D4.6: IMPROVING HEALTH OF THE LATINO/HISPANIC COMMUNITY

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Abstract:
Introduction: The new majority minority in the US is the Latino/Hispanic population, now at 15% and projected to be 30% of the population by 2050. Meeting their health needs provides unique challenges for nursing and other health professionals. Healthy People 2010 and 2020
inform practitioners, researchers, administrators and policy makers of the disparities found among these citizens. The Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services standards are only one strategy to ensure adequate access and quality of care.

**Method(s):** Major efforts provide unique challenges and opportunities among vulnerable Latinos/Hispanics, especially with decreasing resources and increasing population. Age, gender and culturally appropriate interventions, settings, designs, measures, and partnerships focused on heart disease, cancer, unintentional injuries, stroke, and diabetes require innovation, creativity, and sustainable commitment. Also, communities face increasing concerns for the 17% of new HIV infections (which is three times the rate of whites) among Hispanic/Latinos and a lack of Hispanics with mental health disorders contacting mental health specialists. These issues impact housing, employment, schools, business, law enforcement, health systems, and public health.

**Results:** Contemporary models and approaches integrate cultural beliefs, behaviors, and language with daily Hispanic/Latino life. School health station screenings and health education for rural Hispanic/Latino children and after school parent health education programs are innovative culturally focused programs that have immediate and long term impact. Community based truancy prevention engages urban Latino youth in avoiding academic and social problems. Faith based programs utilize spirituality in prevention of obesity and control of diabetes. Male and female promotores promote HIV and diabetes prevention among farm workers and the working poor. Parenting models assist communities in maintaining children in schools and within family homes.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** Avenues to address the community needs, in difficult economic times, including nursing education, innovative service learning, health system outreach, policy and allocation decisions, and volunteer and lay community service will be explicated.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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