

A COLLABORATION WITH THE MEXICAN CONSULATE OF NEW YORK CITY

THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION - NEW YORK

Million Hearts in Action

[Strategies for Achieving Million Hearts Goals]



Heart disease and stroke are leading causes of death for the Hispanic community in the United States. While most of these diagnoses are preventable, many members of this community have difficulty accessing care due to language barriers or other obstacles related to culture. In New York City, the American Heart Association affiliate is working with the Mexican Consulate on a creative initiative to educate Mexican residents about symptoms, risks and prevention.

Fast Facts

- Eighty percent of Mexican-American men and 76 percent of women 20 years and older are overweight or obese.
- About 65 percent of Mexican-American men and 74 percent of Mexican-American women do not participate in leisure-time physical activity, according to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.
- About 24 percent of adult Hispanics have diabetes, and as many as half don't realize it. Untreated, diabetes can lead to serious complications, including cardiovascular disease and renal failure. The prevalence of diagnosed diabetes in Mexican-Americans between the ages of 24 and 74 is greater than in non-Hispanic whites.

What We Did

- The AHA has developed a wonderful collaboration with the Mexican Consulate in New York City that for the past five years has worked to elevate cardiovascular disease awareness, as well as provide opportunities for direct intervention regarding risk factors.
- The AHA initiative is housed within Mexico's Ventanilla de Salud (Window of Health) program (http://ventanillas.org/index.php/en/). The 'ventanillas' provide reliable information on health topics, counseling and referrals to health services. That program was designed to improve the physical and mental health of Mexicans living in the United States and to increase access to primary and preventive health insurance coverage and ensure culturally sensitive services in order to reduce the use of emergency services.
- Supported by volunteers and interns, the AHA initiative organizes many formal events at the Consulate's office in midtown Manhattan, the best opportunity for engagement often comes as individuals wait in line to be assisted by the Consulate's office on other matters. The team shares valuable information with this captured audience, in their native tongue and with a sharp eye toward cultural sensitivity.



• We also worked with the Mexican Consulate in New York to celebrate National Wear Red Day to call attention to women and heart disease, and to partner with their "mobile consulate" on educational opportunities.

$\left[ight.$ What We Accomplished ight]

- The program has had the potential to educate 80,000 individuals over 5 years.
- Education is disseminated on health programs such as Life's Simple 7 and recognizing symptoms of stroke.
- In 2014, the AHA provided three consulate staff members with Heart Saver CPR training, during which they learned the importance of cardiac arrest preparedness. Afterwards, the General Manager of the Consulate agreed to request approval for an AED purchase. Moving through many approval levels, across international borders, they received their approval from the Mexican government. With 52 Consulates of Mexico in the United States, this office in New York City is the first to have an AED and a certified staff. As a result, the Mexican Consulate Office in NYC was recognized as an American Heart Association Heartsaver award recipient.

We are meeting this underserved population exactly where they are. It's an opportunity for the American Heart Association to speak with the Mexican immigrant community in their native language and educate them about the basics of heart disease and stroke. Through our partnership with the Mexican Consulate, the AHA is able to better inform and protect a population that needs us the most."

Vicky Coll, regional director,
 Health Equity & Multicultural Initiatives at American Heart Association

What We Learned

- Being able to meet this audience where they are has been imperative to the program's success. By offering these educational opportunities to visitors at the Consulate's office, the AHA has managed to capture numerous individuals who may likely not have been able to cross paths.
- It is invaluable to share valuable information with this captured audience, as they wait for services at the Mexican Consulate, in their native tongue and with a sharp eye toward cultural sensitivity.
- The need is great. In New York City, there are so many different immigrant communities, we could have a dozen more programs in our arsenal and not meet all the needs.

What We Are Doing now

Our Multicultural Initiatives team, coupled with a routine series of internships, has allowed for the program to continue its outreach.

