Lessons from Two Latino Communities Working with Academic Partners to Increase Access to COVID-19 Testing

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What Is the Purpose of this Study?

• To understand community partners’ experiences and process of engagement in a community–academic partnership that implemented COVID-19 testing and access in two majority Latino communities.

What Is the Problem?

• There has been limited examination of the voices of community partners in a community–academic partnership responding to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly among marginalized, under-resourced communities.

What Are the Findings?

• Participants shared that having community partners from another site provided an essential source of support as they developed plans for their COVID-19 testing events.

• Latino COVID-19 Collaborative strategies tapped into leadership and activities that were present in the sites prior to COVID-19.

• Participants felt that holding study activities in Spanish contributed to the relationships and capacity building of Latino COVID-19 Collaborative partners.

Who Should Care Most?

• Researchers interested in community–academic partnerships.

• Community-based organizations.

• Providers.

• State and local policymakers.

Recommendations for Action

• Relationships among community partners can lead to unique and important insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by residents in accessing COVID-19 testing.
• Community-academic partnerships should uplift existing community capacity, ongoing leadership development is critical, particularly in geographically based interventions.

• Future development and implementation of testing, vaccine, and outpatient treatment strategies should consider moving beyond traditional approaches to engage community partners.