



RESEARCH • PRACTICE • POLICY

LATINO CENTER FOR HEALTH

ENGAGING LATINO COMMUNITIES

LATINO CENTER FOR HEALTH 2021 IMPACT

MARCH 17, 2022



ADDRESSING COVID-19

IMPACTING POLICY

IMPACTING PRACTICE

**SUPPORTING THE NEXT
GENERATION**

WHO WE ARE

The [Latino Center for Health \(LCH\)](#) provides leadership for community-engaged research aimed at promoting Latino health and addressing health inequities affecting Latino communities in Washington state, regionally, and nationally. LCH is the only interdisciplinary health sciences research center in the WWAMI (Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho) region with a singular focus on promoting Latino health.



ADDRESSING COVID-19

While Latinos represent 13% of our state population, they comprise 20% of all confirmed COVID-19 cases and 14% of COVID-related hospitalizations as of March 3, 2022. However, on an age-adjusted basis, the mortality rate due to COVID-19 for Latinos (335.7 per 100,000) is 2.5 times higher than whites (133.7 per 100,000).¹

Our team raised awareness of COVID-19's disproportionate impact on Latino communities across WA state and ongoing recovery needs by:



COVID IMPACT SYMPOSIUM

Convening stakeholders across WA at our [COVID Impact Symposium](#), producing 4 [policy briefs](#) on vaccination efforts, supports for K-12 schools, mental health impact, and mutual aid, and distributing this timely information across the state to inform decision makers on recovery needs.



RESEARCH

Conducting a survey of Latino patients in collaboration with Sea Mar Community Health Centers to deepen our understanding of COVID-19, producing a [series of briefs](#) spanning topics from economic impact on Latinas to vaccine hesitancy and mental health impacts of the pandemic.



¡ADIÓS COVID!

Increasing access to vaccinations among Latino populations in WA state through partnership with [¡Adiós COVID!](#)



COMMUNITY-BASED VACCINATION SUPPORT

Convening vaccinators and community-based and faith-based organizations to provide linguistically- and culturally-appropriate outreach and more than 20 pop-up vaccination clinics in Latino communities across the state.



COMMUNICATIONS

Informing Washingtonians through local and regional media coverage to amplify these important issues in [news stories](#), [television](#) and [podcasts](#) throughout the course of the pandemic.

¹ COVID-19 morbidity and mortality by race, ethnicity and spoken language in Washington state; Washington State Department of Health February 22, 2022; accessed March 6, 2022.



IMPACTING POLICY

Driven by calls from community and health care leadership and funding from the state legislature, our research and expertise on Latino health in WA state has informed legislative efforts over the past year. We highlight below milestones of our impact over the past year which led to important successes on the path to equitable health care and improved well-being for Latinos in our state.

A WA state proviso-funded LCH study assessing the makeup of the [Latino physicians workforce in WA](#)* informed legislation and other efforts aimed at increasing health career pathways and health workforce development for underrepresented minorities, including Latinos. The study, guided by a statewide advisory committee, led to:



Data insights that supported the passing of two bills in the 2021 legislative session ([Senate Bill 5228](#) and [House Bill 1129](#)). The bills established representative admissions goals for state medical schools and the creation of a pathway to licensure for international medical graduates;



The creation of the first ever statewide Latino Physician Caucus – part of the Washington State Medical Association.

LCH invested in inaugural policy director and policy associate positions to develop the policy infrastructure for the organization and lead the ongoing health workforce policy work. Latino community healthcare leadership provided seed funding to further the infrastructure building of this policy work.

IMPACTING PRACTICE

Innovative Telemental Health for Depression Care - In partnership with the Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic and Heritage University, the Latino Center for Health developed an innovative program to train bachelor students to deliver an evidence-based, culturally responsive model of depression care for Latinos via telephone. Evidence attests to the program's success in significantly and effectively reducing patient symptoms. This work offers a promising model to address the shortage of mental health practitioners in a cost-effective manner and reduce barriers to treatment among rural Latino populations.

SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

LCH is committed to building capacity among student scholars to advance Latino health. To that end, LCH continued its annual Student Scholars Fellowship Program launched in 2020 to provide support for UW, Heritage University and Washington State University health sciences students who have demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting the health and wellbeing of WA Latino communities. A total of eleven students were selected in 2021.

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