

New survey of older Hispanics reveals many face language and cultural barriers to care

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Less than a quarter of Hispanics age 40 and older are confident that local home health aides, assisted living communities, or nursing homes can accommodate their cultural needs, according to a new survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. The study reveals that 49 percent of older Hispanics have already faced language or cultural barriers as they navigate the health care system, with two-thirds experiencing stress or delays in getting care as a result.

"Planning for long-term care is a challenge for many people, but it appears that older Hispanics face additional obstacles," said Trevor Tompson, director of The AP-NORC Center. "A majority of older Hispanics experienced difficulty finding a [health care](#) provider for themselves or a loved one who speaks their language, and nearly half have experienced communication issues getting care due to cultural barriers. These are significant hurdles to cross while planning for something as complicated as long-term care."

The population of Americans age 65 and older is expected to grow rapidly in the coming decades, with the majority of these seniors likely to require at least some support with daily activities. The Hispanic population in particular is expected to make up an increasing proportion of those age 65 and older in the coming years. To continue its study into the long-term care experiences of American families, The AP-NORC Center conducted its fifth annual Long-Term Care Poll in 2017 and oversampled older Hispanics to explore attitudes about ongoing living assistance, and expectations and experiences with the [health](#) care system.

Key findings include:

- More than half of Hispanics age 40 and older have had difficulty finding a [health care provider](#) for themselves or a loved one who speaks their language, with 15 percent saying this has often been a problem.
- About half have had difficulty communicating with a health care provider because of a cultural barrier (47 percent) or language barrier (44 percent).
- Of those who have experienced cultural or language barriers in the health care system, two-thirds say it has resulted in additional stress or delays in getting care. Half say it resulted in additional time and effort to find resources to overcome that [barrier](#).
- Less than a quarter of Hispanics age 40 and older are confident that local home health aides (20 percent), assisted living communities (18 percent), or nursing homes (16 percent) can accommodate their cultural needs.
- More than half of older Hispanics with long-term care experience say they felt respected, valued, supported, or satisfied during their time either providing or receiving care, though more than a third also say they felt frustrated, lonely, confused, or helpless.
- Similar to adults overall, 62 percent of Hispanics age 40 and older say the United States is not well prepared to meet the needs of its aging population.
- About 4 in 10 older Hispanics say their local area is doing a good job of providing assisted living facilities (42 percent), [home health aides](#) (39 percent), and [nursing homes](#) (37 percent) to meet the ongoing living assistance needs of its seniors.

The survey about long-term care has been conducted annually since 2013 by The AP-NORC Center, with principal funding from The SCAN Foundation. Collectively the surveys reveal widely held misperceptions

about the extent of long-term care Americans are likely to need and about the costs of such care.

Provided by University of Chicago

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