



ALLIES FOR QUALITY: Patient and Consumer Groups Improving Health Care was developed by the California HealthCare Foundation's (CHCF) Quality Initiative to support and encourage patient and consumer groups' involvement in health care quality issues. CHCF is an independent philanthropy committed to improving California's health care delivery and financing systems. The Quality Initiative is a catalyst for improving the quality and accountability of health care in California through public reporting of performance measures and advancement of improvement and patient safety efforts.

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Improving Quality of Care for Latinos Project

Community Health Worker/*Promotoras* Network

CONTEXT

In virtually all Spanish-speaking countries around the world, Community Health Workers (CHWs), or *Promotoras*, have long been active in local communities working to improve the quality of life of their residents. Although CHW/*Promotoras* serve many different roles, they tend to view health care as one element of the larger fabric of community well-being. For Latinos in the United States, especially new immigrants, they represent a culturally appropriate way to provide health care outreach and to address health care quality issues.

GOAL

To improve the quality of care received by Latinos in California by supporting Community Health Worker and *Promotora* programs as viable community health systems, increasing their awareness of health quality, and building their capacity to address health quality problems in their communities.

ACTIVITIES

This project is building a statewide network of CHW/*Promotoras* through which these health workers will be encouraged to explore health care quality issues and identify roles they can play in improving the quality of care in their communities. The network will also allow *Promotoras* to exchange information about outreach and service delivery strategies, local and statewide issues, and lessons learned and best practices. At the core of the network are six regional collaboratives that will develop regional action plans for social and policy change. Efforts will also be made to build awareness among health providers and public health officials about the critical value of *Promotoras* in reaching underserved Latino communities.

"Promotoras are the missing link in the professional circle of Western medicine. For centuries, they have served the needs of individuals and communities and are continuing their vital work to this day with or without outside support. Now that public health issues such as AIDS and quality of care problems have become so visible in our communities, these vital community links are more important than ever."

—MARIA LEMUS, DIRECTOR

ORGANIZATION

The Community Health Worker/*Promotoras* Network and the Ernesto Galarza Applied Research Center at the University of California Riverside are joining efforts in a community/university partnership to improve community well being by supporting the work of Community Health Workers and *Promotoras*. This partnership provides an academic and community forum for discussion, evaluation and dissemination of information. The Ernesto Galarza Applied Research Center was established in 1993 and conducts research on public policy and its effects on Latino communities in the United States.

For More Information

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