

TIP SHEET

WHAT MATTERS

Older Adults with Limited English



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I Don't Speak English, Help Me! Older Adults with Limited English.

Before You See a Provider – Do Your Homework:

Most health care providers that see patients who are Medicaid or Medicare beneficiaries must make language services available to patients with Limited English Proficiency.

Look up important English words that you may not know about your health.

Translate your questions into English.

Look for visual aids that works for your language and English.

See if a family member or friend who is more comfortable speaking English can come with you.

Learn how to use translation applications on mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets.

Prepare a “*My Health Passport*” in English so that you can easily share basic information about your health.

Know that the hospital, clinic, or nursing home should provide interpretation services at your request. These services may be in-person or by video or phone.

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While You See a Provider:

Ask the doctor, nurse, or any staff member about interpretation services in your language.

Don't be afraid to ask the same question more than once.

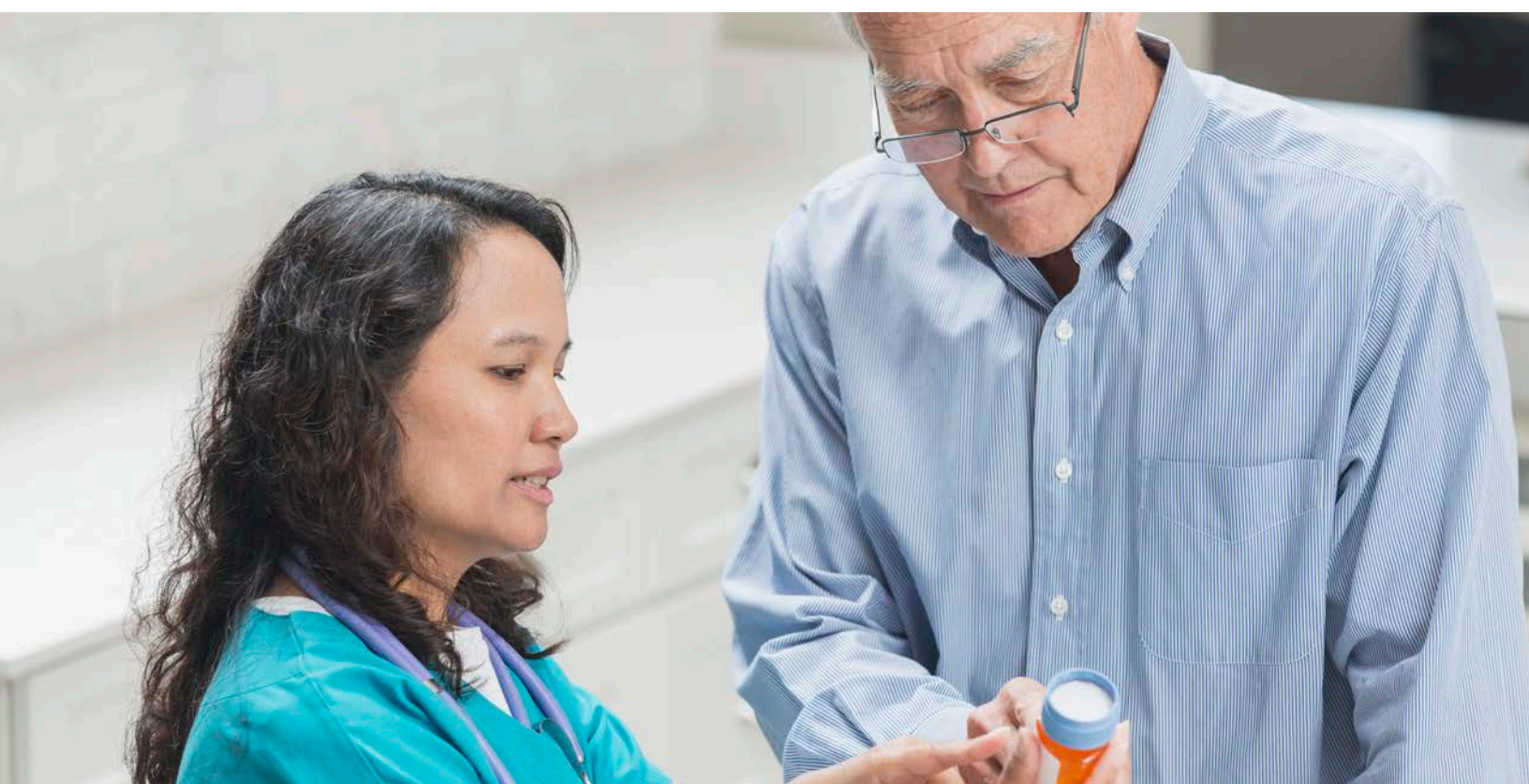
Tell your provider if you are having a hard time understanding instructions or asking questions in English.

