A collection of military medals and a compass on a wooden surface. The medals include a red ribbon with a circular emblem, a blue ribbon with a circular emblem, and two silver star-shaped medals with intricate designs. A pair of glasses and a compass are also visible.

# Language Proficiency Testing of Bilingual Providers at CCHS

José Martín, MA, LMFT  
Language Services  
Manager



# Implementation Process

- ◆ Buy-in from administration
- ◆ Buy-in from Personnel
- ◆ Buy-in from professional unions
- ◆ Memo to all staff regarding the policy
- ◆ Voluntary testing
- ◆ Bilingual pay stays in place for staff who do not pass test if previously receiving
- ◆ For those not previously getting bilingual pay and who have passed test will now get bilingual pay.





# Policy and Expectations

- ◆ Staff who have not been tested cannot use non-English language till tested.
- ◆ Staff who do not pass test at AL level or above cannot use non-English language on their own, must use an interpreter.
- ◆ Special icon used on ID badge indicating staff is able to use non-English language on their own.
- ◆ Hospital bilingual staff are next to be tested.



# Number of Staff Tested

- ◆ Total: 157 Ambulatory Care Staff
- ◆ 73% passed at AL or above
- ◆ Mix of MDs, RNs, LVNs, clerical staff
- ◆ Special test with medical vignettes used for clinical staff
- ◆ Special test with medical terminology for non-clinical staff used.

# Tool Used

- ◆ NetworkOmni offers tests developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), a leading authority on language testing methods. ACTFL is one of the most widely recognized testing bodies at both a national and international level. The tests are administered by Language Testing International (LTI), with whom NetworkOmni has an exclusive partnership.






# Languages Offered:

- ◆ The tests are offered in 61 languages, covering the majority of languages commonly requested within the United States





# ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI):

- ◆ This test is conducted over the phone and provides an assessment of the test candidate's oral language proficiency. The test is approximately 30 minutes.
- ◆ Evaluates Interpersonal Communication
- ◆ Negotiation of meaning



# Tester qualifications

- ◆ All ACTFL-certified testers hold advanced degrees in the language tested and have demonstrated Superior-level proficiency through an official OPI. Certified testers complete a rigorous training process and have met the established criteria for certification by ACTFL. The awarding of Certification as an ACTFL Tester is validation of one's understanding of the principles and concepts of proficiency testing and of one's ability to apply theory to practice.





# Rating Procedure:

- ◆ Official/Certified ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)  
The proficiency interview is administered telephonically by an ACTFL certified tester. The digitally recorded interview is rated by two testers. The final rating is available within five business days from date of test.



# Identification of Proficiency Level:

- ◆ **SUPERIOR:** Speakers at the Superior level are able to communicate in the language with accuracy and fluency in order to participate fully and effectively in conversations on a variety of topics in formal and informal settings from both concrete and abstract perspectives.
- ◆ **ADVANCED HIGH:** Speakers at the Advanced-High level perform all Advanced-level tasks with linguistic ease, confidence and competence.
- ◆ **ADVANCED MID:** Speakers at the Advanced-Mid level are able to handle with ease and confidence a large number of communicative tasks.
- ◆ **ADVANCED LOW:** Speakers at the Advanced-Low level are able to handle a variety of communicative tasks, although somewhat haltingly at times.



## INTERMEDIATE HIGH:

- ◆ Intermediate-High speakers are able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with most routine tasks and social situations of the Intermediate level. Intermediate-High speakers handle the tasks pertaining to the Advanced level, but they are unable to sustain performance at that level over a variety of topics. With some consistency, speakers at the Intermediate High level narrate and describe in major time frames using connected discourse of paragraph length. However, their performance of these Advanced-level tasks will exhibit one or more features of breakdown, such as the failure to maintain the narration or description semantically or syntactically in the appropriate major time frame, the disintegration of connected discourse, the misuse of cohesive devices, a reduction in breadth and appropriateness of vocabulary, the failure to successfully circumlocute, or a significant amount of hesitation.





# Future Plans

- ◆ Test all bilingual staff at the hospital
- ◆ Test all bilingual staff, who have patient/client contact, or used as in-house interpreters on the Health Plan (CCHP)
- ◆ Test all bilingual staff, who have patient/client contact, or used as in-house interpreters at Mental Health



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS