Michigan Medicine
University of Michigan

&

Project Management Institute®
Great Lakes

Project Management Institute. Great Lakes

Communications and Patient care in a Pandemic

Maithili Vadula

Project Management Institute. Great Lakes

Purpose of the project

- Increase service availability and decrease costs
- Improve interpreter productivity
- Partner with vendor and Interpretive Network
- Use department interpreters for existing languages
- Minimize use of dept. in-person interpreters
- Cost savings must exceed $0.15 per minute to offset setup costs and provide return on investment (ROI)

Project Management Institute. Great Lakes

What is the problem?

- Covid pandemic disrupted communications
- Wearing a mask and social distancing was a challenge
- Additional challenge when patients cannot communicate in English. Federal law requires interpretation for limited English proficiency patients (LEP)
- Audio interpretive services has existed for 25years. However, providers were requesting video over audio interpretation
- Requirement for 54 different language (audio + video)

Scope and objectives

- Identify on-site areas for video services
- Establish 3-way interpretation from triage to discharge
- Utilize existing devices for application deployment
- Provide video as primary service followed by phone
- Participate in the National Healthcare Interpreters Network (HCIN)

Engaging vendor experts towards solution

Recommendation:

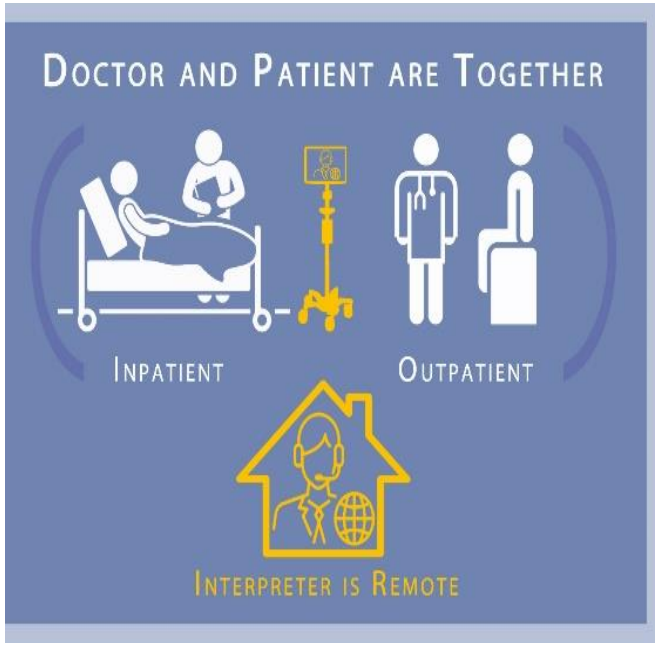
Contract with a vendor that uses organizational interpreters as first line of service, followed by vendor resources

