First, Do No Harm: The Case for Specialization in Healthcare Interpreting

Laurie Swabey, Ph.D.

April 15, 2016
10:00 - 11:30 am
Merrill Learning Center B-111

In this presentation, I make the case for specialized education and credentialing for all ASL-English interpreters who work in healthcare settings. Deaf people identify healthcare as one of the most important settings in which qualified interpreters are needed, as well as the setting in which it is most difficult to obtain a qualified interpreter. Further, empirical and descriptive studies of healthcare interpreting increasingly are shedding light on the complexities of working in this setting. First, I describe linguistic challenges in healthcare interpreting, and report on discourse features and linguistic strategies used by Deaf physicians and interpreters to mitigate these challenges. Next, a wider perspective is taken by presenting data from a study on the importance and frequency of the tasks inherent in healthcare interpreting. Finally, data is presented from a study on the work of designated interpreters in healthcare. Taken together, this evidence illustrates the complexity of healthcare interpreting, which must be realized in the education, credentialing and hiring of interpreters in healthcare.

April 20 - May 7: Presentation available free online at CEUs on the Go.
Lecture provided in ASL with English interpretation.
Required registration information for onsite lecture or online access:
www.gallaudet.edu/guriec

Laurie Swabey is Professor of Interpreting at St. Catherine University and Director of the CATIE Center. Her numerous contributions to the research and practice of healthcare interpreting include scholarly publications, curriculum development, and service to national organizations.