

CALIFORNIA'S
**LATINO
PHYSICIAN
CRISIS**

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PRESS RELEASE

**LATINOS STILL UNDERREPRESENTED IN
CALIFORNIA MEDICAL SCHOOLS,
CREATING CRISIS IN MEDICAL CARE
FOR SPANISH SPEAKING PATIENTS**

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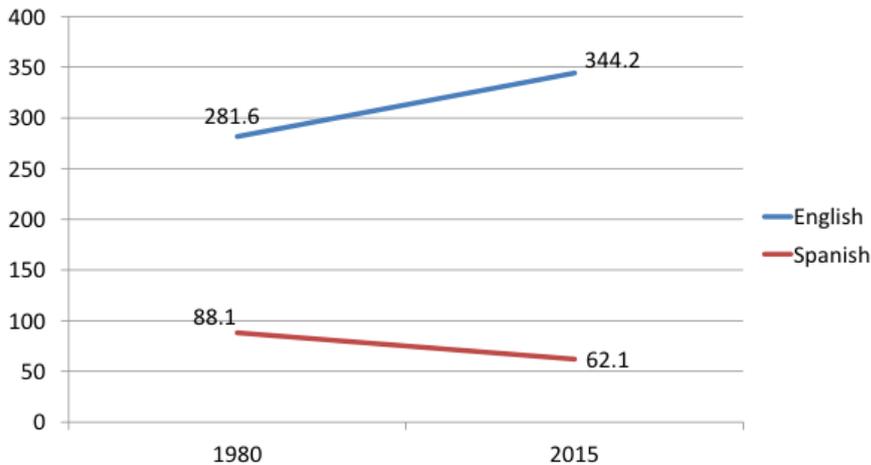
LOS ANGELES, CA—UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative (LPPI) is launching a rapid-response empirical study to address California's Latino physician crisis and identify policy solutions to increase the health and well-being of all Californians. For far too long, California's medical education establishment has maintained a status quo, creating a growing gap between Latinos and non-Hispanic whites, and exacerbating a Spanish-speaking physician shortage. To advance our population's well-being, LPPI research scientists are offering guidance for policymakers and California's next governor to address the state's Latino physician crisis.

"Latinos are going to college at higher rates than ever before, yet California's medical schools are graduating fewer Latinos than they did in 1980," says Sonja Diaz, Executive Director of UCLA LPPI. "California should be a model of health care innovation, but we lag behind states like Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas in training Latino doctors.

"The capacity of California's health care workforce to meet the needs of all residents is a chief policy concern for state leaders, and LPPI's interdisciplinary team of research scientists will provide compelling evidence to support policy reforms that integrate the needs of the state's plurality. LPPI experts leading this project include Dr. David Hayes-Bautista, Professor of Medicine at the Geffen School of Medicine and Center for the Study of Latino Health & Culture; Dr. Arturo Vargas Bustamante, Associate Professor of Health Policy and Management at the Fielding School of Public Health; and Dr. Matt A. Barreto, Professor of Chicana/o Studies and Political Science.

The state's physician workforce is increasingly unable to meet the needs of an estimated 7.3 million Californians with limited English proficiency. In 1980, there were 88.1 Spanish-speaking physicians for every 100,000 Spanish-speaking individuals in California. In the last quarter-century, that number has declined by over 29.5 percent to a ratio of 62.1 Spanish-speaking physicians per 100,000 individuals. Conversely, the ratio of English speaking physicians to English-speaking patients has increased by 122 percent during the same time period.

Change in MD/100,000 by Language, California, 1980-2015

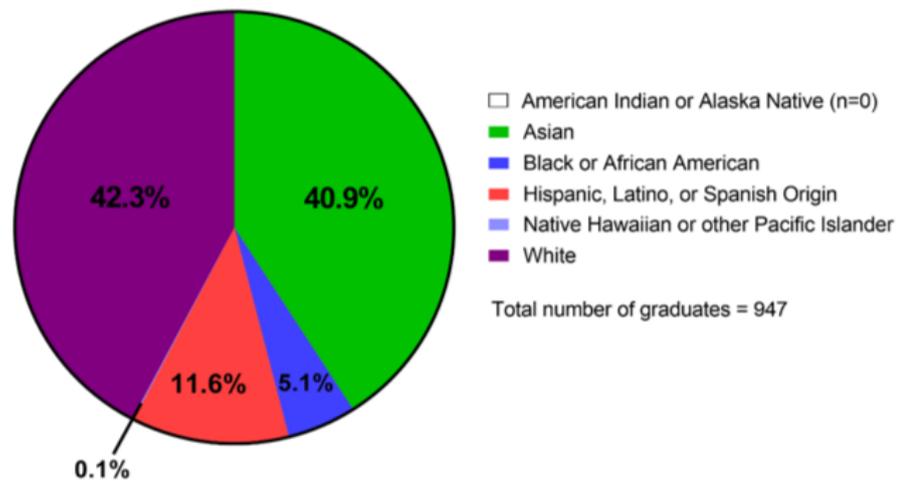


“Medical services in California have been provided in Spanish since 1769, but the supply of linguistically appropriate physicians actually has shrunk, relative to demand, since 1980,” says Hayes-Bautista. “Anyone can make the choice to learn Spanish, one of the languages under which California became a state in 1850.”

The shortfall in Spanish-speaking physicians is driven, at least in part, by a catastrophic shortfall in the training of Latino medical students. While California’s Latino population has grown to become the state’s majority at almost 40 percent, Latinos comprise just 11.6 percent of graduating physicians in all of California’s medical schools, which include the six medical schools within the University of California.*

“It is important to build diversity among providers to ensure that our communities have access to care by professionals who understand their health determinants,” says Cástulo de la Rocha, President and CEO of AltaMed Health Services.

2016 - 2017
California Medical School Graduates



“We need more physicians, and making medical school more affordable and accessible will be crucial to solidifying our workforce. It is also critical that we graduate a diverse enough range of people to ensure a provider base that understands the culture, language, and health determinants of a growing Latino population,” de la Rocha said.

This project is made possible by generous funding from AltaMed, California’s largest community health network—committed to eliminating disparities in health care access and outcomes for Latino, multi-ethnic and underserved communities—and the California Health Care Foundation, an independent, nonprofit organization that is dedicated to advancing meaningful, measurable improvements in California’s health care delivery system.

*American Association of Medical School Data for the following California medical schools: UC Davis, UC Irvine, UC Riverside, UC San Diego, UC San Francisco, UCLA -Geffen, Loma Linda, Keck School of Medicine of USC, and Stanford.