



National Resource Center for Hispanic Mental Health®
Changing Minds, Transforming Lives, Advancing Knowledge™
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Media Advisory

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ALLIANCE FOR LATINO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TO HOST CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING ON LATINO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP

- WHO:** National Resource Center for Hispanic Mental Health (NRCHMH) and the Alliance for Latino Behavioral Health Workforce Development (the Alliance)
- WHAT:** The Alliance for Latino Behavioral Health Workforce Development will host a Congressional Breakfast Briefing on Latino Behavioral Health Workforce Development and Leadership focused on educating law makers about the crisis facing Latinos in need of behavioral health services as a result of disparities in the availability of, access to and the provision of quality, and culturally and linguistically competent behavioral health services for Latinos and how supporting efforts to build a more diverse, multidisciplinary, bilingual and bicultural workforce for Latinos can eliminate disparities in each of the aforementioned areas and ensure meaningful access to behavioral health care services by Latinos. The briefing will be followed by a press conference introducing the formal development of the Alliance and its membership.
- WHEN:** June 16, 2010 - 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM
- WHERE:** Rayburn House Office Building, Room B340, Washington, D.C.
- WHY:** In an effort to address the Latino behavioral health workforce crisis, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS) Office of Minority Health (OMH) convened the nation's first-ever roundtable discussion on developing a mental health workforce for Latinos in July, 2009. The goal of this event was to formulate a national consensus and recommendation plan aimed at increasing the diversity of our nation's behavioral health workforce and leadership, which are critically important in order to address Latinos' underutilization of behavioral health care, eliminate disparities in the availability of, access to and the provision of quality care, and to address Latinos' overrepresentation in many of the nation's most vulnerable populations. The Alliance is an

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outgrowth of this roundtable discussion and will focus on raising awareness of these critically important issues with Members of Congress. An overview of the consensus statements and recommendations developed during the OMH sponsored initiative will be provided, as will remarks from the Honorable Congresswoman Grace F. Napolitano, Co-Chair, Congressional Mental Health Caucus (Invited), and the Honorable Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard, Chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus (Invited).

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The Alliance for Latino Behavioral Health Workforce Development is a strategic partnership of the leading national Latino behavioral health professional organizations, and other key leaders in the Latino health and behavioral health professions, and workforce development. The mission of the Alliance is to ensure that the recommendations contained in the OMH *Movilizandonos por Nuestro Futuro: Strategic Development of a Mental Health Workforce for Latinos Consensus Statements and Recommendations Report* are widely disseminated and seriously considered by the array of stakeholders who are needed to successfully address this critically important issue. The NRCHMH will spearhead the development and operations of the Alliance with the guidance, direction and leadership of the inaugural members of its Steering Committee.

The Alliance will lead and implement the final consensus recommendations, and be charged with creating a process for developing and monitoring an action-oriented, educational awareness and advocacy plan, while engaging multiple stakeholders from across the nation. Yet, with so many obstacles to overcome and so little support, a report and an Alliance is understandably not enough to achieve all goals. To successfully achieve the goals of this initiative and create long-standing change there will need to be careful examination of the recommendations, investments in education, support from the public-private partnerships, and a full commitment to parity.

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The National Resource Center for Hispanic Mental Health is a private nonprofit charitable organization based in Mercerville, N.J. developed as an outgrowth of the New Jersey Mental Health Institute's award-winning and nationally and internationally recognized *Changing Minds, Advancing Mental Health for Hispanics* program. The organization's mission is to promote quality mental health services through policy development initiatives, training, technical assistance, research, data collection, and anti-stigma and anti-discrimination campaigns. The NRCHMH specifically aims to reduce disparities and to increase treatment quality and availability of mental health services for Hispanics throughout the nation. The NRCHMH also aims to heighten awareness, acceptance and understanding of mental illness among the nation's Hispanic population. These goals are accomplished by implementing a number of intervention strategies focused on:

1. Developing culturally competent resources and tools for behavioral health administrators, direct service providers and other stakeholders.
2. Creating and fostering the development and institutionalization of best practice programs.
3. Conceptualizing and implementing high-quality trainings on culturally competent mental health service delivery and on policy development and advocacy.
4. Supporting the planning, development and implementation of policies and systems of care at the local, state and national levels.
5. Developing comprehensive and user-friendly vehicles to disseminate information in English and Spanish on an array of mental health topics, research studies, available resources for consumers, family members and providers and important field related events.

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