

Briefing:

Accessibility of Peer Support Specialist Training To Latinos in Oregon



Introduction

The accessibility of culturally competent Peer Support Specialist (PSS) training for Latinos in Oregon is crucial to achieving health equity, particularly for the significant Latino population in several counties. This analysis examines the availability, cultural relevance, and barriers to accessing PSS training programs for Latinos in Oregon, particularly in counties with higher Latino populations, such as Morrow, Malheur, Hood River, and Umatilla.

Health Equity

Health equity is a fundamental principle aiming to reduce health disparities and ensure everyone has a fair opportunity to achieve their highest health potential. Health equity for the Latino population in Oregon involves addressing linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic barriers that hinder access to health services, including peer support specialist training. Ensuring equitable access to such training programs is crucial for fostering a diverse workforce that can effectively address the unique needs of Latino communities, thereby promoting better health outcomes and reducing disparities.

Importance of Culturally Competent Behavioral Health Care

Culturally competent behavioral health care involves recognizing and respecting the cultural differences that influence individuals' health behaviors and attitudes. This competency is essential in delivering effective mental health and addiction recovery services. For Latinos, culturally competent care means providing services that are linguistically accessible, culturally relevant, and sensitive to the unique experiences and challenges this community faces. Training programs incorporating cultural competence can enhance the effectiveness of peer support specialists, leading to more successful outcomes in mental health and addiction recovery.

Importance of Culturally Competent Healthcare Among Latino Populations

Latino populations often face unique healthcare challenges due to cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic factors. Culturally competent healthcare ensures that these factors are considered in the delivery of health services. For Latino communities in Oregon, culturally competent peer support specialist training can bridge gaps in understanding, build trust, and improve engagement in mental health and addiction recovery programs. This approach not only enhances the quality of care but also contributes to a more inclusive healthcare system that respects and values the diversity of its population.

Demographic Overview

Latinos account for 14% of Oregon's population, with notable concentrations in Morrow (37.3%), Malheur (34.4%), Hood River (32.1%), and Umatilla (27.3%) counties.¹ Cities like Boardman and Nyssa have majority Latino populations, indicating a substantial community presence that necessitates accessible and culturally relevant PSS training programs.

Availability of Training Programs

Several PSS training programs are offered across Oregon, including in regions with significant Latino populations. Critical training programs include

- Juntos NW, Fortaleza Atravez Barreras, Libertad, and Multicultural Consulting in Portland offer Spanish Mental Health Certified Peer Support Specialist training.
- Chemeketa Community College in Salem offers Peer Support Specialist training for Adult Addiction.
- Rogue Community College in Grants Pass offers Peer Support Specialist training for Adult Mental Health.

¹ IndexMundi, Oregon Hispanic or Latino Origin Population Percentage By County, [Oregon Hispanic or Latino Origin Population Percentage by County \(indexmundi.com\)](https://www.indexmundi.com/usa/population/ethnicity/origin/latino)

Despite these offerings, there is a notable gap in the availability of training programs in counties like Malheur and Umatilla, where Latino populations are substantial, but training options are limited.

Cultural Relevance and Language Barriers

A critical factor in the accessibility of PSS training is the cultural relevance and language accessibility of the programs. While some programs are offered in Spanish, many do not consider the unique cultural contexts of Latino communities, such as immigration status or specific community challenges.

- NAMI Multnomah offers a culturally competent training framework, but similar models are not widely implemented across other training programs.
- Lines for Life and other organizations provide culturally specific resources and support, but there is a need for more widespread integration of these principles into PSS training.

Socioeconomic Barriers

Cost is a significant barrier for many Latinos to access PSS training. According to BLS², Latinos earn, on average, 33% less than white people in Oregon. Training programs can be expensive, and there are limited financial aid options. Implementing a pay-back system, where courses are initially free and participants pay back costs once employed, could alleviate this barrier and increase participation.

Systematic Barriers

Several systematic barriers discourage Latinos from applying to PSS training programs:

- More targeted outreach to Latino communities is needed to be done about the availability and benefits of PSS training.
- Complicated and lengthy application processes can deter potential applicants.
- Support services during training, such as childcare and transportation, could be improved.

Recommendations

To enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of PSS training programs for Latinos in Oregon, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Expand PSS training programs to counties like Malheur and Umatilla to meet the demand in these regions.
2. Incorporate cultural competency and language accessibility into all training programs, ensuring they address the specific needs of Latino communities.
3. Implement financial support mechanisms, such as pay-back systems, to reduce the economic burden on trainees.
4. Enhance outreach efforts to Latino communities and streamline application processes to encourage higher enrollment.

