



Promotores/CHW's: Past, Present and Future in Community Health

*A culturally and linguistically
effective approach*

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International Origenes

Much of what is known about Promotores comes from experiences throughout Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East.



Latin America to the U.S.A

- Beginning in the 1950's-Promotores de Salud flourished through Latin America to bring health care to the poor
- Late 1980's-Promotores de Salud became well known in the migrant and seasonal farm working communities in the USA.
- In California, Promotores programs were first used in 1988 by organizations working in AIDS/HIV prevention.
- Today Promotor programs are created by many organizations to educate
- people about topics including:
alcohol/drug prevention, cancer prevention, diabetes, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, lead poisoning prevention, reproductive health, mental health, and more.



Promotoras/es (Community Health Workers)

- Since the 1980's to the present the concept of “Promotores” has evolved into a different form of Community Health Worker. It is defined in academic literature as “personnel in which is sought out naturally in search of information, support and help.”
- A Promotora Comunitaria/Community Health Worker (CHW) is a community member who serves as a liaison between her community and health, human and social service organizations.
- Uses the Popular Education methods
- Is a “natural helper”



Access barriers

- Language barriers
- Transportation
- Lack of medical professionals that are Latino
- Knowledge and trust of the health care system

...therefore residents are less likely to understand and accept

- Prevention/Immunizations
- Care plans
- Diagnosis
- Treatment plan



-CREA RESULTS OF
DENVER, COLORADO



Esperanza Community Housing Corporation's mission

- To achieve comprehensive and long-term community development in the Figueroa Corridor neighborhood of South-Central Los Angeles.
- Community residents of all ages and ethnicities are the foundation of Esperanza's grassroots work.

Building Hope With Community



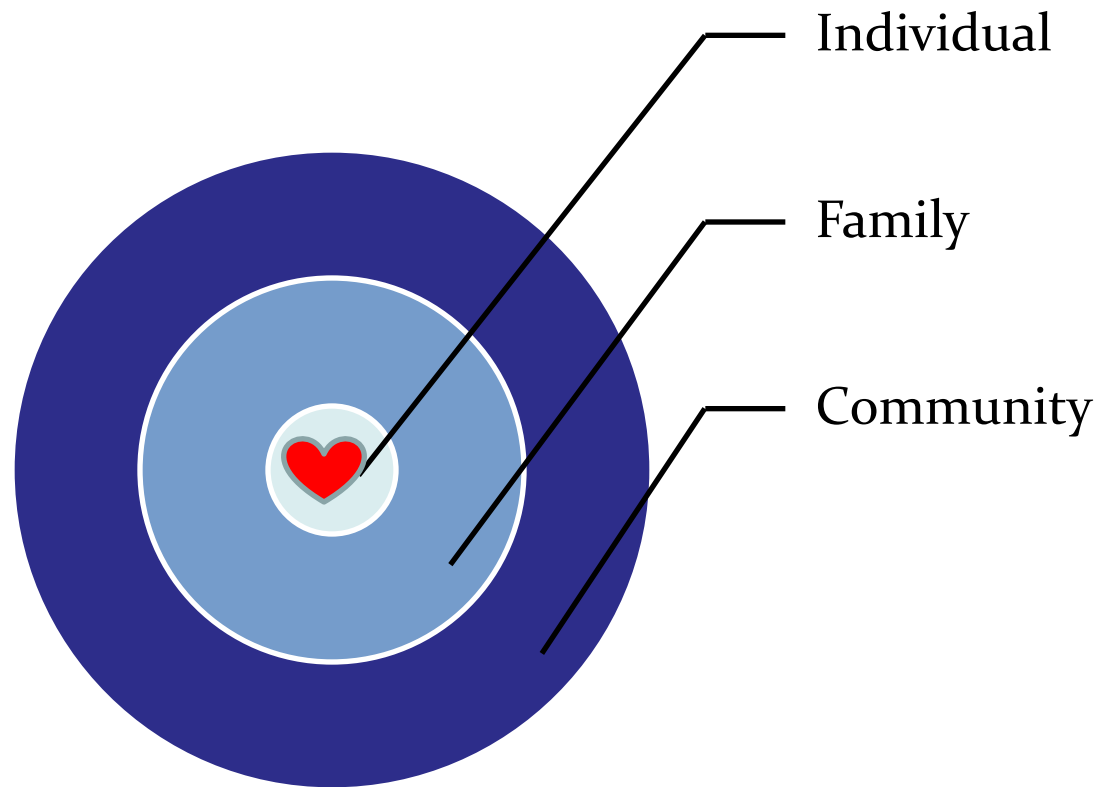
Esperanza Community Housing Promotores Training

- There is an process (application, interview and selection)
- Value lived experience, passion to serve and commitment to community
- Approximately 240 hours of training
- Graduation and inclusion into the family of Promotores de Salud
- Internship within a Partner Agency
- Evaluation
- Ongoing engagement with Esperanza



Why do we know this works?

