

Lunar New Year 2020

More than 20% of world's population celebrates Lunar New Year. It is the most important holiday of the year in many cultures.



Although the holiday falls in the winter season, the Chinese New Year is celebrated to mark the beginning of spring and what it brings along. It complements the beginning of the season for planting and harvests while symbolizing new beginnings and fresh starts.

It is more also commonly referred to it as the Lunar New Year in some countries like the two Koreas and Vietnam. The festivities are also celebrated based on the Lunar calendar which is why there's no set date for Lunar New Year.

It is a day reserved for praying to gods. The Chinese New Year was traditionally intended as a solemn day to pray to the gods for a good planting season and a bountiful harvest. These wishes were significant because ancient China relied heavily on their crops to sustain life as an agrarian nation.

It is also a day for fighting off monsters. Chinese folktales are some of the fascinating aspects of the Chinese New Year. One of the most famous legends is about a monster called Nian (年). It would terrorize villages on New Year's Eve as inhabitants would run to the mountains to seek refuge. One boy found a way to scare the creature by setting off firecrackers. The following day, the people celebrated their survival by cranking up even more firecrackers. Since then, firecrackers have become a significant part of the Chinese New Year celebrations.

The most fireworks are set off in the world that night. To commemorate the legend of Nian, people stay up on New Year's Eve to set off firecrackers at midnight and do it again in the morning to welcome the blessings that come with the New Year. Some families also burn fake paper money and gold bars printed on paper to honor their ancestors. They believe these offerings will bring fortune to their loved ones in the afterlife.

The celebration causes the most massive human migration in the world. The family reunion that happens on New Year's Eve is very significant in Chinese culture. Everyone must do everything they can to come home for this dinner.

Showering, sweeping, and throwing away garbage is not allowed. You are not allowed to take a shower on New Year's Day. You are also prohibited from cleaning the floor or taking out trash until the 5th. In Chinese culture, these actions are equivalent to sweeping away good luck.

Children receive lucky money in red envelopes. Similar to other cultures, children receive during Chinese holidays. They often get red pouches or red pockets that contain lucky money. This tradition represents the transfer of fortune from the elders to their kids. However, people can also give them to friends, colleagues, and superiors.

Source: <https://chinesenewyear2020.org/facts/>



January 2020 Calendar

*National Mentoring Month
National Volunteer Blood Donor
Month*

- 1 – New Year's Day (International)
- 4 – World Braille Day
- 6 – Epiphany (Western Christianity)
- 7 – Christmas (Eastern Christianity)
- 10-12 – Mahayana New Year (Buddhist)
- 11 – National Human Trafficking Awareness Day (US)
- 13 – Maghi (Sikh)
- 19 – World Religion Day (Baha'i)
- 19 – World Day of Migrants and Refugees
- 25 – Lunar New Year (International)
- 28 – Tu B'Shvat (Judaism)

Tips for Interpreting in Mental Health Setting

Source: http://site.interpreteeducationonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Mental_Health_2014.pdf

By Interpreter Education Online



One of the most challenging aspects of medical interpreting is interpreting for mental health patients. Mental health involves complex and interpersonal communication with individuals who may act, speak, or think in unusual ways. It adds several more hindrances to the already difficult role that a medical interpreter plays. Mental health interpreting is a unique specialization within the interpreting profession that can pose problems for even the most experienced interpreters. Training is essential in order to perform successfully as a mental health interpreter. While all interpreting specializations, such as healthcare or legal interpreting, require a specific skill set and knowledge, mental health interpreting involves difficult challenges.

An interpreter working with a mental health patient...

- must be familiar with various types of mental health diagnoses, such as Panic disorder, Bipolar disorder, and Schizophrenia, in order to better understand the patient.
- must be aware of the various techniques that a clinician might use during a session, such as tone of voice, pauses, silence, repetitions, and echoing.
- must be able to interpret words with the highest degree of precision and accuracy, because the difference in meaning between enraged and outraged or leery and fragile might be very important to the clinician.
- must be ready to switch between consecutive and simultaneous modes of interpretation and know when each of the modes is appropriate. For instance, if the client seems to be non-responsive or rambling on and on, the interpreter should be able to switch to simultaneous mode.
- must understand the dynamic of the interaction between a clinician, a client, and an interpreter.
- must recognize and be able to assist in overcoming any cultural and linguistic nuances that may arise during the encounter. One example of a difficulty that mental health interpreters commonly encounter is the speech disfluency of a mental health patient. Disfluency is the inability to fluently communicate in a language. This may occur with patients suffering from a psychological disorder.

Besides disfluency, the interpreter should be able to recognize and accurately render into the target language the various speech patterns of a patient. This may include rambling and incoherent speech.

Finally, an interpreter working in a mental health setting will be exposed to an environment of unpredictability. Working with people is intrinsically unpredictable. However, if a person is suffering from depression or from a panic disorder, their behavior might be even less predictable. In some situations, mental health illness could be compounded with a health issue or developmental disability, thus causing the interpreter to have their hands full.

It is important to note that interpreters may have assignments involving mental health patients while working in various surroundings such as legal, healthcare, and community settings. As a result, it is beneficial for interpreters to be familiar with the general principles of mental health interpreting.

Best practices

So, what skills should an interpreter have in order to achieve a successful mental health interpreting session and how should those skills be implemented? While there are many parallels with the healthcare interpreting, some are unique to mental health interpreting.

1. Pre-session

Pre-sessions are important in any healthcare setting and they're even more vital in mental health situations. A pre-session is a short one-on-one informational session with a mental healthcare provider such as a therapist, social worker, doctor or case worker. In some instances, medical professionals will ask the interpreter to conduct a pre-session, while in other situations, the interpreter initiates the pre-session without being asked to. The purpose of this brief encounter is to allow the interpreter to learn from the health care provider the goals of the session and make subtle adjustments accordingly. For instance, if the provider shares with the interpreter that the patient has tendencies towards aggression, the interpreter may change positioning ahead of time to allow a safe distance without compromising the rapport between the parties. The interpreter and provider may engage in team building. The interpreter shall also notify the provider of the need for the actual pre-session with all parties being present and conduct a regular pre-session defining the parameters, such as transparency, accuracy, scope of practice, managing the flow of the session, and establishing boundaries. Depending on the illness a patient may have, they may not be able to retain the information shared by the interpreter, so the interpreter may have to step out of their role to reiterate these points throughout the session.

(to be continued in the next issue)