



## BARRIERS TO HEALTHCARE ACCESS FOR LATINO IMMIGRANTS IN THE USA

Language and fear of immigration are significant barriers for Latinos to access the healthcare system in the United States. A large percent of the Latino community that live in the USA have a very low academic level of education. Some only have 1st or 2nd grade education. In addition, many of them speak a native dialect with their second language as Spanish, which makes learning English more difficult. This community sees a lot of drug trafficking of medicines that are obtained on the illegal market, especially antibiotics. By using these illegal medicines, they can self-prescribe when they feel sick and don't have to miss work days. Many in this population are working in the USA to send money to their home countries to help their families. Many relatives in their home countries have lost their jobs and don't have income or government help to survive the hardships presented during this economic crisis.

As a health educator in the EPIP program at CCHB, I speak one-on-one with community members in areas where there are many Hispanic neighborhoods like Sharonville, Forest Park, Springdale, Norwood, Colerain, Price Hill, Westwood and Downtown Cincinnati. I also speak with them in Hispanic stores and events that

are organized in their communities. It is important for the Latino community to trust someone who can help them with their needs. Trust is a very important factor when reaching out to this vulnerable community. I educate them about the existence of opioids, STDs, HIV/AIDS and mental health. We also provide safe sex kits (condoms, lubricant and condom instructions) to help control the spread of these diseases. The printed material that we leave with members of this community exhibit brightly colored images, are in Spanish, and contain short and concise statements that will grab and hold attention. I also give presentations in places and centers where they feel safe such as Santa Maria Community Services, Roberts Academy / Coffee Hour in Price Hill, as well as domestic violence groups like Grupo Phoenix. We also raise awareness and invite people to learn more about the EPIP program services in a monthly talk show on La MEGA, 97.7 FM (Spanish Radio station) on the first Tuesday of each month at 12 PM.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have continued to stay in contact and educate the community and continue to distribute safe sex kits

– Marco Trujillo  
*Bi-Lingual Educator/Outreach Worker  
and Hispanic Community Liaison*