

COMMENTARY

NHMA 30th Anniversary Leadership Summit Report

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In April 2024 the National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA) convened its 30th Anniversary Celebration and Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. Attendees divided into teams to evaluate NHMA's 30 years of progress and focus on plans for the future by examining the themes of:

- Hispanic/Latinx health
- Hispanic/Latinx representation in the health professions
- Advocacy and policy
- Partnerships for goal advancement

This report is based on the extensive notes taken at the meeting by the respective teams.

Background and Rationale

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Hispanic/Latinx community is the fastest-growing minoritized community in the United States, with nearly 20% of the population and 1 in 4 children being of Hispanic/Latinx heritage, 90% of which are native born.^{1,2} Our community faces ongoing health care challenges, including worse cardiovascular and diabetes outcomes; systemic barriers to care related to socioeconomic status, disparities in educational attainment, and un- or underinsurance; as well as inadequate representation in the health care workforce. The growing Hispanic/Latinx community is racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse, making one-size-fits-all approaches ineffective.

Despite their representation in the U.S. population, persons of Hispanic/Latinx heritage made up just 11% of matriculants to medical school in 2025.³ In 2022, they comprised 2.7% of full professors, 3% of associate professors, and 3.9% of assistant professors in medical schools⁴; and 6% of physicians overall.⁵ The underrepresentation of Hispanic/Latinx health professionals limits access to culturally informed care and impairs patient communication. It harms Hispanic/Latinx physicians who experience higher rates of burnout,⁶ discrimination, and inadequate support and compensation.

Leadership Summit Recommendations

The Summit identified critical factors concerning the health of Hispanic/Latinx communities and the lack of Hispanic/Latinx health professionals. A multifaceted approach to Hispanic/Latinx health, Hispanic/Latinx representation in the health professions, advocacy and policy, and partnerships for goal advancement was proposed by enhancing health education and culturally informed care, supporting physicians, and strengthening educational pathways.

Recommendations from the Summit to be presented at the 2025 annual NHMA conference

ENHANCE EDUCATION AND CULTURALLY INFORMED CARE IN HISPANIC/LATINX HEALTH

- **Standardized medical Spanish curriculum:** Promote a standardized curriculum to improve communication between health care professionals and Hispanic/Latinx patients.
- **Online CE/CME:** Develop interprofessional CE/CME focused on Hispanic/Latinx health.
- **Social media campaign:** Implement a targeted social media marketing campaign to raise awareness of Hispanic/Latinx health needs and promote culturally informed care.
- **Social media training:** Initiate Social Media Ambassadorship training to support proficient digital communication for physicians.

SUPPORT PHYSICIANS

- **Resources:** Provide career development workshops and advocacy trainings that address institutional bias, microaggressions, and burnout to protect the well-being of Hispanic/Latinx health care professionals.
- **Locoregional engagement:** Expand NHMA chapter engagement in locoregional advocacy efforts—community outreach, recruitment, and mentorship for Hispanic/Latinx youth pursuing careers in medicine.
- **Advocacy and policy:** Engage local and national policy leaders to support the needs of the Hispanic/Latinx communities.

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- **Partnerships:** Form partnerships with community-based organizations, Hispanic-serving institutions, and medical schools. Develop Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to support enrichment programs, mentorship, and leadership development of Hispanic/Latinx students.
- **Membership/mentorship:** Support chapter development through mentorship, leadership training, research opportunities, media training, and publishing, i.e., *Journal of the National Hispanic Medical Association (JNHMA)*. Strengthen collaborations with Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA), NHMA Council of Residents (COR), NHMA Council of Young Physicians (CYP), and NHMA Council of International Medical Graduates (CIMG) to foster leadership.
- **Research/publication/media:** Increase Hispanic/Latinx representation in clinical trials by developing Hispanic/Latinx scientists through leadership and media training to promote plain speaking science. Partner with other medical organizations to offer regional and national presentation opportunities. Continue support for JNHMA as an opportunity to participate in peer review and publish academic research.

Conclusion

NHMA is uniquely positioned to champion improved health outcomes for the Hispanic/Latinx community. By leveraging its platform and resources, NHMA can drive significant improvements in access to health care and in the quality of care. NHMA's strategic approach—to be discussed at the 2025 conference—will position NHMA to make an ongoing and meaningful impact on the health of the Hispanic/Latinx communities.

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