

Access Alliance Language Services and Language Line team up to provide OPI for Toronto hospitals and health centres.

For Immediate Release

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Access Alliance Language Services – a social enterprise of Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services in partnership with Language Line Services – has been awarded the contract from University Health Network (UHN) to provide OPI (Over the Phone Interpretation) services. Access Alliance is the administrating organization in a consortium of 20 hospitals and 11 community health agencies of the Toronto Central, Central, Central East, and Central West Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) led by UHN.

In this landmark move, the TC LHIN will be the first LHIN in the province to centrally fund health organizations to provide language interpretation for clients with limited English proficiency as part of an overall health equity strategy.

While the court system is legally required to provide language services, hospitals are not, leaving many patients vulnerable to misdiagnosis, misinformation, unnecessary tests and repeated and longer hospital visits. Providing interpretation to patients who need it will reduce these risks and lead to better health outcomes. Language is one of the greatest barriers newcomers face in accessing health care, and one that is overcome with the use of professional interpreters.

Access Alliance has led the way for the National Standards Guide for Community Interpreting Services, providing the framework for the delivery of professional interpretation. Adhering to standards of practice ensures that interpreters are providing the most accurate, unbiased interpretation and follow a code of ethics by which confidentiality is of utmost importance.

“This funding is a great step forward that the Toronto Central LHIN is committed to providing quality care, accessible to everyone and I’m sure that other LHINs in the province will be watching”, says Axelle Janczur, Executive Director at AAMHCS. “Access Alliance has always been a long-time advocate for the need for trained professional interpretation. It is the only way to ensure accurate information is getting across to patients. We are very pleased to be a part of this exciting new initiative.”

“University Health Network is an innovator and has shown its commitment to communicating with patients in their native language. Its efforts improve patient care and ultimately trim costs,” said Scott W. Klein, President and Chief Executive Officer of Language Line Services. “Language Line Services is honored to work with this forward thinking organization.”

About Language Line Services

Language Line Services, the global leader in language solutions for over 30 years, serves clients in government, healthcare, telecommunications, financial services, insurance, retail and many other industries in more than 170 spoken and written languages, as well as American Sign Language (ASL) and Mexican Sign Language (LSM). Language Line Services is recognized as a trusted partner to thousands of public and private organizations throughout the world, providing easy access to the industry's most dynamic and comprehensive suite of language solutions that drive a strong return on investment. Language Line Services is known for solving customers' complex language communication issues with leading services that include telephone, on-site and video interpreting, translation and localization, as well as interpreter assessment and training programs. Please call (800) 752-6096 or visit www.language.com

About Access Alliance

Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services works to promote health, wellbeing and improved access to services for immigrants and refugees in Toronto. From three locations in the city, we offer resources, provide links, conduct research and build capacity to enable individuals, families and communities to achieve health with dignity. Our range of programs, services, advocacy and partnerships address medical, social, economic, environmental, settlement and integration issues for immigrants of all ages at all stages of their life. Find out more about our work at www.accessalliance.ca

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