

MARKETPLACE ASSISTER TOOLKIT

The Catalog of Assister Promising Practices



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Collaborating with Other Organizations Serving Immigrants

The Latino Healthcare Forum (LHCF) is an Austin, Texas based nonprofit organization focused on reducing racial and ethnic health disparities. LHCF provides educational outreach and healthcare enrollment assistance for the uninsured and underinsured seeking to obtain coverage through the Affordable Care Act (ACA).



A. Collaborating with Other Organizations Serving Immigrants

For the past few years, LHCF has coordinated with other organizations and offices in Austin, Texas to reach the Hispanic Immigrant population in the Austin Area.



First, LHCF has coordinated with Ventanilla de Salud and the Consulate General of Mexico in Austin, Texas to enhance its education and outreach to Austin's Hispanic immigrant population. In partnership with the Consulate General of Mexico, Ventanilla de Salud provides immigrant and Latino families culturally appropriate health education, free health screenings, and referrals to community health services. LHCF has found that working with both the Mexican Consulate and Ventanilla de Salud has been an effective means of reaching the Hispanic immigrant population in the Austin, Texas area. Many immigrants use the Consulate's services on a regular basis and LHCF participates on site, on a monthly scheduled basis to conduct both outreach and education efforts focused on this specific population.

The Consulate's offices are an ideal place for the LHCF Navigator staff and immigrants seeking health services to connect. LHCF and the Ventanilla de Salud have been able to connect with the Hispanic immigrant population at scheduled activities such as bike rodeos, food pantry activities, and skills training workshops held in predominantly Hispanic middle and grade schools in Austin.

This was a natural partnership given the personal connection many of LHCF's own community health workers have with the Mexican Consulate and Ventanilla de Salud. LHCF staff understand that information and access to local health resources is an important part of helping immigrants integrate into the community. All of the LHCF Navigators and outreach staff are proficient in Spanish and English. LHCF translates and uses culturally appropriate methods to reach, educate and enroll this population.

LHCF recognizes that the local immigrant population in the Austin, Texas is diverse and represented by an array of ethnic and national groups. There are Hispanic immigrants from a variety of countries and recent immigrants as well as those who have lived in the community for a longer time period. Although heavily represented by Mexican nationals, the Austin Hispanic immigrant population also includes both Central and South Americans as well as Cuban and other Spanish and Portuguese speaking populations. Approaching these diverse immigrant populations requires an awareness of and sensitivity to those differences. In an effort to reach many different groups (not just groups that interact with the Mexican Consulate), LHCF has collaborated with many other organizations and offices in the community.

Assister Tips

- You can establish trust and a connection with different groups by making yourself available in the places those groups gather.
- Reassure consumers the immigration information they provide the Federally-facilitated MarketplaceSM will not be used to pursue immigration enforcement action.



For example, LHCF has used the Austin Bar Association to get a list of local immigration attorneys in order to teach those attorneys about the Federally-facilitated MarketplaceSM so they can make their clients aware of this potential coverage option. LHCF's approach has been to provide both literature and direct contact with select attorneys and advise them of critical Federally-facilitated MarketplaceSM open enrollment dates as well as the conditions under which individuals can enroll in special enrollment periods. Also, LHCF offers attorneys an opportunity to refer their clients to get assistance with the Federally-facilitated MarketplaceSM application and advise them of other local options to secure both immediate and long term health services.

LHCF also provides Federally-facilitated MarketplaceSM enrollment information to other local not-for-profit immigration services organizations in Austin like Catholic Charities of Central Texas (CCCTX). CCCTX works to provide legal services to immigrants in order to reunite and preserve families, protect the rights of the immigrant community, and promote self-sufficiency through high quality, low-cost immigration assistance.

The City of Austin has been another key supporter of LHCF's outreach and education efforts. The City of Austin's financial support has enabled LHCF to provide outreach and education to consumers by inserting information into monthly utility bills, as well as conducting outreach and education at targeted utilities payment locations.

Another partner, the New Immigrants Program of Austin Public Library (APL), provides information and services to Austin's new, primarily non-English-speaking, immigrant population. As new immigrants arrive in Austin, they can connect with local organizations and receive assistance and support. These services are offered in seven APL locations. LHCF conducts both outreach and education efforts at select locations at these affected libraries.

LHCF has also worked with the Austin Independent School District (AISD), to schedule Federally-facilitated MarketplaceSM outreach, education and enrollment activities at several elementary and middle school Family Support Centers. These centers offer immigrants information and education on an array of school-centered activities designed to help integrate the immigrant population. Through this outreach, LHCF focuses on student and family health and wellness resources including the Federally-facilitated MarketplaceSM, Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and similar community resources.

Key Takeaways

- ☞ You can develop relationships and collaborate with local offices and organizations that serve the specific population you are trying to target.
- ☞ It may be easier to establish trust with a specific population if you work with another organization that already has a connection to that group.

Useful Resources

- ▶ [Serving Special Populations: Immigrants Fast Facts for Assisters](#)
- ▶ [Assister Guide to the Immigration Section of the Online Federally-facilitated MarketplaceSM Application](#)



Figure 1: Picture of LHCF Outreach and Community Health Worker Josefina Lopez Aguilar (left) and Carlos Gonzales Gutierrez, Counsel General – Mexican Consulate in Austin, Texas (right) at this week’s Diez Y Seis celebration. Josefina and other LHCF workers manned an ACA information table addressing questions from numerous immigrants in attendance. The event was hosted at the Austin Community College Riverside Campus, which has a predominantly Hispanic population.

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