DiversityRx in the news: Japan health study

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DiversityRx was on national TV in Japan, presenting the first results of a national survey of foreigners’ experience with the Japanese health system. The study looks at what linguistic and cultural challenges arise when seeking health care and what strategies are used to address them.

Survey highlights include:

- 57% of respondents delay getting care because of language or cultural difficulties
- 60% needed an interpreter sometimes or chose an English speaking doctor
- 80% of those who needed an interpreter but didn’t have one said it may have negatively affected the quality of care
- 55% said the doctor did not give or only gave a partially clear explanation about their condition and treatment
- 58% said their questions or concerns were not completely addressed by the doctor

As Japan increases its participation in the global marketplace through business, education, cultural initiatives and sport events like the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, the health care system must be ready to care for a more diverse population. Having a better understanding of the foreign patient experience can help policymakers, business, and health care leaders address potentially harmful barriers, ease health care provider interaction with foreigners, and improve overall quality of care.

A video clip of the NHK news report is here, and further details on the study are here.

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