

**OFFICE OF STATEWIDE HEALTH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
CALIFORNIA INPATIENT DATA REPORTING MANUAL, EIGHTH EDITION**

PREFERRED LANGUAGE SPOKEN

Section 97234

Effective with discharges occurring on or after January 1, 2011, the patient's preferred language spoken shall be reported using one of the following three alternatives:

(a) If the patient's preferred language spoken is known and is included in the following list of alternatives, report the three letter code from the list:

See list below

(b) Other. If the preferred language spoken is known but is not listed in subsection (a), report the full name of the language.

(c) If the preferred language spoken is unknown, report the three digit code 999.

DISCUSSION

Specifications for reporting this data element with the Record Entry Form for online web entry of individual records or online data file transmission for encounters occurring on or after January 1, 2011:

PREFERRED LANGUAGE SPOKEN

Enter only one 3-digit value from the list below. If the language is not on this list, then consult the ISO 639-2 (www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2). If the patient's preferred language is not listed in the ISO 639-2, then enter the full language, up to 24 alpha characters.

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

ENG English	HMN Hmong	RUS Russian
AMH Amharic	HUN Hungarian	SGN Sign Language
ARA Arabic	ILO Ilocano (Iloko)	SMO Samoan
ARM Armenian	IND Indonesian	SRP Serbian
YUE Cantonese (Yue Chinese)	ITA Italian	SPA Spanish
CHI Chinese	JPN Japanese	SWA Swahili
HRV Croatian	KOR Korean	TGL Tagalog
PES Farsi	LAO Lao	TEL Telugu
FRE French	CMN Mandarin	THA Thai
CPF French Creole	IUM Mien (Iu Mien)	TON Tonga
GER German	MKH Mon-Khmer	UKR Ukrainian
GRE Greek	NAV Navajo	URD Urdu
GUJ Gujarati	PAN Panjabi (Punjabi)	VIE Vietnamese
HEB Hebrew	PER Persian	YID Yiddish
HIN Hindi	POL Polish	YOR Yoruba
	POR Portuguese	999 Unknown

**OFFICE OF STATEWIDE HEALTH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
CALIFORNIA INPATIENT DATA REPORTING MANUAL, EIGHTH EDITION**

Reporting Requirements:

- Enter only **one** 3-digit value.
- You may use up to 24 alpha characters to report the full name of languages not already listed.
- Indicating more than one language designation is not allowed.

DISCUSSION

Preferred Language Spoken (PLS) would be the language the patient prefers to be used in communicating with those in the health care community. A bilingual patient would presumably state the language in which he or she would have the best comprehension of health-related terminology.

Unknown should be used when a patient's language can not be determined, such as when a patient arrives alone, in a comatose state and the encounter ends without the patient ever speaking. If the patient never coherently communicates, there is no medical chart history, and there is no family/caregiver communication, Unknown is appropriate. A patient who is clearly able to communicate or is accompanied by someone who can indicate the patient's PLS should not be reported as PLS "Unknown". The Unknown category is not to be used to report patients who refuse to self-declare a language. If a patient refuses to self-declare their language preference, report the language the patient is using to communicate with staff.

A child's language can be the language of the parent or caretaker used for communicating with the physician on the child's behalf. The language on subsequent visits could change based on the language preference of the adult accompanying the child.

Be sure to use the regulatory 3-digit code where applicable for the appropriate language or spell the language out completely and accurately. Misspellings and use of non-regulatory abbreviations will result in the language being grouped to a miscellaneous "Other" category once the data is standardized.

Data quality deteriorates when assumptions based on the patient's name, physical appearance, place of birth, race, or ethnicity are the basis for the determination of Preferred Language.