

Aug 25, 2025 | [Bridging Communication Larimer](#)

- **1:00-1:15pm:** Introductions & Updates

## Meeting summary

### Key takeaways

- Medical interpreters, not legal interpreters, should be used for forensic nursing exams/sexual assault exams, aligning with national standards and practices for spoken language interpreting
- There's a need to establish clear qualifications and standards for medical interpreters in Colorado
- The current complaint system for interpreter issues is inadequate and inaccessible, especially for deaf individuals
- Disability Law Colorado is working on legislation to create a better registry and complaint system for interpreters
- Future meetings will be hybrid to accommodate both in-person and remote participants with appropriate technology for accessibility

### Discussed topics

#### Forensic nursing exams and interpreter qualifications

Discussion about whether medical or legal interpreters should be used for forensic nursing exams/sexual assault exams

- **Details**
  - **Larissa:** UC Health's policy is to use medical interpreters for forensic nursing exams, not legal interpreters. Police can observe but not ask questions during the medical exam, and should bring their own interpreters if needed.
  - **Sarah:** Emphasized that forensic nurse examiners are primarily medical professionals, and using legal interpreters causes significant delays in patient care. National standards recommend qualified medical interpreters.

- **Karen:** Expressed concern about changing requirements before establishing clear qualifications for medical interpreters, noting that BEI Basic certification doesn't test for medical skills.
- **Sarah:** National group recommends qualified medical interpreter. The **purpose of the Core Certification Healthcare Interpreter™ (CoreCHI™) certification\*** is to offer healthcare interpreters of *any* language a valid national professional standard that assesses their core professional knowledge as well as critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and cultural responsiveness skills and abilities needed to perform the duties of the healthcare interpreter. The main reason for operating this core certification is that interpreters of any language share the same core professional knowledge and cognitive skills distinguishing them from a speaker of two languages who is *not* an interpreter. The CoreCHI™ certification provides an equitable process for qualifying practitioners of any language at the foundational, basic level.

- **Conclusion**

- Medical interpreters should be used for forensic nursing exams, aligning with national standards and practices for spoken language interpreting
- Colorado needs to establish clearer qualifications and standards for medical interpreters
- Colorado RID will be approached to help research and establish medical interpreter qualifications

### **Interpreter certification and qualifications in Colorado**

Discussion about the current certification system and the need for better defined medical interpreter qualifications

- **Details**

- **Larissa:** Explained that Colorado doesn't currently have a clear definition of what constitutes a qualified medical interpreter. RID no longer offers a medical credential, though BEI does have one in Texas.
- **Karen:** Raised concerns about BEI Basic certification being accepted in Colorado despite not testing for medical skills, potentially allowing underqualified interpreters to work in medical settings.

- **Jenny:** Described the certification paths for RID and BEI, noting the different levels and requirements.
- **Larissa:** Mentioned she will begin offering free workshops on medical interpreting starting in October to help build skills.
- **Conclusion**
  - Colorado needs to establish standards for medical interpreter qualifications
  - Colorado RID will be approached to create a committee to research and develop recommendations
  - Free workshops on medical interpreting will be offered starting in October

### **Complaint system for interpreter issues**

Discussion about the inadequate complaint system for interpreter issues and potential legislative solutions

- **Details**
  - **Jack:** Explained that Colorado relies solely on national certification with no license or structured tiers for interpreters. Complaints must go through the Attorney General's office under the Consumer Protection Act, which is inaccessible.
  - **Ruth Ellen:** Asked about accessibility of the complaint process for deaf individuals.
  - **Karen:** Noted that the division's response to concerns about underqualified interpreters is that they don't receive complaints from deaf people, which she finds unethical.
  - **Julie:** Pointed out that it's difficult for deaf individuals to know if an interpreter is bad since they can't hear, and hearing people can't evaluate sign language if they don't know it.
- **Conclusion**
  - The current complaint system is inadequate and inaccessible
  - Disability Law Colorado is working on legislation to create a better registry and complaint system
  - The goal is to collect data on complaints to justify more comprehensive regulation in the future

### **Future meeting logistics**

Discussion about scheduling and accommodations for the next meeting

- **Details**

- **Wynne:** Explained that for hybrid meetings, clear audio is essential, requiring either a room designed for hybrid meetings with ceiling microphones or having everyone bring their own laptops.
- **Terri:** Emphasized the importance of low background noise for effective communication.
- **Ruth Ellen:** Asked about technology considerations when selecting meeting spaces, noting that rooms with good technology are often expensive.
- **Julie:** Asked if having the captioner in person would help if a good hybrid room couldn't be found.

- **Conclusion**

- Next meeting scheduled for Monday, October 27th from 1-3 PM
- Meeting will be held in person with hybrid options
- Location search will be expanded beyond Fort Collins to potentially include Loveland or Windsor

## **Action items**

- **Jack**

Research if there are more accessible options for filing complaints, such as a 711-equivalent for video-based complaints

Continue developing legislation to create a better registry and complaint system for interpreters

Host a community meeting at the State Capitol in December to discuss legislation for people with disabilities

- **Jenny**

Email Jack with a list of people who previously worked on interpreter licensure efforts

- **Marja/Ruth Ellen**

Find an appropriate location for the October 27th meeting that accommodates accessibility needs

Ensure the meeting space has appropriate technology for hybrid participation and captioning

