

As families increasingly struggle to balance health care costs with everyday needs, nearly all Americans are acutely aware of the urgent need for comprehensive reform of our health care system. Latinos, who at 15% of the U.S. population are the largest racial or ethnic minority group in the nation, are expected to represent 60% of the nation's population growth between 2005 and 2050. Policymakers must respond to the changing demographics of the country and understand Latinos' experiences with the current system in order to create reforms that guarantee affordable, accessible health care for all. If health care reform does not integrate the needs and concerns of all Americans, it will inevitably be less effective in the long-term.

In April 2009, to mark the beginning of National Minority Health Month, the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) released Profiles of Latino Health, a new resource for those who want to know more about prominent health issues affecting the Latino community. The first series, "The Top Twelve Questions about Latinos and Health Care," shines a spotlight on Latinos' health status and their interactions with the health care system. These snapshots provide insight into the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead for creating a health care system that meets the unique needs of the Latino community.

Each week from April to June, NCLR answered a prevailing research question that fell under one of five major themes:

- Key health trends
- Health insurance coverage
- Access to care
- Health care costs
- Quality of care

Click the following links to find out the answers to the top twelve questions about Latinos and health care:

**Question 1: Which health conditions disparately impact Latinos?**

**Question 2: In what ways does the Hispanic community show signs of good health?**

**Question 3: In what ways do Latinos access health insurance?**

**Question 4: Where in the country are Latinos most likely to lack access to health coverage?**

**Question 5: What are the main reasons behind high levels of uninsurance among Latinos?**

**Question 6: Do Latinos have adequate access to health care?**

**Question 7: Which health care services do Latinos have trouble obtaining?**

**Question 8: What are the financial barriers to health care—and the implications—for Latinos?**

**Question 9: What is the cost of health care received by Latinos, and who pays for it?**

**Question 10: How does patient-provider communication affect the quality of Latinos' health care?**

**Question 11: How many Latino health professionals are practicing in the United States?**

**Question 12: How much do Latinos know about their health, and what are their primary sources of information?**