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Governor



Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs  
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## House Interim Committee on Behavioral Health

September 24, 2020 at 8am  
Remote Meeting

Chair Representative Salinas, Co-Chairs Representatives Hayden and Nosse, Representatives Dexter, Lively, Moore-Green and Stark,

The Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs (OCHA) is pleased to share legislative recommendations that stem from a comprehensive needs assessment research initiative undertaken by OCHA and its data and policy partners, OHA and DHS, over the past two years. The upcoming study report *Crisis de Nuestro Bienestar: A Report on Latino Mental Health in Oregon* is the first of the Oregon Advocacy Commission (OAC) reports using a community-based public policy research model which we refer to as the Policy Arc, building policy and resource cycles over the course of years. The hallmark of this participatory action research is community involvement throughout the research process. For legislators it provides another ear to their constituents, pairing lived experience with data- and equity-driven analysis, and best practice review to inform effective public policy.

The community of which we speak involves many levels, service providers, consumers, and research partners like OHA and DHS. Thirty years of service data, including intake, diagnosis, and outcomes, have been made available through these agencies in an administrative database, for analysis in the Latinos and Mental Health Study. This allowed four Master's students to work with internal analytics leaders to produce the data you will see in the report and reflected in the ideas for LCs. We are grateful for this access and support from these agencies, and consider broader access to administrative databases to be a leading best practice for equity-focused research, inclusive of community engagement.

Attached you will find recommendation statements derived from data and findings from a number of sources. Primary among these were studies undertaken by OCHA interns that included quantitative as well as qualitative analyses. Direct links to those studies are provided below. In addition to the recommendation statements, a series of specific legislative concepts (LCs) will be submitted for the 2021 Legislative Session that will add specificity to the recommendations. It is important to acknowledge the interplay between these general recommendations and the specific LCs that will be submitted. To address this interplay, we further suggest that the Legislature consider the recommendations as a "package" and the undertaking of a work-group or task force to help consider the best path to our joint goal of

### ORCommission on Hispanic Affairs

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Dr. Connie Kim-Gervery,  
Research /Policy Analyst

improving the mental health of Latinos and all Oregonians. OCHA plans a full presentation of this work in December to which both houses and all Legislators will be invited.

Respectfully,



Dr. Joe Gallegos, OCHA Commissioner



Irma Linda Castillo, OCHA Chair

STUDY TITLE	TYPE	TOTAL N	DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE
<a href="#"><u>Mental Health Disparities for Latino Oregonians</u></a>	Quantitative	N=272,538	Oregonians who initiated mental health care between 1983 & 2013 and terminated between 2010 & 2014 who utilize state-sponsored insurance
<a href="#"><u>Mental Health Service Disparities of Latino Oregonians: A Qualitative Analysis</u></a>	Qualitative	N=16	Mental Health Providers (MHPs) – urban + rural
<a href="#"><u>Mental Health Service Disparities in the Latino Population</u></a>	Literature Review	N/A	Rural focus
<a href="#"><u>Access and Barriers to Mental Health Services for Oregon's Latino Population</u></a>	Qualitative	N=8	MHPs - Rural

## **Mental Health & Latinos: Talking Points**

### ***Why the Work is Important for All Oregonians:***

#### **The Latino/a/x population is a large and growing community in urban and rural Oregon.**

- 13.1% of Oregon's population is Latino/a/x.
- The native Latino/a/x population has grown by 21% since 2000.
- Currently 1 in 4 students enrolled in the Oregon public school system is Latino/a/x.
- The OCHA/OHA/DHS study, from 30 years of administrative data, found that Oregon's Latino/a/x K-12 students are almost twice as likely as the general student body to access mental health referrals and services from school settings.
- As much as 15-36% of the population in rural counties across Oregon is Latino/a/x, and 13-27% of the population in urban counties across Oregon is Latino/a/x.
- Health disparities such as Covid-19, among many others, disproportionately affect this community.

### **Key Recommendations of *Crisis de Nuestro Bienestar: A Report on Latino Mental Health in Oregon***

1. Build on OR's work towards Health Equity by increasing diversity in and providing training for the workforce, pipeline, and credentialing of culturally- and linguistically-specific, trauma-informed behavioral health providers.
  - Increase systemic resources and implement policy and organizational structures to address the scarcity of behavioral health providers, and support for those providers, for Latinos/as/x and rural populations.
  - Increase access to behavioral health services by building systemic supports for comprehensive care in school districts and schools.
2. Establish as standard practice the appointment of practitioners of color, BIPOC, and other historically underserved groups on all licensing boards and public bodies.
3. Community Integration is key: Integrating culturally- and linguistically-specific behavioral health care with community services that Latinos/as/x in Oregonian regularly utilize will address three prominent barriers for Latino/a/x Oregonians - access, retention, and stigma.
  - Create dedicated spaces and places for Latino/a/x clients by increasing systemic resources and implementing financial incentives to increase culturally-specific behavioral health programming that combats stigma.
4. Resource and support data collection and analyses that center Latinos/as/x and other BIPOC Oregonians.
5. Request HECC to work with ODE to address provider workforce needs for Latinos/as/x and other BIPOC Oregonians.
6. Increase funding for Latinos/as/x and other historically under-resourced behavioral health services in Oregon, with specific breakdowns for funding increases.
7. Resource and support a Behavioral Health Task Force that centers equity for Latinos/as/x and other BIPOC Oregonians. This Task Force will focus on applying culturally-specific lenses to behavioral health, and on using the *Crisis de Nuestro Bienestar: A Report on Latino Mental Health in Oregon* to inform the development of an action agenda for the Oregon state legislature.