

**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
ALWAYS WORKING FOR A SAFER AND  
**HEALTHIER WASHINGTON**

**WASCLA Summit IV Conference**  
**October 25, 2008**

# '05 -'07 DOH Strategic Plan: Translation

- Goal 1:** Improve the health status of people in Washington state.
- Objective 2:** All people have an equal opportunity to be healthy.
- Strategy 2:** Increase the number and types of interventions designed to improve equal opportunity to health within the baseline of programs and activities.

**Measure 1:** Percentage of programs providing translation services, multi-lingual information, or other community appropriate materials.

**Translation:** Rendering of a WRITTEN document from one language into another so that both have the same meaning and impact.

# Why Provide Translations?

## Health Consequences and Disparities

- 770,000+ people in WA have Limited English Proficiency (LEP)  
Of these 322,000+ speak Spanish\*
- Dangers of communicating poorly or inaccurately
- Language is a significant barrier in medical care and public health services
- DOH credibility, community relations

## Standards

- 14 National CLAS Standards (Culturally & Linguistically Appropriate Services)—four are mandatory for agencies receiving federal funding
- PHIP Standard 2, Measure 2.10 for state and local health

## Legal Requirements

- U.S. Dept. of Justice Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964
- RCW 2.43—legal proceedings

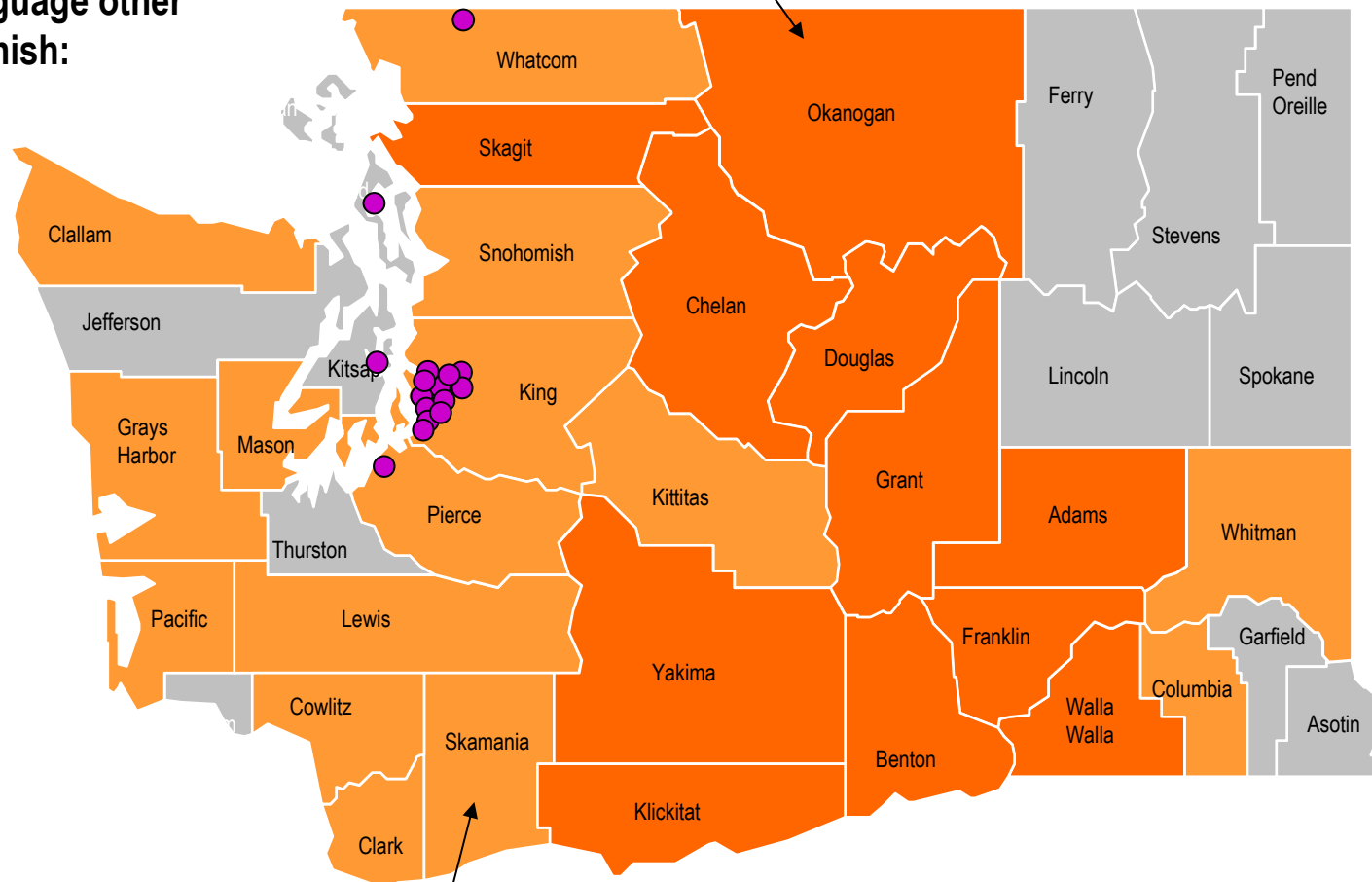
\* Data Source: 2000 Census

● Zip Code Areas where 5% or more speak a language other than English or Spanish:

- Beacon Hill (Seattle)
- Bellevue
- Bremerton
- Bryn Mawr (Seattle)
- Burien
- Columbia (Seattle)
- Eastgate
- Federal Way
- Intl. District (Seattle)
- Lakewood
- Oak Harbor
- Sumas
- Tukwila
- White Center

Data Source: 2000 Census  
