

Aggressive outreach increases organ donation among Hispanic Americans

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An outreach campaign that included local media and culturally sensitive educational programs in targeted neighborhoods was associated with an increase in consent rates for organ donation among Hispanic Americans in the Los Angeles area.

Nearly 20 people die each day waiting for an organ transplant. The organ shortage affects all ethnic groups but is more pronounced in minority populations.

The authors examined an aggressive outreach campaign over a five-year period to see how it affected [organ donation](#) among Hispanic Americans. The intervention included television and radio campaigns, along with educational programs at high schools, churches and community clinics. The outreach interventions started in 2007 and were finished by 2012. Data collection spans from 2005 and 2011.

The interventions resulted in contact with more than 25,000 people. Of 268 potential donors, 155 total donors (106 of them Hispanic Americans) provided consent for organ donation. The consent rate for Hispanic Americans increased from 56 percent in 2005 to 83 percent in 2011, a level of increase not seen in the non-Hispanic population (67 percent in 2005 to 79 percent in 2011).

"We provide strong evidence that an aggressive, targeted outreach effort increases consent rates for organ donation. During the study period, a significant increase in consent rate was observed among the targeted

Hispanic American population and was not evident in the population that was not Hispanic. Continued, similar efforts addressing the ongoing organ shortage crisis are warranted." Ali Salim, M.D., of Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, and colleagues wrote in their JAMA Surgery paper today.

In a related commentary, Darren Malinoski, M.D., of the Portland Veterans Affairs Medical Center, writes: "After identifying limitations in knowledge that lessen the intent to donate, the authors developed and implemented a series of educational interventions ranging from high school programs to media campaigns."

"Through these efforts, they have demonstrated an increase in consent rates by the families of potential Hispanic [organ donors](#) over time, an increase that was not seen in other ethnic groups," Malinoski continues.

Malinoski notes that despite some limitations of the study "the results are encouraging and similar methods should be used in other regions of the country as well as in different [ethnic groups](#)."

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