

# Healthcare:

A Call to Action for  
Dane County

**Cuéntame Más**

LATINO CONSORTIUM  
**FOR ACTION**

**United  
Way**



United Way  
of Dane County

## **Health: Call to Action**

In Dane County, the Latinx community is primarily young and access to preventive healthcare now is an essential investment to avoid the associated long term human and financial costs.

The following three priority areas will allow us to tackle the issues described above in a long-term and sustainable manner:

- 1. Improve access to culturally and linguistically appropriate primary and behavioral health services.**
- 2. Hire and retain culturally and linguistically competent healthcare providers.**
- 3. Increase capacity for health education programming.**

# HEALTH: An overview of the Latinx community in Dane County

## 1. Improve access to culturally and linguistically appropriate primary and behavioral health services.

We have made enormous strides in increasing the number of Latinx with primary care homes (PCH) through the crucial role of Access Community Health Centers, the Primary Access for Kids program, the availability of nationally certified medical interpreters in all local health systems, and the community awareness created by the Latino Health Council outreach and educational programs. Despite all these efforts, many Latinos are utilizing urgent care clinics, emergency rooms or free acute care clinics such as the UW medical student run MEDiC clinic as their primary way to access healthcare. It is important to specifically highlight the scarcity of culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health services.



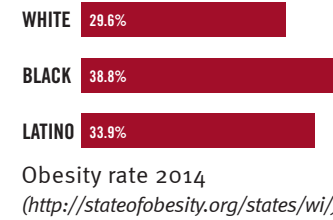
Hiring and retaining **culturally and linguistically competent healthcare providers** creates a higher level of trust and an ability to identify with the provider knowing that s/he can understand not only the language but also the cultural and legal factors.

## 2. Hire and retain culturally and linguistically competent healthcare providers.

Research has shown that the Latinx community have a higher level of trust when providers:

- Formalize and financially support internships and mentoring programs that increase the number of Latinx youth choosing healthcare careers.
- Hire and retain bilingual and bicultural providers. Latinx are woefully underrepresented in our local health care systems. Programs such as Centro Hispano's CNA training, Caminos (a partner in United Way's HIRE Initiative), are essential in increasing the number of healthcare providers. We need a specific focus in attracting and retaining Latinx physicians, nurses, therapists and health care providers at all levels of care including management positions.

- A key component of quality behavioral health services is for the client to feel understood. When the client identifies with the provider and knows that the provider understands not only his/her language but also the cultural and legal factors, there is a significant increase in positive outcomes of treatment.



## 3. Increase capacity for health education programming.

The Latinx community embraces with enthusiasm any opportunity offered to learn about health and well-being. Events such as the annual Latino Chronic Disease Community Workshop, the Latino Mental Health Summit or Teen Health Bash are well-attended year after year. The new Centro Hispano Tuesday farmers' market has quickly become a community staple. We need to continue offering a breadth of community-based health education programs as they are an important driver of health behaviors. We specifically see a need for a robust community health worker or "promotora" program to drive sustainable neighborhood based peer to peer health education.

### Healthcare Priorities and Opportunities.

Obesity and mental health are two of the top health concerns in our Latinx community. Unfortunately a major barrier is the high rate of uninsured Latinx. Immigration status plays a significant role in this:

- cannot purchase insurance on the ACA Marketplace
- do not qualify for regular Medicaid or Medicare
- are often employed in low paying jobs in industries that do not offer health insurance coverage.

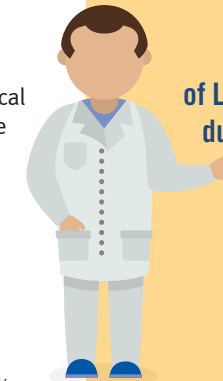
Percent Uninsured	
Latinos	25%
Native-Born Latinos	15%
Foreign-Born Latinos	50%
Whites	7%
African Americans	17%
Latinos 17 and Younger	9%
Whites 17 and Younger	4%
African Americans 17 and Younger	4%

These figures are from the 2011 demographic profile for Wisconsin provided by pewhispanic.org



### Additional Facts.

"In 2005, the American Psychological Association noted that while one in five Americans identifies as [Latino], only one percent of psychologists identified themselves as [Latino]. APA went on to note that while 70 percent of ... whites return for a second appointment after an initial visit to a psychologist, only 50 percent of [Latinos] do."  
 (<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/issues/latinohispanic-communities-and-mental-health>)



**20.2%** of Latinas report suicidal thoughts during high school compared to 16.1% of white females and are also more likely to attempt suicide at **13.5%** compared to 7.9%.

Over 40% of Latinx reported having mental stress in 2013 in Wisconsin whereas 34% of Latinx in the nation report the same.

Latina teens have the highest rate of suicide attempts of any other ethnic and gender group in their age category.

## Demographic Profile

- Latinx are the largest non-white racial/ethnic group in Dane County, making up 6.1% of the Dane County population (30,662). Close to 70% live in Madison and Fitchburg.
- The growth of this community is not just a result of migration; 44% of Latinx are born in Wisconsin.
- The poverty rate among Latinx increased 59% between 2009 and 2014 (*from 17.6% to just under 28%*) with even greater increases in Madison and Fitchburg.
- With increased poverty comes increased instability. Notably, home ownership among Latinx has dropped by 23% from 2009 to 2014. The percentage of Latinx renters has increased across Dane County from 63.5% in 2009 to 70.2% in 2014. This is the largest increase among all major racial groups.
- Between 2009 and 2014, there was a 24.3% increase in overcrowded households. Latinx overcrowding has been consistently twice the rate of the next most overcrowded racial group, and is growing.
- Current immigration policies force the Latinx community to live in the shadows. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Dane County hold individuals without due process, and in many cases, without pending charges or probable cause. Across Wisconsin, ICE detainees decreased more than 25% between November 2014 and October 2015. Yet in Dane County during the same period of time, the number of detainees more than doubled.

## Call for Action

We are in a critical time for investment in the Latinx community. **Please join us in making the greatest impact in our community by giving, advocating and volunteering.**

**The Latino Consortium for Action (LCA)** is made up of organizations that understand the daily lives of our community because of their work within the community—they are culturally and linguistically embedded in the Dane County Latinx community. They are: *Centro Hispano of Dane County, the Latino Chamber of Commerce, the Latino Academy of Workforce Development, the Latino Support Network, the Latino Education Council, the Latino Health Council, the Latino Children and Families' Council, the Latino Professionals Association, LUCES, Omega School and UNIDOS.*

**United Way of Dane County** uses our leadership, vision and expansive relationships to bring the community together in multiple convening roles. Ten years ago, we were proud to be steadfast partners with the Latinx community in the facilitation of the Cuéntame report. A decade later that has not changed and we are committed to creating more positive change in the Latinx Community by facilitating the production of this next generation report.

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Full report is available at [www.unitedwaydanecounty.org/resources/reports/](http://www.unitedwaydanecounty.org/resources/reports/)