Modern Language Association Mapping

■ Counties with 5.8% or more of households where Spanish is spoken



■ 3.0% - 5.7% of households where Spanish is spoken

# DOH Interpretation & Translation Work Group Developed

- Established by agency senior management team
- Executive sponsor champion
- Representation from each division
- Charged to assess current practice and offer recommendations



# Work Group Mandate

- Develop standards, policies and procedures for quality services
- Review and understand CLAS standards
- Look for efficiencies in contract and testing processes
- Document current processes in place within DOH
- Develop prioritized recommendations to share across divisions

# Internal Needs Assessment Strategy

- Keep survey short and easy as possible – 23 questions using online survey tool, Opinio
- Achieve 100% participation
  - CFH – 27 programs
  - EH – 29 programs
  - EHSPHL – 19 programs
  - HSAQ – 101 programs
  - OS – 10 sections
- Identify managers to complete survey

# Challenges & Solutions

- Identifying “programs” – used 2006 Program Alignment document
- Six or seven programs under one program manager, Opinio required unique respondent for each program – all program managers in this category were prescreened to determine if program had provided language services in past two years (Q#3 of survey)



## Challenges & Solutions (cont'd)

- Defining program was problematic even with “list”
- Did not take into account whether programs actually encounter LEP populations
- Respondents understanding of the terms “translation” and “interpretation” – included definitions at top of survey

**Acknowledge above factors may skew results and will be taken into account when survey is repeated.**

# Outcome

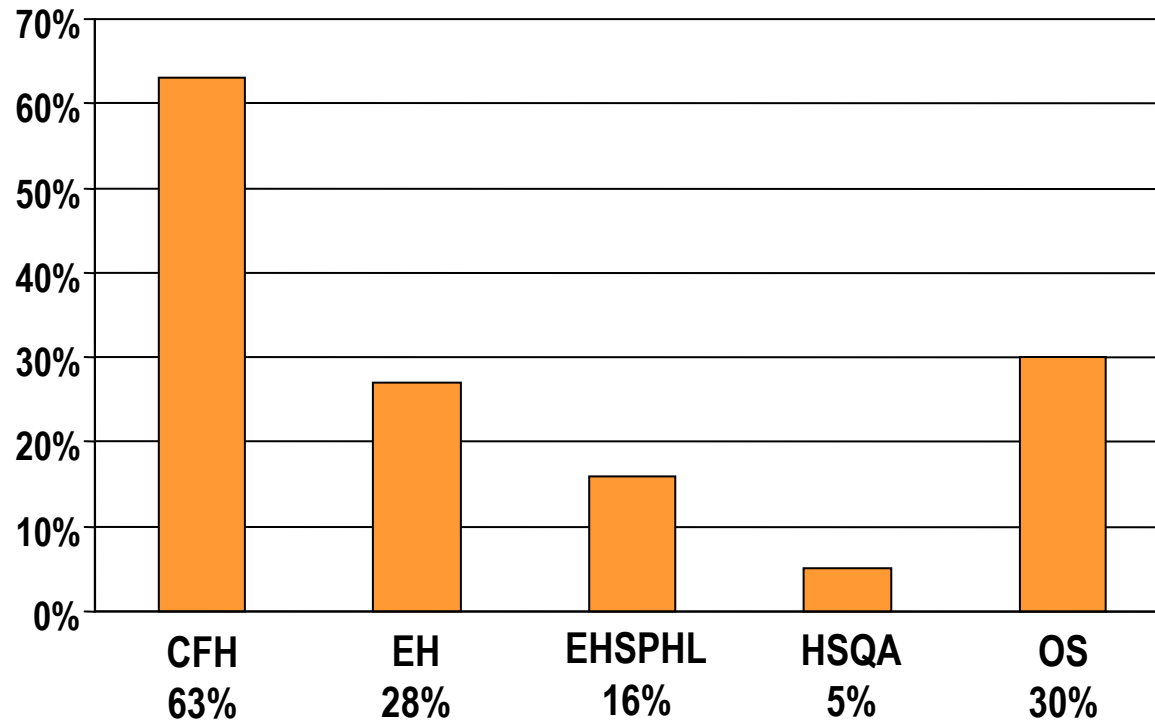
- Response rate to survey was 100 % of 186 programs!



