The calm and peaceful-ness of Marathon Mon-
day, April 15, 2013, was violently shattered by a
cowardly act of terrorism. On that day our Interpreter Services family,
along with the entire MGH community, our
city, country and world were indelibly shaken by
these events. Though it has been more than 6
weeks since the time of the bombings and the
massive effort to capture those responsible; we
continue to mourn the loss of precious life, heal
from the physical and emotional wounds that
were suffered, and join together as we collectively
journey, step by step, through the hurt and
harm to a place of healing and wholeness.

Dr. Peter Slavin so elo-
quently reminded us of
the critical role we play
as team members of this
great institution. MGH and many other hospitals
in and around Boston were called upon to re-
spond to this tragedy, and did. Then beginning on
Thursday night April 18 and continuing through-
out Friday April 19, as the hunt for the perpetra-
tors continued, Boston’s healthcare community was
asked to step up yet again. MGH doctors, nurses and
many other staff members struggled mightily to try to
save the life of the MIT police officer who was am-
bushed in his car; then, a shelter in place order was
issued, something unheard of in the history of this city.
The uniqueness of this peri-
od was truly unparalleled.

I cannot tell you how grate-
ful I felt for the dedication of all those who were able to
make it to the hospital on
that Friday. We were re-
minded that as a hospital we are always open and
even if our particular de-
partment’s services might
not be required on a large
scale, we still play a criti-
cal role in the overall
functioning of the hospi-
tal. Our presence as
members of the medical
team is necessary to
MGH’s ability to offer
care during such crisis
situations. We also pro-
vide support to the hospi-
tal as members of the
pool of workers who can help out in situations of
personnel shortages, as
happened that day.

As I mentioned, and as
Dr. Slavin stated, the
uniqueness of that day
stands alone; there were
so many barriers to be
considered when each of
us had to decide whether
or not to come to work
that day; such a decision
for personal safety is one
that can never be taken
lightly, and must always
be respected. Some were
even in the area that was
most tightly locked down.
Even with these re-
strictions in place, and a
tense atmosphere all
around, the staff, our
patients and their fami-
lies still depend on us to
be here and ready to
work.

The extraordinary efforts of all
MGH staff who responded with
such care and professionalism
during these days truly be-
speaks Dr. Slavin’s sentiments
that, “Our employees once again
demonstrated that they are the
MGH’s greatest assets.” Person-
ally, I have to say this applies
even more so to our own MIS
family, of which I am proud to
be a part. The coordinators,
staff interpreters and freelance
interpreters who were able to
make it in that April 19th re-
vealed a deep sense of commit-
ment to our mission, our hospi-
tal and our profession. This is,
perhaps, a painful reminder of
just how essential we are, and
how critical our work is.
Though everyone will not be
able to do it every time, there
are times when we are called
upon to go to great lengths to be
present at work to serve our
patients, their families and our
colleagues on the medical team.
Our thoughts and prayers are
with those who bare the scars of
these days that they may experi-
ence healing; and may all of us,
from our different countries,
races, religions, cultures and
communities, continue to grow
as a family and be Boston
Strong.

By Anabela Nunes
National Certification Updates

Back in August of 2012, the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters approached MGH MIS about offering the oral exam here at Mass General. We were thrilled to oblige. Since that time 65 interpreters have taken their oral exam in Spanish here.

The exciting news is that the oral exam is now being offered here in Russian, Mandarin and Cantonese. Soon the oral exams in Korean and Vietnamese also will be available.

And now, there is even more EXCITING news! The National Board has approved Mass General as a site where the NBCMI written exam may be tak-

either Chris Kirwan, in Medical Interpreter Services, or go to the National Board web site: www.certifiedmedicalinterpreters.org .

Go to the web site and register first. Then you can sign up for the written exam, and when you have passed the written exam and if it is available you can take the oral. If your oral exam is not yet available, you may still take the written exam and become a Qualified Medical Interpreter (QMI).

White Board Promotes Communication and Education

The “White Board” in our office plays a key role in our department’s communication plan. Here different medical terms, procedures, illnesses, etc., are put up on the board to solicit interpretations in various languages, or clarification on exactly what the terminology means. Everyone is free to contribute to the ongoing conversation.

One recent discussion revolved around the term “Randomized Study”. A few interpretations were written on the board, “Etude arbitraire” in French; “Estudio al azar” and “Estudio aleatorio” in Spanish. The dialogue that resulted also focused on exactly what a Randomized Study (a.k.a. Random Controlled Trials, Randomized Controlled Trials) is.

MGH defines a randomized controlled trial (RCT) as:

“A specific type of scientific study in which subjects are randomly – meaning by chance alone – assigned to receive the experimental treatment (the treatment group) or to have the usual care, or no intervention (the control group). After randomization, the two groups of subjects are followed in exactly the same way, and the only differences between the care, procedures and tests they receive are the treatments being compared. Randomized controlled trials avoid sampling bias, where portions of a population are more or less likely to be included. This would result in a situation in which all types of participants are not equally represented.”

www.massgeneral.org/children/lurie-center/evidence-based-research

News you can use!

