

Llegando a Comunidades en Caso de Emergencias (LACECE)

Emergency Risk & Public Health Communication for Monolingual Latino Population in San Diego County

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BACKGROUND

The "Llegando a Comunidades en Caso de Emergencias-LACECE" team is one of the 12 national teams selected by the Public Health Institute to participate in the National Leadership Academy for the Public's Health- NLAPH-. Throughout the year we have received training to advance our leadership skills and achieve health equity in our community.

For the LACECE team members, the passion for improving the lives of the Latino community in the San Diego-Tijuana border region is what defines them and dictates their work. Collectively they possess over 70 years of leadership experience working with diverse communities on a variety of public health and social betterment projects. They all work in San Diego County with Latino binational communities in different capacities representing government, non-profit, and academia.

Population of focus

- Spanish speaking Latinos with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) in San Diego County.
- In San Diego County over 400,000 individuals speak a language other than English at home and report speaking English less than very well¹.
- Approximately 11% of the total San Diego population report speaking primarily Spanish in the home
- Almost 1/3 of individuals with LEP report not to be prepared for a disaster².
- Latinos represent approximately 33% of San Diego County's entire population and in the recent past they have encountered significant barriers to receiving lifesaving information during emergencies³.

TEAM LEADERSHIP GOALS

Team Leadership Goals:

- Identify best practices, systems to model and gaps in local efforts
- Determine the key individuals that should form part of the communication pathway and solicit their involvement
- Create guidelines for determining at what point and what type of information should be shared; the hope is that these guidelines will be easily adapted and replicable in other statewide, national and international jurisdictions

PERSONAL LEADERSHIP GOALS

April Fernandez: To learn more about new innovative strategies to effectively address health equity and learn about quality improvement methodology and how to measure progress of the project. Interested in strategies on how to influence policy change and learn about the latest online technology and effective social media tools.

Liliana Osorio: To learn about formal processes for developing collaborations, continuous quality improvement methodology to measure project effectiveness and systems thinking. To improve leadership skills while participating in a multi-sector collaboration and to gain a deeper understanding on how to evaluate the collective impact of a collaborative project.

Connie Lafuente: To expand knowledge in working with non-traditional partners (business community, transportation, library, and police) across social sectors to leverage resources, and address community health issues. To learn how to become a more effective leader by gaining skills to improve program outcomes and reduce health disparities. To increase knowledge on how to apply quality improvement methodology, use online technology and social media tools to achieve community health improvement goals.

Justine Kozo: To learn strategies to strengthen my communication skills using online technology and social media, as well as build a greater understanding of quality improvement methodology surrounding project implementation. To continue building my career in border health and address border and binational health issues essential to my professional and personal development.

LACECE'S STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT USING BRUCE TUCKMAN'S STAGES OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Performing - achieving effective and satisfying results, working collaboratively, and caring for each other.

HOW COMPLETING THE NLAPH PROGRAM WILL CONTRIBUTE TO OUR APPLIED HEALTH LEADERSHIP PROJECT (AHLP)

Completing the NLAPH program has provided our team with the opportunity to learn more about each other's organizations, how systems and protocols are adopted and how to effectively collaborate on projects large in scope. It is essential to have strong, trusting relationships while working with diverse communities. The NLAPH training provided the guidance to achieve our goals and sustain strong cross-sector collaboration among team members and community agencies to facilitate working together in the future.



INDIVIDUAL LEARNING GROWTH – Reflections on what we learned through participating in NLAPH

April:

- To focus more on process than outcomes
- To step back and observe before reacting or taking charge
- To understand the importance of "reflection" and looking back at the "a-ha's"
- To formalize our work that had been going on and measure formal outcomes through the data collected from our trainings
- To acquire practical tools and examples that can be applied to our work and community
- To recognize and utilize Myers- Briggs personality traits
- To gain the opportunity to share challenges and successes with colleagues and organizations

Liliana:

- To identify and recognize my own strengths and weaknesses, as well as the strengths of my group peers
- To learn the importance of stopping the "action" process and take a time to step back and see the big picture
- To focus on the positive aspects, and see the opportunities that each challenge can bring, instead of looking only at the problem
- To think outside the box when looking for potential partners and collaborators
- To utilize the many Public Health resources available that are very helpful in many of my projects

Connie:

- Expand and strengthen relationships with non-traditional partners consisting of the media, elected officials, and public libraries to expand program reach.
- Increase knowledge on quality improvement methodology to implement a successful program with measurable outcomes.
- Frame the message to convey program goals, and increase support.
- Learn to effectively manage work load and deliver quality work with ongoing competing priorities.
- Take the time to self-reflect and step back to look at the big picture
- Enhance critical thinking to problem solve.
- Receive expert guidance and insight from NLAPH coach, Susan.

Justine:

- The power of soft leadership: influencing others through suggested strategies and solutions, building strong teams, creating mutually beneficial partnerships
- The importance of mindful communication and being open to all ideas, saying "Yes, and..." instead of "No"
- Assertive communication – learning to communicate firmly, yet politely
- In a gentle way, you can shake the world* - Gandhi



VISION

Background:

Previous emergencies in the region have demonstrated the need for improving communication with the monolingual Spanish-speaking population. For example, during the 2004 and 2007 wildfires, the Latino population was greatly affected and due to communication barriers, many Latinos did not receive critical information.

