Hispanics/Latinos in Missouri

Missouri has experienced more than an 80% increase in its Hispanic/Latino population since 2000\(^1\). Thirty counties have more than doubled their Hispanic/Latino populations.\(^2\) St. Louis and its surrounding counties have a smaller Hispanic/Latino population than Missouri as a whole (Figure 1).\(^3\)

The areas within the St. Louis region that have the highest Hispanic/Latino populations include south St. Louis city, St. Charles, Warrenton, and North County. This is counter to the common misconception that all Hispanics/Latinos live on St. Louis’ Cherokee Street.

Uninsured Population in Missouri

Missouri did not expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act (ACA)\(^4\), which left nearly 150,000 people in a coverage gap with incomes above Medicaid eligibility limits but below the lower limit for Marketplace premium tax credits.\(^5\) In 2014, 13.4% of Missourians were uninsured.\(^6\)

In the United States, non-citizens are three times more likely to lack health insurance than U.S.-born citizens. This is, in part, due to the fact that those who are undocumented do not qualify for benefits under the Affordable Care Act. Thus, non-citizens are also less likely than their native-born counterparts to obtain needed care or preventive services.\(^7\) This is true for Hispanic/Latino immigrants in the St. Louis region.

Current Challenges

Hispanics/Latinos in Missouri, as well as the uninsured population, face a multitude of social and health challenges including:

- Lack of access to medical care
- A 2-3 year lag behind on obtaining routine preventive care screening
- Poorly controlled high blood pressure
- Language barriers that can lead to dysfunctional relationships due to the use of family members or friends to provide interpretation services (e.g., 10-year old son serves as interpreter for his mother)
- Resistance to recognize the growing immigrant population among the St. Louis community
- Decreasing federal and private funds to cover uninsured persons in community health centers
Current Efforts to Improve Hispanic/Latino Health & Health of the Uninsured

**Casa de Salud**

**Mission:** To facilitate and deliver high quality clinical and mental health services for uninsured and underinsured patients, with a focus on new immigrants and refugees who encounter barriers to accessing other sources of care.

*Casa de Salud* aims to create a sustainable resource center for immigrants. Services include:
- Primary care and mental health visits
- Spanish-speaking professional staff
- Professional interpretation
- Patient education
- Location on Saint Louis University’s campus
- A $25 flat fee for medical visits

**St. Louis Mosaic Project**

**Goal:** To make St. Louis the fastest growing U.S. metropolitan area for immigration by 2020.

An initiative through the World Trade Center and International Institute, *Mosaic* programs optimize the potential of immigrants in the region, helping them achieve success by accelerating their connections to resources and expanding their networks. Programs include:
- Ambassador Program
- Professional Connector Program for foreign-born professionals
- Regional Business Council Mentoring Program for international students
- Global Talent Hiring Program
- Immigrant Entrepreneurship Program

**Needs of the St. Louis Latino/Hispanic Community & Uninsured Population**

The following pressing current questions were identified that would benefit from attention by researchers:

- How can access to health care and social services be improved for Hispanics/Latinos living in the St. Louis region and for specific Hispanic and Latino communities?
- How can mental health services be designed to take into account the trauma that faces many Latinos/Hispanics in St. Louis?
- What preventive health services are needed by Hispanic/Latino individuals, families, and communities and how can they best be designed to improve uptake of healthcare services?

For more information or to schedule a consultation with the Center for Community-Engaged Research or the Community Advisory Board, please contact Hilary Broughton at hbrought@dom.wustl.edu or 314-362-7034.

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3 United States Census Bureau. (2014). *State and County Quick Facts.* Available at: [http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/29000.html](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/29000.html)


7 Kaiser Family Foundation. (2013). *Key Facts on Health Coverage for Low-Income Immigrants Today and Under the Affordable Care Act.* Available at: [https://kaiserfamilyfoundation.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/8279-02.pdf](https://kaiserfamilyfoundation.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/8279-02.pdf)