~Interpreter Grand Rounds will be held on Friday July 12, 2013 at 12 noon in the Conference room. A topic and presenter have not yet been selected, so if you have an idea and are willing to present, please see Chris. All are welcome to attend. Bring your lunch and join us for the discussion.

~Staff meetings will take place June 20, 2013 at 9 and 10:30 am and at 3:30 pm in the Conference room.

~Paving the Way to Health Care Access is a full-day educational conference for medical interpreters, interpreter managers and coordinators, and other members of the healthcare team. This yearly conference is sponsored by UMass Medical School’s MassAHEC Network and it features workshops related to medical interpreting on topics such as healthcare disparities, quality care for diverse populations, and offers opportunities to improve knowledge and skills. Click on the link for more information and to register: www.massmedicalinterpreting.org/sites/massmedicalinterpreting.org/files/Registration2013.pdf
Director attends DiversityRx Conference in Oakland, California

By Anabela Nunes

I had the privilege of attending the Eighth National Conference on Quality Health Care for Culturally Diverse Populations in March, 2013. This biennial conference brings together experts and stakeholders from healthcare, government, academia and various advocacy groups that are committed to improving access and quality healthcare for minority, immigrant and indigenous communities to reduce health care disparities. The theme of this year’s conference was Achieving Equity in an Era of Innovation and Health System Transformation. There were approximately 700 attendees from near and far, spanning the entire globe.

There were many highlights from this conference, one of which was the opening keynote speech by Mark Smith, MD, MBA President & CEO, California HealthCare Foundation. He spoke about the healthcare reform and how success is defined in terms of the triple aim: enhance healthcare coverage, improve patients’ experience and make healthcare affordable. This was a recurring theme throughout the 3 day conference as many workshops focused on one or more of these aims. Another highlight was during the plenary session Redressing the Legacy of Racism to Make Meaningful Progress on Health Equity. Gail Christopher, DN Vice President, Program Strategy, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, one of the panelists, suggested that the term racism shouldn’t be used, that in fact, there is no such thing as different races. Humanity is one sole race with diversity. If we are to make progress in reducing healthcare disparities we must embrace our collective humanity while celebrating our differences. Lastly, Dennis Andrulis, PhD, MPH Senior Research Scientist, Texas Health Institute shared some staggering facts during a workshop on Affordable Care Act and Opportunities for Advancing Equity for Racially and Ethnically Diverse Communities: Taking Vision and Promise to Reality. Forty five percent of newly eligible individuals entering the healthcare system are racial and ethnic minorities, which will mean increased focus and continued work on reducing healthcare disparities.

I will end on a fun note. I attended a presentation, Sharing Perspectives on Unconscious Bias in Health Care, where the speaker talked about how our background and experiences shape our expectations and become the filter through which we assess our reality. To exemplify this phenomenon he showed a video on how our biases shape our behavior (open the link and watch). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=590pXIlr1Yc. Enjoy.

Did you know…? A Four Part Series on Translations

By Anna Pandolfo, Translation Specialist

Part 1

Quality management in translation requires the revision of each translated document to ensure that accuracy and style standards are met. How do we accomplish that? Through a three step process always performed by a second pair of eyes: revision, editing and proofreading. Each process checks on different aspects of the text. Revision checks for accuracy, completeness, register, style, specialized terminology, grammar and spelling among other things. Editing focuses on improving the text for readability. Proofreading is the final check on the layout of the text. In the following editions of this newsletter, we will explore more in depth how each of these processes work.

MIS Campaign

Anabela has been working with the Excellence Every Day Communications Committee which is charged with helping different departments educate the greater MGH community about their services in creative ways. This awareness campaign will be launched sometime in the near future and you will recognize the subjects of these informative posters on best practices for utilizing professional medical interpreters. Thank you to all those who agreed to have their pictures taken for the posters, your participation will help spread the word to our patients, their families and providers.
Sayoko is in her 18th year of medical interpreting at the MGH. She was a court interpreter, but one fateful day Medical Interpreter Services received a request for Japanese from our Emergency Department, and the Boston Court Office gave MIS Sayoko’s name. Her immediate response was “I can’t do it, I’ve never been a medical interpreter,” but the person on our end of the line said “Just this once.” Sayoko agreed, and was amazed at how having a Japanese person in the room made the patient feel visibly at ease. She switched from court interpreting to medical interpreting, and never looked back. “I think of the patient as a person, a real human being, worried and sick. And when the body hurts, the heart hurts more. I want to support them in every way and ease their anxiety.” Sayoko was born in Japan, but came to the U.S. to attend a seminary, where she met her husband, an English teacher there. They married after her graduation. Her hobbies include cooking and Ikebana (Japanese flower arrangement). As a mycologist, she enjoys studying wild edible mushrooms. Sayoko concludes by saying “I love to work here. The Coordinators are very professional, and the Director is always ready to listen.”