



Our Community, Our Responsibility: Latinos in Action

Nuestra Comunidad, Nuestra Responsabilidad: Latinos en Acción

Meeting Summary October 14, 2008

On October 14, 2008, HIV providers and community partners met to discuss the state of HIV/AIDS prevention and care among Latinos living in Los Angeles County. The goal was to continue conversations inspired by recommendations developed during the *Latino HIV Policy Summit and Discussion* sponsored by the National Latino AIDS Awareness Day—Los Angeles Planning Committee with support from the Office of AIDS Programs and Policy in 2007 (see Appendix).

The following is a summary of strategies designed to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic among Latinos as identified by the meeting's participants. The areas of focus included funding, media, and policy.

FUNDING

Goal

To increase the financial capacity of agencies providing HIV prevention, care and treatment services.

Strategies

- Build staff capacity to compete for funding effectively.
 - Recruit competent grant writers.
 - Implement a team effort in competing for available funds.
- Diversify funding sources.
 - Pursue funding opportunities in the private sector (e.g., Spanish-language media), non-HIV sources, individual donors, etc.
- Incorporate business model into non-profit work.
- Identify organizational growth strategies.
- Strengthen collaborations and partnerships to share resources and increase funding opportunities.
 - Identify new partners and network.

- Strategically collaborate and partner when applying for Request for Proposals (RFPs).
- Strategize on how to leverage current resources.
- Prioritize funding applications.
- Advocate for a unified application and/or screening process.
- Understand the specific needs of the population to better allocate scarce resources.
 - Assess current data.
 - Pay specific attention to priority populations and cultural factors, in addition to unique issues (transgender, youth, etc.).

Next Steps

In 30-60 days participants plan to:

- Map current resources and needs.
- Approach foundations for support.
- Build and increase capacity within organizations.
 - Learn more about capacity building.
 - Seek technical assistance when necessary.
- Work with Latino taskforce on funding policies.

Within one year, participants plan to:

- Diversify funding sources (e.g., social enterprise model).
- Initiate and develop collective and collaborative Latino events and strategies.
 - Involve multiple agencies in strategic planning.
- Advocate for a new Ryan White Part A federal funding process as part of a national strategy.

MEDIA & COMMUNITY NORMS

Goal

Address stigma and discrimination related to HIV disease in the Latino community through the power and reach of popular media and other meaningful collaborations.

Strategies

- Use and leverage existing media resources and relationships.
 - Target free media (e.g., cable shows).
 - Use popular radio personalities as vehicles for disseminating information.
- Collaborate with others. Involve schools, religious institutions, popular media, and online communities (e.g., my space, facebook).
 - Approach media as a group, rather than individually.
 - Use lessons learned from the “Soy” campaign collaboration between Kaiser Family Foundation and Univision.
- Integrate messages with other issues that impact the Latino community (immigration, general health care, etc.).
- Create media messages that highlight community strengths.

Next Steps

In 30-60 days participants plan to:

- Initiate a letter writing campaign that outreaches to media and schools to encourage more coverage on HIV issues.
- Develop a list of community health fairs throughout Los Angeles County and share with HIV providers to encourage more agency participation in community events.

Within one year, we plan to:

- Integrate HIV messages with other health issues covered in the media.
- Advocate for televised HIV/AIDS medication ads.
- Create a media resource guide that catalogues Public Service Announcements (PSAs) that focus on HIV/AIDS issues.
- Create a social marketing campaign that reduces the stigma associated with HIV disease (e.g., “I know somebody...”).
- Partner with the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) to organize a summit that targets media content developers (producers, directors, etc.).

POLICY

Goal

Enact structural and organizational changes to improve HIV prevention, care and testing services for Latino populations.

Strategies

- Create and foster Latino leadership and organization at the local level.
 - Encourage more representation from populations most impacted by HIV disease.
- Increase health provider awareness of and agency capacity to implement key legislation on HIV/AIDS and other pertinent issues (e.g., AB 682).
 - Monitor healthcare issues, anti-immigration laws, prison reform bills, etc.
- Collaborate with non-traditional partners from the public and private sectors.
 - Establish networks with churches, AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs), and Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD).
 - Encourage stronger partnerships between researchers and providers.
 - Invite Medi-Cal /Care representatives to planning bodies.
 - Join healthcare reform efforts.
- Recruit bilingual doctors, pharmacists, and other integral health providers.

Next Steps

In 30-60 days participants plan to:

- Identify and partner with state and local allies.
- Become more involved with local planning bodies (e.g., Prevention Planning Committee, Commission on HIV).
- Convene local Latino HIV taskforce under the auspice of the Prevention Planning Committee (PPC).
- Create HIV messaging that religious organizations can effectively utilize.

Within one year, participants plan to:

- Launch a Countywide notification/education campaign to inform medical providers that health insurers now cover the cost of HIV testing.
- Initiate a comprehensive prisons bill that adequately addresses HIV testing, education, medical care and transitional case management for incarcerated populations.
- Develop a Latino strategic plan and distribute widely.
 - Review and shift past priorities.
 - Involve high level leaders.

APPENDIX

A Call to Action:

2007 Latino HIV Policy Summit & Discussion Recommendations

(Released at *Our Community, Our Responsibility: Latinos in Action*)



A Call to Action:
*Latino HIV Policy Summit & Discussion
Recommendations*

**National Latino AIDS Awareness Day
October 15, 2007**

National Latino AIDS Awareness Day
Los Angeles Planning Committee

October 15th is the annual observance of National Latino AIDS Awareness Day (NLAAD) and marks the conclusion of Hispanic Heritage Month in the United States. It is a day of hope for a future world without HIV/AIDS.