Stakeholders:

Community partners, government agencies, schools, media, faith-based and non-profit organizations, clinics, Emergency Responders (Fire Dept., Paramedics, County, City), promotores network groups, 211, Red Cross and other relief organizations

Environmental and political context:

- Climate change and the increase in natural disasters (e.g. wildfires in the region, earthquakes, drought, high temperatures), greatly impact vulnerable populations. There is a need to devote more resources to preparedness efforts.
- More San Diego-based CBOs and local government agencies are recognizing the importance and urgency of improving communication with Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations
- Immigration status and providing services to undocumented persons are a concern to segments of the population, making this a potentially sensitive political issue. However, protecting populations during emergencies is a fundamental public health priority and the affiliated agencies are first and foremost, concerned with the wellbeing and safety of their communities

Critical leadership challenges:

- Prioritizing
- Recognizing the big picture
- Funds to support multi-lingual resources
- Sustainability
- Technology – finding the appropriate communication mechanism

Pathway to change:

- Organize quarterly trainings for key, trusted organizations within the Latino community
- Promote and review key emergency preparedness tools including the County of San Diego Spanish Emergency website and App
- Schedule presentations on emergency preparedness topics from the County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services and Emergency Medical Services, Red Cross and local agencies to share best practices
- Sign attendees up for the Partner Connection information sharing platform and encourage participating organizations to dedicate 1-2 staff positions to serve as the main contact for emergency communication

Vision/Desired future state:

Project Outcomes:

- To date, 2 trainings with local organizations serving the Latino population, have taken place (July and September 2015)
- 57 people attended the trainings representing government, clinical, educational, non-profit, faith-based and relief organizations
- 20 people signed up for the Partner Connection online information sharing platform at the trainings
- One drill utilizing the partner connection site took place on October 2015
- 9 people participated in the drill
- Lessons learned inspired an innovative solution to increasing participation and quality assurance – creating "community champions" to assist in our efforts
- Nine Community Champions have been identified and are currently being invited to serve in this role. Four have accepted.
- Due to the project success, trainings are being replicated for other organizations serving immigrant, refugee and newly arrived communities
- The most important outcome is that through these trainings, agencies serving the Latino community, will have access to accurate, timely information and resources, ultimately impacting and saving lives

Leadership Element – What was the impact of the NLAPH program on the project and your team?

- NLAPH encouraged the team to reflect on our leadership styles – strengths and opportunities for improvement
- NLAPH encouraged the team to explore innovative ways to engage with communities/organizations
- NLAPH taught us important ways to frame our message when communicating with leadership, partners and the community
- NLAPH reinforced the importance of data gathering
- NLAPH encouraged us to tell our story in a compelling, meaningful way with a "Call to Action"



THE FUTURE

Team – What are the team goals moving forward

- LACECE team members are committed to the sustainability of the project and ongoing collaboration with the San Diego County Office of Emergency Services in providing county wide emergency preparedness trainings, and community drills
- Explore the use of technology – such as developing an app to facilitate access to Partner Connection website
- Continue with quarterly emergency preparedness trainings.
- Expand trainings to other communities in San Diego County and to Baja California key stakeholders
- Increase membership of key community organizations to the Partner Connection website

Project – What are the next steps to advance the project?

- Continue to strengthen collaboration with current partners by establishing ongoing communication
- Promote Partner Connection to increase membership and participation
- Coordinate the remaining quarterly emergency preparedness trainings for organizations serving the Latino community - scheduled to take place in January and March 2016. Additionally, the team is planning in providing training for Community Health Workers to reach the most vulnerable populations
- Conduct and participate in Partner Connection emergency drills
- Highlight project with community stakeholders, and public health officers at state and local levels
- Provide presentations at conferences and meetings
- County Office of Emergency Services and Public Health Services will replicate the trainings for other communities – scheduled to begin in January 2016

The information that was shared through NLAPH helped us to become better leaders. We hope to continue to use the concepts that we learned in self-reflection, critical thinking, framing the message and leveraging relationships.

SUPPORTING AGENCIES



SPECIAL THANKS TO

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San Diego County Office of Emergency Services

CITATIONS

¹County of San Diego Community Health Statistics Unit. (2011) *Atlas of Foreign-born Populations in San Diego County, Demographic Table Language Spoken at Home by English-speaking Ability*. Retrieved from www.sdhealthstatistics.com

²UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. (2009). *California Health Interview Survey (CHIS)*. Prepared by: County of San Diego (CoSD), Health & Human Services Agency (HHS), Public Health Services (PHS), Community Health Statistics Unit, 7/06/2012.

³National Latino Research Center at California State University, San Marcos. (2007). *San Diego Firestorm 2007 Report, Fire Impact on Farmworkers and Migrant Communities in North County*. San Marcos, California: Authors: Arcela Núñez-Alvarez, Konane M. Martinez, Amy Ramos, Fabiola Gastelum. Retrieved from: https://www.csusm.edu/nlrc/documents/report_archives/NLRC%20Wildfires%20Report%202007%20Rev.pdf