SI 501 // Interview Protocol

Michigan Medicine Interpreter Services
ACT*M: April Shin, Chloe Clark, Tayloir Thompson, Megan St. Andrew

Overarching Question

What is the source of Michigan Medicine Interpreter Service's current staffing problems and how do different groups of employees think staffing could be better carried out?

Introduction

Hello, my name is *<First Last>* and this is my partner, *<Partner Name>*. We are students studying at the University of Michigan School of Information and this semester we are doing a consulting project with Michigan Medicine's Interpreter Services. Today, we are here to better understand your organization's current staffing problems and see if we can improve the situation with your help. I'll be leading the interview and my partner will be taking notes as we go. We'll be shadowing you for about 60 - 90 minutes in order to better understand your work process as you actually conduct it on a day-to-day basis. I'd like to emphasize that I'm here as a learner so please treat me as if I'm someone who knows nothing about your process or even the University of Michigan.

Before we begin, I'd like to let you know that this meeting is mostly confidential. We'll include elements of these interviews in our final report but we will make sure not to attach comments to any individual interviewee or their specific job role in the process. If, after this interview, there is something you would prefer not to be included in our final report, please let us know and we'll make sure not to include or reference it. I would also like to add that you are here voluntarily. If there is anything that makes you uncomfortable or if you would like to stop, please let me know.

Do you have any questions for me? Ok. Let's begin!

[Some time later]...I would like to record this interview for our research. Would this be fine with you? Like everything else, our confidentiality rules will apply to this as well.

Selected Job Roles

Interviewee // Supervisor – Oversees various teams of interpreters. They also serve as interpreters, and manage emergency situations i.e. unexpected interpreter cancellation.

In our initial meeting with the client, we were introduced to another group of stakeholders we had not previously considered interviewing. Our client contact referred to them as "Supervisors", but we have not yet determined what their role is in the problem we're addressing. In order to make the most of our interview time with this group, we are currently working with our client to learn more about the supervisor role before developing the questions for these interviews.

Interviewee // Clinic Schedulers – Clerks for clinics that schedule patients' medical appointments and schedule interpreter if needed for patients' clinical visit.

Overarching Question: What are some inconsistencies regarding interpreter scheduling that exists for clinic schedulers?

Scheduling Protocol/Process:
1. Could you walk me through the process of scheduling a patient for a medical appointment?
2. What is the established protocol for scheduling an interpreter for a patient when you're scheduling their appointment?
3. Could you describe for me the last time you scheduled an appointment for a patient that needed interpreting services?

Personal Experience and Opinions:

5. Could you describe for me a time where the scheduling process did not go as planned?
   - What kind of roadblocks did you run into?
6. What kind of changes would you make to the scheduling process to prevent the issue you described above?
7. If you had the opportunity to make a recommendation to the leaders in charge of interpreter staffing, what change or changes would you recommend (if any)?

Relationship With Interpreter Services:

8. How do you interact with interpreter schedulers on a daily/weekly/monthly basis?
9. Could you describe for me your last interaction with an interpreter scheduler?
10. During this interaction, did you encounter anything that you found to be frustrating? How about encouraging or collaborative?
11. Based on your experience, how do you think your office/position should collaborate with interpreter services in the future?

Interviewee // Interpreter Services' Schedulers – Manage the actual interpreters' schedules, and answer incoming calls regarding interpreter scheduling issues.

Overarching Question: What are some inconsistencies regarding interpreter scheduling that exists for interpreter services schedulers?

Working with clinic schedulers:

1. What is the established process for clinic schedulers notifying you, the interpreter scheduler, of the need for interpreter services?
2. In the past week, how many appointments for patients in need of interpreting services have you been notified of by the aforementioned process? How many did you become aware of in other ways?
3. Could you describe one of the times you just mentioned (in which clinic schedulers did **not** correctly provide information about interpreter appointments) in more detail?
   - What was the result?
   - How did you adapt to this situation?
4. Could you describe your most recent interaction with a clinic scheduler in detail?
5. If you were to identify one clinic that does particularly well in scheduling appointments and one that does not, which would you identify? What does <*better clinic*> do better than <*other clinic*>?

Working with interpreters:

6. In the past week, what systems (Email? Direct Call? Mychart?) did you use most frequently to interact with interpreters?
7. What steps did you last take to inform an interpreter of their appointment with a patient?
8. Are the interpreters the primary contact when an appointment is scheduled, or are the supervisors?
9. The last time you scheduled an interpreter for a patient appointment, how did you find out if they were available?

Working with patients who need on-demand services:

10. What is the last time you noticed there was a need for many <*top 4 languages*> interpreters?
    - Based on your experience in the past month, was this indicative of a pattern?
11. In the aforementioned situations, were you adequately prepared to handle the volume of patients in need of these interpreting services, or did you have to use on-demand services?
12. If you needed on-demand services, could you describe in detail the process for getting an interpreter for that patient? *[If no to above]* Would you be able to describe the last time you had to handle a patient in need of on-demand interpreting services?
13. Would you be able to share your thoughts about the overall staffing system for interpreter services?
    - What limitations have you experienced?

14. In your opinion, what do you think the root causes are of the limitations you mentioned?
15. What is the last time you experienced a conflict with a patient in need of interpreting services? Could you describe the circumstances of the situation?
    - How was it resolved?

HR Staff:

16. The last time you hired an interpreter, how did you set working dates and hours when making their contract?
    - In what ways did you consider patient demand (high or low) when hiring this interpreter?
    - What data did you use to make your decision?

Interviewee // Interpreters – Relays health care information for patients who are either deaf, blind, deaf/blind, or have limited English proficiency (LEP).

Overarching Question: How has the current staffing system affected the overall patient satisfaction of interpreting services?

Interacting with Patients:

1. What language do you interpret/which patients do you serve?
2. Has a patient ever expressed frustration with scheduling an interpreter appointment?
    - Did this affect their medical appointment?

Interpreter Scheduling and Using MyChart:

3. Could you tell me about the last time you used MyChart? What were you doing and what steps did you follow to complete the task?
4. Can you walk me through how you are managing your interpreting appointments today? *[If not today, last day with multiple appointments]*
    - Is MyChart the only source you use to be notified of your appointments? If not, what other services (Email? Direct Call?) do you use?
5. Could you describe the current process for managing appointments that need to be rescheduled?
    - The last time you needed to reschedule an appointment, was it recorded in MyChart?
    - How many patient appointments have been rescheduled in the past week?
6. Would you describe the MyChart system as beneficial or detrimental to the interpreter scheduling process? Why?

Scheduling Challenges:

7. Can you describe the last time you interacted with the interpreter schedulers? What about with the clinic schedulers?
8. Tell me about the last time you did not have any appointments for an extended period of time. How were you affected by this?
    - Were any patients affected by this incident? How so?
9. Tell me about the last time you were overbooked with patient appointments.
    - How many patients were you expected to interpret for?
    - Were you successful in making all of these appointments?
    - How did this experience make you feel?
    - Were you able to speak with anyone about the situation? If so, what steps were taken to prevent this from happening again, if any?
10. Could you describe the last time you faced a different *[not over or under-booking]* challenge with the interpreter scheduling process?

Conclusion

That's the last of my questions for today. I'd like to thank you for taking the time to meet with me, and for answering my questions. I may be in touch in the following days or weeks with some follow-up questions, and I encourage you to reach out to me at act-michigan@umich.edu if you think of anything else you'd like to discuss. Otherwise, you will hear from us with our final recommendations in early December. Thank you again,