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LESSONS LEARNED FROM AUCD'S LANGUAGE
AND COMMUNICATIONS ACCESS PLAN

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>> KATIE JOHNSON: Hi, everyone, welcome. We're going to give people a few moments to join, but we're glad you're here. All righty. I'll go ahead and get started just for the sake of time. Welcome, everyone. My name is Katie Johnson, Program Specialist with UCEDD. I'm glad you could make it to learn about our plan. We're glad you could make it. Before we begin, I have a few logistical details. Today's webinar is on our Zoom webinar platform, so all of our participants are muted and videos are turned off. But we hope to hear from you throughout the webinar. Share your thoughts in the chat box, add questions to the Q&A, and participate in the polls. To access the captioning, please click the CC button. If you wish to make the captions larger or smaller, you can click on the CC button again and then select settings. A new Zoom feature allows you to move the caption box to wherever you'd like, so feel free to adjust as you need. I am glad I wrote it down that this is being recorded, so let me make sure I hit the record button.

>> Recording in progress.

>> This meeting is being recorded and it'll be available a few days following this event, as well as a written transcript from our captioner. So, thank you again for joining us today and please join me in welcoming each of our presenters. Their full bios are available on our event page, which I will drop into the chat once I'm finished. First we have Sarah DeMaio. There we go, Senior Program Manager for AUCD's UCEDD Technical Assistance Center, she brings nearly 20 years of experience working with people with disabilities and their families. She's been with AUCD since 2016, sibling of an adult with Down syndrome. Next, two members of our Plain Language Advisory Group. First, Nancy Ward, from the self-advocacy organization, Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered, SABE. She served on Oklahoma's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Consumer Advisory Committee. And serves on the board of Oklahoma People First.

Rose Ann, Community Partnership Coordinator at the OUHSC Center for Learning and Leadership, has worked there for ten years. Before that, she worked for the past 22 years at the Developmental Disabilities Services, DDS. Following hearing from Nancy and Rose Ann, we'll hear from Laura Rodriguez-Lopez, the training director for the Florida Center for Inclusive Communities at the University of South Florida's UCEDD. Her work with the Florida Center for Inclusive Communities involved leadership of the Interdisciplinary Training Program. Originally from Puerto Rico, she moved to Florida in 2009 to pursue graduate studies and be closer to her family. She is a caretaker and sibling of two family members with disabilities. So, welcome to all of our presenters and their full bios are available on the events page, which I'll put into the chat now. Sarah?

>> SARAH DeMAIO: I'd also like to take a moment just to get to know a little bit about who



else is in the room with us so that we have a sense of what perspectives you're bringing to the conversation today. We hope that you take the opportunity to ask questions in the Q&A box or in the chat box to actively engage. I've got a couple of questions in the poll up right now, just to get to know how long you've been at your UCEDD or program, if you're not at a UCEDD, less than a year, one to five, five to ten. Some people have been around for 30 or 40 years at the UCEDD network, so if that's you, let us know.

We'd love to know how you feel your UCEDD or program is doing in language or communications access. Is this something that feels brand new to you, or you feel like you've really got a gold star and are somebody that others should emulate. Or somewhere in between. Maybe you're still learning, but you've made some progress already. I'm going to share. I think we've got a good number of responses.

It looks like most people are brand new, although some people are fairly new to their roles. Others have a significant amount of experience and everyone feels like they're still learning. And I will say AUCD is also learning in this process. In my diversity, equity, and inclusion work group, we say everyone has a right to be a little raggedy. We don't have to have polished edges here. So apologies if you're seeing a little bit behind the screen, AUCD's raggedy edges, but I'm going to share honestly about how we've learned, successes we've had, and maybe some of our missteps that we can all learn together in the process. Thank you for sharing, and letting us get to know you.

So, a little bit of the context. We're going to start off -- I'm going to give why AUCD started working and focusing on this area, what we've done to develop our language and communications access plan, and the two priority areas we've been focusing on, Spanish language and plain language access. When we get to those points in the conversation, I'll hand it over to Laura, Nancy, and Rose Ann to talk about their experiences participating in AUCD's language and communications access improvement efforts.