² BLS, Earnings Disparities, 2017-19, [Earnings Disparities | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](https://www.dol.gov/ebsa/earnings-disparities)

5. Provide support services like childcare and transportation assistance to reduce barriers during training.

Appendices

Inventory - OHA-Approved training programs for Peer Support Specialists.³

City	Agency	Program
Portland	Juntos NW, Foraleza Atravez Barreras, Libertad and Multicultural Consulting	Spanish Mental Health Certified Peer Support Specialist
Salem	Chemeketa Community College	Peer Support Specialist - Adult Addiction
Grants Pass	Rogue Community College	Peer Support Specialist for Adult Mental Health
Roseburg	Umpqua Community College	Peer Support Specialist for Adult Addiction
Eugene	Willamette Family Inc.	Willamette Family Peer Support Specialist Training
Coos Bay	Bay Area First Step	Bay Area Step's Mental Health Peer Support Training Program
Portland	Kelly Fitzpatrick	Addiction Recovery Mentor Education
Portland	Daystar Education Inc.	Walk the Talk Peer Training
Portland	Mental Health & Addiction Association of Oregon (MHA AO)	Youth Support Specialist Training
Portland	NW Instituto Latino de Adicciones	Peer Support Specialist - Adult Addictions
Baker City	New Directions Northwest, Inc.	Peer Support Specialist Training in Adult Addictions
Albany	C.H.A.N.C.E.	Peer Support Specialist Adult Addiction

³ OHA, THW Training Programs, [Oregon Health Authority : THW Training Programs : Equity and Inclusion Division : State of Oregon](#)

Pendleton	Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center	Tribal Family Preservation Training
Portland	Peer Recovery Solutions	Adult Addiction Peer Support Training
Medford	ROC Recovery Center	Cultivating a New Life Through Peer Support - PSS Adult Addiction
Klamath Falls	Klamath Child & Family Treatment Center dba Klamath Basin Behavioral Health	Peer Support in the Community - Adult Mental Health
Medford	Rogue Retreat	Fundamentals of Peer Support - PSS/CRM training for Adult Addictions
Eugene	Restored Connection Peer Center	Peer Support Specialist Training Program in Adult Addiction
Portland	The Miracles Club	Certified Recovery Mentor/Peer Support Specialist - Adult Addiction Training
Portland	Cultivating a New Life, LLC.	Cultivating a New Life Through Community Connections and Warriors in Recovery - Peer Support Specialists Training for Veterans and Supporters in Adult Mental Health
Eugene	Relief Nursery Inc.	Accessing Success Peer Support Specialist - Adult Addiction Training
Salem	WVP Health Authority	Peer Support Specialist with an Emphasis on Adult Addictions
Salem	Oregon Family Support Network	Oregon Family Support Network's Family Support Specialists (FSS) Foundations training program
Ontario	Treasure Valley Community College	Peer Support Specialist - Adult Addictions HSER 120 Recovery Coaching/Certified Recovery Mentor Program
Bend	Central Oregon Community College	Adult Mental Health Peer Support Specialist Training

Portland	Lutheran Community Services Northwest	Peer Support Specialist Training - Adult Addictions
Portland	Folk Time	Peer Support Specialist Adult to Adult Mental Health
Salem	Project ABLE, Inc.	Peer Support Specialist Training Program
Eugene	Youth Era	Youth Support Specialist Training Program
Portland	Lutheran Community Services Northwest	Refugee Peer Support Specialist Training

Bibliography

1. Oregon Office of Economic Analysis:
 - Source for demographic data and population statistics in Oregon.
 - Available at: Oregon Office of Economic Analysis

2. Oregon Demographics:
 - Provides detailed demographic information about Oregon's population, including Latino population statistics.
 - Available at: [Oregon Demographics](#)

3. National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):
 - Information on mental health issues and statistics related to Latino populations.
 - Available at: NAMI Latino Mental Health

4. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):
 - Guidelines and information on cultural competence in behavioral health services.
 - Available at: SAMHSA Cultural Competence

5. OHA, THW Training Programs, [Oregon Health Authority : THW Training Programs: Equity and Inclusion Division: State of Oregon](#)
 - Data on licensed training programs for traditional health workers in Oregon.

6. IndexMundi, Oregon Hispanic or Latino Origin Population Percentage By County, [Oregon Hispanic or Latino Origin Population Percentage by County \(indexmundi.com\)](#)

- Data on the distribution of Latino populations and percentage composition of Oregon counties.