

III. Results

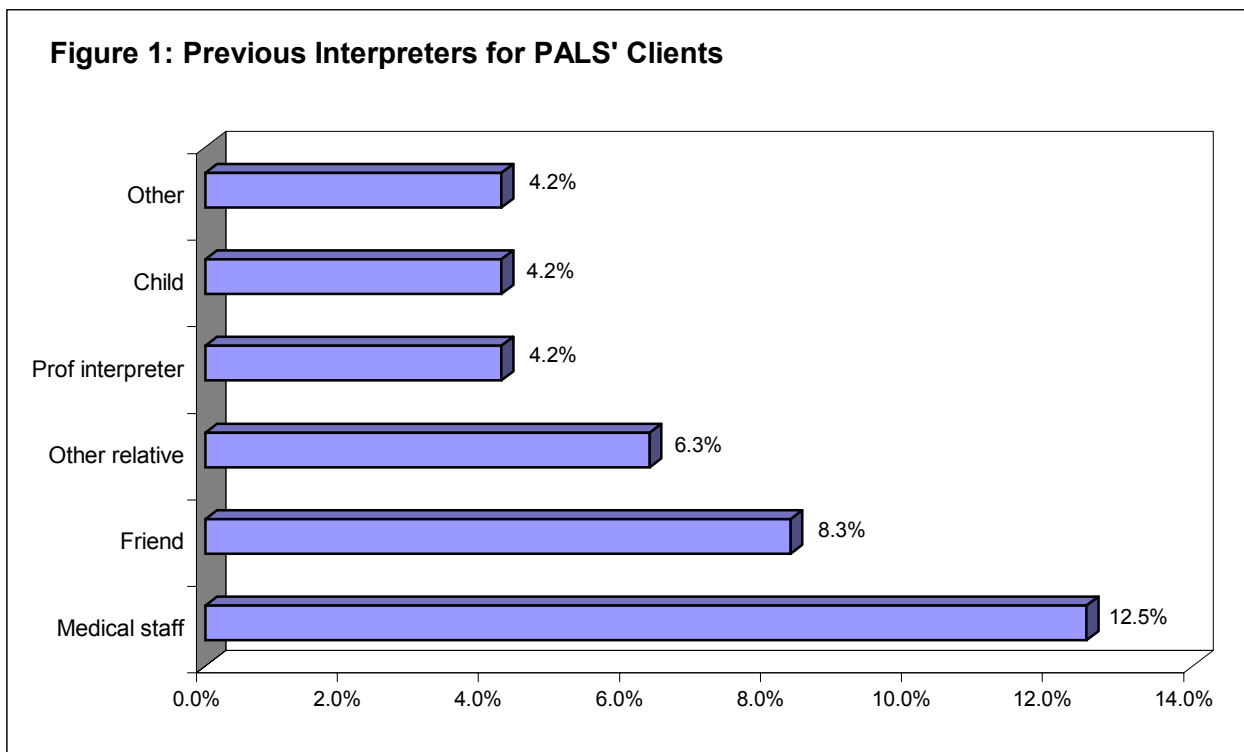
A. Demographics

Among the 110 surveys completed, 73% were with adult clients and 27% with adult caregivers of child clients. The breakdown by gender was 39% males, 61% females, and by ethnicity was 45% Korean, 24% Thai, 20% Chinese, and 11% Vietnamese.

