A PROGRAM TO INCREASE HEALTH LITERACY FOR OLDER LATINO ADULTS RESIDING IN LA HABRA, CALIFORNIA: A GRANT PROPOSAL

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INTRODUCTION

- Sixty-six percent of Hispanics scored below the basic health literacy level compared to meeting the criteria to have proficient health literacy (NAAL, 2003).

- Research has shown that many older Latinos adults have low health literacy resulting in poorer health outcomes.

- Older Latino adults with low health literacy may also have depressive symptoms that may also go unaddressed.

- **GOAL:** Increase the health literacy and decrease the depressive symptoms of older Latino adults in the La Habra community using a short term in-home *promotora* program.
SOCIAL WORK RELEVANCE

• According to The Centers for Disease Control reported that there will be more than 71.5 million adults over the age of 65 by the year 2030 (CDC, 2009).

• Social workers who will be working with the older Latino adult population need to make sure that all resources are utilized to assist with increasing the health literacy which provides empowerment, which in turns increases their self-determination and may improve their quality of life in the later years.

• Increasing health literacy and empowering older adults lends to the NASW Code of Ethics core values of the importance of a person’s self-worth and self-determination.
CROSS CULTURAL RELEVANCE

• Older Latino adults are the fastest growing population and largest minority group in the United States (Hansen & Aranda, 2012).

• Latinos scored low at 41% below the basic level of health literacy compared to whites at 9% and Asians at 13% (National Network of Libraries of Medicine, 2011).

• As a member of a minority group, many older Latino adults face factors that will make aging a difficult and challenging experience; limited access to healthcare that will lead to poor health outcomes, low financial income which will lead to little savings for the future and the stress endured from these factors (National Hispanic Council on Aging [NHCOA], 2015; Tran & Williams, 1998).
METHODS

• **Target Population:** 6,000 older Latino adults over the age of 60 years old in the La Habra community

• **Strategies used to identify and select a funding source:** A combination of word searches using different search engines including the library database. The funding source was selected based on the organizations funding criteria and finding a source that would fund a program for older adults.
METHODS (CONT.)

• **Identify the funding source selected:** The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

• **Sources used for the needs assessment:** A comprehensive literature review, data from the supporting agency and health care providers and community health care workers in La Habra, California.

• **Projected budget range and conditions:** $167,301
GRANT PROPOSAL

- **Program Summary and Description:**
  Referrals of older Latino adults to the *Tu Vida, Tu Salud* program will be received from a community clinic located in the city of La Habra. This is a 6-week program with a two-fold purpose that includes utilization of a master level social worker who will address mental health and a *promotora* who will address health literacy.

- **Population Served:** The older Latino adults living in the community of La Habra referred to the Institute for Healthcare Advancement.

- **Sustainability:** Positive outcomes to the program can lead to other communities offering the program to their community residents.
• **Program Objectives:** To increase the health literacy of older Latino adults and their families, address and decrease depressive symptoms of older Latino adults with low health literacy and provide additional resources to older Latino adults and their families.

• **Program Evaluation:**

• Clients will be assessed both pre and post after completion of the program utilizing the Test of Health Literacy in Adults (TOFLA) (Wolf et al., 2010) to measure their health literacy, a Mini Mental Status Exam (MMSE) (Baker et al., 2000) to measure their cognitive function, and the Geriatric Depression Survey (GDS) to measure depression (Wolf et al., 2010).

• A post-posttest assessment will be completed one month after completion of the program to measure the long term effectiveness of the 6-week program.
LESSONS LEARNED/IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK

• After diligent research on the target population and their connection to health literacy, it was decided that this topic was vital to further research and develop a program to provide an educating and empowering program specific to this population.

• Social workers who choose to work with the older adult population will be further empowered with a new tool to “meet the person where they are” and how more appropriate than in the comfort of one’s home. This process may better the opportunity for the older Latino adult to share barriers to obtaining healthcare services.
REFERENCES


Wolf, M.S., Feinglass, J., Thompson, J., & Baker, D.W. (2010). In search of low health literacy: Threshold vs. gradient effect of literacy on health status and mortality. Social Science and Medicine, 70(9), 1335-1341