



Power in Listening

April 26th, 2023

Synthesis of Roundtable Responses

Table 1: Language Access in Clinical Care

Co-hosts: Leonor Fernández, MD & Rose Molina, MD, MPH

Key takeaways:

- Culturally appropriate interpretation needed
- Quality metric for language access

Table 1 focused on language access in clinical care. They discussed the importance of culturally appropriate interpretation as well as plain language and awareness around literacy outside of healthcare in order to make it accessible. They also discussed the need for follow-through when it comes to giving access to language preferences in the context of a community interpreter program, as well as the importance of tracking language access as a quality metric. Lastly, they discussed the need for resource navigation in specific language and the need of awareness regarding Google Translate and its limits.

Action/Solution:

- Track language access as a quality metric

Table 2: Diversity, Equity and Inclusions (DEI) in Health Care

Co-hosts: Michael L. James, MBA & Onesky Aupont, MD, MPH, MA, PhD

Key takeaways:

- Health and digital literacy as well as language barriers contribute heavily to disparities in immigrant health
- Understanding that all communities of immigrants are nuanced therefore must be appreciated in unique ways
- Current gaps for queer immigrant youth

Table 2 addressed in their discussion the need to create a space for queer youth who are immigrants and children of immigrants to share their stories and get resources to healthcare. Table participants also discussed the need to dedicate time to do community-based research, specifically BIPOC faculty who lack mentorship. They also addressed the need to offer a higher salary if staff are expected to provide care in foreign languages. Participants also mentioned the lack of resources for care navigators and the lack of immigrant navigator support along with a need to value community health workers in general.

Actions/Solutions:

- Build data collection and shared services



- Access to community research
- Listen to the community and assess their needs
- Build capacity of workforce support for career advancement
- Reach out to academic institutions to recruit students of color
- Emphasize DEI and hiring diverse staff

Table 3: Food Justice

Co-hosts: Amy Smith, MD, MPH & Molly Velasco

Key takeaway:

- Food security is a barrier for people with undocumented statuses, as people are worried to sign up for benefits due to fear of retaliation (ongoing chilling effects of public charge)

Table 3 discussed the needs for fresh produce in the region. They directed their conversations to the people in the community that have food insecurity and the social workers who support these populations.

Table 4: Funding Strategies

Co-hosts: David Bor, MD & Lauren Dorn-Jones, MEd

Key takeaway:

- Increasing government funding away from traditional policing and towards equity and community driven wellness and safety efforts

Table 4 discussed individuals as a form of fundraising as well as individual funding. They talked about making racial justice a priority in philanthropy and having less required reporting. The table also discussed having proposal ideas ready to pair with available money from the government. Participants emphasized needing funding for children's health.

Actions/Solutions:

- Educate large funders/state budget folks about our needs
- Invest in children
- Annual award in Leah's honor
- LZC as a convener of potential funders and government agencies to ask for advice and review existing operations for future innovations and research funding
- Advocate for investments and practices in trust-based philanthropy and equitable evaluation



Table 5: Substance Use Disorders

Co-hosts: Ranjani Paradise, PhD & Sarah Ruiz, MSW

Key takeaway:

- Substance misuse looks different across cultures

Table 5 discussed how many immigrants do not feel a sense of belonging in the United States or in their home country, which can lead to substance use. Due to the stigma behind substance use and the fear of jeopardizing immigration status, the user keeps it private, which creates harm. Substance use does not only intersect with sense of belonging, but also with the occupations that immigrants perform, usually jobs with high injury rates which leads them to substance use for pain management as well as dealing with trauma and other negative life experiences. Misinformation about eligibility for insurance and other services/resources is also prevalent.

Action/Solution:

- Create and increase awareness that resources exist, and that people with limited English proficiency are eligible

Table 6: Mental Health

Renato Castelo, EdM & Ayatt Elawad, MPH

Key takeaway:

- Need for de-stigmatization of mental health as well as the promotion of it

Table 6 discussed the importance of preventive mental health on demand, specifically this service for free without insurance as well as the need for education in the community around mental health that is holistic, meaning community-certified and not individual-focused. They talked about the need to expand healthcare access for undocumented immigrants and the need for funding and mental health policies to make mental health clinics, treatments, and other resources more accessible (cost and languages).

Actions/Solutions:

- Promote mental health clinics
- Hold community listening sessions
- Conduct a public health campaign on community-certified mental health



Table 7: Community Economic Development ***Co-hosts: Karen Colón Hayes & Yuqi Wang, MPP, MBA***

Key takeaway:

- Bold civics infrastructure is needed to create a sense of belonging and to welcome new groups

Table 7's discussion centered the need for language access and active listening to build strong communities. They also talked about the need to have difficult conversations regarding race and equity as well as the acknowledgement of Malden having environmental racism and park development that lack community input. The roundtable discussion mentioned the need for a community-driven process to identify solutions for viable economic health communities. Participants raised actionable items as the difference between the racial wealth gap and research.

Actions/Solutions:

- Conduct empowerment campaigns
- Connect and partner with community members
- Build trust and meet new people
- Increase community involvement

Table 8: Policy Advocacy Priorities for 2023 ***Co-hosts: Cristina Aguilera Sandoval, MPA & Lenita Reason***

Table 8 discussed the need for culturally affirming health providers, specifically leveraging foreign-trained providers so they can support their own communities, which goes hand in hand with language access. They discussed how language is not only a barrier to understanding but also cultural differences. It is important to consider all clinical appointments as an opportunity to tap into mental health and take the time and effort to understand how cultural differences can also impact the perception of one's mental health status in order to more accurately access needs. They also talked about how providers currently experience burnout, as well as the importance of education support for providers of color and bilingual providers.

Actions/Solutions:

- Share resources to support clinical and community mental health work
- Provide educational support for bilingual providers and providers of color