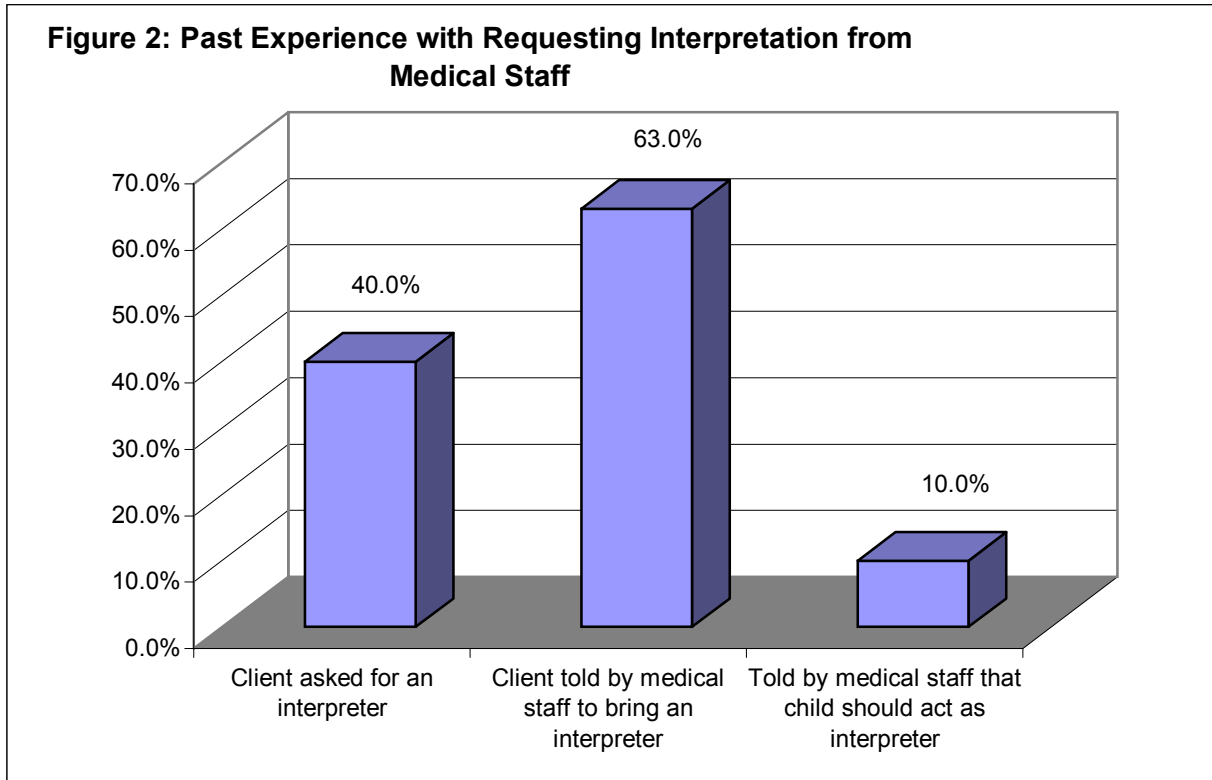
B. Past Interpretation Experiences

The majority (56%) of respondents have relied on someone to interpret for them at past medical visits. Among the types of people used, 60% had used PALS for Health interpreters and 4.2% had used another professional interpreter. For all others, non-professional interpreters were the only source of assistance, including medical staff, friends, adult relatives (who were not their child), children, and others (*see Figure 1*). PALS clients described many instances of “inappropriate” interpretation, as exemplified by the following quotes:

- Medical staff: “...but (the doctor’s staff) was not knowledgeable of medical terminology and not dedicated to help me out as an interpreter. (He) would only give two or three words to interpret what I said (Vietnamese).”
- Friends: “I paid someone in the community (to interpret for me) each time I needed to go to the doctor. So I could only afford to go when the pain was unbearable (Vietnamese).”

