write some of your questions in the Q&A box.

Please continue Aparna, thank you so much.

>> As I was saying, the language may sound like Mongolian, even though it is Bengali. It's all about the pronunciation. What I'm saying is that we need to have back-up plans for when the interpreters in the community have conflicts, which is quite often and so... that's part of shifting and adapting your language access plan to ensure the safety of the survivors you're working with. Okay?

Marina, I believe you're next.

>> Okay... great, thank you, Aparna. Language identification matters, so... as you can see, in this next slide... there can be some miscommunication when it comes to interpretation. So... I don't speak Portuguese, so... I'm going to attempt to read what this says, but... it says *estar embaracada*, to be embarrassed in Portuguese, is different from *estar embarazada*, to be pregnant in Spanish.

So... there can be a real confusion when it comes to language and similarities, so... Camisinha in Portuguese means condom and not T-shirt as many Spanish speakers assume.

We also have to prepare survivors as they access other services. Ideally, we'd like to be there, but sometimes we're not, so... part of what we need to do is prepare our survivors on their language rights. Have them practice asking for an interpreter, provide them with I Speak Cards to carry with them and hopefully it also has language about the Civil Rights Act and sometimes we may have to call with them.

So... in one situation, we had to call with the survivor because every time the survivor was calling the hotline, for shelter... -- we're having technical difficulties --

>> Thank you so much, Aparna. I think this is -- I think this is -- going back to what Ana is mentioning... you know, offering a, an accessibility place and time is a learning process, so... it disrupts the way that we tend to do things.

So... we could just have a couple minutes until we get some of the technical issues and the Spanish interpretation line set... and we'll begin shortly, thank you.

>> Okay... looks like we're ready, right?

>> Yes... thank you so much.

>> We talked about a survivor that was trying to access shelter, multiple shelters, multiple times, and each time they

were not providing the interpreter, because... again, she had a language they weren't used to. And we were also told that the person on the line was not comfortable using language line.

As advocates, if we end up making the phone calls with survivors, we make sure we're not put into the role of being an interpreter and letting our fellow advocates know that we cannot play both roles. And if we're bilingual, I think we should use that time to make sure that the interpretation is occurring in a meaningful way and that the interpreter is representing what the survivor needs. We have definitely had situations where there's a miss in the interpreter not providing the whole story.

>> And, Aparna, also to, on what you said on community education -- it got me thinking, of course... as you mentioned, right? We need to hold our systems accountable. It's powerful to disseminate education on language rights in our communities. I remember as an advocate providing education on Title VI, the different legal mandates, the reality is that not everyone, necessarily, will have access to an advocate who will be supporting them or who will be accompanying them, right? To provide language advocacy, so... it's important to disseminate this information in the community. If you have a chance, so... that folks can self-empower -- they can basically... uphold their rights as well as, in terms of language access. And rights of folks who have limited English proficiency and who are deaf or hard of hearing. And also, because, it's one of our clients, is a

community member who can disseminate that information to others.

>> I think the other thing to keep in mind is we say, not playing both roles -- I guess in our situation, what happens is the agency bypasses their role in paying for interpreters and trying to get us to act as the interpreters as opposed to the advocates. And I think it's a very, very slippery slope and it's a way in which, I think a lot of agencies get out of paying and... using interpretation.

So... here are some language identification cards. One is the -- the one with the peach is the one that Georgia has adapted and added a number of languages to. There's a census 2010 language identification card which has less languages than the I Speak booklet and then there's one that Department of Homeland Security has that has a number of the Mexican and Latin American indigenous languages included on it as well.

So... just thinking this could be a tool for when people are in front of you, but... there's still more languages to be added. So... if you see that you have a lot of languages, you might want to get this or other things -- other types of tools and add your own languages to it or create your own version, but... if you're looking for this, we can definitely provide a PDF and you can add on additional languages.