In each of those areas, we're hoping to discuss progress, lessons we've learned in working towards progress, and what we're still hoping to accomplish. We, AUCD, we put ourselves in the same boat as most of you. We've still got a lot to learn in this process. So, before we get started, I wanted to make sure that we're all using the same language as a best practice. We try and avoid using acronyms as much as possible, but there are a few that have become somewhat second nature because they're a part of who we are at AUCD. So, AUCD is the Association of University Centers on Disabilities.

We're a national network of UCEDDs, which that stands for University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, which is a mouthful. LEND, Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities, and IDDRC, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities



Research Centers. All of those are long names for what we use in the AUCD network, in abbreviation, for the most part.

So, I always like to ground myself in why we do this work. This is a quote from Rick Creech, an AAC user, in his testimony on a special committee hearing on aging. He said, living without being able to communicate is like being behind four glass walls. You're able to see others and they can see you, but you are ignored or worse, talked down to until you stop remembering who you are and why you are important.

To me, that gets to really the heart of why this is important work for AUCD, and the UCEDD Resource Center. We don't want anyone that we interact with to feel excluded, or de-humanized by the interactions that they have with us. We want every person, regardless of their language or communication needs abilities to feel like a full member of our network and the work that we do together.

We also prioritize this work because it's a federal requirement. Every single program or center who receiving federal funding has a requirement for anyone who receives federal money to look at your services and see if people who have limited English proficiencies, which they abbreviate to LEP, and you may see that in some of our handouts, if anyone who has limited English has support needs to access your services. And then you need to make a plan to address those needs and follow through with that plan. So, this is AUCD's effort to do that. And every UCEDD, LAND, and IDDRRC is also responsible for having a language access plan based on this executive order.

It's also a priority for us because it aligns with our strategic map. Back in 2018 we developed a strategic map. One of the -- we call them petals of our strategic map is for AUCD to model equity, diversity, and inclusion. And after that map was developed, the central office staff identified goals we would like to accomplish in each of the four main areas of the map. And the model diversity, equity, and inclusion goals were one goal around improving accessibility within our office, and all of our events and activities. One related to facilitating cultural exchange among staff and with network members. And then the third goal was around language and communications access. And so this was part of our implementation of our strategic priorities as an organization.

As we started to look at the language and communications access needs, we did a little bit of data-gathering. We looked at what we knew about the network at that point in 2018 and 2019. We started to gather data around trainee languages and we learned that there are over a hundred different languages that were represented amongst the trainees across the network.

We also met here. There was a board retreat, I believe at the Puerto Rico UCEDD. And in being on the ground in Puerto Rico, we learned a lot about the language needs of that particular UCEDD, with many of the staff being primarily Spanish-speaking and having limited English



proficiency. And then we also heard from a lot of network members about the increasing involvement of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities from -- both in their CAC but also on staff, and as staff and faculty at UCEDDs and LENDs. So there's an increasing need in the network based on, kind of, requests for information that we were seeing from the network around plain language.

So I'd be interested. I have another quick little poll to see, you know, from -- so, that was AUCD's global needs assessment as we started our process. I'd be interested to hear from you all in our next poll about what the language needs are at your organization. There are only ten options in Zoom polling, so I put the top ten most common languages in the U.S. in our poll. And I would love to hear if you have others. Obviously there are over a hundred languages, which are represented at your UCEDD or IDDRRC, if you have others, feel free to put them in the chat and everyone will be able to see.

It look like we've got . . . Accessible English being typed into the chat. I'm going to give it another ten seconds for people to enter, and then I'll close out the poll and share that so everyone can see the responses. I see Anne is sharing she has languages from Burma, Chin, and my apologies, I don't know how to pronounce all of these, Karen, Burmese, the Marshall Islands. I'm going to close out the poll now and share.

The most common one is right up at the top, Spanish language is a high need in the network. We've also got Mandarin, French, Hmong, Tagalog, Russian, from the participants in this webinar. Thank you for sharing. So, I think it's important AUCD isn't always looking at needs, we're also looking at our strengths as well. So there were some needs that were identified within our own staff, why we wanted to have a language access plan, one of which is we were growing as an organization and we had staff -- you know, new positions opening up both as we added new staff, but also as staff departed.

And we wanted to make sure that as staff left, we weren't losing the information that they had about where to get things Brailled, who to have translating documents, what language resources we had already connected with as an organization. And we also acknowledged we had a huge amount of resources within our staff that not everyone knew about with regard to the diversity of our staff. You know, when we did a snapshot survey in 2019 of staff language capacities, over 30% of staff used a different language than English in their home. So, a pretty diverse language representation just within our relatively small staff.