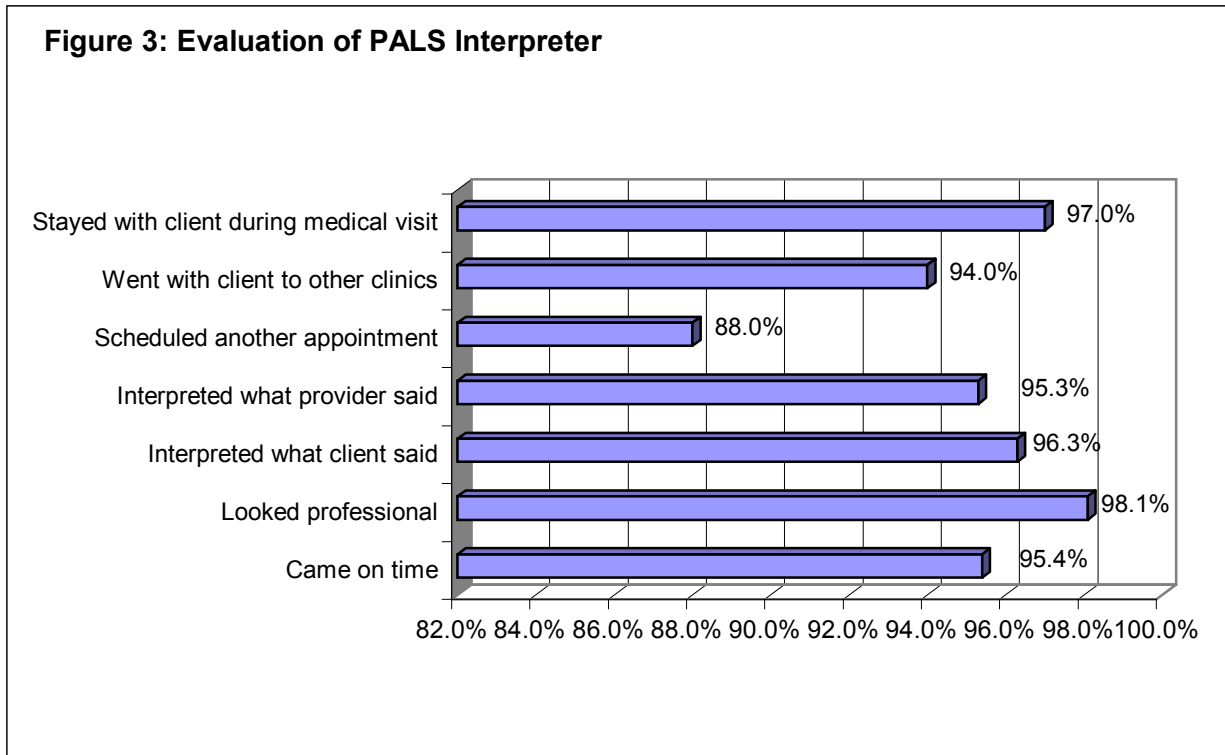


PALS clients also reported many difficulties in accessing professional interpreters for past medical visits. Despite the fact that forty percent (40%) said that they had asked a medical staff person for an interpreter, 63% were told by a medical staff person to bring their own interpreter to their appointment and 10% were told that their child should act as their interpreter. (See Figure 2.)



C. Experience with PALS Interpretation Service

PALS clients initially found out about PALS' interpretation services from many places, including by direct referrals from the medical facility (37%), from friends (24%), newspaper or radio (17%), an Asian community-based organization (10%), from their doctor (5%), or from their family (3%). Overwhelmingly, clients indicated that their PALS interpreter provided high quality interpretation services relating to timeliness, appearance, verbal translation, appointment scheduling, and accompanying and staying with the client for the duration of their medical appointment. (See Figure 3.)