>> So... the question -- I don't know if you have encountered this situation, but... what if my client doesn't recognize their language in the language ID card? Right... like it's great to have a language ID card, even if we are a culturally-specific organization, as we mentioned before -- we can get clients who speak languages, other than the community of focus that we have. It's good to have it handy, it's good to advocate in systems so that they have their language ID cards handy, but... what if the client -- the language that our client speaks is not there?

What if it's a language, for instance... that has no written form? As it happens with some indigenous languages?

What if the -- our client doesn't recognize the print version? Of, of the alphabet? What are some creative ways that you have used or you have seen to identify the language of your client, so that you can meet their needs? Would you like to share some of those, through Q&A? I'll provide one -- so... this is from one of our advocates. At Casa de Esperanza. She shared with me, a brilliant strategy where for, a speaker of indigenous language, from Central America, right? She was trying to find out which language it was. As you may know, there are multiple indigenous languages spoken in the Americas and... in, for example... Guatemala, alone, there are a wide variety of Mayan languages, for example and some are not mutually intelligible, for example... some varieties of the same language are not mutually intelligible

and they vary a lot from region to region. So... it's so important to learn, not only what language the person speaks, but... also, what region or variety -- so that we can get the right interpreter.

So... a strategy that she used was one she was able to identify the general region, she did some research using Google and... researching what languages are spoken in a certain region. So... signing, let's say, a number of languages. So... she went, then, to YouTube and looked up videos, could be songs, could be dialogues, whatever, a movie or a clip, of people speaking those different languages.

She played those back to the client and the client said yes, that's my language. So... that shows thinking outside of the box, like... you know, so many of you do, as advocates, every day. A great strategy, that really talks about cultural responsiveness, right? Of seeing the individual as a whole, taking the time, honoring that person's cultural heritage and being effective and finding an interpreter that that person needed.

>> Ana, I wanted to answer one of the questions. The wording to convince an organization that using a bilingual advocate instead of an interpreter is detrimental. In the ideal world, we'd want to have the bilingual advocate and the interpreter. Because... interpretation is hard work. And one can't be focused on interpreting the information while advocating and listening and sensing what the survivor is needing.

So... in the ideal world, of course, we should have both the bilingual advocate and an interpreter. And then, depending on confidentiality issues, you just don't want the interpreter to be, the advocate to be in a role where they get subpoenaed for court when they're acting in that interpreter role.

Okay... it looks like we were -- the slides are moving around. I think we're --

>> Yeah... I'm moving around -- sorry. Because... I was trying to get to the -- the point that you just brought up, Aparna, based on the question, on the difference between bilingual staff and interpreters. Given that that seems to be one of the questions and... also to follow-up, I'd be curious to know, it says wording to help convince an organization that using a bilingual volunteer, instead of an interpreter is of detriment. We're talking about a bilingual volunteer who is asked to interpret, right? Because... one thing would be to have trained staff providing services in language. To have bilingual, bicultural staff, who have demonstrated proficiency in the second language, who provide services directly in that language. Right? Like... that can be a wonderful thing, but... then a different thing would be to ask someone who is the bilingual staff member or a bilingual volunteer to interpret, which as Aparna said, can have -- the participant sets can be detrimental. Being an interpreter requires high training, it requires amassing experience, certifying, right? In order to be able to interpret accurately and completely.

Otherwise, there can be loss of information, which can have consequences for the survivor and there can also be conflicts of interest, potentially.

>> And... also, I see Tony's question or comment about minimizing the number of victims who have -- the number of people who hear the story of their sexual violence and I understand that and value that, but... I'm also concerned about, if it's a legal -- if it's a legal situation, does that put the advocate in a role where they may be subpoenaed or questioned and we really need to be thoughtful about that as well.

>> I know that we've jumped some slides, part of what we provided was just a listing of languages for folks to be more aware of, and it's not as thorough as we'd like to be, but we wanted to let people know what they didn't know if they aren't used to seeing those languages. You can look at that at another time, just to keep in mind.