So, what we did was we -- after doing this kind of needs assessment across the network and the organization, we started to draft a language access plan. And that plan was really to kind of offer a place for us to catalog the resources within the organization and put together a process for ensuring



that our communications were continuously improving in their accessibility. We developed the plan initially in 2019, and our initial plan called for having a language and communications access advisory committee. And we recruited I think about ten members of the network who had experience in language and communications accessibility to provide advice and recommendations to us, and to review the plan and let us know where it could be improved.

It was initially designed around the PDSA process -- plan, do, study, act. It's a change management methodology that comes out of healthcare. And so you'll see if you look at the resource that's posted, the language and communications access plan, it's broken up into planning stages, the implementation stages, our evaluation stages, and then cycling back around to acting in new and different ways.

The advisory committee agreed with our recommendations to prioritize Spanish language and plain language as areas of emphasis, and recommended that we continue to improve data collection and analysis. In 2020 we started to incorporate more of language and communications assessment questions into our event evaluations and our global survey this goes out once a year to the entire network.

In 2020, we also developed a relationship with -- we vetted a wide range of Spanish translation companies and developed a relationship with specific translation company for Spanish. And we started to recruit reviewers for Spanish and for plain language. We'll talk a little bit more about that later, but to help implement the priorities that the Spanish language caucus and the Plain Language Advisory Group were sharing more priorities for the group.

We also did a huge number of, like, product adaptations and translations to kind of get us started in increasing access. So we had some videos that were translated. A number of documents that are currently available on our website. And I think Katie may be able to share that in the chat.

In 2021, we realized -- we asked -- I'll say one of my, sort of, hand to forehead moments was we were doing our evaluation and we had questions in our evaluation about whether people spoke another language or had language and communications access needs. But the evaluation itself wasn't in an accessible format. It wasn't in Spanish or plain language. So that was not likely to result in a lot of meaningful feedback from people with language and communications needs. And the evaluation itself was not accessible to them. So we adapted the evaluation forms themselves into Spanish and to plain language.

We decided for our staff size it didn't make as much sense for us to have a separate language and communications advisory committee and instead we decided to incorporate language and communications access into our existing advisory process. So we have a project advisory committee to give us input on, sort of, the global priorities of our TA contract. And so rather than having it



separated out for a language and communications advisory committee, we incorporated language and communications prioritization into the existing advisory process.

We decided we needed to share our progress. So we just were hosting this webinar with you today and we're going to continue to host a number of other webinars that will follow on and give a little bit more detail and more concrete training to the network. So we're kicking off our process of sharing our progress with the network. And we also incorporated some of this content into the NIRS database, the National Information Reporting System for all of the UCEDDs and the LENDs that AUCD houses. So we're starting to incorporate this into that as a resource for the network, but that will also help inform us in our work.

So, outside of just the trainees, incorporated in 2018-2019, we added it to the directory data set for all faculty and staff, some of the language and communications access questions. And then in 2022 we are hoping to even further leverage that NIRS data and some of the other demographic data to incorporate this priority in the implementation of the UCEDD network's equity, diversity, and inclusion plan. We have been already working with network members to implement that.

But some of our year two activities relate to language and communications access. So, I want to say some of the lessons that we learned were just at the very beginning. You know, we were really focused on language initially and we heard very strongly from network members that this wasn't just about language, it was about communication, and that being a reciprocal process that extended beyond just what language you spoke but how you -- whether that's -- actually, I would love to hear from -- I'll give a couple of examples. I already mentioned Braille. We have captioning available on our webinar right now. Those are some examples of communications access needs and I would love to hear if anyone wanted to put in the chat some other examples of communications needs that are outside of just language needs.

I mentioned using existing advisory groups and incorporating language and communications access into existing processes instead of separating it out is a lesson that we learned. Initially we were like, we'll have this separate entity and then realized it's actually more effective to look at this in kind of a global context.

We learned it's important to build in accountability. Putting the UCEDD Resource Center put this into our work plan, and writing it into our grant applications, writing it into our work plans and our reports to our funders as a way to really build in accountability for ourselves and has really propelled, you know, this work forward because we have an accountability mechanism for ourselves.

