2021 Highlights

In 2021, Latino Health Access worked tirelessly with the community and partners all over Orange County to identify and remove individual and systems-level barriers to needed services, amidst the fear and uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. The team used strategic community-centered outreach, messaging and education in the highest COVID-19 impacted neighborhoods which are also where highest inequities exist.

- Conducted 3,321,311,415 outreach contacts
- Provided 32,897 boxes of nutritional food
- Processed and distributed $5,414,378.55 to low income families
- Supported linkages to and administration of 40,962 COVID-19 vaccines and 43,109 tests
- Co-hosted 44 COVID-19 testing and vaccinations clinics in the community
- Served 94,097 unduplicated people with 502,090 services
- 300,386 were system navigation services
Structural Inequity and the COVID-19 Pandemic

Why was COVID-19 so devastating to working-class communities of color in Orange County and worldwide? Structural inequities that existed long-before the pandemic placed these communities at risk, prevented swift response, and delayed access to critical services.

**What do structural inequities look like?**

- Limited emergency response systems to reach residents
- Disinformation and misinformation due to historic mistrust stemming from exclusion and abuse of community residents by institutions, research, and systems
- Environmental hazards that exacerbate risk in a pandemic and other crises
- Fragmented health care systems and a shortage of healthcare staff
- Gaps in broadband access, and limited digital literacy
- Little economic opportunity which limits families’ ability to withstand emergencies
- Housing instability (e.g. multi-generational, crowded housing conditions)
- Limited emergency response systems to reach residents
- Environmental hazards that exacerbate risk in a pandemic and other crises
The Promotor Model

Equity requires that we center the people experiencing the greatest impacts of health disparities and underlying inequities in developing and implementing solutions. As such, LHA trains community residents as Promotores (Community Health Workers) to provide acompañamiento to community members facing barriers to health care and health improvements due to social determinants of health and their root causes. Promotores also build community capacity and create opportunities for community members to lead solutions to the issues that contribute to health disparities.

Key aspects of equity in the promotor model:

- Reaching the individuals experiencing the greatest vulnerabilities and who are disconnected from health care and social services systems.
- Building trusting relationships that enable information and resource sharing, community-building, social capital, and social connection.
- Connecting individuals and families to critical services.
- Providing systems navigation services to overcome barriers to access and utilization of services.
- Amplifying community leadership and participation.
- Engaging community members in policy, systems, and environmental changes to address social determinants of health.
System Navigation Services

Due to structural inequities, working-class, Latinx communities face significant barriers to accessing services such as language, transportation, child care, economic instability, immigration status, among others. Promotores partner with each participant to identify solutions to these barriers, and in that process, they also help families increase their capacity to self-advocate and access services to critical systems.

The Promotor Model as a Pro-Equity Practice

The two scenarios below illustrate how the model works:

Lorena is 65, lives in 92701 and does not have health insurance. Has a smartphone, no email and does not know how to download apps.

Leticia is 65, lives in 92807 (Anaheim Hills) and has health insurance.

Navigation services include, referrals, addressing or reducing barriers to accessing services, follow up to service utilization and links to referrals.
Basic Needs

The pandemic strained access to the most basic resources, in neighborhoods that already experienced high social vulnerability. In the area of food insecurity, LHA increased the number of people benefiting from LHA’s weekly food and diaper distribution and supported additional neighborhood-based food distributions to address transportation and other barriers impacting food access by neighbors, particularly our elderly as well as individuals with disabilities.

Furthermore, when our city partners released applications for financial assistance for housing, Promotores ensured the equitable implementation of these programs by creating templates of letters that were required to be addressed to landlords, assisting individuals to complete applications, reviewing application materials before submission, among other actions.

$5,414,378.55
Processed and distributed to low income families in the form of
3,725
Financial assistance units; these are individual gift cards, rent checks, bill payments.

32,897 Boxes
Of nutritional food provided to
4,479 Households
Community Engagement and Advocacy

Community engagement and advocacy is a fundamental pillar of equity because it places the people most impacted by health disparities at the center of driving change. Therefore, while LHA Promotores embed equity in service delivery through systems navigation and acompañamiento, they also build community capacity, organize, and mobilize community members to advance policy and systems change around health equity issues, such as housing.

LHA implemented a Consejera de Vivienda/Housing Counselor program as a community-driven equity response to rising evictions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fifteen Consejeras de Vivienda reported assisting approximately 186 community members from January 2021 through June 2022. Of those, the majority (170 or 91%) reported stopping immediate evictions.

Policy and Systems Wins, in collaboration with tenants and partner organizations:

1. Rent Stabilization Ordinance in Santa Ana
2. Just Cause Evictions Ordinance in Santa Ana
3. Adoption of redistricting boundaries at the city and county level
4. Development of a Tenant Union
OUR VISION

A healthy, equitable, inclusive and prosperous community that is engaged and civically active.

OUR MISSION

Latino Health Access partners with communities to bring health, equity and sustainable change through education, services, consciousness-raising and civic participation.