

Special Considerations: Outreach in underserved communities

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Our Story

- The United Language Navigator Program is a federally-funded program created to assist the uninsured community in the state of North Carolina in obtaining health coverage.
- United Language Group is an international company that provides language access services for various industries with distinct expertise in healthcare.
- The United Language Navigator Program was created by language access experts to improve access to affordable healthcare amongst communities with languages other than English, with a particular emphasis on increasing healthcare access for the Spanish-speaking community.



CHALLENGES: ACCESSING MEDICAID

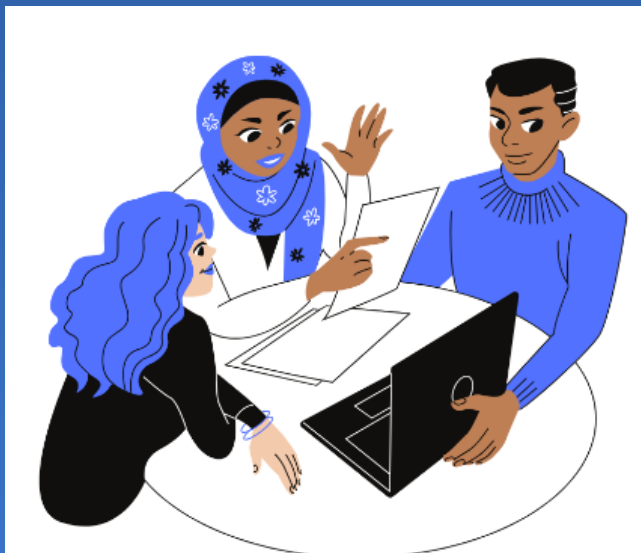
- Misinformation: Public charge fears.
- Biased/unfair treatment when seeking to apply to Medicaid. Discrimination: Assumptions about immigration status.
- Immigration-related fears, especially for undocumented parents of US-born minors.
- Fraud amongst the uninsured. Lack of understanding of risks of sharing PII or, in the case of the undocumented population, being improperly signed up for federal benefits.



BEST PRACTICES FOR OUTREACH



EDUCATIONAL APPROACH



Explain Medicaid/the Affordable Care Act in simple terms.



Emphasize the importance of having health coverage in our healthcare system.



Explain how health coverage works. (Health insurance, premiums, etc.) Make sure you break down technical vocabulary.



Become familiar with immigration status and eligibility rules. (NCDHHS has a new flyer for it)

IDENTIFY AND UNDERSTAND CHALLENGES

- Identify current barriers to health coverage.
- Be willing to advocate for the consumer.
- If the consumer is not eligible for any type of Federal assistance, it is important to ensure access to care and make proper referrals to a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC).



Foment language access rights



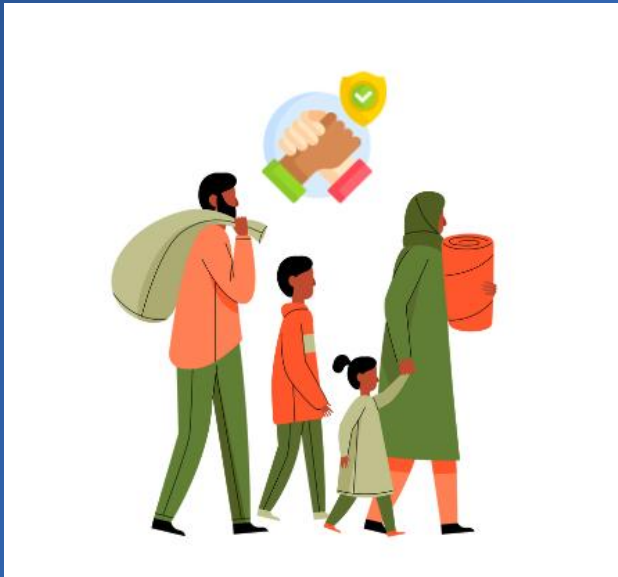
- Identify if the consumer requires an interpreter.*
- Provide literature in the preferred language.
- Help facilitate obtaining documentation in the patient's preferred language. (Summary of benefits, etc.) Too often, consumers receive correspondence in the wrong language.
- Make sure you have the information handy for interpreter lines provided by your organization.
- Let consumers know they have a right to an interpreter at any federal facility or medical institution.

HELPFUL TIPS WHEN WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER



- ✓ Briefly debrief the interpreter on the subject you want to discuss with the consumer.
- ✓ Speak in first person (“she said”).
- ✓ Keep phrases short and pause in between sentences. Pace yourself.
- ✓ Speak directly to the consumer.
- ✓ Speak in a normal tone of voice.
- ✓ Avoid technical terms and acronyms (NCDHHS, FPL, etc.).
- ✓ Clarifications: Some community members might agree out of respect. Don’t assume they understand; if you sense something is not clear, invite them to express what they understand in their own words. The interpreter may also identify a cultural/comprehension issue. Make sure to reframe or rephrase the question.
- ✓ Ideally, all consumers must have an interpreter; avoid having children as interpreters.

BUILD TRUST



Introduce yourself and the purpose of your outreach, practice empathy, and build a connection.

Assure the consumer that your conversation will be kept confidential.

When dealing with individuals with unknown immigration status, use a culturally sensible approach to addressing someone's immigration status*.

When dealing with immigration status questions in applications, assure the individual that the information is protected by law and is not used for immigration enforcement.

*An educational approach is crucial. Explain to consumers how the system works and who can apply, as well as the documentation required. Allow the consumer the opportunity to identify whether they can qualify and whether they have the required documentation.

(Avoid exclusionary language).



Meet individuals where they're at

- Practice flexibility with meeting preferences, especially time/day preferences.
- Be willing to spend more time in appointments; many languages expand when translated. Be patient.
- Technical issues might take longer if there is limited technological literacy. (Password reset, uploading of documents, etc.)

Post-Engagement Assistance



Additional assistance may be necessary: Schedule follow-up appointments to troubleshoot potential roadblocks:

- Submitting documentation
- Understanding letters



Have contact information for local DSS offices handy to facilitate communication.

Have additional resources available:

- Navigator Programs
- NC Medicaid Ombudsman
- Enrollment Broker

Questions