We also learned that it's really important to commit money and time to this process. It doesn't happen on its own, or out of the goodness of your heart. You have to build it into your budget and not just your work plan, but build it into your budget. Because we believe that people should be paid for



their time. And as much as various network members are frequently happy to do things for us on a volunteer basis, we want to make sure that these resources are of high quality and aren't done -- are done by paid professionals.

And then we learned that this isn't something that needs to be isolated to external, you know, consultants, but that we can build capacity on-staff. So you'll hear a little bit later that we've been doing trainings for plain language. And that's a way for us to build capacity on-staff and make this part of staff development.

I kind of mentioned we have a raggedy policy. The process is not, you know, aim for perfection. It's a constant process for improvement. And so, you know, I think when we initially launched a bunch of these groups we heard from network members we need everything to be translated immediately. And that's not possible. So it's really about prioritizing what is the greatest need at this moment. How can we most effectively use the time and the resources that we have available to make progress, because . . . And then I see some comments in the chat. There isn't a written form or people may not be literate in languages that they speak. This is the case in many countries, for many people from Burma. That's a great point. Thank you for sharing that, Anne.

At this point, I'm going to hand it over to Nancy and Rose Ann to share a little bit about the work that we've been doing with our plain language advisory group to improve access in plain language. And I think you're still muted.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Dang it. Okay. At least I said dang it. Okay.

>> Rose Ann and I have been working on the plain language advisory committee since it started. We are going to review some of the work we have done.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Click.

>> NANCY WARD: The first thing we did was to read the federal plain language act and the guidelines. The law was only 2 1/2 pages long, while the guidelines were 118 pages long. We found the guidelines were not written in plain language. The yellow box contains words that are not plain language. The legal field has always used words that seem to be used to confuse instead of helping people understand the law.

The blue box needs to say, put the important information first. The green box needs to say, put things in order by date or number.

>> Click.

>> NANCY WARD: Okay. Sorry. The group found that plain language is really a process, not a definition. Writers and speakers have to think about what they are going to say and carefully plan what they want to say or write so everyone can get the point. We found this picture as an example to show how important it is to keep directions simple and in words that we can all understand.



Say exactly what you want the person taking the medicine to do. So, a doctor should say every day, take two pills in the morning, and two pills at 12:00 p.m., two pills in the evening, and two pills at bedtime. Even this can be simplified. Take two pills at 8:00 a.m. -- morning, 12:00 p.m. -- noon -- 5:00 p.m. -- evening, and 10:00 p.m., bedtime.

We looked at what other groups have written many plain language, but many did not go far enough to help people with disabilities. We want to help and be a part of the change, but it is hard when we do not understand a lot of what we are asked to read or listen to.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Forward.

>> NANCY WARD: I want to do this slide, though. If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough. And that was said by Albert Einstein.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Okay, click.

>> NANCY WARD: The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug. And that was said by Mark Twain. Words are important. We have to make sure we say or write things that make sense. This means everything we write or say should be easy to read and understand. We have to be able to clearly and simply state our points. It is more important for people to understand what you are saying than for you to show off using big words.

There is never a time you need to use words like -- I can't even say -- conundrum, thank you, plethora, or convoluted. The world of academia seems to have a really hard time making things simple, easy to read, and easy to understand.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Okay, click.

>> NANCY WARD: We wanted to start putting together some ideas for a training on plain language. We thought it was important to make some goals. Plain language helps you reach everyone. Plain language should be easy to read for anyone. People get what you are trying to say. Your information is easy to use, like directions to put something together, or a guide book, or a plan. People do not have to wonder what you are trying to say.

Plain language is not unprofessional or dumbed-down. And we are not talking down to people or being condescending.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Which is another large word we'd like to get rid of.

>> NANCY WARD: Yes.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Okay. Click forward.

>> NANCY WARD: And then you can read these yourself, but these are a couple of statements about fellow trainers.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Who want to be a part of the system and help make changes, but



boy, the one I like in the blue is sometimes, I just give up trying to help. So, okay. Click. Okay.

>> NANCY WARD: Okay. We made slides to prepare for a training this group might want to do. The pictures help people see what we are talking about. So we would start out saying, let's talk about some of the rules of plain language.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Click.

