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Enhancing end of life discussions: A guide to practical tips when using translated materials

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Sensitive topics in palliative care, such as goals of care and advance care planning conversations, can be challenging for healthcare professionals (HCP) to discuss when patients and families speak another language. HCP often resort to using translated materials to assist in these discussions. Ariadne Labs in Boston has developed the Serious Illness Conversation Guide (SICG) which guides HCP in having early conversations so that patient's wishes, values, and beliefs are known earlier to the healthcare team. In Vancouver Coastal Health, the guide has been translated into 4 main languages: Chinese, Punjabi, Farsi, and Arabic. With direct translation into English, it has been noted that several of the questions had lost its original meaning and intent as some words cannot be translated directly into a language, therefore, the translators chose a word that may or may not reflect the original meaning and intention. Translation is not a one-step process; it involves translating the materials into a different language, back-translating to see if the meaning is maintained, reviewing by interpreters/people who speak the language, and then tested by clinicians. Given the sensitivity of topics discussed in the SICG, it is important that this is done correctly. The goal of this presentation is to share with HCP the challenges of translating patient materials directly into second languages. Using the Serious Illness Conversation Guide as an example, the barriers to translation will be identified along with learning helpful processes which will assist HCP to create more culturally appropriate materials.

Biography

Ingrid See is a Clinical Nurse Specialist with the Vancouver Home Hospice Palliative Care Service in BC, Canada. She started her home care nursing career in Massachusetts before returning home to Vancouver to specialize in palliative care. She completed her Masters in Education in 2001 with a focus on teaching health care professionals in providing culturally competent care. She is currently the Vancouver lead in implementing the Serious Illness Conversation Guide project across home health.

Sarah Lau is a home care nurse who is currently working as an educator for the Serious Illness Conversation Guide implementation in Vancouver home health. She has worked as a home care nurse for several years and has a specialty in palliative care.

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