To commemorate, Latino leadership across the United States sponsors diverse activities that respond to the state of HIV/AIDS among Latinos in their communities. Different leaders in diverse localities use the day to promote activities related to HIV prevention, awareness, and the power of culture in recognition of surging new infection rates among Latinos/as.

In 2007, the Los Angeles Planning Committee for National Latino AIDS Awareness Day, in collaboration with the Latino Coalition Against AIDS, hosted *A Call to Action: Latino HIV Policy Summit and Roundtable* discussion at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles with support from the Office of AIDS Programs and Policy. This event brought prominent leaders in the Latino community together to strategize and develop recommendations for the California State Office of AIDS. The goal was to develop recommendations aimed at removing barriers to HIV testing and reversing current trends of late testing in the Latino community.

The following are the barriers and strategies identified by those community leaders present at the 2007 NLAAD/Latino Coalition Against AIDS "A Call to Action" summit.

"Working together, we can make a difference"

OUR PROBLEM, OUR GOAL

Problem

Latinos are more likely to receive an AIDS diagnosis within one year of testing positive for HIV. Over the past 10 years, Latinos have accounted for the largest increase in the number of persons living with AIDS.

Goal

To decrease late HIV testing among Latinos and to promote HIV prevention and early testing by engaging and coordinating community resources, including: government, community partners, business, faith-based organizations, schools, various media, other non-traditional supporters, and the community at large.

POLICY

Barrier

The specific issue of HIV/AIDS among Latinos is not on legislative agendas and appears to live in a vacuum, despite the fact that it affects healthcare justice and other rights.

Strategies

- Engage effective leadership at local, State and federal government levels to develop the political will necessary to support HIV/AIDS issues affecting Latino communities.
- Build support and funding for routine universal HIV testing at all levels of government and healthcare, including testing for those who are un- or under-insured.
- Support pilot/test programs and new strategies that increase testing--particularly among first-time testers--and address reasons for not testing.
- Conduct research that examines the incongruence between conventional profiles of at-risk populations and those who are testing positive. Risk profiling criteria for Latina women in particular need close examination.
- Use and integrate data from our HIV/AIDS work to improve our performance and expand opportunities to normalize HIV/AIDS.

MEDIA/COMMUNICATIONS

Barriers

- Lack of knowledge and understanding of how to use and operate in media markets.
- Competing messages in a saturated media market dilute the visibility and effectiveness of social marketing tools around Los Angeles County.
- Social marketing may not be as effective for HIV prevention messages as other social issues (e.g., immigration).
- High production costs and low visibility render Public Service Announcements (PSAs) ineffective.

Strategies

- Allocate resources for more effective social marketing campaigns that address and normalize HIV-related issues for all Latinos.
- Use media as a friend and partner, and be informed on how to present messages in a responsible manner that reaches the community.
- Use online networks as part of mass media and marketing approaches.
- Develop direct and/or provocative social marketing messages to gain attention.
- Support linguistic and culturally appropriate approaches.
- Emphasize Latino values, and include messages and images that appeal to and represent real community members with specific messages aimed toward Latina women (the modern woman, the worker, the mother, the student) and Latino men (fathers, macho men, vaqueros, rancheros).
- Tie messages into real change and provide an integrated healthy vision of the Latino community by emphasizing its strengths.

COMMUNITY NORMS

Barriers

- Misconceptions that HIV/AIDS is a white, gay disease.
- Misconceptions around the need for condoms during anal sex *versus* vaginal sex.
- Fear of testing among those most at risk.

Strategies

- Collaborate with stakeholders outside of HIV to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS issues in the Latino community (e.g., immigration advocates, businesses, religious institutions, etc.).
- Maintain a multi-prong approach by continuing grassroots efforts, building bridges and enlisting partners in the community.
- Focus on a strengths-based versus deficit model.
- Address both women and men, and work with their assets when educating them about HIV/AIDS.
- Discuss men who have sex with men and their role in driving the epidemic.
- Invite immigration advocates to the table and incorporate border issues into the discussion.

FUNDING RESOURCES

Barrier

- Accomplishing the work needed with shrinking dollars.
- Various risk groups competing for limited funding.

Strategies

- Look to private sector for funding.
- Expand the number of community and business leaders working to address the epidemic.
- Continue to have frequent, honest dialogue that challenges us to improve our response and to have effective collaborations.
- Identify best practices and more effective interventions to better utilize existing resources.

YOUTH

Barriers

- Testing rarely occurs in youth-oriented settings.
- Conservative values may impede HIV services provided by Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD).
- No consistency in the quality of sex education and health services offered in schools. Programs with excellent sex education and services accessible to youth are not the norm.

Strategies

- Increase access to HIV testing in school settings, youth centers and family planning clinics.
- Use opportunities at schools to address sexual health and development (e.g., health education curricula).
- Explore opportunities at schools to reach and educate families and communities (e.g., PTAs and other events).

HEALTHCARE

Barriers

- Lack of access to primary health care or insurance coverage, which contributes to late AIDS diagnosis.
- No current standard of care in the medical community for HIV risk screening.
- Inability to test our way out of the epidemic via universal testing; targeted testing through effective screening strategies designed to find those at highest risk need to continue.
- Social norms that discourage seeking primary and preventative health care.

Strategies

- Encourage more testing by:
 - Educating medical students and providers on the importance of testing in medical settings, including small neighborhood community cash clinics where Latinos may frequent and receive medical care.
 - Implementing standard routine HIV testing in emergency rooms.
- Include HIV in IDA indicators.
- Revise risk assessments to reflect specific risk behaviors among Latinos when screening individuals during targeted testing.
- Prioritize CDC recommendations for universal HIV testing.
- Normalize HIV testing through social marketing campaigns and/or by packaging the HIV test with other routine or common medical services.