



**OREGON
MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION**

Health Care Interpreter Reimbursement HB 2538 Fact Sheet

Vote **YES on House Bill 2538** to ensure clinician reimbursement for health care interpretation services.

BACKGROUND

As a result of HB 2359, passed during the 2021 legislative session, clinicians are required to provide qualified or certified health care interpretation services to their patients. This was the first in a series of improvements to the field of health care interpretation to assist clinicians with access to interpreter services for their patients and advance health equity. However, **the cost for providing this service can be significant. It is important that this cost be shared in an equitable way.**

Right now, clinicians are responsible for covering the full cost of providing such services for patients who have commercial insurance, Medicare, or if they are uninsured. (For patients with fee-for-service Oregon Health Plan (OHP) coverage, reimbursement for interpretation services is a flat fee of \$58, regardless of the actual cost, which often exceeds this amount. For patients with coverage through an OHP coordinated care organization (CCO), CCOs provide full reimbursement.)

It is unsustainable for clinics to continue bearing such a large portion of the expenses. House Bill 2538 will ensure clinicians are reimbursed for providing legally mandated health care interpretation services.

HEALTH CARE INTERPRETER SURVEY | JUNE 2022

Forty-five clinics across Oregon participated in survey conducted by the OMA in June 2022. The survey asked clinics about how or if they used interpreter services, the impact of accessing interpreter services, as well as the cost associated with providing interpreter services, among other barriers.

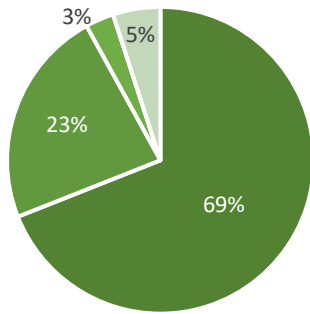
- **92%** of clinics report the cost of interpreters is a financial burden on their practice
- **90%** of clinics are concerned about the increased cost associated with meeting new interpreter requirements

“Healthcare has not recovered from pandemic rules and regulations that were ever-changing. New interpreter requirements create additional burdens on the shoulders of an already stretched and exhausted system.”

- Quote from OMA Clinic Survey

OMA Health Care Interpreter Survey Charts | June 2022

Cost is a Burden



- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree (0%)
- Strongly Disagree

Health Care Interpreter Requirement Concerns





For more information, please contact Courtni Dresser, 503-380-9488 or courtni@theOMA.org, Vice President of Government Relations for the Oregon Medical Association.