>> NANCY WARD: Here are some first ideas about putting together a training. We think we need to have some rules everyone follows when talking about plain language. So the first one, know who you are speaking to or writing for. Talk about what people came to learn. And number 3 is pictures and symbols are needed to get points across and help people see what you are talking about.

Four, make it easy to follow. Keep it one or two ideas. If you have more than that, then it gets hard to follow. Use only the words you need, no long sentences or too many phrases. Use the simplest word you can to make your point. Do not use a lot of extra words.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Okay, click.

>> NANCY WARD: And then you can read this -- the picture as well. We found some slides that we think make a point and help with people who may not read well, or read at all.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Click.

>> NANCY WARD: Here is another example, but you can read these on your own, so we can move on.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Click.

>> NANCY WARD: One more example, and then go up a little bit, please.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Go up a little bit.

>> NANCY WARD: I can't . . .

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Click and then click again. Click. Click. There we go.

>> NANCY WARD: If it is too simple, it cannot be right. Or, we think we have to sound smart, right?

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: We're not just a plain language group. We are the central subcommittee steering group for the facilitation of brevity and clarity of language usage in the user/provider communication interface. So we have to sound smart. So one of the next steps for us here and to work with Katie and the plain language group, we have access to a lot of self-advocates through the Oklahoma Self-advocacy Network, and we have currently eleven certified trainers who we pass a lot of this stuff by when we're doing trainings. And I'm telling you, the first thing we said that this is a process, it really is a process. We are still going back to trainings we did six years ago and looking at them thinking, geez, what were we thinking back then? So we constantly go back and have



to edit and look at this thing from a new perspective all the time. So we're going to continue to use the trainers through the Oklahoma Self-advocacy Network and the Oklahoma People First organization here in continue to work on this, because they love this. They like the idea that people are taking the time to work on plain language. They want to be a part of systems, legal, policy change, but trying to get all that stuff broken down into words they can understand is probably 80% of my job here at our UCEDD.

And it gets hard. And you just think, why do people have to use those words? So we want to continue to participate. And our 15 minutes are up. But for more information, that's Nancy and I there and we'd be glad -- some of our trainings, we'd be glad to share some of our trainings and you'll probably look at them and say they need to go back and work on that plain language, because every time we go back and look there's something else, you know, we need to change, so. But we have really enjoyed being on this plain language committee with Katie.

>> NANCY WARD: Yes, we have. Very much so.

>> ROSE ANN PERCIVAL: Okay. That's ours unless anybody has questions. We're doing those at the end.

>> Thank you, Nancy and Rose Ann. That was very helpful. And I think Katie had wanted to take a minute just to share her perspectives on working with the Plain Language Advisory Group.

>> This is Katie. Just real quick, I was listening to both of you speak. It made me think of some of the lessons I learned from the UCEDD Resource Center side about how this actually works, which was I think Liz and I cochaired this group and we were working really hard to make sure that the advisory group is actually accessible. So we tried to get every one of our meeting minutes in plain language and easy to read. We added extra time to the meetings so that everybody could understand and we could go at a better pace. And so we've been learning a lot about what it means to build relationships and to take the time to really do this well. And then recently we brought on some reviewers because Liz and I admire your program so much, but people with intellectual disabilities are a part of every single thing that you all do. And so at the URC, the UCEDD Resource Center, we've been trying to build relationships with advocates that can look at our materials. We wanted to share how we're making our work more accessible.

>> We appreciate that, Katie.

>> And it isn't an easy process. You think it is, but you have to have a commitment to it.

>> You really do.

>> Thank you both, and thank you Sarah, for letting me share a few things.

>> SARAH DeMAIO: I'm going to pop a couple of concrete resources into the chat that we have used that network members may enjoy looking at. I'm going to hand it off to Laura to share a



little bit about the plain language access, and the plain language caucus.

