



CASE STUDY

Banner Health Increases Patient Safety, Compliance and Patient Satisfaction with Video Remote Interpreting

PROFILE

Location: Operated in six states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, Nebraska and Wyoming.

Number of Employees: 50,000

Total Members Served: 400,000

Number of Acute Care Hospitals and health systems: 28

Overview | Banner Health, one of the largest health care systems in the country, is in six states and has nearly 50,000 employees, 28 hospitals and a growing network of health centers and clinics. Hospitals range from 25 beds to medical centers with more than 700 beds, and on an average year, Banner Health uses interpreters for more than 30 languages. As a leading nonprofit provider of health care in the communities they serve, Banner Health is dedicated to fulfilling the mission of making healthcare easier, so life can be better.

The Challenge | Banner Health was facing several challenges with its current language service program including standardization of care across the health system to bridge the communication gap between clinicians and their limited English proficient (LEP), Deaf and hard of hearing (HOH) patients.

Busy healthcare providers would often use an interpreter who was available—even if that meant a family member or another staff member who spoke a patient’s language. In addition to an increased liability for the health system, this was creating challenges in accurately communicating all information to patients. In some cases, it was even leading to delays in care, misdiagnosis or increased complications and unnecessary return visits to the emergency department when a patient did not understand discharge instructions. Health system administrators knew they had to address these risk and compliance issues along with the exceeding costs of on-site interpreters.



The Solution

To address these challenges and to standardize care across the organization, Banner Health partnered with InDemand Interpreting to implement video remote interpreting (VRI) system-wide.

Now patients and providers facing communication barriers are offered access to VRI when it is determined to be an appropriate method of communication. . InDemand VRI exceeds strict federal and state guidelines to deliver effective language access for LEP, Deaf and HOH patients.

Banner Health decided to adopt InDemand VRI devices to ensure the highest quality video and audio performance and uptime, connecting patients and providers with immediate access to medically qualified interpreters at the touch of a button.

The VRI technology connects healthcare professionals to medically qualified interpreters 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in more than 200 languages, including American Sign Language (ASL) and Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDIs), across the care continuum. VRI enables clinicians

to provide greater language access for LEP, Deaf and HOH patients, improving overall patient care.

“At Banner, we believe in making healthcare easier so life is better, which is why we have invested in the standardization of our language access program using video remote interpreting.” —Paula Harsin

Banner also offers bilingual staff, on-site interpreters, translation services and over-the-phone interpreters, providing an effective balance of language options to best serve its patients and providers.

The Results | “Through the use of VRI, Banner Health clinicians now have immediate access to a medically qualified interpreter, ensuring accurate language interpretation and consistent patient and provider experience system-wide. InDemand VRI has enabled substantial benefits for both LEP, Deaf and HOH patients, providing effective access to medically qualified interpreters, within seconds, over a secure network that is a fraction of the cost of the previous on-site interpreters.

According to Corporate Language and Cultural Senior Manager Paula

Harsin, the number of encounters with qualified medical interpreters at Banner Health has dramatically increased using VRI, trained staff interpreters and over-the-phone interpreters, which has led to better communication between providers and their LEP, Deaf and hard of hearing patients. The language service mix has decreased expenses and improved satisfaction among patients, staff and physicians. These changes have also led to a reduced risk of miscommunication with patients and family and compliance with federal and Joint Commission requirements.

“At Banner, we believe in making healthcare easier so life is better, which is why we have invested in the standardization of our language access program using video remote interpreting,” said Banner Health Corporate Language and Cultural Services Senior Manager Paula Harsin. “The InDemand VRI system creates continuity of care, increases efficiency, improves patient and provider communication and ultimately, outcomes.” ■