



www.chia.ws



www.ncihc.org



Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association

www.mmia.org

September 2005

Dear Colleagues,

The California Healthcare Interpreting Association (CHIA), the Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association (MMIA), and the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC) are pleased to jointly announce the publication of two critical documents that help further the professionalization of health care interpreting: the *National Code of Ethics for Interpreters in Health Care*, published in June 2004, and the *National Standards of Practice for Interpreters in Health Care*, published in September 2005. These documents were developed by the NCIHC and reflect the most up-to-date thinking in the profession and provide interpreters and those who work with interpreters with a unified set of guidelines that define competent practice. We encourage all stakeholders to use, adopt and further disseminate these documents. These documents can be downloaded at no charge at www.ncihc.org.

The National Code of Ethics and National Standards of Practice were developed through a national consensus building process that included focus groups and surveys of hundreds of working interpreters from across the United States. Their development was made possible by the pioneering work of state and regional organizations. Specifically, the *California Standards for Healthcare Interpreters: Ethical Principles, Protocols, and Guidance on Roles & Intervention* developed by the California Healthcare Interpreting Association (CHIA) and the *Medical Interpreting Standards of Practice* developed by the Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association (MMIA) and the Education Development Center have been essential to the work of the NCIHC. The CHIA and MMIA documents will continue to be important tools in the training, hiring and job performance of healthcare interpreters. Indeed, the National Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice build upon the previous work of CHIA and MMIA. Some of the experts that helped develop the CHIA and MMIA standards and ethics documents were also key members of the NCIHC Standards, Training and Certification Committee – the committee charged with the development of the National Code of Ethics and National Standards of Practice.

As organizations who have advocated for many years for the recognition of the key role that health care interpreters play in the delivery of care for limited English proficient individuals, we are proud of our contributions to the advancement of the field of health care interpreting.

We would like to thank the US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, The California Endowment and The Commonwealth Fund for their financial support of our work, a testament to their vision of equal access to health care for all those living in the United States.

Sincerely,

Wilma Alvarado Little and Maria Michalczyk
Co-Chairs, National Council on Interpreting in Health Care

Joy Connell
President, Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association

Beverly Treumann, President
President, California Healthcare Interpreting Association