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HEALTHCARE TRANSLATIONS AGENCY

FREE
E-BOOK



EXPAND YOUR
BUSINESS
WITH MEDICAL
TRANSLATIONS

okomeds 
by okodia

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1. WHY GOOGLE TRANSLATE IS NOT ENOUGH?

Although huge strides are being made in machine translation and its usefulness in certain contexts should not be ignored, medical translation is not yet one of them. By way of illustration, we refer you to some original research carried out by the British Medical Journal on the use of Google Translate in medical translation.

The experimental set-up replicated a common scenario in medicine: a health professional having to communicate a patient's medical condition or requirements to the patient without the help of a human translator, turning instead to an online translation service. Ten common statements were selected and Google-translated into 26 languages. The accuracy of the resulting translations was assessed by asking native speakers to back-translate them into English.





And let's not forget that, beyond avoiding the life-threatening and the nonsensical, communication in this context has another role to play: it must inspire trust in the patient and the patient's family, and to do so it must be empathetic. The factual content of a message like "Your husband is now ready to donate" is not hard to extract, but the message lacks all tact and may not therefore lead to an optimal outcome.

It must also be natural, meaning "as used by a native speaker". In Spanish, for instance, nasal hemorrhages, plantar fasciitis and myopia are perfectly commonplace, but such diagnoses would set alarm bells ringing for an English-speaking patient.

In this language, Latinate terms are the preserve of doctor-doctor interactions, medical journals... and serious illnesses – not nosebleeds, jogger's heel or shortsightedness. So while Google's translation would perfectly be correct, it would also be perfectly incomprehensible to your average native English speaker.

To reiterate, Google Translate has its uses, but where patient well-being is at stake, we strongly recommend the services of a trained language professional.

2. WHAT CAN MEDICAL TRANSLATORS ONLINE OFFER TO YOUR COMPANY?



Medicine means health, and health means life. Quality is essential. Medical translation field requires further attention to details, even much more than any other kind of translation. Remind that it is critical to put someone's life in the right hands.

A specialized medical translation agency, such as Okomeds, takes care of any detail and focuses on perfection. The aim is not to take unnecessary risks which might lie on the translated text. A good medical translation is a life insurance.

Here are some points for reinforcing the idea of trusting an experienced medical translation agency.

- Accuracy: a specialized text should always provide truthfulness, precision, and clarity. Accuracy and objectiveness are needed both for specialized words and sentences.
- Knowledge: a medical translator should know, understand, and be familiar with all the features of the target text. Otherwise, a mistranslation would endanger lives.
- Quality: a medical translator is essential thanks to the quality offered and can make communication easier by offering such high quality service.
- Professionalism: avoid unnecessary mistakes and perform a professional work. Consequences of a bad medical translation could be a catastrophe.
- Process: a medical translation agency works in a detailed process aiming at high quality. Translation and proofreading are not the only values taken into account.

- **Specialization:** not just a good translator neither a specialized doctor could be the one required for a medical translation. The right translator should feature these two characteristics: both a translation experience and a high medical knowledge. That is the key for specialization.

A translation agency specialized in medical services can offer you specialists in pharmacy, biotechnology, veterinarian science, and other medical specialities, as well as the added value of a large team of translators in various languages who can meet your needs. Translation agencies usually have a large team of professional translators who can provide the urgent translations you need.

This team does not only include translators, but other professionals who bring great added value to the final work, such as the proofreaders, who review and correct the translations, bringing greater quality to the work delivered, and administrative staff, who provide customer care to facilitate the translators' work. In this way, translation agencies can provide you with a more personal image. All-in-one.

- **Preventive healthcare:** when talking about drugs, medical procedures, healthcare researches... you should avoid any risk as health is at stake. If any information is misunderstood, the patient may be in danger. Avoid any potential mistake and its consequences may be catastrophic. So trust a professional medical translation agency for offering this detailed task.

- **New clients:** if you can clearly communicate any information at a prospection process, the potential client will be satisfied. It means that there will be no doubts or unanswered questions, and that all the contained information is transmitted in a decided and accurate way. When dealing with foreign clients, a medical translation agency may provide you a medical translator - for written texts - or a medical interpreter - for oral speeches, in order to achieve such purpose. And that will be vital to increase the number of clients.

- Strengthen relationships: it is very important to keep on transmitting quality information. That is to say, to strengthen any professional relationship you should always do your best, including any area. In the linguistic field, a medical translation agency perfectly knows how to bring such quality with the best professionals as healthcare and translation skills are some of its requirements.
- Life: medicine should never take unnecessary risks as life is on the line. Medical translation plays an essential role and becomes a very important element for consideration.

A little research can be enough, and it is always essential. Word of mouth can be a good start; if a relative or friend recommends you a medical translation agency due to a previous and good experience, why not to trust it? But if you have no references at all, just google the name of the company on the Internet. Some medical blogs, Facebook groups or Twitter researches for obtaining reliable information about such agency are as easy as useful. A quick look at Google or LinkedIn will also give you a whole idea if some good feedbacks and recommendations are included in the profile.



