

Medical Interpreting Services Department

Newsletter

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10 Ways to Honor South Asian Heritage Month In 2025

Source: <https://www.betterhelp.com/advice/current-events/10-ways-to-honor-south-asian-heritage-month/>

South Asian Heritage Month was officially named in 2020 to celebrate the culture and contributions of South Asian countries and their people. South Asian Heritage Month is celebrated annually from July 18 to August 17. During this time, many honor the people and countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and the Maldives.

Why celebrate South Asian Heritage Month?

South Asian Heritage Month recognizes the diverse cultures and experiences of individuals from the countries of South Asia. Outside of these areas, it offers the opportunity to emphasize the value of mental health awareness and support in every community.

Ways to celebrate South Asian Heritage Month

Below are ten ways you can celebrate South Asian Heritage Month this year.

1. Learn about the diverse cultures of South Asia

During this year's South Asian Heritage Month, it may be valuable to note that South Asia is a diverse region of many countries and communities, all of which have their own unique traditions, religions, customs, cultures, and languages. To thoughtfully celebrate South Asian Heritage Month, consider educating yourself on these countries' vast and diverse areas and peoples instead of lumping them together as one culture.

South Asian territories can include the following:

- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- India
- Pakistan
- Nepal
- Sri Lanka
- Afghanistan
- The Maldives

You may choose to learn about, and celebrate, the region's history and how these countries differ geographically, socially, politically, and by custom.

2. Explore the contributions of South Asian individuals

Overlooked historical figures from countries in South Asia may have contributed to works of art, science, medicine, politics, and social change. In addition, present-day artists may be under-celebrated for their contributions. South Asian Heritage Month offers individuals a chance to educate themselves on the contributions of these individuals and continue learning throughout the year, elevating, and amplifying their support and progress for the betterment of society across industries.

You can explore the contributions of South Asian individuals by reading, watching, or listening to relevant content. Additionally, you can use that new knowledge with other practices, such as raising awareness of a specific individual or event on social media, discussing it with friends, or reading a book about it.

3. Spread the word about South Asian Heritage Month

South Asian Heritage Month can be underrepresented in mainstream media. To combat the lack of awareness around South Asian Heritage Month, you can spread the word with friends, family, and coworkers about the month's existence and ways to celebrate it.

4. Learn about an issue affecting a country in South Asia

Current challenging events may occur in countries worldwide, and South Asia can also experience these challenges. Research a crisis affecting a country or area in South Asia and how you can help. For example,



July 2025 Calendar

World Autism Month
Sexual Assault Awareness Month

- 4 – Independence Day (US)
- 5 – Ashura (Islam)
- 14 – Bastille Day (France)
- 17 – World Day for International Justice
- 22 – Fragile X Awareness Day (International)
- 23 – Buddhist Lent (Buddhism)
- 24 – International Self Care Day
- 24 – Pioneer Day (Church of Latter Day Saints)
- 25 – Feast of St. James (Christianity)
- 26 – National Disability Independence Day (US)
- 26-1 – Hepatitis Awareness Week (International)
- 28 – World Nature Conservation Day
- 30 – International Day of Friendship

you may choose to read up on the environmental issues affecting Bhutan, including habitat loss, human-wildlife conflicts, and climate change. As you research, consider your research material and the possible benefits you may gain from researching from unbiased, verified, and comprehensive sources.

After learning about an issue or multiple crises, you may take the time to make the next step or develop an action plan for yourself. You might find a local organization with which to volunteer or sign up for relief support. If you cannot take physical action, you can try to donate to a South Asian cause.

5. Donate to a South Asian-specific cause

While educating yourself about a crisis in South Asia, donating money or time is a practical way to celebrate this month. If you're in a place to donate money, you may choose to donate to a specific cause that affects a community in South Asia.

6. Buy from a South Asian-owned business

Wherever you live, your area may have restaurants, shops, services, and other businesses owned and run by people of South Asian heritage communities. You may search online or ask for your friends' favorite restaurants serving cuisines from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, or the Maldives.

In addition, you can choose to find a local boutique selling free-trade items from a South Asian country that donates a percentage of profits back to people in the country of origin. While supporting South Asian-owned businesses, you can also learn more about that community and its diversity.

7. Read content from an author from South Asia

Whether you're a book lover, read articles regularly, or haven't touched a piece of literature in years, reading content is one way to educate yourself and celebrate South Asian Heritage Month simultaneously.

You don't necessarily need to limit yourself to non-fiction content. Suggestions on reading content from cultures other than yours can include a vast library of fiction from South Asian authors. You can also try articles, short stories, novels, essays, or poems. If you are part of the South Asian community, consider posting your writing online or asking a local bookshop if they can display your book to celebrate the month.

8. Watch a movie directed by or starring South Asian individuals

Movies and TV can offer more than a fun respite after the workday. Spending time in August watching media from South Asian creators can be a fun way to celebrate South Asian heritage in an effective, entertaining format.

9. Learn about the experiences of South Asian individuals in your community

South Asian Heritage Month celebrates not just the countries and people of South Asia but also people in America and other countries who have South Asian heritage. That means that your celebration this month may include people in your local community, wherever you live.

10. Boost the voices of South Asian creators

Raising awareness for South Asian Heritage Month can also include amplifying the voices of South Asian creators on social media. You can use online resources and your social media presence to show their posts and recommendations, whether they are content creators, educators, local businesses, or artists.

The Future of Digital Health Must Be Multilingual

Source: <https://www.languageine.com/blog/the-future-of-digital-health-must-be-multilingual>

At the recent HIMSS 2025 Conference, one question dominated the conversation: How do we ensure technology bridges healthcare gaps rather than widens them?