- Program Managers received email instructions and encouragement from executive sponsor
- Also received regular automated reminders until survey was completed
- Were allowed to delegate completion of survey to more knowledgeable staff member

# Key Findings

## Direct Public Contact Drives the Use of Language Services



**DOH Baseline 19% -- 36 of 186 programs provided translation or interpretation in the last 2 years**

Data Source: Baseline survey conducted January 2007

## Who does the most?

- WIC
- Immunization/CHILD Profile
- EH Spanish Translation Team
- Health Promotion
- Newborn Screening

## Main Languages:

**Spanish**

Chinese, Korean, Russian, Vietnamese

## Quality Issues:

- No consistent process
- No quality standards
- Only 18 of 36 programs check accuracy of translations

# Additional Survey Results

- DOH bilingual staff utilized in various roles
  - Checking accuracy, translation, determine cultural appropriateness of messages, interpretation
- Additional languages mentioned with most frequency
  - Cambodian, Laotian, Arabic, Somali and Thai
- Difficult to draw conclusions on expenditure data

# Key Themes

- Individual programs want guidance and TA
- EH Model – utilizing bilingual DOH staff saves time, improves accuracy, provides better understanding of public health issues
- Utilizing bilingual staff doesn't assure accuracy – need for quality assurance

## Key Themes (cont'd)

- CBOs provide valuable link to LEP populations, but may not have time to deliver service and quality assurance is still needed
- Translation is subjective – differences of opinion can cause disagreements between translators and reviewers
- Translating and interpreting legal information requires special skills and attention

# Recommendations

- Work Group Model
  - Maintain current work group
  - Work within existing resources and organizational structure
  - Work to improve quality, timeliness and availability of language services



# Recommendations (cont'd)

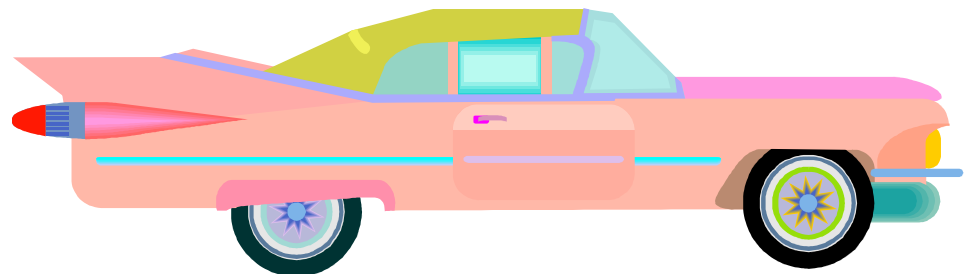
- Publications Management Model
  - 1 FTE language access specialist to coordinate some duties currently done by each program
  - Work group or other governance structure to serve as division coordinators/advisory group
  - Coordinates with other agency communication functions including media relations, publications, and customer service





# Recommendations (cont'd)

- Emulate Model
  - 1 FTE language access manager
  - 1 FTE Spanish-language expert
  - Additional staff as needed to provide a full service program
  - Advisory group of reps from each division and key offices i.e. HR, Communications, Contracts, etc.



**Waiting for Action !**