3. ARE YOU AWARE OF MEDICAL TRANSLATION FIGURES?

Regardless the global economic recession, medical translation is one of those markets that are still growing. According to some reports by IbisWorld – which is a global business intelligence leader specializing in Industry Market Research and Procurement and Purchasing research reports – it is estimated that the size of this sector is around \$35 billion and that it would reach \$37 billion in 2018. And the overall growth for the decade of 2010s will represent an increase of 40%.

As regards pricing, you will probably find a wide range of fees. The cheapest one – if it differs a lot from the others – might be suspicious.

It is better to assign the whole project to one – maximum two medical translators – if it is huge, whenever possible. Coherence gives more quality.

You may choose the best medical translators, but a proofread is highly recommended for avoiding any potential mistake. Four eyes see better than two. So you will assure quality and a great professional image.

Always select medical translators with a specialization in the corresponding field. Health and medicine are huge areas. In other words, translating an oncology text is very different from translating – for example – a document related to teeth or a Patient Information Leaflet related to cardiology.

Coordination and communication are essential. So, do not bother to contact or be contacted by the medical translators. They might have a doubt – which is better to solve – or even detect a linguistic mistake in the original text – which needs to be corrected.

Experience is a good point, but do not miss new medical translators, as they might have the same potential. Anyway, you can ask for a quick translation test for double-checking their knowledge and skills.

So, if you need translating different texts into different languages, you can get the best medical translators by contacting Okomeds.

Here are some ideas that must always be taken into account when justifying prices:

- Specialization: any specialized text should be surcharged with an extra fee (the medical translator should be compensated for his/her previous specialization training). Not all projects are supposed to have the same level of difficulty.
- Urgency: urgency rate might be applied when the medical translator would have to make extra hours and/or work during weekends or even bank holidays.
- Similarity: If the client works with similar texts, he/she should get a discount. Working with Translation Memories eases the job of the translator and reduces costs for the client. Besides, templates can be useful and very practical.
- Delivery method: Either on-site or via courier. In the last case, this extra service should be included in the quote too.
- Taxes: taxes should be added when issuing the invoice. The taxes depend on the country, but VAT (Value Added Tax), PIT (Personal Income Tax) or a regular monthly fee for freelancers are some of the most common worldwide taxes. Anyway, you should check the corresponding national taxation.
So, if you need translating different texts into different languages, you can get the best ones by contacting Okomeds.

4. SOME TIPS ON MEDICAL TRANSLATION



- Abbreviations: no matter which language you are translating from or into, you must always know how to face abbreviations in the source language. And, as English is the most common source translating language, here are some useful common abbreviations in medical translation with their corresponding meaning.

a.c. – before meals. It normally refers to the drug intake. It comes from Latin: ante cibos.

bld – blood. In clinical test, this is one of the most common abbreviations.

CDE – complete dental evaluation. It is used in the odontology area.

CVA – cerebrovascular accident. Also known as stroke.

DNR – do not resuscitate. This is a specific order for not reviving a patient artificially if succumbs to illness.

EUA – examination under anesthesia. When an anesthetist is needed for a medical procedure, we often see this abbreviation.

gtt – drops. This abbreviation is used for intakes. HTN – hypertension. Some common diseases are also written with abbreviations for a quick communication.

IM – intramuscular. Some abbreviations, like this, are used just for medical notations.

IV – intravenously. This is used by doctors and nurses.

KVP – keep vein open. An indication often given by doctors.

LBP – low back pain. One of the most common medical complaints.

NAS – no added salt. Very used in hospital menus and nutritional recommendations.

N/V – nausea or vomiting. This a medical note for explaining some patient's symptoms.

p.o. – by mouth. It comes from Latin: per os.

PMI – point of maximum impulse (of the heart when felt during examination).

q2h – every 2 hours. It refers to the medicine intake. “Q” means “every”, but there are some other similar abbreviations, as q3h (every 3 hours), qAM (each morning), and so on.

SQ – subcutaneous or subcutaneously. This a notation related to the skin or injections.

VSS – vital signs are stable. Doctors love seeing abbreviations like this one.

Wt – weight. Generally seen in physical examinations.

- Decimals and figures: in English, decimals are represented with a point (3.0, 232.56, 912.091...), but in many other languages it changes into a comma.

Conversion units are also subject to mistake. Amounts of money, doses of drugs, statistics... It all may change in a catastrophic way.

- Too large sentences: Unnecessary long sentences and a complex syntax only cause misunderstandings. Be as clear as possible for your reader. A scientific translation must be concise, precise and correct.