Promotores state to go through a transformation.



Charateristics of a Promotor de Salud

- ❖ Have the gift to serve
- ❖ Usually are empathetic, creative and are willing to help others.
- ❖ Has created relationships in the community they serve
- ❖ Desire to help their community
- ❖ Are persistent
- ❖ Have personal strength and courage
- ❖ Model respect



Benefits to families and organizations:

- Promotores provide relevant health information
- They provide linkages to wide range of services
- They are the bridge between the families and the healthcare systems
- They help families navigate the system
- They are peer advocates



Impact on Promotores



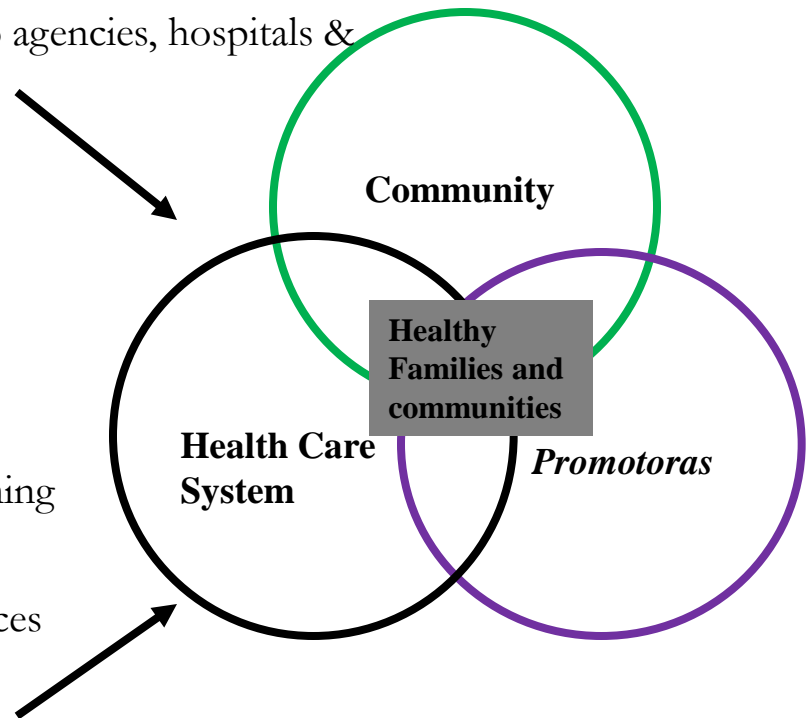
- ❖ Promotoras felt part of the team.
- ❖ Stated to have learned about organization's day to day operation.
- ❖ Valued the system and resources they provide.
- ❖ Created relationships with patients/clients/community.
- ❖ Solidified their passion of being a Promotora
- ❖ Learned to be more “quick on my feet”.
- ❖ Felt appreciated by staff.
- ❖ Opportunity to develop their own skills: language, computer, public speaking
- ❖ Desire to seek higher education
- ❖ Seek employment in social service

Promotoras Reduce Disparities

- Naturally connects with and maximizes existing social networks
- Increase trustworthiness
- local workforce development
- Provide cost-effective services
- Reinforce cultural values & norms
- Reduce access barriers to agencies, hospitals & institutions

As Liaisons, they assist to:

- Keep appointments
- Remove barriers cultural, linguistic barriers
- Encourage participation in maintaining health
- Increase access to prevention, services and follow up care
- Provide a wide range of services & integrate prevention



Promotor/CHW Continuum

- Promotoras work with organizations and institutions formally and informally, as employees or volunteers
- Promotoras/CHW's provide a continuum of services in a variety of capacities; peer advocates, outreach workers, case managers, educators, community liaisons, community organizers, project managers and Promotoras de Salud.



What do we have...

- As of this year we have 453 graduates of the Esperanza Community Housing Promotores de Salud training.
- Vision y Compromiso, a statewide Promotora/Community Health Worker Network that advocates for approximately 1,000 Promotores statewide.
- Esperanza's senior Promotora serves on the 15 member National Steering Committee for Promotores de Salud under the The Office of Minority Health (OMH) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- In 2010 the Department of Labor Federal Job Classification
- President Obama signs a Proclamation in October 2011





So what does that mean...

- ❖ Recognize the unique capacity of Promotores de Salud to effectively reach and communicate with families and individuals in the most vulnerable, low income and marginalized populations.
- ❖ Promote increased integration of Promotores within efforts already in place in health education, primary prevention, home visitation and health care access.
- ❖ Develop additional training and resources to increase job specific skills and further the integration of Promotores into organizations.
- ❖ Advocate for reimbursable income streams through health insurance for the services of Promotores de Salud, to improve community health and to support the increase integration of Promotores into the community clinics and other sites within the healthcare delivery system.



Thank you!

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