



## Clinical Technical Assistance: National Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15th – October 15th is National Hispanic Heritage Month (NHHM). This year's theme - Hispanics: *Be Proud of Your Past, Embrace the Future* - invites Hispanic individuals to embrace their backgrounds, to be proud of who they are and where they came from – this is a time to raise awareness through community events, online resources, and education, and shared experiences. National Hispanic Heritage Month.



### History:

Hispanic Heritage Month commemorates the cultural and societal contributions of Americans who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico, Central America, South American, and the Spanish-speaking nations of the Caribbean. National Hispanic Heritage Week began in 1968 and became a month-long celebration two decades later. It starts on September 15th, a historically significant day that marks the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

### Key Facts:

- The U.S. Hispanic population reached 60.6 million in 2019, 18% of the U.S. population.
- A record 32 million Latinos are projected to be eligible to vote in 2020, up from 27.3 million in 2016.
- In 2019, 12 states had a population of 1 million or more Hispanic residents.

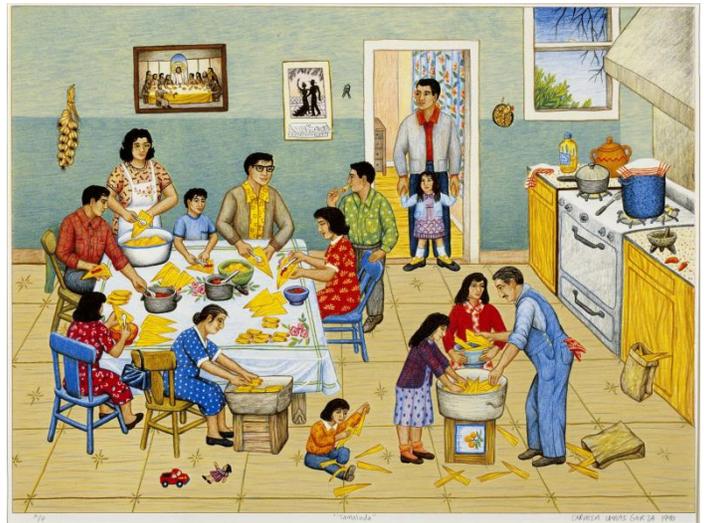
### Substance Use and Mental Health – Prevalence, Social Determinants, and Barriers<sup>2</sup>:

- The opioid use (heroin use and prescription opioid use) rate among Hispanic/Latinos is similar to the national population rate, about 4 percent.
- In 2017, the opioid-related overdose death rate among Hispanics was 6.8 deaths per 100,000 individuals, which was significantly lower when compared to non-Hispanic Whites, Blacks, and American Indian/Alaska Natives.
- 1.34 million Hispanic or Latino adults, age 18 and over, had a co-occurring substance use disorder (SUD) and mental illness (MI) in the past year.
- The onset of civil wars, economic insecurity, poverty, and natural disasters have contributed to the growing Hispanic/Latinx population in the United States. The **resulting trauma** associated with leaving one's native country and acculturating to a new country may **manifest as a mental health condition**.
  - » Latinx (refers to individuals of Latin American origin or descent) is a more inclusive, gender-neutral, and non-binary alternative to Latino/Latina and is pronounced \uh-TEE-neks\.
- For Hispanic/Latinx individuals, discrimination toward their ethnicity and immigration status is linked to an



**increased risk of developing a SUD.** However, due to the subsequent stigma experienced by individuals with a SUD, many will not seek treatment.

- » A key contributor in the Hispanic/Latinx community noted, “People are hiding an addiction, especially Latinos. The message is not getting to them that addiction is a disease.”
- Internal family dynamics, extended social networks, and religion play a critical role in Hispanic life. In turn, the concept of familismo and the practice of faith are critical to SUD prevention, engagement, treatment, and recovery approaches for Hispanic/Latinx communities.
- A frequently cited issue regarding prevention, engagement, treatment, and recovery strategies related to the opioid public health crisis for Hispanic/Latinx communities is the need for bilingual providers and materials in one’s native language.



<sup>1</sup>Carmen Lomas Garza, Tamalada, 1990

### Clinical Consideration

- **Know the resources!** If an individual who didn’t speak English were to seek services at your organization, would you know which organizations in the area provide multi-lingual services? Identify local organizations and community resources that offer services in non-English languages.
- **Be proactive!** Don’t wait until someone who doesn’t speak English contacts you before you prepare your staff. Instead, be proactive and ensure all staff know how to support a non-English speaking individual.
- **Utilize a culturally inclusive approach!** Be aware of the unique needs of the client’s cultural background by educating yourself, using resources such as those listed under Additional Resources
- **Avoid assumptions and stereotypes!** Staff should be aware of their own potential implicit bias and encouraged to discuss any such biases in supervision should they arise in interactions with clients. Supervisors can support a staff member in recognizing their implicit bias and being intentional in their interactions with clients so as not to bring their implicit biases into the professional relationship.
- **Integrate cultural factors into treatment/services!** When creating treatment or service plans, be sure to respect and integrate factors relevant to the client’s culture. What may be common parts of treatment/services plans for many clients, may not be relevant or appropriate for clients from a different cultural background.



## Ways to Observe and Learn More about NHHM, please visit the following websites:

- <https://www.hispanicmonth.net/>
- <http://www.hispanicheritagemonth.gov/>
- <https://nationaltoday.com/hispanic-heritage-month/>
- <https://www.languagemagazine.com/2020/09/20/how-to-celebrate-national-hispanic-heritage-month/>

### Additional Resources:

SAMHSA - The Opioid Crisis and the Hispanic/Latino Population: An Urgent Issue, 2020. <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/The-Opioid-Crisis-and-the-Hispanic-Latino-Population-An-Urgent-Issue/PEP20-05-02-002>

SAMHSA – TIP 59: Improving Cultural Competence, 2014. <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/TIP-59-Improving-Cultural-Competence/SMA15-4849>

### Sources:

- 1: (Image) National Council of Hispanic Employment Program Managers. Hispanic Heritage Month Themes and Posters. 2020
- 2: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Office of Behavioral Health Equity, The Opioid Crisis and the Hispanic/Latino Population: An Urgent Issue, 2020
- 3: (Image) Carmen Lomas Garza, Tamalada, 1990, color lithograph, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Museum purchase made possible by John B. Turner, 1997.5, (c) 1990, Carmen Lomas Garza