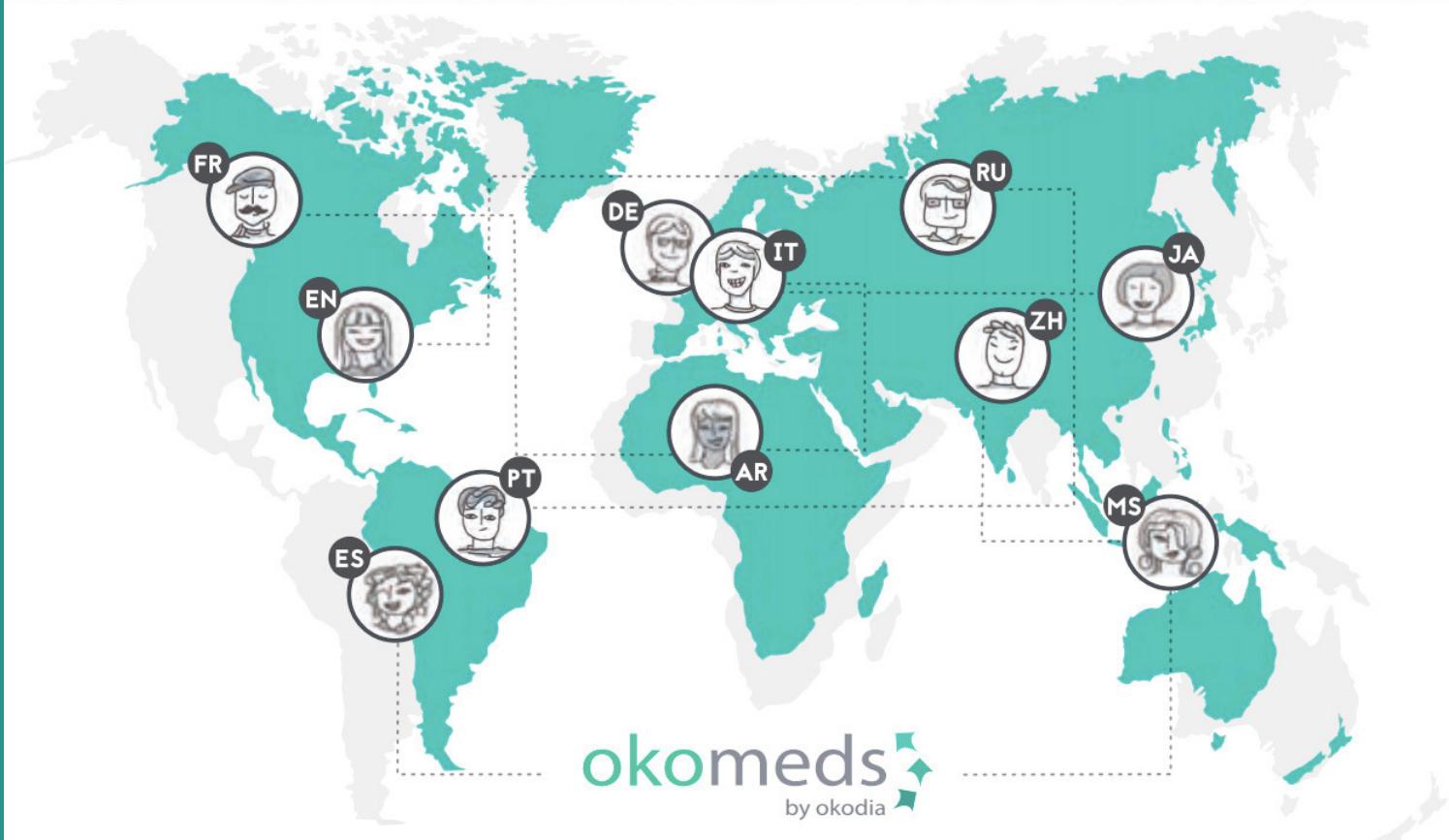
- Conditional tense: it is one of the most common mistakes in scientific translation. Words such as may, might, can, could, should or shall are the trickiest ones, because hints are subject to completely change the meaning of the sentence. What conditional tense and probability express should be looked closely. A drastic, unequivocal or conclusive statement might offer a slightly different point of view.

- False friends: any translation must pay attention to false friends, but it is more important – for sure – in those fields related to health. Scientific translation may focus on researching, testing... or even human lives. So do not confuse information avoiding unnecessary risks.

- Kill ambiguity: unless the original text is ambiguous, avoid any unnecessary ambiguity in your medical translation. Surgeons, doctors, nurses or any other health specialist should perfectly know what to do at any moment. Pay a special attention and be sure that you have clarified any detail.

- Drug names: do not translate drugs with an equivalent brand name which is only sold in the target country, even if they are both similar and you are sure that any hospital would prescribe any of them with no distinction. It is not your responsibility; you are a medical translator not a doctor. Just keep the original brand name and add INN (International Nonproprietary Name) in brackets afterwards: it would clarify the idea and avoid any hypothetical and further problem.

GLOBAL TRANSLATIONS



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This is why, more and more companies are entrusting us with their professional translations specialized in life sciences and health sciences, and share with us their satisfaction with our service:

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Okodia's translations have always been of high quality, their communication and availability is great, and certainly above average. In particular, their translations of scientific terms in informed consent forms makes them perfectly understandable for patients from every educational background. -

Uri Weinberg, Novocure

Communication with Okodia has always been excellent in all our translation projects. When our instructions were not sufficiently clear, Okodia always did their best to clarify. Deadlines have always been met, and certificates have always been delivered on schedule. -

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