

The COVID-19 pandemic has unfairly affected Latinx individuals in the state of Oregon. COVID-19 deaths in Latinx communities are 3x higher than those of non-Latinx White communities. The Latinx population is also less likely to get tested which leads to higher cases, more hospitalizations, and mortality rates. Therefore, researchers at the University of Oregon wanted to study the impact of culturally tailored outreach on COVID testing rates among Latinx individuals. The study was called *Oregon Saludable: Juntos Podemos* (Healthy Oregon: Together We Can) and was designed to educate, increase trust, and mitigate misinformation.

WHERE

SARS-CoV-2 testing sites across 9 Oregon counties



WHEN

February 1 to August 31, 2021



WHO

Latinx individuals (3 years old and up)



WHAT HAPPENED

Researchers randomly assigned 38 SARS-CoV-2 testing sites to either the culturally tailored intervention or control- community outreach model. All outreach methods were in Spanish and English.



- **Intervention:** 19 testing sites used a *Promotores* model. *Promotores* were community members trained to share SARS-CoV-2 testing information in a way that highlighted Latinx cultural values and increased trust. *Promotores* outreach strategies included texting, in-person promotion at local community sites (specialty stores, Spanish language church services, and workplaces), and advertising (both print and on Latinx radio stations).
- **Control:** 19 sites used a typical community outreach model of flyers, shared via email, Facebook, and handout.

Researchers held SARS-CoV-2 testing events every two weeks across 9 counties and 38 sites for a total of more than 400 testing events and 1851 community tests collected:

- **212 events promoted** by *Promotores* tested **1,213 participants**.
- **182 events promoted** by typical outreach tested **638 participants**.

Participants collected their own nasal swabs for SARS-CoV-2 testing and received their results by email.

Participants completed a survey about sex, gender, race, and ethnicity.

Study controlled for US Census and Oregon Health Authority pandemic data.

KEY FINDINGS

Approximately 4 more Latinx individuals (3.8) were tested for each event held at sites promoted by *Promotores* compared to typical outreach controls. This also translated to 3 more Latinx per capita (per 1,000) of the Oregon population for each U.S. census tract.



CONCLUSIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

Tailored community outreach in Latinx communities can be effective when trying to increase testing rates. The *Promotores* model can be adapted for other communities and community engagement needs to address current health disparities, participation concerns, and access issues. Success greatly depends upon making sure there are representatives and advisory boards that the community trusts to act in their best interest, that the community itself is involved in the decision-making processes and community-specific deliverables, and that all involved parties recognize that respect should not be expected but earned.



This summary was performed in September 2022. This summary includes only the results of a single study. Other studies may find different results. The NIH RADx[®] Underserved Populations (RADx-UP) initiative supported the study. radx-up.org.

Citation: DeGarmo DS, De Anda S, Cioffi CC, Tavalire HF, Searcy JA, Budd EL, McWhirter EH, Mauricio AM, Halvorson S, Beck EA, Fernandes L, Currey MC, Garcia JR, Cresko WA, Leve LD. Effectiveness of a COVID-19 testing outreach intervention for Latinx communities: A cluster randomized trial. *JAMA Network Open*. 2022; 5(6): e2216796. doi: 10.1011/jamanetworkopen.2022.16796

To read the published research article, radx-up.org.

A research collaboration with the University of Oregon and OSJP



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