Workers' Comp

Specialty Solutions Spotlight: Why Translation Matters in Workers' Compensation

January 13, 2026
3 MIN READ
Author profile image

Nicole Usher

Senior Director, Operations

How do translation services improve claim processes and outcomes?

Language diversity is a significant consideration in the effective management of workers' compensation claims because non-English or Limited English Proficient (LEP) employees are disproportionately represented in high-injury industries such as construction, agriculture, manufacturing and food service. These industries also experience higher-than-average falls, repetitive strains, machinery-related trauma and overexertion injuries creating complexity, magnified by language barriers, that can quickly drive-up claims costs.

The Impact of Miscommunication

Injured employees may experience the following without proper translation services:

- Issues understanding how or when to report an injury, especially if forms or instructions, are provided in English.
- Misunderstood or incorrectly recorded injury descriptions, medical histories and accident details.
- Treatment plans, medication directions, physical therapy exercises and work restrictions can be unclear and directly impact recovery.
- Confusion around scheduling or follow-up visits can result in missed care and compliance issues.
- Language barriers may lead to denied claims, delays in wage replacement or acceptance of inadequate settlements.

Each of these issues can prolong recovery, increase claim costs and create frustration for both the injured employee and the claims team.

How You Can Support Translation Needs

When you refer to Apricus, your injured employees receive certified translators and interpreters who understand medical, legal and claims-related terminology so you can focus on injured employees instead of getting caught up in language barriers.

Your injured employees receive translated information in the way that best suits their needs, either rewritten documents such as claim correspondence, instructions, forms or translated live calls, management discussions or office visits. Translation coordination can occur over the phone, in person or offline, and can include video conferences, such as for sign-language translation. The injured employees can work with the same translator for repeated visits for continuity and building trust.

A combination of live interpretation and document translation can be applied at every stage of a claim. On-site or remote medical interpretation examples include:

- Initial physician visits after an injury
- Follow-up appointments to discuss progress and restrictions
- Physical therapy sessions, where proper technique and compliance matter
- Independent Medical Exams (IMEs)
- Qualified Medical Evaluations (QMEs)
- Agreed Medical Evaluations (AMEs)

Legal and claims interpretation may also be required for depositions, mediations, hearings or trials or recorded statements, where accuracy and neutrality are critical and can affect claim decisions and legal outcomes.

Best Practices for Working With Interpreters

Using an interpreter effectively requires preparation. Setting expectations early ensures smooth and productive interactions. You will want to ensure providers, case managers and attorneys who are involved understand how to work effectively with interpreters.

Here are some tips for successful interpreter interactions.

- Clarify the length of the appointment, the need for breaks, and the overall structure of the conversation.
- Share relevant context, such as the type of injury (e.g., back strain, crush injury, repetitive trauma) or the purpose of the visit.
- Remember interpreters do not advocate for either side and strictly facilitate communication.
- Let speakers finish their thoughts so nothing is lost in translation.
- Pause every few sentences to allow accurate interpretation.
- Avoid slang, idioms, metaphors and complex medical jargon when possible.

Why Translation Is a Smart Investment

While translation services do involve coordination and cost, the return on investment for employers is significant:

- Claims move more efficiently
- Medical outcomes improve
- Litigation risk decreases

- Return-to-work timelines shorten
- Overall claim costs are reduced

For claims professionals, understanding how and when to use translation services can be the difference between a stalled claim and a successful return to work. Apricus care coordinators can connect you with certified, native-speaking interpreters in 200+ languages, including American Sign Language, to ensure seamless, cost-effective communication.

This information is meant to serve as a general overview, and any specific questions should be fully reviewed with a health care professional or specialty service provider.

To make a referral for translation, transportation and other services, call us today at 877.203.9899 or send an email to apricus.referrals@enlyte.com.



©2022 Enlyte Group, LLC.

mitchell | genex | coventry