

CHICANX/LATINX/INDÍGENA HEALTH EQUITY COALITION



# The Espina Project

ADDRESSING LATINX HEALTH  
DISPARITIES IN SAN FRANCISCO

Espina  
means  
thorn in  
Spanish,  
as in the  
thorn  
or spine of  
a cactus.

"Spines help cacti to thrive in desert environments by providing multiple functions. They protect the plant from predators, provide shade, help regulate temperature, reduce water loss and even help the plant to spread and reproduce..."

(<https://smartgardenguide.com/why-do-cacti-have-spines/>)

**Cacti use their spines to help them to survive and thrive in the inhospitable conditions in which they live.**



# Two Conditions impacting Latinx Health

## Social Determinants of Health

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Our communities often start out:

- with lower incomes and education levels
- limited employment skills and job prospects
- language and/or cultural barriers

## Systemic Racism

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Institutions can be hard to navigate:

- rules are inflexible and don't often benefit the user
- institutional approaches can be culturally unwelcoming
- racist practices can be hidden within generic policies and procedures

These two inextricably linked forces work together, reinforcing their processes to establish streamlined systems that lead to....

# LATINX HEALTH DISPARITIES

to name a few...

- **Diabetes**

Latinx adults are 70% more likely than white adults to be diagnosed with diabetes.

- **Mental Health**

In 2019, suicide was the second leading cause of death for Latinxs, ages 15 to 34.

- **HIV**

In 2018, Latinxs accounted for 27% of new diagnoses in the United States and dependent areas. (CDC)

- **Obesity**

Over 78% of U.S. Latinxs are obese or overweight (OMH, DHHS 2020)

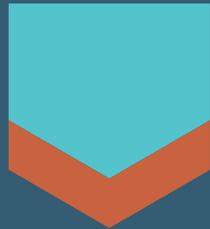
- **Prenatal Care**

In 2019, Latinx mothers were 80% as likely to receive late or no prenatal care as compared to white mothers.

- **Asthma**

Latinx children are 40% more likely to die from asthma, as compared to whites.

What if we tried a  
different approach...  
one that reviewed how  
healthcare institutions  
might reduce  
systemic racism?



The Espina Project's  
two inspirations



# Black Census Project

1

An early project of Black Futures Lab was the Black Census Project, representing the largest U.S. survey of Black people conducted since Reconstruction. Over 30,000 Black people nationwide participated in the Black Census Project, offering their views, political beliefs, concerns, and aspirations. This data can become the basis for understanding what is important to the Black community.



Black  
Futures  
Lab

## More Black than Blue:

Politics and Power in the  
2019 Black Census

Demos



SOClOANÁLITICĂ  
research

It made us  
wonder...



What if we collected health data on the Latinx community to better understand how social determinants of health & institutional racism impact them?

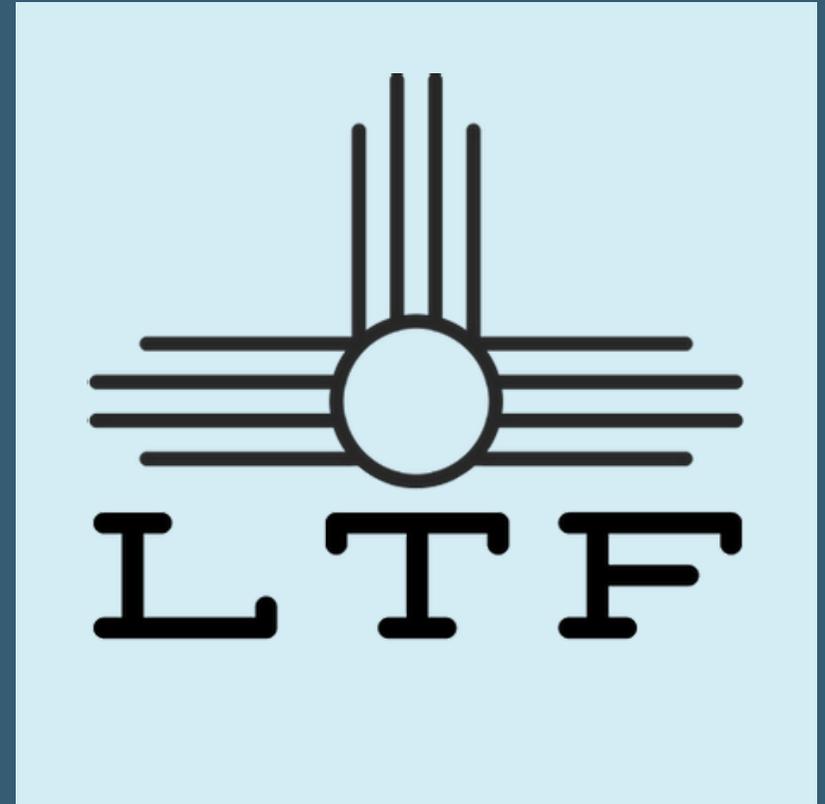
What if we could gain a greater understanding of how Latinxs in San Francisco receive, perceive, and experience their own health care?

Could this information be used to inform and reduce health disparities?

# The Latino Task Force

2

When mainstream approaches to reduce Latinx incidents of COVID didn't work in San Francisco, a network of Latinx community organizations organized to conduct outreach in culturally meaningful and appropriate ways, using community practices. Rates of Latinxs with COVID-19 went down dramatically and testing went up.



“

Always Remember...

In San Francisco, public servants stood behind leaders in the Latinx community...

Trusted partners delivered vaccine information and resources in a culturally appropriate and relevant manner to a community that was disproportionately impacted by the virus...

When we lead with community, we ensure greater equity..."

Press release, San Francisco Joint Information Center, Emergency Operations Center, June 28, 2021

And we  
thought  
some more...