>> LAURA RODRIGUEZ-LOPEZ: Hi, everyone, my name is Laura Rodriguez-Lopez or Laura, Training Director with the Florida Center for Inclusive Communities, UCEDD at the University of South Florida. I plan to offer updates about the role of the Spanish caucus, formed as part of the general language and communications access plan, as Sarah explained. It is composed of staff members from UCEDDs across the country who either have an interest or are currently engaged in work that recognizes the need to respond to the increasingly diverse communities across our country and territories such as Puerto Rico. Our mission is to increase the meaningful participation of a wide variety of the populations in the network, services and activities that we offer. And the goals for the caucus this year were to first assist AUCD central office to identify issues for Spanish-speaking network members and improve engagement by serving as a focus group for AUCD. We were also tasked with functioning as a mutual learning community, which I think is one of the biggest rewards from the Spanish caucus. And together we share best practices and innovative resources from around the AUCD network. And lastly, our last goal was to focus on a collective project of relevance to the broader AUCD network.

So after consulting with the group last week regarding our achievements, there are a few areas we wanted to highlight during this presentation. The first was that the caucus feels that one of the main benefits of the group has been the ability to meet virtually and being able to connect with other UCEDD staff from across the country. While we are all tired of Zooming, Teams, and sitting in front of the computer, the benefit has been putting faces to names and increasing our ability to make meaningful connections.

And this was important to us. And in part it's because, making those connections is a tenet of the Latino culture. We like to think we're a family. Being able to connect with members across the nation has aided to that feeling of belonging.

In addition, the national approach to a shared mission played to the unique strengths of the UCEDDs that are part of the Spanish caucus. Every UCEDD has different assets and by forging a larger network of connection among us we can help each other by sharing the best practices, resources, and supporting each other especially in those areas of need. So some UCEDDs are better at some things than others and we can support each other in those areas. Now, on the other hand, coming together has shown us the struggles, the similarity and the struggles of the Hispanic and Spanish-speaking communities that we serve across the country.

Finally, it was also important for us to share that coming together as a group and engaging in work that has a broader impact beyond our individual years of influence really moved us to coming up with guidelines and best practices. We are on our way as well to being able to help and have a



national impact through our UnidosUS, our partnership with them, which I will talk about. So, some of our lessons learned, one of our biggest accomplishments has been to reflect on the shared lessons. While we could go on and on on better ways to engage and serve Hispanic communities, we identified some key areas that we think we could have a more immediate impact.

First, producing linguistically competent content is more than just translating. So what do we mean? It means that we need to give more context and meaning to the resources that we are producing for Spanish-speaking families and members of our network. It is not enough to translate a resource that was created for Spanish -- for English speakers, I apologize -- as one of our caucus members said. We need to transcreate our materials so that they are hell vanity to our Hispanic constituents. Transcreate can be defined as the process of adapting a message from one language to another while maintaining its intent, style, tone, and context. A simple example from my own professional experience, I once worked as a psychometrician for someone offering IQ evaluation services for people with disabilities and traumatic brain injuries.

When he hired me to administer the evaluations to patients that spoke Spanish, the evaluation tools and activities that I was utilizing were translated without providing context. So they weren't culturally competent. One afternoon we welcomed a child that had lost cognitive abilities because he was part of an accident. We were doing an evaluation to determine if he needed to have brain surgery. The patient had recently moved to Florida from their home country, which they spoke Spanish and had never really traveled outside of their home country. One of the evaluation activities that I was tasked to perform was to show the patient pictures of items or places and record how fast the patient could recall the name of the items that I was showing them on the picture.

While the child was responding accurately to most pictures, he failed to answer correctly when I showed pictures that contained any snow, like snowman or igloos. And it's because the patient did not live in a place where it snowed. So it wasn't part of their vocabulary or the things that they were familiar with. Now, this made the patient very upset, very frustrated. It did so as well for his parents. And then of course it also affected their score on the evaluation. That was completely -- that is relevant because depending on the score, the surgeon was going to decide whether this person needed surgery or not. So that was one of the observations we did, but it showed the need, when we are translating things we need to give them context.

Another important lesson is, at the root of most of the issued we identified is the lack of representation in our center staff and leadership and in our providers. Research has shown that clients and patients belonging to underrepresented minorities such as those who are Spanish-speaking respond more positively to services and supports provided by either race concordant and culturally linguistically and competent providers. Unfortunately, we've noticed there is



a dearth of Hispanic representation in leadership positions across our network and in the health and behavioral fields in general. So, addressing this area of need is imperative to achieving equity for Hispanic communities across our country.

