

Community Engagement & Advocacy

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History of WA State Rx Language Access Efforts

- Involvement in both fields + equity focus
- WCPI and WASCLA networks in place
- Monitoring national and state issues
- Coalition-building approach

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Washington Coalition for Prescribing Integrity

- Coalition of consumer and medical groups which supports improved access for all residents of Washington State to high quality, appropriate, and affordable prescription medicines.

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Washington State Coalition for Language Access

- WASCLA aims to ensure the provision and delivery of effective legal, medical, educational and social services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) residents in Washington State through the collaborative efforts of interpreters, translators, service providers, policy makers, and community members.

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Developmental Process

- Community organization approach
- Personal work as interpreter > local networks > national networks > planning local solutions, support
- Research plus topic education from advocates in other states, national
- Study status quo, political context

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Research & Education Phase

- Issue research:
 - CA SB 472 , Bd. Of Pharmacy regulation process
 - NY and NYC settlements with Rx chains
 - WA demographics
- Established key contacts:
 - National Health Law Advocates (NHeLP)
 - NY Lawyers in the Public Interest (NYLPI)
 - NY Academy of Medicine
 - Am. Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (ACCP)
 - National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations

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Initial Meetings, Fall 2009

- Broad outreach via networks
- Invited presentations by experts from key disciplines
- 1st-time convening of state's academic pharmacy programs, state pharmacy association, advocates, language service and healthcare providers

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Establishing Common Ground

- Began with basics on each field:
 - Interpretation & translation
 - Relevant state & federal laws
 - Pharmacist training & practice
 - History and context
 - Acknowledgement of group process

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Core Legal Issues

- Pharmacies & pharmacists receive federal funds, must comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, bans discrimination based on national origin
- Executive Order 13166 of 2000 defined how language tracks with national origin, gave implementation guidance
- Language access at pharmacies rare
- State laws on pharmacist counseling

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Core Health Issues

- Patient safety : IOM estimates > 1 M annual Rx errors occur due to lack of understanding instructions
- Errors linked to language barriers cause serious problems, even deaths
- Cultural context
- Health literacy concerns widespread

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Role of Timing

- New federal Administration > new policies
 - Emphasis on civil rights enforcement
 - More work on health & healthcare inequalities
- Joint Commission work on new standards for hospitals re: language, culture, communication, to be issued January 2011
- NHeLP, AACP, NASPA publish *Language Services Resource Guide for Pharmacists and Analysis of State Pharmacy Laws: Impact of Pharmacy Laws on the Provision of Language Services*

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Outcomes to Date

- New initiatives by WA State Pharmacy Association (WSPA)
- NW Health Law Advocates (NoHLA) got DSHS response on Medicaid payment for language services at pharmacies
- Ongoing communication, resource sharing among groups, technology providers

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Catalyst Effect: State Level

- WA State Pharmacy Association
 - CE programs for 2010
 - LEP web resources
 - Contract for members w/language company for telephonic interpreting
 - Invitation to Rx Workgroup to present at 2010 WSPA conference

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National Involvement

- *Two tablets...¿pero cuándo?*
Addressing language barriers in the pharmacy DiversityRx webinar, Dec. 2009
- Via WSU, meeting at AACP, July 2010
- Collaboration on FDA request for comments on Patient Medication Information, Sept-Oct. 2010

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Work & Ideas in Progress

- LEP service plans for WA pharmacies
- Pilot project for Medicaid reimbursement of interpreters at pharmacies via DSHS
- Survey and list WA pharmacy language capabilities
- Specialized Rx language training
- Funding for expanded services
- Possible state legislation

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Focus on Goals

- Medication information will be provided in format and language understood by each individual patient
- Culturally competent Rx counseling
- Medication errors will be reduced > health improvements

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Take-Home Messages

- Persistence by advocates is key
- Join/create networks, seek new allies
- Identify barriers, plan objectives
- Try novel approaches
- Build on strengths
- Use teachable moments
- Our Rx Workgroup is unique in the USA!

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For More Information & Resources

- WASCLA website: Rx Translations
<http://wascla.org/>
- Contact Joana Ramos
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