

Salud Talks Podcast Episode 44: Building Infection Control-Oriented Latino Healthcare Leaders

SPEAKERS

Dr. Amelie Ramirez, Dr. Elena Rios, Dr. Jorge Moreno

Dr. Amelie Ramirez 00:05

Hola and Bienvenidos to this special episode of Salud Talks, we're continuing to explore infection control in healthcare settings as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Project Firstline program. Salud America at UT Health San Antonio is working with the National Hispanic Medical Association to bring Project Firstline content to Latino front line health care workers. In this week's episode, we are focusing on building infection control oriented Latino healthcare leaders.

Hi, I'm Dr Amelie Ramirez, director of the Salud America and its home base, the Institute for Health Promotion Research at UT Health San Antonio. It's my pleasure to serve as your host for this special series on infection control. I'd like to introduce our first guest, Dr. Jorge Moreno. Dr Moreno, please tell us a little bit about what you do.

Dr. Jorge Moreno 00:59

Thank you so much for having me. My name is Dr. Jorge Moreno. I'm an assistant professor of medicine at Yale School of Medicine, and I have two main roles, which is, I do clinical work with primary care practice that I've been here for about five years. And I also do a subspecialty clinic in obesity medicine at the clinic, in addition to my role as faculty at the medical school.

Dr. Amelie Ramirez 01:23

And our next guest is Dr. Elena Rios. Dr. Rios, can you please tell us more about what you do?

Dr. Elena Rios 01:30

Sure, I'm the president of the foundations called the National Hispanic Health Foundation, and I guess what I really do is coordinate programs and meetings and do advocacy in Washington, DC, where I live, for the improvement of health of Latinos.

Dr. Amelie Ramirez 01:50

Thank you. You know, HMA was the, one of the first organizations to really bring together, you know, Latino physicians, and you all have just done some amazing work. I'd like to just jump into today's discussion. Dr. Rios, for those of us who are unfamiliar, can you introduce the purpose of NHMA and its Fellows Program?

Dr. Elena Rios 02:10

Sure, the NHMA started because we wanted to find movers and shakers in our community who were doctors who wanted to help with educational efforts across the country, and we got a grant. It was a cooperative agreement from the Office of Minority Health. We decided that instead of just developing a

program, we developed a way to build the infrastructure for the organization, and we call it the NHMA Leadership Fellowship. And it was to train mid-career or older doctors who had already documented that they were interested in leadership, whether it was in their hospitals as, on the staff committees or in their medical school training, on the admissions committees or, or doing research and how they wanted to do more than just be a clinician, and wanted to do things that could impact the system that they were working in.

So our NHMA Leadership Fellowship has become a sort of flagship program of and actually both organizations now we have leadership fellowships, but the importance is that we've been able to track the graduates of the program, and many of them have become board members of our organization, but also, many of them have gone on to do all kinds of great things. One of them was the commissioner of New York City Health Department. Another one is working at the HRSA agency in the director's office. Another one actually runs the HRSA's Bureau of Primary Health Care that gives money to medical schools and other things. And I think that there's been a real honor of seeing how so many leaders in our community can be motivated to do more when they're in a cohort of other leaders and they learn from each other. So that's what we've done.

Dr. Amelie Ramirez 04:00

Yeah, and, you know, just amazing, because they serve as role models for our young individuals that need that mentorship in becoming as they go through their development and become future leaders. So you have so much to be proud of. How has CDC's Project Firstline infection control education and training been integrated into NHMA's Fellows Program?

Dr. Elena Rios 04:25

Well, we did, we decided that we would include it as a one of the modules that the fellows take during the summer months. It's a one year executive leadership program, and they are one hour modules with different topics, and we've had the CDC make a presentation on the Project Firstline and the tools that they have.

And then the other thing is that they've been asked to talk about, how do they talk to the non-Hispanic doctors or non-Hispanic nurses in their hospitals, about talking to Latinos, so that there's more of an echo effect in the hospitals about infection control. You know, usually the infectious disease control was only a part of a hospital. You know, just like the people that take care of the administration, only take care of administration well, or billing and so, so it's a way to get more and more people interested in understanding how important it is to protect yourself from infections.

But more importantly, the fellows are asked because they're all Hispanic doctors from different settings, some of them work in clinics, some works in hospitals, some in private practice. They've been asked to provide feedback on the tools of CDC. In fact, I have presentation, some of the presentation slides here, and I know that they have mentioned quite a bit about how there needs to be language, Spanish language, for example, should be integrated into the tools, health literacy and also the importance of how to talk to people before you get into a training session. So there's been, you know, some good feedback to the CDC officers about how to talk to Latino patients. Right. I think the pandemic has taught us so much right, in terms of precautions that we need to take and that it takes everybody you

know working together. What, what part of this infection control education and training program do you feel has been the most helpful for NHMA fellows? Well, I think one of the big things that we've talked about is how there's a CDC pledge that you and your team have put together a CDC Project Firstline training pledge so that we have more people.

