

CALIFORNIA-MEXICO HEALTH INITIATIVE



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

**CALIFORNIA-MEXICO HEALTH INITIATIVE
CALIFORNIA POLICY RESEARCH CENTER
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Mission

The mission of the California-Mexico Health Initiative (CMHI) is to coordinate and optimize resources in the United States and Mexico to increase access to and use of health services, expand health insurance coverage, improve health outcomes, reduce health disparities, enhance the cultural competency of health care personnel, and implement innovative strategies to address unmet health needs of the Mexican-origin population living and working in the United States.

Background

CMHI was created in January 2001 under the auspices of the California Policy Research Center, a program of the University of California Office of the President. The initiative is a collaborative effort involving government, academia, the private sector, and community-based organizations of both countries. The University of California (UC), The California Endowment (TCE), and the California Health-Care Foundation have provided major support for CMHI projects.

Binational Leadership

CMHI facilitates the development of complementary and coordinated projects involving key stakeholders in Mexico and the United States. The initiative fosters collaboration between the research communities of both countries and establishes cross-border working relationships among government agencies and community-based organizations.

Principal Activities and Programs

The initiative's activities and programs focus on four areas related to migrant and immigrant health: access to health care, research and policy, resource development, and training and exchanges.

Access to Health Care Binational Health Week (BHW)

BHW is an annual weeklong series of health promotion and education activities that take place throughout the United States, Mexico and Canada. BHW events provide migrant/immigrant workers and their families with medical screenings, health care referrals, treatment services, and prevention education. BHW is a collaborative effort between CMHI and the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IME), Mexico's Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (SRE) and Secretariat of Health (SSA), the Mexican Institute of Social Security (IMSS), U.S. federal agencies, the U.S.-Mexico Border Health Commission (USMBHC), California's Department of Health Services, and thousands of volunteers and community-based organizations in 3 provinces in Canada, 17 Mexican and 24 U.S. states.

Health Stations (Ventanillas de Salud)

This program establishes health stations within Mexican consulates in California. They are staffed by bilingual personnel who provide on-site health information and referral services to Mexican migrants and immigrants.

Binational Health Insurance

CMHI, in conjunction with the California Program on Access to Care, is developing a pilot program that would provide health insurance for Mexican-origin migrants/immigrants in California and their families in Mexico. Working with private- and public-sector representatives, insurance regulators, and labor unions, CMHI is exploring innovative approaches to increase health insurance coverage for this population.

Health-Promotion/Disease-Prevention Campaigns for Agricultural Workers

CMHI works with California health agencies to implement educational campaigns targeted toward low-income, Mexican-origin agricultural workers. This project seeks to improve health outcomes by minimizing behavioral risks among young, monolingual, single males in particular.



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Research and Policy Binational Policy Forum on Migration and Health

This annual policy forum examines and promotes migrant/immigrant health issues as a policy priority in the United States, Mexico and Canada. Held during Binational Health Week, the forum presents the opportunity for policy-makers, researchers, and public health workers to propose policy recommendations and develop bilateral working strategies.

Request for Proposals: Migration and Health Issues (RFP)

In partnership with research institutions, government agencies, and foundations in both the United States and Mexico, CMHI's RFP sponsors short-term policy studies that will enhance the understanding and knowledge of health issues facing those who work and live in two countries and cultures. These studies help decision-makers craft more informed policies.

California-Mexico Epidemiological Surveillance System

CMHI is collaborating with the University of California Universitywide AIDS Research Program (UARP), IMSS, and SSA to develop a bilateral epidemiological surveillance system aimed at improving the monitoring of behavioral, medical, environmental, and demographic trends among Mexican migrants and immigrants with regard to HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases. Pilot projects have been implemented in the California's Fresno and San Diego counties, and in the Mexican states of Jalisco and Michoacán.

Resource Development

Spanish Materials Resource Center

The Center houses reference materials relevant to the Spanish-speaking population. Organizations working with Latinos in the United States can access these materials, which include a Health Education Spanish Materials Catalog, guidebooks on health insurance programs, and a database of migrant/immigrant health services and programs in California and Mexico. This database of over 700 listings is continually updated and available in both hard copy format and electronic format.

Health Fact Sheets on the Mexican-Origin Population in California

These fact sheets focus on health issues affecting Latinos, in particular the health of Mexican-origin migrants. Topics include basic demographic and health information, agricultural workers' health, mental health, occupational health, drug and alcohol use, and diabetes. The fact sheets serve as valuable reference instruments for health care providers, administrators working with this population, the press, policymakers, and the general public.

Spanish-English Dictionary of Health-Related Terms

This bilingual dictionary includes general terms as well as those related to traditional medicine and popular health beliefs. It serves as a resource for more accurate communication between healthcare providers and Latino patients.

Training and Exchange

Binational Promotoras Program

Promotoras (community health outreach workers) are key for linking underserved populations to health resources and services. This program provides binational exchanges, training modules, and health education manuals for promotoras in California and Mexico. The program builds the knowledge and resource base for promotoras who interact with mobile populations in both countries.

Jornadas (Informative Health Journeys)

In partnership with the Mexican Secretariats of Health and Foreign Affairs and several U.S. organizations, the Jornadas program sends U.S. health care professionals to Mexico for a week-long cultural immersion into Mexico's health care system. Participants return with a better understanding of how environmental conditions, behavioral changes, and language barriers affect migrant health in both countries.

Medical Student Exchange Program

To increase culturally relevant health care for Mexican migrants/immigrants in California and Mexico, this exchange program for medical students in the UC system and Mexico increases their understanding of the linguistic and cultural health needs of this population. These future health care providers participate in clinical rotations, site visits, and academic training programs.

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