

# Bridging the Gap Between Spanish-Speaking Patients and Healthcare Providers

## IT Company Designs Communication Tool that Uniquely Bridges the Gap

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9% of patients in the US healthcare system have limited English proficiency (LEP). 66% of this population are Spanish-speaking and within a 20-year time frame (1990-2010), there has been a 50% growth in this LEP population. Research shows that when language barriers between LEP patients and healthcare providers (HCPs) continue throughout patients' hospital stay, it affects their participation in their care and negatively impacts the transition from the hospital to their homes and other facilities. <sup>1</sup>

According to the recently published article 'Spanish-Speaking Limited English Proficiency Patients and Call Light Use' in Hispanic Health Care International, call light use was identified as a contributing factor to positive and negative patient outcomes such as safety and satisfaction scores. LEP patients cited examples of this, stating:

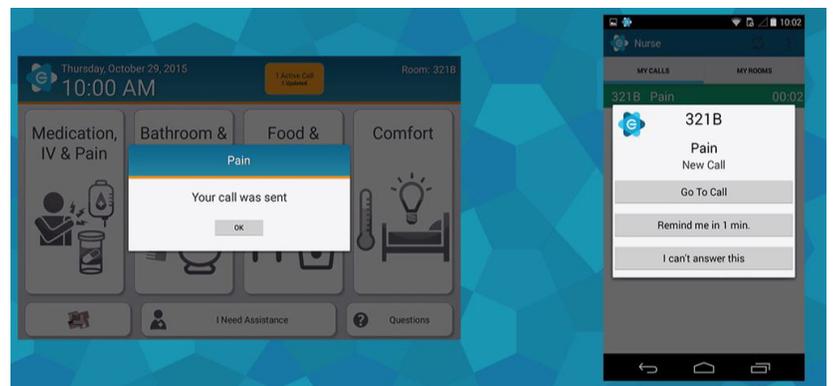
"I think these two people are not doing what I tell them to do."

"It makes me a little bit nervous that they don't understand me and sometimes I don't understand them either."

"When something is hurting, I just have a difficulty trying to explain where it hurts. That has been the most difficult."

This study tracked frequency, reasons, and challenges of patient usage with an analog call light system. Following a hands-on demonstration, participants in the study were offered the Eloquence Communications, Inc. solution. Patients expressed the system was a useful tool that would help them better understand their English-speaking providers.

"I can actually see what I want to tell her. I'm not going to guess how to say to her what I need," remarked one patient.



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Another patient explained how Eloquence could help other patients with LEP, “And it doesn’t really have to be in Spanish. Any other person that doesn’t speak English would be able to use this call light and let the nurse know what they need.”

Eloquence’s Language Access Solution (LAS) has effectively bridged the communication gap by providing patients immediate access to a touchscreen tablet device displaying 30 of the most common requests in English or in their native language. From this tablet, a patient’s request is routed to the appropriate caregiver on

their mobile device, the nurse or aide acknowledges the request, and a confirmation is sent back to the patient – in their preferred language. Equally as valuable is LAS’s feature that allows the patient to speak with a live interpreter simply with the touch of an icon on the device. For hospitals and healthcare facilities, LAS is customizable, intuitive, requires no capital expense, and its WIFI connectivity makes installation a simple plug-and-play solution, avoiding any disruption to patient care. For patients, this system is empowering, reliable, and ensures more equitable, quality care that could prove life-saving.

## **About Eloquence Communications, Inc.**

Eloquence Communications, a healthcare IT company founded by Dr. Lance Patak and Dr. Bryan Traughber, is dedicated to improving the delivery of care through the development of innovative and simple communication solutions. Drs. Patak and

Traughber have committed themselves to helping healthcare facilities achieve optimal staffing allocation and workflow efficiency while driving improvements in patient communication, safety, outcomes, and satisfaction, in an impactful way.

1. Montie M, Galinato J, Patak L, Titler M. (2016). Spanish-Speaking Limited English Proficiency Patients and Call Light Use. *Hisp Health Care Int*; 14(2):65-72.



**For more information about Eloquence Communications, Inc.  
and the Language Access Solution program**

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