



**HISPANIC/LATINO QUALITY OF LIFE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION 2022032-3a iv**

**EXPAND FUNDING FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS FOR HISPANIC/LATINO
COMMUNITY**

Strategic Direction: Economic Opportunity & Affordability; Safety; Health & Environment

Date: March 22, 2022

Subject: FY23 Budget Recommendations

Motioned by: Garay

Seconded by: Silva

Recommendation to Council:

Increase Austin Public Health's funding for mental health services that serve Hispanic/Latino clients.

Ensure services are provided in the client's preferred language.

Ensure services provided are culturally tailored and that the professionals are culturally competent as well.

Background and Rationale:

The Reimagining Public Safety Task Force 2021 Mid Year Recommendations report states, "There are very little programs and services that either offer clinicians that can effectively and competently provide services to predominantly marginalized populations such as people with disabilities, queer and trans individuals, Black and brown people, and our immigrant and undocumented community members, or non-English speakers or that provide low-cost sliding scales services and almost none that offer both. We call on the City to support and reinvest in the collected mental wellbeing of our communities and to invest in the provision of mental telehealth opportunities for particularly vulnerable populations."

The City of Austin needs to be intentional when selecting service providers to ensure the most vulnerable populations, which includes Hispanic/Latino people, are able to equitably access mental health services. According to SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health, overall mental health issues are on the rise for Latinx/Hispanic people between the ages of

12-49. In 2018, 56.8% of Latinx/Hispanic young adults 18-25 and 39.6% of adults 26-49 with serious mental illness did NOT receive treatment.

According to the American Psychiatric Association, bilingual patients are evaluated differently when evaluated in English versus Spanish, and Latinx/Hispanic people are more frequently undertreated than whites. Hispanic children and adolescents are at significant risk for mental health problems, and in many cases at greater risk than white children. Barriers to accessing mental health care include lack of insurance or inadequate insurance; lack of knowledge/awareness about mental health problems and services available; cultural stigma associated with mental illness; language; lack of culturally tailored services and culturally competent mental health professionals; shortage of bilingual or linguistically trained mental health professionals; difficulties recognizing the first signs of mental illness; and problems identifying psychiatric symptoms when chief complaint is somatic symptom.

Vote:

For: Afifi, Solis, Garay, Ramirez, Perales, Silva

Against: None

Abstain: Vigil

Absent: Peña, Garcia

Attest:



Amanda Afifi, Chair

Reimagining Public Safety Task Force 2021 Mid Year Recommendations report -

<https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Completed%20RPS%20Taskforce%20Mid-Year%20Recommendations%20Report.pdf>

SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use and Health -

https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt23249/4_Hispanic_2020_01_14_508.pdf

American Psychiatric Association Mental Health Disparities: Hispanic and Latinos -
<https://www.psychiatry.org/File%20Library/Psychiatrists/Cultural-Competency/Mental-Health-Disparities/Mental-Health-Facts-for-Hispanic-Latino.pdf>