

Language, Culture, and Genetics Webinar

Date: June 14, 2010

Another “Double Helix”: Language and Cultural Challenges in Genetic Counseling Encounters

The National Society of Genetic Counselors and the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care are pleased to join with DiversityRx to offer an educational seminar that explores the complexity of genetic counseling encounters and the multiple layers of communication that are integral to assure provision of the best possible, culturally competent patient care. Nancy Steinberg Warren, MS, CGC will provide an overview of cultural issues in genetic counseling encounters and review resources available to genetic counselors, medical interpreters and other healthcare providers. Interpreter Katherine Langan, PhD and genetic counselor Cindy Johnson, MS, CGC will explore ethical issues unique to each discipline and provide tips to working effectively as a team.

Learning Objectives:

With respect to working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations, participants will be able to identify:

1. Components of a clinical interaction that are unique to the genetic counseling setting
2. Ethical issues that arise for the genetic counselor and for the medical interpreter
3. Tips for teamwork between the genetic counselor and the medical interpreter
4. Educational resources available to enrich genetic counselors knowledge of cultural issues and medical interpreters knowledge of genetics

This is the ninth webinar in the DiversityRx [Your Voice](#) [1] Webinar Series, funded by The California Endowment. The project also features [Communities of Practice](#) [2], [Peer Learning Networks](#) [3], and an [online professional education and support network](#) [4].

Presenters:

Cindy Johnson, MS, CGC received her Master of Science in Human Genetics from North Texas State University in 1984. She is certified by the American Board of Medical Genetics and the American Board of Genetic Counseling. Ms. Johnson has over 25 years of experience in pediatric, prenatal, and cancer genetic counseling. She currently splits her time between the Perinatal Center of Iowa and Mercy Cancer Center in Des Moines, Iowa. She is a member of the National Society of Genetic Counselors.

Katherine Langan, PhD is a linguist with many years of experience in various applied fields. She did research on a number of topics in Guatemala, where she worked with the Summer Institute of Linguistics and Kaji' Ch'umil (a not for profit NGO) for many years. In addition to language description and literacy projects (Poqomam), she researched language vitality (K'iche') and program effectiveness for bilingual schools. She taught in the linguistics programs at Rafael Landivar University and Mariano Galvez University and did free lance interpreting in a variety of settings. In the U.S. she has worked at a number of colleges and universities, including five years in the Anthropology Department at Tulane University in New Orleans. She has worked as a professional interpreter in various states including Rhode Island where she worked with the New England Regional Genetics Group on training interpreters. A resident of Iowa since August 2006, she is a full time medical interpreter at Mercy Medical Center. She became the Interpretation Services Departmental Trainer in 2008. She is active in the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care as a member of the Policy and Research Committee and Advisory Committee for the Standards and

Training Committee. She was a subject matter expert for the National Board for Certification of Medical Interpreters.

Nancy Steinberg Warren, MS, CGC is a board certified genetic counselor and educator who has been in the field of genetic counseling for 30 years. During this time, she has taken on genetic counseling roles in clinical, public health, and education as a genetic counseling graduate training program director. Her interest in enhancing cross-cultural health care led Ms. Warren to reach out to colleagues and interdisciplinary experts to develop and lead many local, regional and national research and education efforts to enhance recruitment of underrepresented minorities into the field. She has been an avid volunteer and leader for the profession in this area. As the 2009 Jane Engelberg Memorial Fellow (JEMF) of the National Society of Genetic Counselors, Ms. Warren is developing a website for the profession on cultural and linguistic competence, which will be launched later in 2010.

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