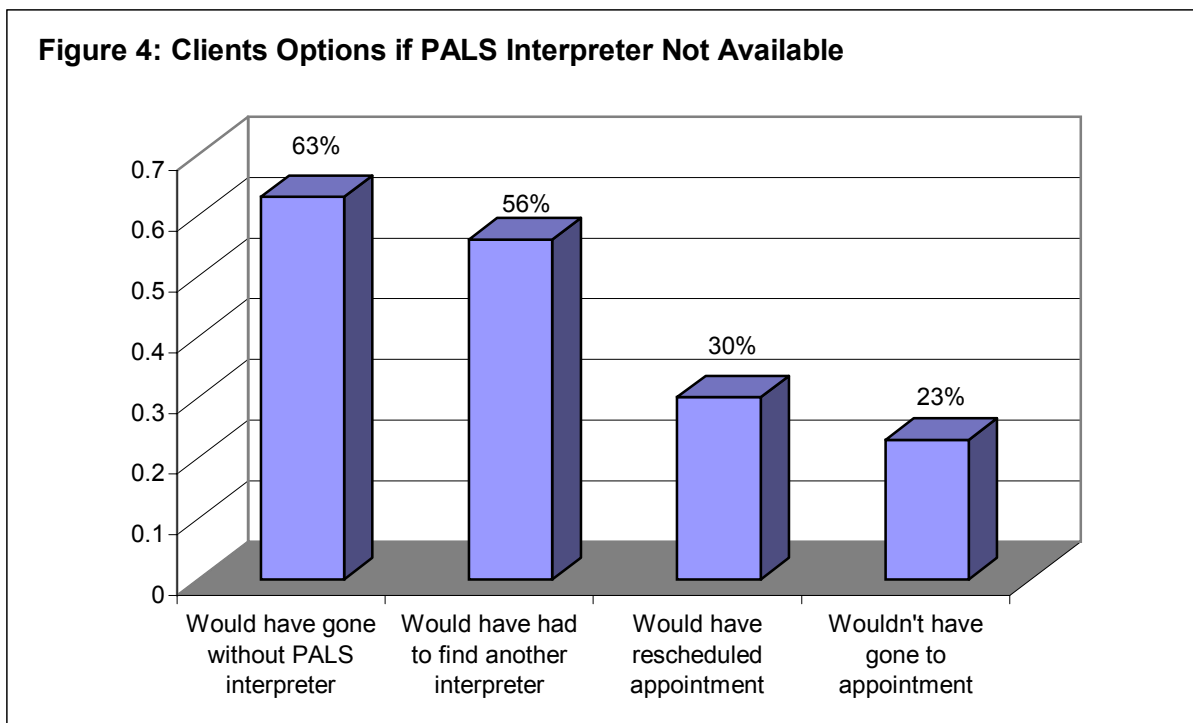


Clients were also extremely positive about how the PALS interpreter enhanced the quality of their medical visit, citing that they "strongly agree" or "agree" with the statements regarding possible outcomes from PALS' interpretation services. Clients cited improvements in understanding of medical staff, ability to express concerns, length of the appointment, and understanding of medication-taking recommendations. Clients gave specific examples of how PALS helped, including:

