

## **NCIEC Healthcare Interpreting Fellowship Description**

The purpose of the NCIEC Healthcare Interpreting Fellowship is to provide supervised work experience to select certified ASL-English interpreters towards the goal of increasing the quality and quantity of practitioners specializing in Healthcare interpreting. The 2014-2015 pilot program is designed to facilitate certified practitioners gaining direct healthcare interpreting experience by providing them with supervised work experience designed to 1) increase their practical experience, 2) providing opportunities to reflect on their performance with experienced health care interpreting practitioners, and 3) improve their confidence in applying the skills, knowledge and attributes associated with working in healthcare settings.

The pilot program is open to both Deaf and non-deaf nationally certified interpreters. The ideal candidate for participation this program is a nationally certified interpreter who has completed at least some training in medical terminology and interpreting in healthcare settings, at least three years as a working interpreter including prior community interpreting experience, and who will benefit from direct work experience in the healthcare setting.

Supervision is an essential part of this program because of the high-risk nature of healthcare interpreting. Healthcare providers must have procedures in place that ensure that linguistic access for Deaf individuals is achieved. For this reason, the induction sites that have been arranged include providers who employ experienced staff healthcare interpreters. These individuals, who will function as Fellowship Supervisors, can pave the way for new practitioners to gain field-based experience, while also working to protect the interests of consumers and the medical providers.

In order to provide an incentive to applicants to participate in this program, the NCIEC will pay a nominal amount for interpreting services on an hourly basis. This fee will allow practitioners to forgo other interpreting assignments in order to be available to accept healthcare-related assignments. The fee may not cover all associated costs, but will reflect a substantial contribution towards costs. As well, practitioners participating in the program will have the rare benefit of working under the supervision of a qualified healthcare interpreter and receive regular and ongoing feedback.

### **How does the program work?**

The NCIEC, through the CATIE Center, has partnered with healthcare and interpreting agencies working within healthcare systems to create pilot fellowship sites in several locations around the United States. As part of the partnership, the fellowship sites will typically provide the supervision and the NCIEC will provide the program management, including the screening and selection of applicants.

Selected applicants will be matched with a specific site and supervisor—ideally at a location near them. The fellowship period is for 40-50 hours. How long it takes for the accepted practitioner to complete these hours depends on several factors: primarily the degree of flexibility the selected practitioner has in being scheduled, and the demand for interpreting services at any given time at the fellowship site. It is estimated that it will take an average of 4-6 weeks for the hours to be accrued. This is an average of 8-10 hours per week.

Once the match of a selected practitioner and fellowship site/supervisor occurs, participants will sign an agreement that specifies the procedures and responsibilities of each party involved in the process. At that time, the fellowship supervisor will begin working with the selected practitioner to arrange for assignments. The fellowship supervisor, or their designated representative (who must be a certified healthcare interpreter), will accompany the selected practitioner to all of their assignments. Assignments may involve the practitioner interpreting an appointment alone, with a team interpreter (which can include a CDI interpreter for non-Deaf interpreters), or in collaboration with the supervisor. To a limited degree, it may also involve observing the work of more experienced healthcare interpreters. The distribution of hours is spelled out in the Healthcare Interpreting Fellowship Agreement.

The supervisor will complete an observation form for each assignment. This form will serve as the foundation for review and discussion about the interpreting performance. The supervisor and practitioner will periodically discuss the interpreting performance and suggestions for how to improve the performance will be offered. The practitioner can work to incorporate the feedback in future assignments and in this fashion increase their competence interpreting in healthcare settings.

Practitioners and supervisors will also be offered ongoing access to discussion groups and training materials while they are part of the program. These groups will be supported via web interface. Some training will be mandatory for the participants while other information will be offered as an option. There will be an expectation of participation in an online community group consisting of all current supervisors, practitioners and the program coordinator.

### **How does payment of the fee work?**

The practitioner will submit a copy of his/her log, detailing the assignments completed, signed by the fellowship supervisor, along with an invoice for the total amount due to the CATIE Center within five business days of the completion of the fellowship. The CATIE Center will process payment, which usually takes about three weeks. A sample invoice will be provided to those individuals accepted into the program so that accurate information can be included.

### **Why must participants be certified?**

Participants in this program must meet minimum criteria required by both RID and the fellowship sites. Patient care and safety are priorities for the program and the healthcare providers. Pre-certified interpreters are prohibited from working in most healthcare site.

### **Where are the induction sites located?**

The pilot sites for February-June 2014 are in Minneapolis/St. Paul, and Duluth, Minnesota, and Boston, Massachusetts. Additional pilot locations in San Antonio, Texas and Tampa, Florida as well as on the west coast are being developed for October 2014-June 2015.

Additional locations may be developed upon request. If you are a staff interpreter for a healthcare system or provider, you can become a site for a fellowship. If you are a working interpreter wishing to initiate a fellowship in your area, contact us with a local staff interpreter and we will work to see if a fellowship rotation can be developed in your preferred location.

For the period of February-June 2014, a total of 6-8 individuals will be accepted into the program with an additional 6-8 individuals accepted for the fall 2014 sites.

### **Who can apply?**

This program is limited to RID, BEI or NAD IV or V certified interpreters who meet the following criteria:

- Verifiable RID, BEI or NAD IV or V certification
- Verifiable prior interpreting experience (letter from interpreting agency, mentor, or employer)

Priority will also be given to individuals who, in addition to meeting the above stated criteria, who have completed verifiable training in interpreting in healthcare settings and/or healthcare terminology (ex: RID CEU transcript or academic transcript) and demonstrate an interest in making healthcare interpreting part of their primary practice.

### **How do I apply?**

Download the application form from the CATIE Center website, complete the application form, then email the completed form to the Fellowship Coordinator, Patty Gordon at [pattygordon@mac.com](mailto:pattygordon@mac.com). The website has other useful information about the program.

Applying early is encouraged as applications will be reviewed and slots filled by qualified applicants on a first-come, first-served basis. Qualified applicants not immediately placed with a fellowship site will be placed on a waiting list for future openings.



For further information about this program, feel free to contact the Fellowship Coordinator, Patty Gordon at [pattygordon@mac.com](mailto:pattygordon@mac.com) or the CATIE Center director, Richard Laurion at [rlaurion@stkate.edu](mailto:rlaurion@stkate.edu).