



CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

May 13th, 2024

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Johns Hopkins Centro SOL and ‘Making It Stick’ for Community Health Workers

BALTIMORE — The Johns Hopkins Center for *Salud*/Health and Opportunities for Latinos (Centro SOL), which has the mission to promote equity in health and opportunity for Latinos by advancing clinical care, research, education and advocacy for Latinos in Baltimore, will hold its 10th anniversary Latino Health Conference on Monday, May 13.

The conference will convene clinicians, public health professionals, community leaders and other stakeholders in the critical prevention work that community health workers (CHWs), also known as *promotoras*, are doing in Maryland, especially in the state’s immigrant and Latino communities. The central idea for the conference is Making It Stick —to creating equitable and sustainable infrastructure for the CHW workforce to keep Latino and other marginalized communities healthy. The conference will provide the foundation for an actionable policy agenda to promote the sustainability of Maryland’s CHW workforce.

“The **community health worker —CHW—** workforce plays a crucial role in our health care systems,” says Sarah Polk, M.D., Sc.M., M.H.S., co-director of Centro SOL. “It goes beyond medical care, addressing social determinants of health such as housing, food access and transportation, that improve health outcomes. Evidence shows that CHWs can reduce hospitalizations and health care costs. Hence, it is important to talk about strategies to support the CHW workforce.”

Making It Stick — Advancing and Sustaining Community Health Work in Maryland Monday, May 13, 12 to 5:30 p.m.

Carlos Rodríguez-Díaz, Ph.D., M.P.H.E., M.C.H.E.S., professor of community health sciences at the Boston University School of Public Health, will present one of two keynote addresses. His professional work focuses on engaging the social determinants of health to address health inequities among populations made vulnerable by factors such as race/ethnicity, incarceration status, gender identity, sexual orientation and HIV status.

Laura Gutierrez, small business, policy and community development director in the Maryland’s Comptroller’s office will present the second keynote address, which will focus on policies and legislation to advance the CHW workforce.

A conference panel will discuss legal, policy and implementation perspectives regarding sustaining community health work in Maryland. Panelists are Gabriela Lemus, Ph.D., executive director of Maryland Latinos Unidos, a program partner of Maryland Nonprofits; Ashley Woolard, J.D., lead

attorney for the Public Justice Center's Health and Benefits Equity Project; Kelly Velazquez-Umaña, M.P.H., founder of Umana Public Health Solutions; and moderator Alexandra Morán, M.D., founder and CEO of Thriving Juntos.

"Reducing health care disparities for Latinos could effectively be accomplished by engaging a multidisciplinary care team that includes CHWs to promote cultural and structural competence," says Monica Guerrero Vazquez, M.P.H., M.S., executive director of Centro SOL. "That is why this conference is a needed space to bring together partners that can think about sustainability of a workforce that empowers individuals to take control of their health, advocates for equitable access to resources and fosters positive health outcomes."

Following the keynote speakers and panel, a town hall will summarize the Centro SOL CHW report to advance community health work policy and programs.

Centro SOL 10th Anniversary Celebration
Monday, May 13, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Guests are invited to join in celebrating Centro SOL's 10th anniversary immediately following the conference, at the same location.

The conference and 10th anniversary celebration are both free to attend. To register, visit JHCentroSOL.org.

Centro SOL (Johns Hopkins Center for Salud/Health and Opportunities for Latinos) promotes equity in health and opportunity for Latinos in Baltimore by advancing clinical innovations, research, education, advocacy and outreach at Johns Hopkins and beyond, in partnership with the center's Latino neighbors. Founded by physicians in 2013, Centro SOL is celebrating a decade of service to Latinos. (JHCentroSOL.org)

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