

# Speaking Together

## National Language Services Network

**Speaking Together: National Language Services Network** is a national program funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation aimed at improving the quality and availability of health care language services for patients with limited English proficiency (LEP). The program integrates quality improvement techniques with hospital-based language services activities to reduce health care disparities faced by patients across the country.

**Speaking Together** has four goals:

- To improve communication between patients with LEP and their health care providers.
- To work in with hospitals to develop models of high-quality language services.
- To help hospitals develop useful, ongoing measures, enabling hospitals to create performance benchmarks and conduct measurements of performance.
- To share successful strategies to increase effective language services within and across hospitals and health systems.

The core component of Speaking Together's work is a 16-month hospital learning collaborative process that allows ten acute care hospitals to use quality improvement tools to pilot interventions to improve their language services programs.



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
AND HEALTH SERVICES

Participants are addressing three specific areas:

- Improving the quality and accessibility of language services for patients with LEP.
- Using quality performance measures to monitor improvements in the delivery of language services to patients.
- Focusing on quality improvement in cardiovascular disease, depression or diabetes mellitus in order to demonstrate how quality of care can be affected by improvements in language services and communication.

The program uses a collaborative 'Learning Network' model to foster shared learning and innovation among **Speaking Together** participants. The collaborative is managed by a National Program Office (NPO) housed at the Department of Health Policy at The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services.

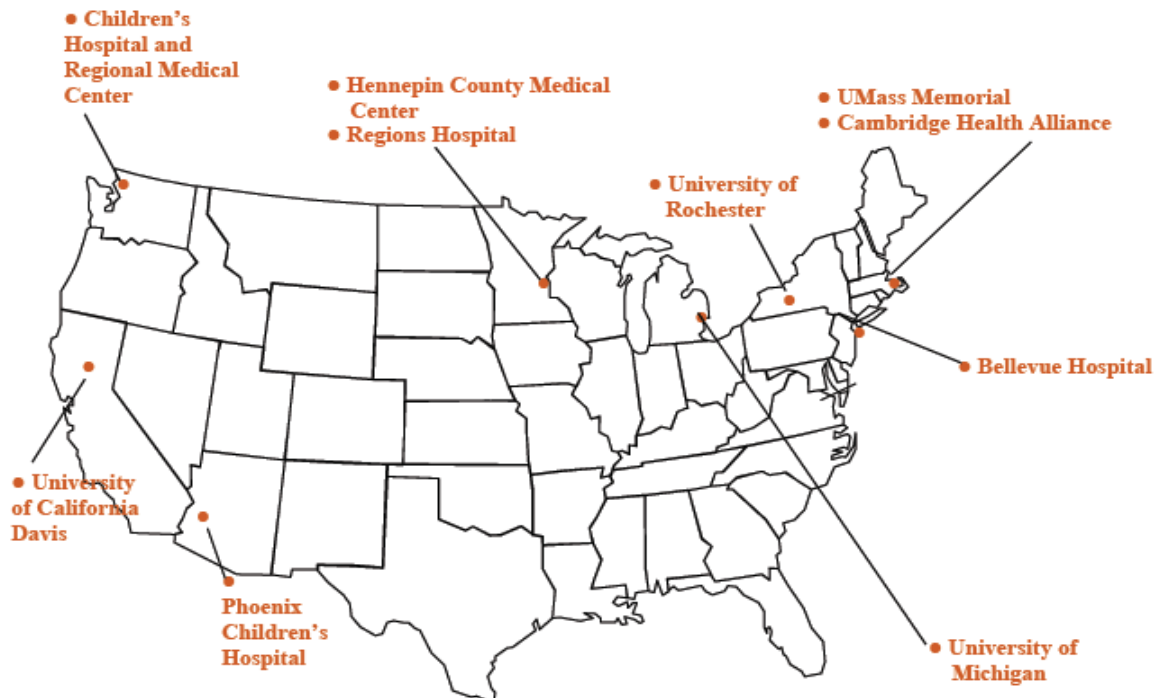
**Speaking Together** is developing and testing valuable techniques for reducing health care disparities associated with language barriers, using performance measures for language services developed by the NPO. The program disseminates lessons learned through the project to other language services programs and health care settings throughout the country.

**For more information, please contact Melissa Stegun at (202)994-8668 or via e-mail at [info@speakingtogether.org](mailto:info@speakingtogether.org).**

**Visit us at [www.speakingtogether.org](http://www.speakingtogether.org)**

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### **Cambridge Health Alliance**

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### **Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center**

Seattle, WA

*Project Director: Beth Ebel, MD, MPH*

### **Hennepin County Medical Center**

Minneapolis, MN

*Project Director: JoAnne Hall*

### **Phoenix Children's Hospital**

Phoenix, AZ

*Project Director: Irma Bustamante*

### **Regions Hospital**

St. Paul, MN

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### **UMass Memorial Health Care**

Worcester, MA

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### **UC Davis Health System**

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