Lastly, I wanted to mention that moving forward there are a few things we have already identified that we would like to work on as next steps for our caucus. First is that it is important for us to come together as a group and engage in work that will have some sort of national impact. And to achieve this -- this was thanks to Sarah. I want to give her credit. To achieve this we are working on a partnership with UnidosUS, an organization that supports the U.S. Hispanic community through research, policy analysis and state and national advocacy efforts, as well as in the program work in communities nationwide through their network of over 300 affiliates across the country. UnidosUS has sought our assistance to help them with two items. First, helping them create a list of resources supporting parents and students with disabilities in navigating the education system. We are starting to reach out to our UCEDDs across the nation to tap into their expertise and come up with an expansive list to share. And in the long-term, UnidosUS would like our help in developing a toolkit for their affiliates with tips on how to support and engage families who have children with disabilities across the country. We are still in the planning stages for this part of the request and we will have more updates once we update in a future presentation.

Another area in which we would like to make progress is developing some sort of toolkit or tip sheet to identify best practices to increase social capital. As we've talked before, it is not only about making resources and services available to Hispanic communities or other communities in need, but we need to build trust with those communities so that families and constituents come to us for guidance and service.

So we can develop a thousand resources, but if we don't develop that trust, they're just going to sit there unused. We want to build meaningful connections, but it is very difficult to know where to start, even when we are Hispanic or Latino ourselves. So as we work together and develop a resource, it would be useful to other member networks as well to try and increase their impact with Hispanic communities and build those relationships. And lastly we want to recognize that as professionals in our centers we all have strengths and weaknesses and we want to continue to increase those collaborations between us and other -- between all the UCEDDs across the nation and form alliances to support each other in areas of need. I'm sorry I went fast. I wanted to make sure we didn't run out of time. And that's my short essay. Thank you.

>> SARAH DeMAIO: I want to see if there are any questions from the audience. We do have a couple minutes left, so you can either put them in the chat or in the Q&A, by selecting the Q&A box at the bottom. I'll also share a couple of additional lessons learned that I have taken away from my work



with the Spanish Language Caucus. I will own, we started off by translating a lot of materials from English into Spanish and then realized oh, you know, a lot of the links to secondary resources aren't in Spanish or aren't accessible in Spanish. So you really need to think about Spanish language across the board, from how this material's going to be disseminated to the end goals of the audience. Whether that's a second-party link or additional connections, or it was very important for AUCD to have someone on staff who speaks Spanish, because when you're asking people to reach out to you and you're creating products in Spanish you need to have somebody who can speak to them in the language of their choosing or that they use.

The other piece we've learned about is in our world we use a lot of acronyms. And we've kind of done a lot of balancing of how do you use acronyms in plain language and Spanish-language translations. In plain language there's a lot of priorities on just trying to avoid acronyms as much as possible and explain them when you need to use them.

And it's a similar process in my understanding with Spanish. Don't use them unless they're necessary, but also in one material we had the translator had translated everything in the acronym and then it looked like just jumbled things in Spanish. We said just use the English-language acronym and explain what it means in Spanish. So, little things like that we've learned along the way. The other thing that we learned is Spanish takes longer to pronounce. When you're doing videos you have to think about that at the front end because you need to record the Spanish first before you do the -- because you can type the visual content around the English language -- tighten it up easier than if it's recorded in Spanish first and is longer than trying to extend out visual content when you're going from English to Spanish. We're learning and I wanted to share some of those sometimes funny missteps that we've made along the way.

I see in the chat Liz asked a question about other languages. I'm not sure if you're asking if they're longer or shorter. I would guess it's across the spectrum. You have to think about the timing, whether it's Spanish or Russian, Hmong, Mandarin, they're all going to have different timings for video content. So it's 5:00. I want to thank everyone for joining us today. My contact information is up on the screen. Yes, Laura says she thinks the same lessons apply to other languages when translating and making accessible materials. Please fill out our evaluation. Katie just put that in the chat. I'm going to stop sharing. Thank you all for joining us.

>> Thank you.

>> SARAH DeMAIO: If you have further questions, feel free to reach out to me and/any of our other AUCD staff who are working in these areas.

>> Thank you, guys.

>> SARAH DeMAIO: Thank you to our presenters.



>> Thank you for having us.

>> SARAH DeMAIO: It's been a joy to work with each of you.

>> Recording stopped.

>> SARAH DeMAIO: Have a good evening.

(Session concluded at 4:02 p.m. CT)