If healthcare providers learned how Latinxs receive, perceive & experience healthcare, could this data be used to create a more culturally approachable healthcare experience?

Could it be used to modify existing institutional policies, practices, and operations?

Could these changes help reduce health disparities as they did with the Latino Task Force?

# THE ESPINA PROJECT



*How do Latinxs perceive their healthcare?*

*Is there a connection between how Latinx receive/perceive healthcare and their healthcare disparities?*

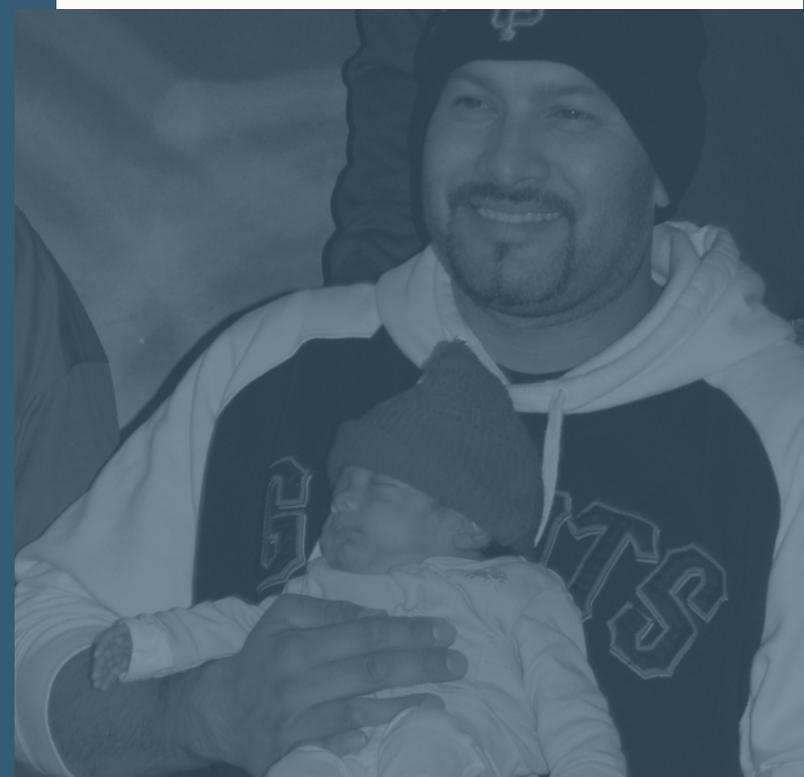
*Can data on Latinxs point to policies, practices, and operations that negatively impact Latinx healthcare experiences (espinas) to reduce their healthcare disparities?*

*Can we develop recommendations to reduce barriers to health and promote reforms to improve Latinx health disparities?*

*What if we shared our findings with healthcare institutions to see how community-based approaches could be incorporated into their current practices?*

*Can we offer a roadmap of community practices that other Latinx and BIPOC communities can tailor to reflect their own communities and address their own health disparities?*

# MOVING THE NEEDLE FORWARD



# The Espina Project

## Planning & Outreach

A Coordinating Committee comprised of CLI organizations will oversee the project.

## Focus Groups

Facilitate 12-24 focus groups of Latinx sub-populations on their health care experiences.

## Questionnaire

At least 1,500 questionnaires to be collected, including various modules for some populations.

## Healthcare Provider Interviews

Collect feedback on healthcare providers' view of existing barriers from the inside.

## Personal Histories

Approximately 10 personal histories will provide information on individual experiences in greater depth.

## Data Collection

Input & clean data, prepare data sets.

# Our Solutions

## Data Analysis

Compile list of espinas identified by Latinxs; identify patterns & unique distinctions among subpopulations; assess how espinas can be addressed; compile recommendations related to reforms in operations, practices and/or policies.

## Reports on Findings

Report on findings on findings on Latinx healthcare information and on unique subpopulations.

## Data Distribution Plan

Assess where/how data will be shared to maximize practical implementation of recommendations.

## Convenings & Presentations

Invite healthcare institutions to one or more convenings to present findings and begin dialogue to incorporate recommendations; present findings to commissions and other relevant bodies.

# Our Community-based Approach

## *Respect for Diversity*

The Latinx community is diverse and must be reflected to ensure inclusion. We will engage participation from youth, seniors, immigrants, the LGBTQ Latinx community, the Indígena, and others.

## *Respect for Culture & Language*

Participation will be available in Spanish, English, & as many Indígena languages as possible. Those unable to read/write will be provided support.

## *Incorporating Trusted Messengers*

Participant engagement is based on trusted community relationships. We will incorporate promotores and other trusted messengers to engage with the community.

## *Respect for Participants*

Participants are asked to provide their individual opinions and experiences. They should always be compensated for their valuable time and information.

# The Espina Project

(a project of the Chicanx/Latinx/Indígena Health Equity Group)

- **INSTITUTO FAMILIAR DE LA RAZA**

Each organization has a long history of serving the Latinx community of San Francisco.

- **HORIZONS UNLIMITED**

Each organization brings expertise in providing targeted culturally responsive programs, services and interventions.

- **MISSION NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH CENTER**

Each organization provides support to critical segments of our diverse community.

- **SAN FRANCISCO AIDS FOUNDATION**

The CLI has worked together on various health-related projects for nearly 20 years.

# Chicano/Latino/Indígena Health Coalition

## What We Bring

- **ORGANIZATIONS**

Each organization has a long history of serving the Latinx community of San Francisco.

- **SUBPOPULATIONS**

Each organization provides support to critical segments of our diverse community.

- **COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE**

Each organization brings expertise in providing targeted culturally responsive programs, services and interventions.

- **WORKING TOGETHER**

The CLI has worked together on various health-related projects for nearly 20 years.