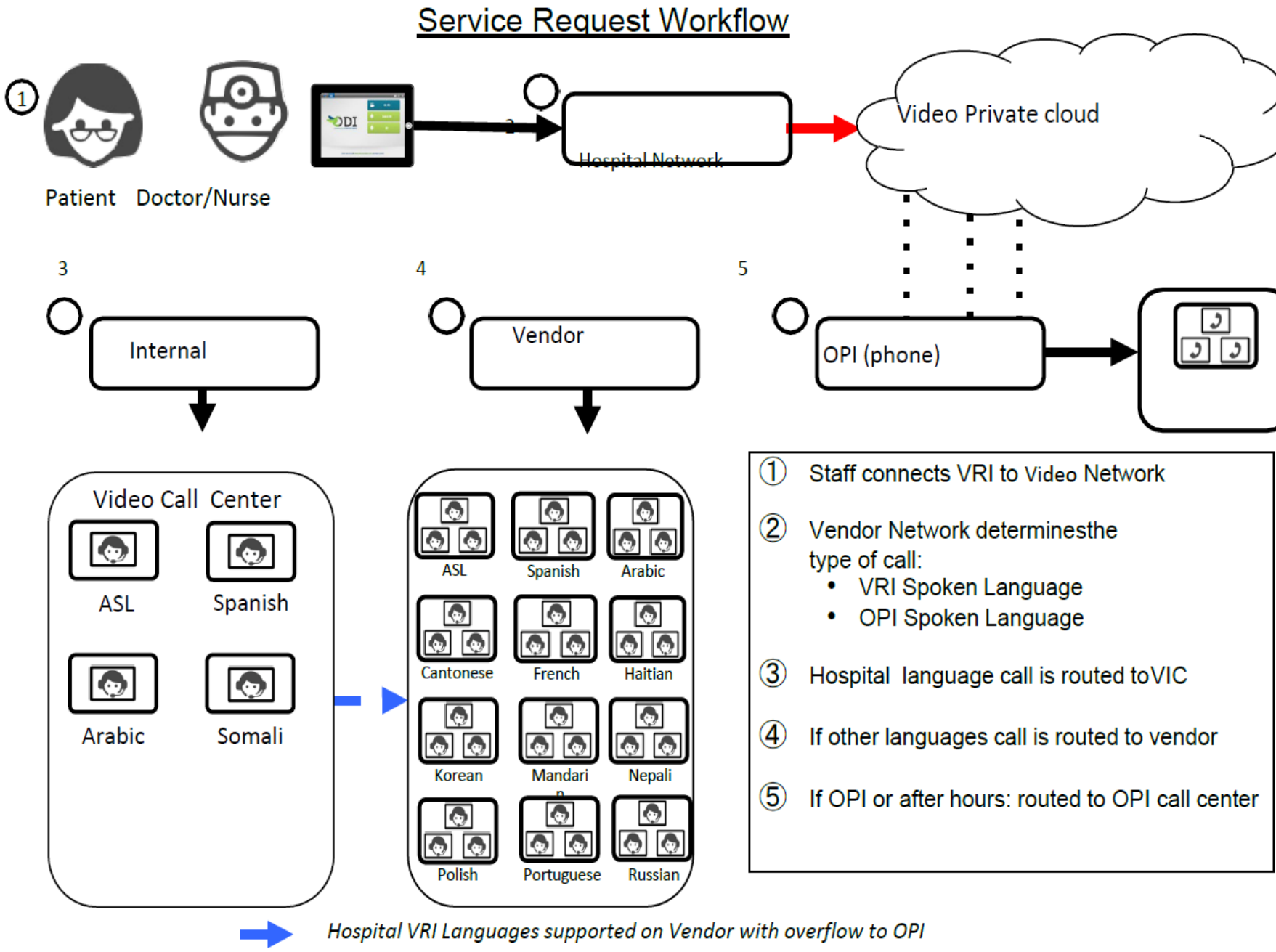
Reduce in-person interpreters to certain days of the week at satellite locations

Dependencies:

Organizational support to manage cybersecurity, app setup and device maintenance including software updates and replacement

Process Flow for interpretive service request

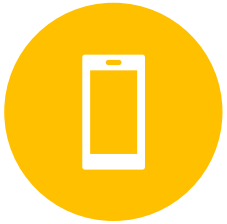




Project Management Institute. Great Lakes

Technology setup

Devices with SOC type 2 and HIPAA security



App access via jabber with no browser function

Videophones setup using secure VPN connection

Enterprise setup with a dedicated T1 line

Calls setup to seamlessly connect to video in 30 secs or less

Reference guide for quick tech issues resolution

Summary and results

- Enterprise implementation in the form of “big bang” not feasible due to cost and resources
- Timing with other projects to utilize existing devices provided smaller windows of opportunity
- Limited geographical ambulatory roll-out is the most satisfactory option
- Utilization reports that monitors risks, costs, usage and productivity for best indicators of success

Benefit realization of the project

- Participation in HCIN and revenue of 80cents/minute
- Reduction in phone interpretation by 15% or $51,000
- Increased service - expected revenue 80,000 per annum
- Cost savings - reduction of in-person service
- Application for other healthcare delivery

Application in other industries

- Auto dealership- video interpretation for sales, repairs, setting up Wi-Fi tools such as GPS, emails etc. as more cars have electronic connectivity
- Interpretive services for government services, banking, investment etc.
- Videos for “how-to” can benefit many industries that sell DIY (do it yourself) kits
- Global commodities trading

Future directions for the healthcare sector:

1) Voice recognition
2) Artificial Intelligence
3) Robotic surgery