Again, feel very comfortable in talking about infectious disease control, but also giving a call to action to the people that they talk to about it, and say to go to your website, or our website, the nhmamd.org website or the Salud America website, and take the pledge. And you'll notice on the website that there are other people's names on it so that you can join a growing group of, of healthcare leaders in our in our community and so the Leadership Fellows are actually putting their leadership to work.

Dr. Amelie Ramirez 07:10

Dr. Moreno as an NHMA fellow, what have you found most useful from CDC's Project Firstline infection control education and training?

Dr. Jorge Moreno 07:21

Yeah, so I think that the CDC has done a great job of creating this Project Firstline, for those who may not know about it, I think that it's important to realize all the important resources available, and it really creates reinforcement of the tools that we know about, but really to emphasize the importance of using them, also talks about certain clinical pictures that may present to the hospital, like if someone has a rash, and when to use gloves, when to use other protective equipment, personal protective equipment, that can be really helpful to prevent infection across the hospital.

And the other important thing is that it really provides language appropriate information. There's a lot of available languages, including Spanish, and I think that that's important for the healthcare workforce to really understand what to do to prevent infections throughout, in the healthcare setting. And and they're easy to read, easy to use, and I really thought they were very helpful when I utilize them.

Dr. Amelie Ramirez 08:22

Can you give us an example of how you've implemented lessons from CDC's Project Firstline into your own practice in the healthcare setting?

Dr. Jorge Moreno 08:30

You know, I think that it really reinforced for me to really keep an eye on whenever I move from room to room in the hospital setting. And, you know, taking those extra five, five seconds or minute to really make sure you're doing the appropriate setup for your personal protective equipment when you go into a patient room that has, that has certain conditions that would require that will make a huge difference in the healthcare setting that you're in.

And also, you know, I was working with residents and interns and students, and so modeling that behavior can also continue the process going forward, right? The importance of infection control going forward and I think that really making sure to take that pause and you know, if have a patient with flu, wearing your mask, if you have a patient with some other infection that requires a gown, reminding the team members to wear their gown. And so I think that the information on the website was very helpful.

Dr. Amelie Ramirez 09:37

That's awesome. Dr Rios, have they identified any kind of favorite CDC project, first line education or training materials that they like or that you have seemed to enjoy the most?

Dr. Elena Rios 09:48

Oh, I think all of these user guides that are very simple and very thought provoking the way they have provided training for the facilitators that give the training, so that you can actually tell people what you're talking about, but then you can ask them questions and get feedback.

Dr. Amelie Ramirez 10:04

Dr. Moreno, can you add another reason to pledge and use our tool kit?

Dr. Jorge Moreno 10:08

Like I said, I think that there's a lot of important resources there and in language appropriate ways, culturally sensitive ways, and really any nuance or any question that people may have about when to wear certain personal protective equipment, or what to do about hand washing, or when to use sanitizer, hand sanitizer, all those, all those data points, all that information is available on there, it definitely can only help to really have that resource, and if not just for you, then for your team members, whether it's nursing, whether it's other healthcare providers or other team members. I think that you should definitely look at this website and consider using these tools.

Dr. Amelie Ramirez 10:54

Sounds like that? Easy to use material is really important, and they're so busy and easy to read, but you know, very concrete information. Dr Rios, if Latino healthcare workers interested in joining NHMA, how can they go about doing that?

Dr. Elena Rios 11:09

Oh, sure. We have a website, nhmamd.org, and there is a membership section, and anyone is welcome to join. We have different dues, rates, depending on who the person is, but it is an organization that really just has a mission to improve the health of Hispanics and other underserved and like I said, we do have lots of opportunities, like Project Firstline to have people get involved and help us with spreading the word about the importance of infectious disease control.

Dr. Amelie Ramirez 11:40

Thank you, Dr. Rios for sharing your thoughts. Healthcare workers can sign up for the pledge and the toolkit by visiting the Dalud America website at salud-america.org We want to thank Dr. Rios and Dr. Moreno for joining us in this discussion and appreciate their perspectives on building infection control oriented Latino healthcare leaders, we hope you enjoyed listening and learning with us during this special podcast series of CDC's Project Firstline and we'll see you next time!