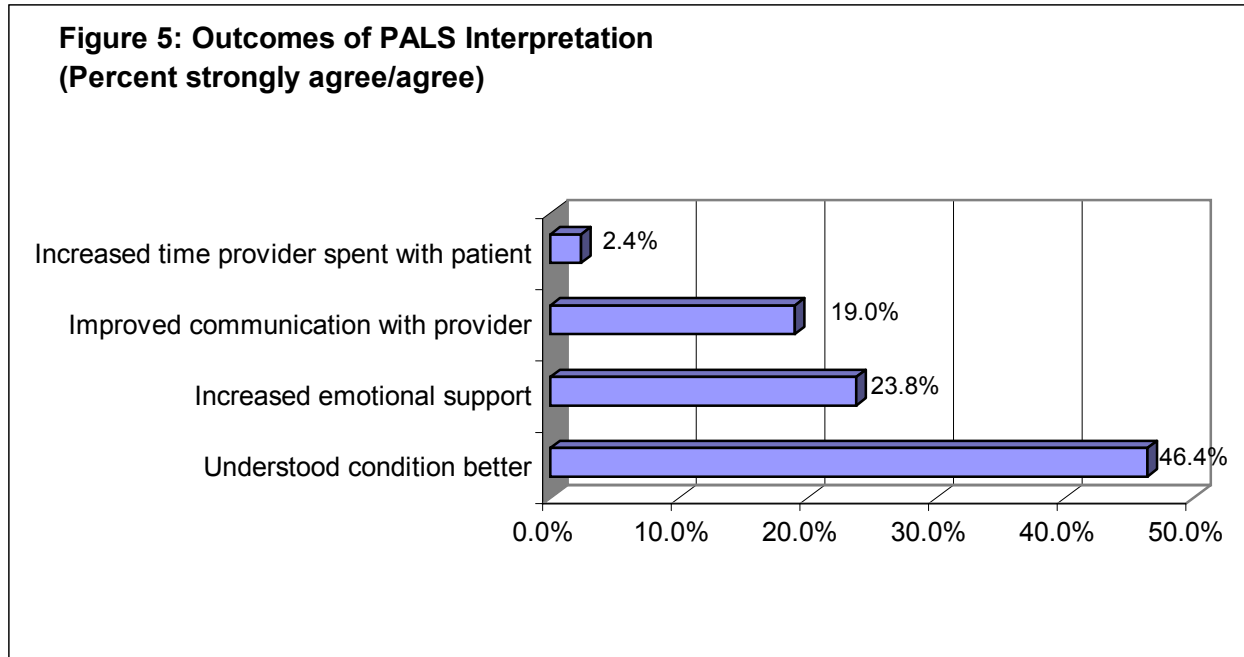
- Medications: *"We get to go to hospital rather often due to my child's weak health. We were having hard time understanding all the tests and medicines to take (Korean woman)."*
- Checkups: *"I am able to go to my monthly checkup without having to ask my friends to take off from work (Chinese woman)."*

Despite the positive benefits from PALS professional interpretation, however, we found out that PALS' clients were also willing to go to their medical appointment without a PALS interpreter. Sixty-three percent (63%) of the clients said that they would have gone to their medical appointment even if a PALS interpreter wasn't available. Fifty-six percent (56%) said they would have had to find another person to interpret if a PALS interpreter wasn't available. Only 30% of respondents said they would have rescheduled their appointment if a PALS interpreter wasn't available, and only 23% said that they would not have gone to their appointment if a PALS interpreter wasn't available. (See Figure 4.)

One client summed up the dilemma by stating, "I would go to (to my doctor) anyway, but I wouldn't understand anything (Thai woman)." This reflects how difficult it is for low income, limited English proficient patients to get timely medical care – so difficult that they may not want to reschedule their appointment even if it meant seeing their doctor without a PALS interpreter.



Finally, clients overwhelmingly believed (96%) that the PALS interpretation service directly improved their health and well-being. Positive health outcomes included better understanding of their health condition (46%), emotional and moral support (24%), ability to ask questions and get clearer answers (19%), having staff spend more time with them (2%). (See Figure 5.)



Clients gave many examples of how their health and/or wellbeing were enhanced, including:

- Improved understanding: *"My son is only six years old. He cannot interpret for me. An interpreter helped me to understand my son's condition (Chinese man)."* *"I got to know about the benefits I can receive from the government. Once approved, I can go to the doctors, not worry about the payment issue. That's such a relief (Korean man)."*
- Trust and support: *"I have more confidence with the interpreter present; I have confidence in taking care of myself according to the doctor's instruction and I have moral support (Thai man)."*
- Emotional support: *"Emotionally, I felt a lot better. I was very nervous about the whole thing, but with the interpreter present with me, I felt better (Korean woman)."*
- Communication: *"I had a chance for once to explain in detail my whole health history to my family doctor. I believe that tremendously helped my doctor better understand and treat me. That is a big relief for me (Vietnamese woman)."*
- Increased time spent by provider: *"Unlike before, the hospital staff actually took the time to explain the procedure and answer my questions (Chinese man)."*
- Follow-up: *"I could understand a lot about my disease. Also, the interpreter helped me setting up[sic] other appointments and getting medicines. I could've never done that by myself (Korean woman)."*