

# LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS CAN IMPROVE PATIENT CARE AND EFFICIENCY

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## BACKGROUND:

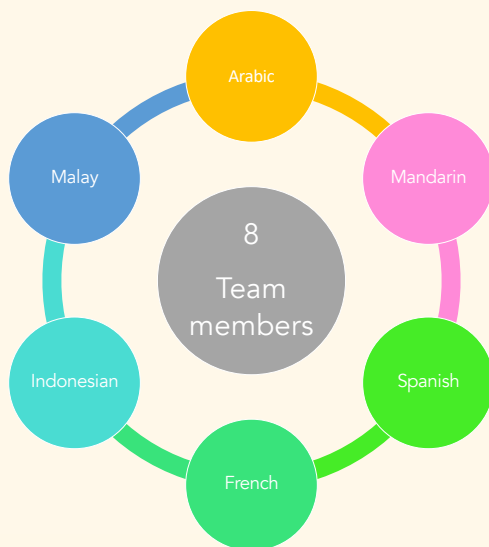
SWSLHD treats an impressive breadth of linguistically diverse patients. Some speak little or no English which is a known contributor to poorer healthcare outcomes. If the medical team cannot communicate, a telephone or in-person interpreter is required which is time consuming and adds delays to urgent patient care. Service provision by multi-lingual teams is common in industries such as tourism/hospitality but rarely seen in hospitals.

## AIM:

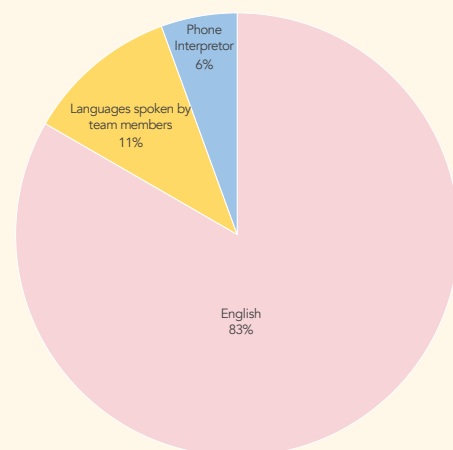
The aim of this study is to evaluate the impact of a linguistically diverse multidisciplinary team on daily inpatient ward rounds.

## RESULTS:

The medical team comprised of one fellow, three surgical trainees, three RMOs and a CNC who spoke a total of seven languages other than English: Arabic, Mandarin, Spanish, French, Hindi, Indonesian and Malay. Median number of patients on the daily round was 18 (range 9-26). Each day, there was a median of 2 patients (range 0-3) who spoke no English. Review was achieved using a team member's secondary language in all but one occurrence (6%) when a phone-interpreter was required.



Median of 18 Patients



## CONCLUSION

A linguistically diverse team tailored to the local demographics is an important staffing strategy that promotes improved care. Efficiency is improved by avoiding delays, and it reduces the burden on hospital interpreter services.