

## Case Study NO. 022

# Healthcare center increases patient ACA enrollment with translations

North East Medical Services supports multiple diverse populations. When new healthcare regulations rolled out, they found an impactful way to communicate the critical updates with the limited English patients.



## Background

North East Medical Services (NEMS) is one of the largest health centers serving the Asian population in the United States, with 85 percent of its patients speaking a language other than English.

While the most popular language among its patients is Chinese, the center has 10 locations throughout the Bay Area with some predominately Vietnamese- and Spanish-speaking communities, as well as a growing Filipino population.

In order to clearly communicate with its patients, the center was looking to translate its forms, educational materials, posters and other collateral into multiple languages.

## The Challenge

The center has a diverse staff with some employees who speak different languages and can translate some of the materials in-house. However, these employees have other roles within the company that take up the majority of their day and it can be difficult for them to find time for translations. In addition, they occasionally struggle with the technical medical terminology.

With the launch of the Affordable Care Act in early 2014, the center needed a PowerPoint presentation translated into multiple languages quickly and accurately to provide an overview of the ACA as well as information on enrollment. In addition, they needed fliers with information on childhood asthma and obesity translated into Spanish and Tagalog for the parents of their more than 12,000 juvenile patients. NEMS didn't have any on-site staff to do this.

## The Solution

United Language Group (ULG) helped NEMS to prioritize their needs and identify its target population in order to maximize budget. In addition, ULG worked with the center to translate the materials at a 5th grade reading level and ensure the center was satisfied with the quality of the translations.

## The Results

Thanks to ULG's quick translation, NEMS was able to educate approximately 135 Chinese-speaking patients on the Affordable Care Act during eight external presentations at community centers. This does not include the internal presentations that they gave five times a week throughout the Bay Area. While presenting the workshop in Cantonese and Mandarin was helpful in increasing their knowledge of the subject, patients needed visual aids to reaffirm what they heard and digest the material at their own pace.

Many patients requested to have a copy of the PowerPoint so that they could look over what they forgot or could not fully comprehend during the 40-minute presentations. Other patients wished to pass on the information they learned by taking pictures of the slides to show their family and friends. During the Q&A sessions at the end of the presentation, it was very helpful to be able to refer to previous slides to answer patients' questions. Older patients especially have a hard time with audio comprehension and understood information faster after reading it on the PowerPoint slides.

Translating medical documentation and collateral can help limited English patients achieve better outcomes for their treatment and their health. ULG is proud to partner with organizations like NEMS that are committed to serving diverse communities with linguistic support.

"The translated PowerPoint was integral to our goal of outreaching to the Chinese community effectively. Many limited-English speakers came into the presentations with misconceptions picked up from listening to bits and pieces from other confused friends. When they left, they were incredibly grateful that they were able to understand how to prepare for healthcare reform."

- Outreach Coordinator, NEMS