Use your time with your provider for what matters the most to you. For example, managing your medications might be very important to you.

Communicate little by little. Use short and simple sentences. Speak up and repeat yourself in different tones if you think that might help.

Repeat back what you think you heard the provider say: Tell the provider what you understood and ask, "Is this right?"

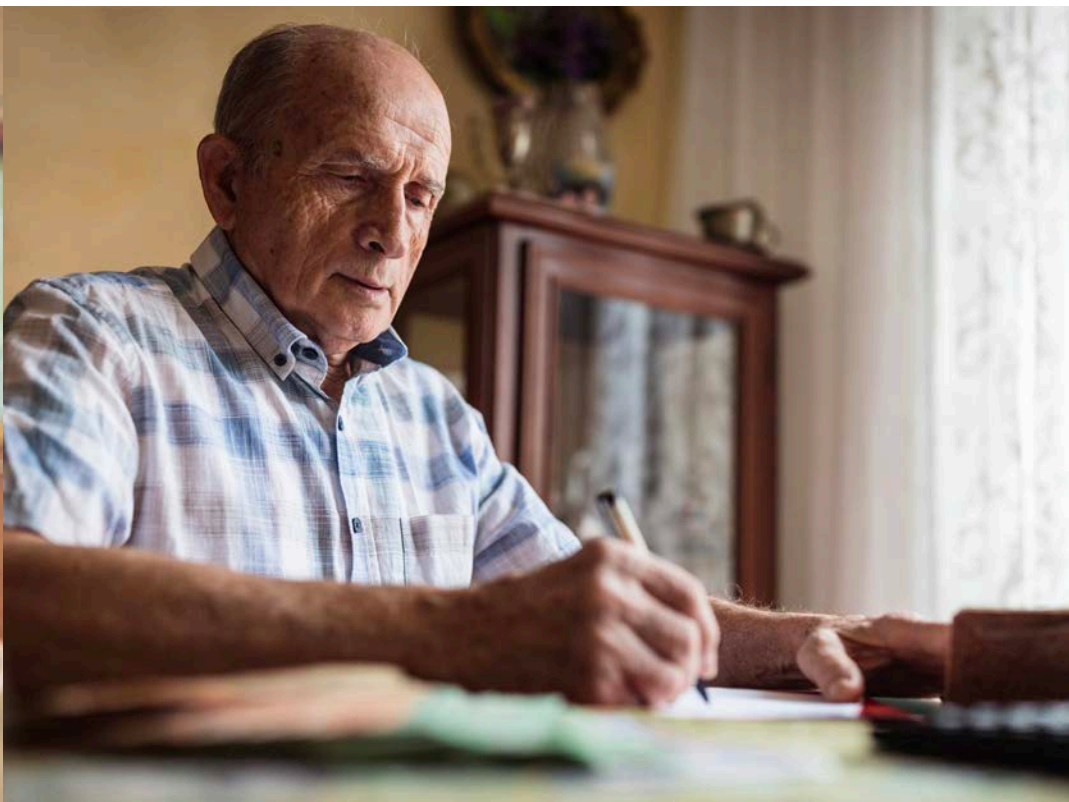
Use technology, such as translation application on your smartphone, if it is available to you.



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After You See a Provider:

Figure out if there is any interpretation phone services to ask more questions

Write down questions or things you are not sure about.

Do your homework (see above) before your next visit.



DISCLAIMER: This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other healthcare provider. Always consult your healthcare provider about your medications, symptoms, and health problems.

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