

Healthcare access among Mexico-California migrants: Evidence from the California-Mexico Epidemiological Surveillance Pilot

Alvaro Garza, MD, MPH¹
Matthew A Stanich, MPH¹
Maria T Hernandez, MPH²
Lorena Ayala-Lawless²
George F Lemp, DrPH²

¹Latino Center for Medical Education and Research
University of California San Francisco
Fresno Medical Education Program

²Office of the President
University of California

Objectives: To describe the utilization of selected preventive healthcare services, and identify demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics associated with receiving services among Mexican migrants in California.

Methods: We analyzed data collected between January and December 2004 in Fresno County for the California-Mexico Epidemiological Surveillance Pilot, a survey composed of a venue and housing-based, targeted random sample of Mexico-California migrants using a 35-minute face-to-face questionnaire.

Results: Of 340 respondents, 101 (30%) received health services for HIV/AIDS, STI, or TB within the past 12 months. Approximately two-thirds received services in California. Health services were accessed more by females (35%) than males (25%). Half of MSM (N=11) and all transgender respondents (N=6) received services. Respondents who received health services showed a significant association with some schooling in the U.S. (18% vs. 5%; $p<0.001$), more years of education (8.9 years vs. 7.1 years; $p<0.001$), high/medium language acculturation score (51% vs. 23%; $p<0.001$), attending a health fair in the last year (14% vs. 7%; $p=0.041$), having access to condoms when needed (41% vs. 26%; $p=0.009$), and higher HIV transmission-risk knowledge score (85% vs. 74%; $p<0.001$). Logistic regression analysis showed that accessing healthcare services was associated with high/medium acculturation score (odds ratio [OR], 2.4; 95%CI, 1.3-4.2) and years in school (OR, 1.1; 95%CI, 1.02-1.2).

Conclusions: Mexico-California migrants in Fresno County receive HIV/AIDS, STI, and TB services primarily in California. Results suggest that accessing health services is related to education, acculturation, and attending health fairs as well as to disease prevention outcomes, such as increased availability of condoms and better HIV risk knowledge. These results support continuing and expanding health educational and outreach efforts with Mexico-California migrants.