I think we were going through the security and safety of interpreters, making sure that we have enough interpreters for example, I've been in court many times, where there's an interpreter just for the court, but... the survivor doesn't have an interpreter to talk to the attorney that she's working with.

So... really, making sure we have interpreters that are there throughout the entire process. Again... even with court interpreters, we want to make sure we get the name of the

interpreter, to make sure there's no conflict of interest. And then we want to make sure we have glossaries that have the complicated words, that are given to the interpreters ahead of time, so... there's not a delay. But... also, making sure that the interpreters are comfortable breaking those words down into simple words.

We've definitely had situations where clients have been in court and the interpreters have used much high-level, college/academic-level language to where the survivors didn't understand what the interpreters were saying. You want to move to the next slide?

>> I think that, given that we have five minutes left... we can try to address some of the questions. So... for instance, there's the issue, the very real issue in a small community, right? The difficulty here, there's a question that says, it's just hard in a small community to find interpreters that the person doesn't know. Right? That's, that's very true.

So... some things to do would be, one, what we mentioned to have a procedure in place, and have it written in your plan on how to vet or how to see in advance whether there's any conflict of interest and that can be asking the survivor, this would be your interpreter, like... do you know them? Is that okay? That can be a strategy, right? We are, every day, learning what our community needs and trying to be proactive and learning from one another, best practices, that can be a way to --

[talking simultaneously]

>> I'd like to jump in on a few things. There's a reason we put resources on here. As we said, you could call Casa. If you can't find interpreters, these are TA providers that could help you identify language. Think about using the consul generals in your community. They might have access to interpreters. That might be where you want to look at telephonic interpretation, instead of in-person interpreters, to minimize the conflicts of interest and be aware of where you're using the names of the clients.

I think the other thing is to look at state-wide coalitions, so... Arizona has provided tools to help with translation and interpretation. Ayuda in D.C. has a language bank that maybe you could check in, but the other thing to look at is how we can build our own models of providing language access in our community.

Asia Women's Shelter in San Francisco created a Multi Language Access Model where they rerouted folks from the community to help provide language access. Norma, I know you're on here, but like Norma with the Cherokee Family Violence Program has created a Spanish hotline for the entire state of Georgia to allow law enforcement officers to access that. I know they're in the process of building in interpreters and advocates and folks who will work with some of the indigenous languages that are growing inside the state of Georgia.

So... I just want to offer those as possibilities and places you can call for technical assistance. So... that we don't feel like we're alone in trying to bridge the language access gap.

>> Okay... great, thank you, Aparna. Okay... so... we just want to say thank you to everyone for joining us today. We want to give some of the, the other people behind the scenes a chance to, to say what they need to say, so... thank you once again.

>> Thank you so much, thank you, Aparna, Marina, Ana. Aparna, I think there's just -- I want to emphasize one thing that you said, is that you're not alone. And I just really, you can take that message as you go back to your communities and your planning language access and appropriate accommodations, given the context of where you live and what you have access to.

I'm glad, Aparna, that you brought all these resources to the table, to the forefront and I'd just say, that reaching victims at VERA.org would also be able to be a convener to connect you with Marina, Ana or Aparna to continue the conversation outside.

Please... I'm going to ask Ashley to switch to our evaluation. If you could please fill out the evaluation -- it just takes a few minutes. You'll see it below the PowerPoint, if you click on the words webinar evaluation survey in the white box and click browse to -- it will give you access to our evaluation and then, also, if you're interested in downloading the transcript of the webinar, you can do so by going to the captioning pod at the

bottom of the screen and clicking on the button that says save and that should give you access to our captioning pod.

Again, I just want to say thank you, as you go back and return to your communities, you're not alone -- you can reach out to Reaching Victims at VERA.org. We can provide all the resources that we have available around language access and prerecorded webinars as well.

Again... thank you for being patient with us. As we are also creating a tri-lingual space, as we are modeling language access, and we truly appreciate all of the staff at VERA, all of the interpreters, for this afternoon. Thank you so much.

[Call concluded at 3:30 p.m. ET].

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