

# IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE IN PUBLIC **HEALTH SERVICES**

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## **Abstract**

Language is a key tool for healthcare doctors to manage consultation and any type of communication along with clients. Many think that being a good doctor means having enough knowledge on medicine however it is not only about clinical skills, it can be also language skill performance, providing clear and accurate dialogue with patients.

## Introduction

In case, inaccurate and poor communication happen between doctor and clients, it can lead wrong diagnosis and clinical trial where mostly end with death. For example, if health care specialist is native speaker he might have good understanding of terminologies while he may not have enough experience on providing simple language which typical participant could understand or digest. That is called "technical language" of medicine or "non-technical" which is a bit clear way of demonstrating this or that typical terminology. For example; we have the word doctor and GP (general practitioner), intestines or bowel, stomach or abdomen and some others. Sometimes, wrong diagnosis may occur where mis-communication is provided by the hospital staff. Mostly they may use poor hand writing or abbreviations in their report form or even prescriptions that can be only predicted by the new comers, receptionists or even patients. So that reason, many international clinics have been applying technologies and new digitals for performing automatic registration or even scanning the problem area and copy it to the analysis only. Thus doctors are less likely to spend time on paper work and get stressed from the work. As a result, handwriting has been avoided in many private clinics.

#### Aim:

Firstly, this paper aims to investigate language performance and clear communication in medicine and health care services. Showing the importance of first and second language holder in hospital and to cope with difficulties in applying accurate consultation whether it is online or face to face dialogues. Sorting out the most common used abbreviations among physicians and nurses in health system. According to Cameron and Williams whereas the most crucial part of medicine is considered technology and medical background, language is only the tool where all these technologies used by. Healthcare system should be affordable to all humanbeings in the world despite the fact that he or she native and non-native speaker of a threaten country.

## **Methods:**

Analysis were carried out using data from secondary materials and articles, books of some scholars such as Gregory Hankoni Kamwendo, R.M. Abdullayeva and Nursing for medical students course book by Tony Grice published between 1996 to 2020 y.y. The descriptive and qualitative,





quantitative methods have been used in this work. Application of a language policy goes differently in high income counties. So that in this paper we will mainly focus on the European's counties language policy and language barrier in healthcare. According to some known articles, majority migrants experience language barrier in primary health care services. Data on adverse events resulting from physical injury were gathered for a study that was carried out at six hospitals in the United States. Just 24.4% of adverse events were reported in patients who spoke English; in contrast, 46.8% of patients who did not speak the language experienced transient to substantial harms or even passed away. Communication errors were the primary cause of adverse outcomes in patients who did not speak English (52.4%) compared to those who spoke English (35.9%).

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## **Results**

According to the study most European countries have been occupied by immigrants and nonnatives who have difficulty in demonstrating clear language communication with people around. When it comes to speak about emergency cases most overseas are unlucky because they do not have background knowledge on a second language. It is recorded that most immigrants have basic knowledge of language to demonstrate only some daily task activities correctly. However, medical terminologies and naming the deceases their most challenging tasks. See glossary;

No	Medical term	Definition
1	fatigue	A strong tired feeling that goes beyond just sleepiness. "One of the symptoms
		of flu is fatigue."
2	numbness	If a part of your body is numb, you cannot feel anything there.
3	dizziness	You can use dizzy to describe someone who is careless and forgets things, but
		is easy to like.
4	constipation	Constipation is a medical condition which causes people to have difficulty
		getting rid of solid waste from their body.
5	GP	General practitioner
6	IV	Intra-vascular
7	IM	Inta-muscular
8	Clinical trial	A study that tests a potential new medication or medical device for safety and
		effectiveness. "All medications in the U.S. must go through clinical trials before
		being approved by the FDA."
9	benign	Not a danger. "Jackie was relieved to find out that her tumor was benign."
10	disorder	A disorder is a problem or illness which affects someone's mind or body.
11	placebo	In clinical trials, a substance that has no effect and is used for control purposes.
		"Clinical trial participants will receive the medication or a placebo."
12	remission	A period of time when a disease is not active. "Annie threw a party when her
		cancer went into remission."
13	supplement	To add on. "Taking vitamins can supplement a healthy diet."
14	trigger	A cause. "Stress can be a trigger for arthritis symptoms."
15	To immerse	If something is immersed in a liquid, someone puts it into the liquid so that it is
		completely covered.

According to the study of Eurostat most immigrated country in EU is Luxemburg 39.6 for 1000 inhabitants in 2021 where three official languages are spoken German, Luxembourgish, French and English is considered as common. After an open letter detailing issues at a hospital circulated on Facebook, Luxembourg's Health Minister Mars Di Bartolomeo stated that the health sector is





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working to overcome the language barrier between doctors and patients.<sup>1</sup> The least number of migrants occupied Slovakia 1.1 for 1000 inhabitants in 2021. That means many migrants face language problems in Luxemburg than Slovakia.

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## **Conclusion**

Although being a medical professional in healthcare system is very respectful it has much more problems to deal with. Collaborating and partnership will be one of the key approach to reduce clinical challenges with foreign people. It can solve the problems with ethnicity, cultural diverse, time, social life, law and discrimination in healthcare sector.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> luxtimes.lu/luxembourg/health-sector-working-on-breaking-language-barrier



