

Occupational Health Status of Urban Hispanics in the U.S.: A Call for Action

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Introduction

- APHA (1994) published *Latino health in the U.S.: A growing challenge*.
- Chapter 12: Health among urban Latino workers
- APHA new publication (2000): *Health issues in the Latino community*.
- Chapter 13: Occupational health among urban Latino workers

Hispanic Worker Demographics

Accuracy of statistics?

According to U.S. Census and DOL,

"Hispanic" is an ethnicity (shared culture and language), not a racial class.

Hispanics are black and white. *Problem:* double counting.

"Latino" refers to originating from south America. *Problem:* ignores Brazilians, Caribbean and European Latins

Hispanic Worker Demographics

Accuracy of statistics?

- ❑ A large but unknown number of Latinos are illegal immigrants; most are uncaptured by the census
- ❑ Fear created by immigration status is a barrier to inclusion in civil society (unions, health services, political organizations, voting, etc.)
- ❑ Resentment over being excluded: Former Southwest Mexicans >400 years in North America

Hispanics: Urban V. Country

- 88% of Latinos live/work in urban settings – 29.0 m (EPA, 1999)
- 12% of Latinos live/work in country settings – 4.0 m (EPA, 1999)

1998-99 Racial/Ethnic Distribution of U.S. Adult Civilian Workforce (P.O.L.) and Total Population (U.S. Census)

Race/ Ethnicity	U.S. Civilian Workforce (1000's)	%	U.S. Population (1000's)	%
Hispanic (Latino)	13,381	10	34,864	12.8
Black	14,795	11	31,355	11.5
White	111,863	84	224,650	84.0

U.S. Workforce by Race/ Ethnicity (U.S. Census 1999)

**Hispanics are 12.8% total U.S.
population, 10.0% adult workforce
Substantial numbers <16 years old
Projected to reach 25% of U.S.
population in 2050**

Distribution of Occupations by Ethnicity, U.S. Adult Civilians

(column %)

Occupation	Hispanic	Black	White
Prof/Manag.	14%	20%	29%
Service	20%	24%	13%
Operators	23%	22%	14%
Sales/Admin	24%	30%	31%
Other	20%	4%	15%

Hispanics: Occupational Morbidity

Disparity of Risk

Latino Occupational Morbidity

(from "Top Ten" Occupations, 1997)

Occupation	All Cases	% Hispanic
All Occupations	1,833,400	10.2%
Laborers (non-construction)	106,900	11.5%
Janitors, cleaners	45,800	20.0%
Laborers (construction)	45,800	17.9%
Cooks	31,500	12.8%

Hispanics: Occupational Mortality

Disparity of Risk

1999 Fatal Injuries by Race/ Ethnicity (BLS)

Race	Fatalities	%	% in US Workforce	Rate/ 100,000
White	5,016	83	84	4.484
Black	591	10	11	3.995
Hispanic	700	12	10	5.231
Total	6,026	100	100	4.541

Hispanics' Relative Risk of Occupational Mortality (RR)

Rates greater than whites and blacks:
Hispanics 5.2, Whites 4.5, Blacks 4.0
RR = 1.18 (95% CI = 1.09 - 1.28)
compared with black and whites
combined. (Hispanics include black and
white)

Occupational Working Lifetime

Mortality Risk (WLTR)

NIOSH 1998

WLRT (Deaths per 1000)

$$= [1 - (1 - R^y)] \times 1000$$

$R_{\text{in class}} = \frac{\text{Worker deaths}}{\text{All workers at risk}}$

$y = \text{working years at risk}$

(from ages 20 to 65)

Occupational Working Lifetime
Mortality Risk (WLRT) -- NIOSH 1998

$$WLTR = [1 - (1 - R^y)] \times 1000$$

Occupation / Event 1992-96	WLRT Hispanic (#Deaths)	WLRT Whites (#Deaths)
Cab Driver/Homicide	49.5 (46)	40.7 (120)
Gas Station Cashier /Homicide	13.1 (12)	NC (<5)
Grocer/Homicide	12.2 (52)	33.5 (13)
Security / Homicide	9.5 (31)	NC (<5)

Occupational Working Lifetime

Mortality Risk (WLTR)

About 50 of every 1,000 Hispanic cab drivers will be killed on the job (vs. 41/1000 Whites)

13/1000 Hispanic gas station cashiers and 10/1000 security guards will be killed. No computable (NC) data for Whites, i.e., fewer than 5 deaths

Occupational Morbidity and Mortality Risk for Hispanics:

Conclusions

Over-represented in occupations with highest lost time injuries

Over-represented in occupational fatalities (RR = 1.18)

Highest Work Lifetime Fatality Risk (WLTR) in the most dangerous occupations

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE ?

Statistics. Integration of Hispanics into civil society to assure accurate demographics and occupational health services

- Expanding Immigration Amnesty Programs
- Culturally appropriate census counting

Stop Disparity of Risk. Identification of government/NGO resources financing surveillance and prevention programs

Identification of Resources

Federal Executive Agencies

(Time for Big Government Programs is Gone)

- HHS --NIH, CDC, NIOSH
- DOL --OSHA, BLS
- EPA --State Programs (i.e., Brownfields)

Federal Legislative Sources (Key Resource)

Private Resources (NGO)

- Congressional Hispanic Caucus
(No! to the Tobacco Industry)

Congressional Funding Model: Successful Programs

**Hazardous Waste Worker Training
Program (NIEHS)**

**Construction Occupational Health:
Center to Protect Workers Rights
(NIOSH)**

**National Academy of Sciences:
proposed Monograph on Hispanic
Health and Population issues (NRC)**

Slide 9:

- Fewer professional and managerial: less than half of white population (14% v. 29%)
- More operators/laborers (23%) than among whites (14%); fewer than blacks
- More service workers (20%) than whites (13%); fewer than blacks

Slide 11:

Explain "Top Ten"

= The 10 occupations with the largest number of reported occupational injuries/illnesses

Other "top ten" occupations:

Occupation	All Cases	% Hispanic
Truck drivers	145,500	6.3
Nurses Aides	91,300	7.6
Assemblers	44,300	9.7
Carpenters	37,100	8.2
Stock Handlers	29,200	7.7
Welders/Cutters	28,400	8.4



Introduction

**Welcome to the EPA-NSC initiative on
Hispanic workers health**

**Encouraging that PAHO, OSHA, NIOSH
have joined**

**APHA Latino caucus and OSH caucus
working for years on Hispanics'
health**