With over 28,000 healthcare leaders from 88 countries gathered in one place, an urgent theme surfaced among those with whom we spoke: As digital health advances, so does the risk of leaving non-English-speaking patients behind.

AI-driven language tools, digital inclusion, and the role of language in health equity emerged as critical topics —each shaping the future of patient care.

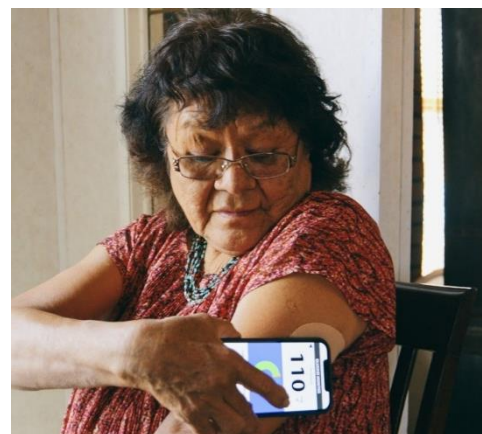
Will AI Translation Be Enough in the Exam Room?

In hospitals, language barriers can mean the difference between a correct diagnosis and a life-threatening mistake. HIMSS showcased a wave of AI-powered translation tools, from real-time interpretation apps to smart devices capable of converting speech into text.

But the excitement was tempered by a stark reality: AI isn't perfect. While automated interpreting is improving, it still struggles with dialects, cultural nuances, and complex medical terminology. A small error—for example, misinterpreting “feeling dizzy” as “feeling lighthearted”—could lead to the wrong treatment.

Wearable AI devices may soon offer real-time translation directly to patients, displaying subtitles on smart glasses or delivering whispered interpretations through earpieces. However, these tools must be tested rigorously for medical accuracy before they can be relied upon in clinical settings.

The consensus was that AI will be a powerful tool in breaking language barriers, but it won't replace human oversight for critical healthcare patient interactions.



In fact, one of the most important capabilities that emerged from the AI discussions at HIMSS is the critical need to enable seamless escalation to live medically qualified interpreter when the need arises, 24/7.

The Digital Health Divide: Who Gets Left Behind?

As telehealth, mobile health apps, and AI chatbots become standard, a new challenge is emerging: many patients can't access these tools at all. For non-English speakers, the problem isn't just translation, it's that most digital health platforms were never designed with them in mind.

Imagine trying to schedule a telehealth appointment when the interface is only in English, or attempting to understand medication instructions from an AI chatbot that misinterprets your native dialect. For millions, digital health is not an entry point to care—it's a barrier.

At HIMSS, healthcare leaders called for culturally competent tech development:

- AI that adapts to regional dialects, not just standardized translations.
- Voice-based AI for patients with limited literacy.
- Chatbots designed with cultural norms in mind.

Regulations already require language accessibility in telehealth; however, further regulation is needed that ensures all digital platforms and health apps meet the needs of diverse populations. Without these changes, health care's digital transformation risks excluding millions of non-English speakers.

Language Access as a Social Determinant of Health

This idea was pervasive at HIMSS: Language is not just a communication issue; it's a health risk factor. Patients who struggle to communicate with their doctors are less likely to seek preventive care, more likely to be misdiagnosed, and at greater risk for medication errors.

Despite this, language access remains an afterthought in many health systems. Studies show that patients with limited English proficiency are twice as likely to experience an adverse medical event, yet few hospitals prioritize language services in their digital health strategies.

The message among health professionals was resounding: Language access isn't a luxury; it's a matter of health equity. Without addressing it, digital health will only deepen existing disparities.

The Future Must Be Multilingual

HIMSS 2025 made one thing clear: The future of health care must be multilingual. AI-powered translation, culturally competent digital tools, and language-conscious policy changes are not optional add-ons, they are fundamental to making health care truly accessible.

In the rush to modernize, the healthcare industry must ensure that no patient is left behind simply because they speak a different language.

New Staff Profile: Rosa Camacho

Rosa Linyú Camacho Villaseñor is the newest addition to the Spanish-language team at UC Davis Health.

She was born in Michoacán, México and brought to the United States at the age of two. Growing up, she witnessed her parents' frustration when trying to help with her Kindergarten homework, as the English words made little sense to them. Their struggles extended beyond school, as they often avoided medical visits for fear of not understanding the doctors. Once she learned English, she became the family interpreter, assisting her parents in daily interactions.

At the age of 10, Rosa returned to México, where she attended school for a time. Although Spanish was her first language, living in México strengthened her linguistic skills and deepened her appreciation for the language. She knew she wanted to become a professional interpreter, inspired by her parents' struggles. Her passion for interpretation was further reinforced while traveling with her father—she frequently encountered English-speaking tourists at airports who needed assistance, solidifying her love for bridging language gaps.

Rosa graduated from Sac State with a BA in Spanish and a certificate in medical interpretation in 2023. Just a month later, she began her first professional role as an interpreter. Having spent years interpreting for her parents, she recognized the importance of her work and how it had become second nature to her. The next goal was to validate her skills at the national level, which Rosa has done - she has recently earned her national certification as a medical interpreter. She is grateful for the opportunity to help Spanish-speaking individuals access the healthcare they need.

Beyond her work as an interpreter, Rosa is a dedicated crafter, always working on creative projects. She also has a passion for cooking and enjoys coffee, concerts, and spending time with friends and family. In addition to being an interpreter, she is also a florist and a baker.

Welcome to the Medical Interpreting team, Rosa! We are happy to have you onboard.