



Improving care for Latinx patients

Barriers to care have resulted in disparities in the quality of health care Latinx patients receive. These barriers may include language or illiteracy. Latinx patients may not have insurance, transportation or access to telehealth technology. In addition they may have different cultural beliefs, and in some cases, undocumented immigration status or mistrust.

To better serve this patient population, Asuris and our employee resource group, Home of Latinxs and Allies (HOLA), collaborated to share this information with providers. HOLA's mission is to develop a place of welcoming and valued interaction for Latinxs and allies by providing personal and professional development, as well as opportunities for involvement that enhance our diversity efforts, empower our members and strengthen our community.

What's happening in the U.S.?

National data show multiple health disparities for Latinx individuals. Compared to non-Latinx White adults, Latinx adults are:

- **1.2x** more likely to be affected by obesity
- **1.3x** more likely to die from complications of diabetes
- **13%** less likely to be up to date with colorectal cancer screenings
- **50%** less likely to receive any mental health treatment
- Generally more likely to be underdiagnosed and untreated for depression

Best practices

We have included best practices for you to consider when treating your Latinx patients—but keep in mind that high-value, patient-centered care requires a focus on each individual patient rather than assuming a set of normative values.

- Ask patients if they would like a Spanish-speaking provider. If a Spanish-speaking provider is unavailable, offer Spanish-speaking language services (e.g., interpreters, Spanish forms) during office visits and other health care-related services (e.g., pharmacy, social work, physical therapy, dietician, nutritionists, etc.).
- Establish a warm and personal relationship, and avoid a sense of urgency.
- Build trust by showing an interest in your patients' family life, heritage and culture.
- Develop rudimentary understanding of Latinx cultures (e.g., cultural attitudes and beliefs about health and health care) and diets.
- Understand the important role families play in most Latinx decision-making and communities.
- Use plain language and the “teach back” technique to ensure understanding of medical language, terms and treatment plans.
- Ensure regular HbA1c screening and follow-up testing as appropriate, since there is greater likelihood of Latinx individuals dying from complications of diabetes,
- Ensure connection to culturally-aligned nutritional guidance for obesity.
- Because Latinx patients get screened for colorectal cancer at a lower rate, ensure they understand all the options for screening, including colonoscopies and fecal occult blood tests.
- Because depression is more likely to be underdiagnosed and undertreated, ensure routine screening for depression.
- Conduct social determinants of health (SDoH) screenings on every patient.
- Connect patients to community resources (e.g., food pantries, transportation, social support services, resource fairs, and utility and energy assistance), as needed.
- Connect patients, where possible, with bilingual/bicultural care, including promotores (patient advocates and educators).
- Refer patients to additional resources (e.g., behavioral health, personal emergency response devices, palliative care, home health and nutrition).

Resources for you

Provider website, [asuris.com](https://www.asuris.com)

- Find resources to help support your cultural competency and health literacy: [Toolkits>Health Equity](#).
- The Healthwise Knowledgebase includes patient resources on health topics in Spanish that you can share with patients during their office visit: [Toolkits>Quality Improvement Toolkit](#).
- You and your patients can find in-network providers using the [Find a Doctor tool](#). By selecting Advanced Search, you can refine your search to find providers who speak a particular language.

Asuris Provider Contact Center

- Providers can contact us for support finding SDoH resources or in-network providers for their patients: 1 (888) 349-6558.

Resources for your patients

- **Asuris Customer Service:** Members can call the number on the back of their member ID card for help with SDoH resources, finding a PCP, understanding their benefits and more. Medicare Advantage members have access to Spanish-speaking customer service representatives.
- **Asuris member website, [asuris.com](https://www.asuris.com):** View the lists of covered preventive care services.
 - [Commercial preventive care list](#)
 - [Medicare Advantage preventive care list](#), including annual wellness visits (AWVs) and preventive care visits (PCVs)
- **Healthwise:** Members can access a library of health information about wellness, prevention, specific conditions and more (in English or Spanish), supported Healthwise:
 - [English](#)
 - [Spanish](#)
- **Community resources:** Individuals can find support to address social needs (e.g., food insecurity, housing instability, transportation access and more).
 - [211.org](https://www.211.org)
 - [findhelp.org](https://www.findhelp.org)
- **National Alliance for Hispanic Health:**
 - View [resources on health topics](#) (e.g., cancer, diabetes, mental health).
 - Su Familia, The National Hispanic Family Health Helpline, provides free, reliable and confidential health information in Spanish and English: 1 (866) 783-2645.