

THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into health care



Esteban Coria
 MEDICAL INTERPRETER

After he graduated high school, Esteban Coria wasn't sure what he wanted to do.

He was sure of one thing though – he wanted to use his bilingual skills to help people communicate with each other.

Just three months after he graduated in 2008, Coria found a way to do that at Columbus Community Hospital (CCH) when he was hired as a medical interpreter.

“I was lucky enough to find a part-time position available in the hospital. After a while, that position turned into a full-time position and 11 years later, I am still here and hopefully, I will be here for many more years,” Coria said.

As a medical interpreter, Coria provides verbal and written interpretation for patients and families, staff, physicians and other health care providers. The majority of this interpreting is done face to face, but the interpreters provide their services over the phone as well.

CCH has 10 dedicated medical interpreters who help as many as 1,000 patients each month. From emergency situations to scheduled procedures, they offer various services at the hospital, the Visiting Physicians Clinic and other private clinics in the area.

CCH's interpreters also help to translate medical forms, break down complex instructions and ensure patients understand any paperwork that comes along with their hospital or doctor's visit.

To become a medical interpreter, Coria had to be proficient in writing and speaking in English and Spanish and do a 40-hour class for interpreters.

“You have to learn as you go as well,” Coria said. **“Each day, you hear new medical terms, but the medical providers explain everything very well and simply. That helps us provide a better interpretation.”**

On a typical day, Coria comes in at 8:30 a.m. and checks his schedule to see how many appointments he has been assigned. If there are appointments that no one has claimed, Coria signs up to handle them. In addition to these appointments, throughout the day, Coria can be called to any hospital department that needs the help of an interpreter.

Coria usually ends his day at around 5 p.m., when he waits for another interpreter to come in and take over. If he is busy with a patient, he either asks a coworker to take over for him or he stays with the patient until he finishes what he is doing.

The time Coria spends with each patient varies, based on the department and the situation, and each day on the job is different.

“Some days are busier than others. One day they might be calling from five different places at the same time,” he said. **“You never know how busy you will be.”**

In his position, Coria is exposed to a variety of different jobs throughout the hospital, and though he said many of these jobs are very interesting, he's happy with his own.

“It is very rewarding to be in a position that allows you to help people that need your help,” he said. **“In my case, I am glad I can help the patients communicate with the people they came to see and express their needs, concerns and ask questions.”**

For more information on Coria and how CCH became the first hospital in the region to set up a dedicated medical interpreter department in 2002, visit our website at www.columbushosp.org.