



Non-English/Verbal Speaking Patient Interpreter Policy

Pacific Rim Orthopaedic Surgeons (PROS) will provide a certified interpreter to attend a non-English speaking or non-verbal patient's appointment. Certified interpreters are provided at no cost to the patient. Our providers reserve the right to cancel and/or reschedule a patient's appointment, should they feel that a certified interpreter is necessary.

PROS contracts with Universal Language Services and The Language Exchange for certified interpreters. Washington State Labor & Industries provides and arrange their own certified interpreters.

In urgent situations, a bilingual office staff member may stand-in for a certified interpreter.

Family members may accompany the patient to the visit, however, PROS will not be held responsible for misinformation provided by any non-certified interpreter. For very simple types of communication it may be permissible to use a family member but for informed consent discussions, PROS requires a certified interpreter to be present to provide professional and certified interpretation for the patient.

In contrast to a certified interpreter, family members may not be truly bilingual and are likely not sophisticated in their understanding of medicine and medical terminology. Using a family member to provide interpretation increases the potential for misunderstanding or misinterpretation which then allows for an argument of "inadequate informed consent" by the patient should that misunderstanding or misinterpretation result in injury to the patient. In addition, our providers have no way of determining whether the family member is transmitting information accurately.