

Latinos Living with HIV/AIDS – Access to Sub-Acute care

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A Collaboration between Leeway, Inc. & Southern Connecticut State University

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Leeway

- ❑ Specialized HIV/AIDS health and housing service provider in New Haven, Connecticut
 - ❑ Opened in 1995 with 40-bed, sub-acute inpatient medical and nursing care facility
 - ❑ Also a developer and operator of independent supportive housing units
 - ❑ Approximately 20% of clients in skilled nursing facility have been Latinos
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Project Aims

□ Research Questions

- Why are Latinos living with AIDS not accessing skilled nursing facility care (SNFC)?
 - What barriers exist that prevents them from accessing skilled nursing facility care (SNFC)?
 - What can Leeway do to better tailor its services to Latinos living with AIDS?
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Project Methods

1. Focus Groups with HIV+ Latinos
 - Assess expectations and understanding of their health care needs
 - Determine their understanding of SNFC
 2. Focus Group with Family/Friends
 - Determine their understanding of SNFC
 - Assess knowledge of HIV care
 3. Semi-Structured Interviews with Staff
 - Assess how well current services benefit their clients
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Participants

- Four Focus Groups
 - Female only ($n = 5$)
 - Male only ($n = 8$)
 - Mixed sex ($n = 6$)
 - Family and Friends ($n = 9$)
 - Health and Human Service Staff Interviews ($n = 16$)
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Results: HIV+ Latinos

- ❑ Lack of knowledge of management and progression of HIV/AIDS
 - ❑ Women expressed concern about stigma more than men
 - ❑ Perceived skilled nursing facilities to be a *"place to die"*
 - ❑ Highly value opinion of their "HIV doctor"
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□ Preferred to be treated at home

- *"The family will treat us good, instead of paying someone to do the job. We run the risk of being mistreated by a stranger. I prefer my home with my family."*

□ If not at home, then:

- *"A place where they treat me with dignity in the last stage of my life. If I could identify a place like that, then that would be my option, because that way I could provide tranquility to my family."*
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Results: Family and Friends

- Most were unaware of SNFC
 - All expressed interest in learning how to treat their loved ones
 - *"I would make sure that this person feels comfortable in my home and that I get the knowledge I need to provide appropriate care to this person"*
 - Preferred to treat loved ones at home
 - *"I would treat them at home under one condition that the person take his/her medications, if treatment is not followed as indicated this person would have to go to the hospital"*
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□ Mixed on role of church and religion:

- *"People with HIV feel judged and rejected by the church, the church is not prepared for a disease like this one"*
- *"My church has taken care of people with HIV, and has rendered many services to these individuals"*

Results: Staff Interviews

- See the need for more culturally and linguistically appropriate services
 - Concerns about undocumented clients
 - Many not medically insured
 - Their clients prefer home-based or hospital care
 - Clients need to keep diagnosis a secret
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Conclusions

- Findings compel providers, community organizations and government agencies to incorporate creative, fresh and culturally appropriate strategies for education
 - Further research needed in addressing issues that result from complexity of relationship dynamics
 - Mandate to increase awareness of and access to AIDS care in general and sub-acute care specifically, among Latinos in CT
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Conclusions, cont.

- *Challenges* presented by limited health care access, cultural norms, transportation issues, INS concerns, limited English language fluency, etc. present *opportunities* for innovative ethnic-specific intervention strategies
 - Without taking action on these findings, jeopardize early access to HIV testing, care and treatment and negatively affect overall HIV outcomes – opportunistic infections and speeding the progression to full blown AIDS
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Affirmations and Unexpected Outcomes

- Opportunity to tune-up the organization's cultural competence
- Recognition of the importance of interpreter services when communicating with patients with limited English proficiency
- Opportunity to partner with other AIDS Service Organizations in CT to discuss the timeliness of an AIDS Awareness (social marketing) campaign



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Now!
