

Obesity in the Hispanic/Latino Community in Cleveland



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Organization

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Description: The Cleveland Department of Public Health is the local health department for the city of Cleveland. They provide a range of services from being at the forefront of disease outbreaks to monitoring air quality, to advocating for and providing community services for health equity and social justice.

Population

The population served was the Hispanic/Latino community in Cleveland, Ohio. This population was chosen because of a personal affinity towards this community. Additionally, improving the health of underserved communities is imperative for achieving health equity and social justice.

Activities

My experience working at the Cleveland Department of Public Health involved finding and utilizing available research and statistics to evaluate what type of health education materials would be impactful to the target population. This experience involved using Canva and discussing how to best communicate information on the health education material with my preceptor.

Some of my responsibilities included creating an infographic about obesity for the Hispanic/Latino population, creating an informational video component to the infographic, and translating existing food safety handouts into Spanish.

Learning Objectives

1. Analyze data to understand public health needs among Hispanic/Latino populations in Cleveland.
2. Create culturally-appropriate health education materials for health issues important to the Hispanic/Latino community in Cleveland.
3. Understand the inner workings and daily operations of a local health department.

Deliverables

Created

- A bilingual infographic about obesity in the Hispanic/Latino community in Cleveland.
- An informational video component to the infographic.

Translated

- Handwashing instructions
- Danger zone prevention plan for food
- Date marking instructions for perishable food
- Thermometer Calibration instructions

Lessons Learned

Engaging and accessible educational materials can be a useful tool for educating underserved populations. However, there is lack of bilingual materials for the Hispanic/Latino population and other non-English speaking residents. This is relevant because Cleveland has a diverse population where multiple languages are spoken.

Coordination of information between local, state, and national health departments and agencies is of paramount importance.

Local health departments are responsible for containing the spread and informing the community about infectious diseases along with a plethora of other responsibilities. A common misconception is that public health departments operate as hospital-like entities.

Public Health Implications

By creating a bilingual infographic about obesity for the Hispanic/Latino community, any existing language barriers are being torn down, allowing for individuals that may understand little or no English the opportunity to engage with the material.

Being exposed to and engaged with this material may lead to changes in health behavior of the people that have or are at risk of becoming obese.

Given that this educational material, in addition to the translated documents, will be made available to the general public by the Cleveland Department of Public Health, it will be widely available to the Hispanic/Latino population in Cleveland.



Figure 1. The figure above shows both the English (left) and Spanish (right) versions of the obesity infographic. The QR code visible on each version is linked to informational videos in their respective language.