

Proposal to Fund Bilingual Community Health Workers throughout Cincinnati

LC #13

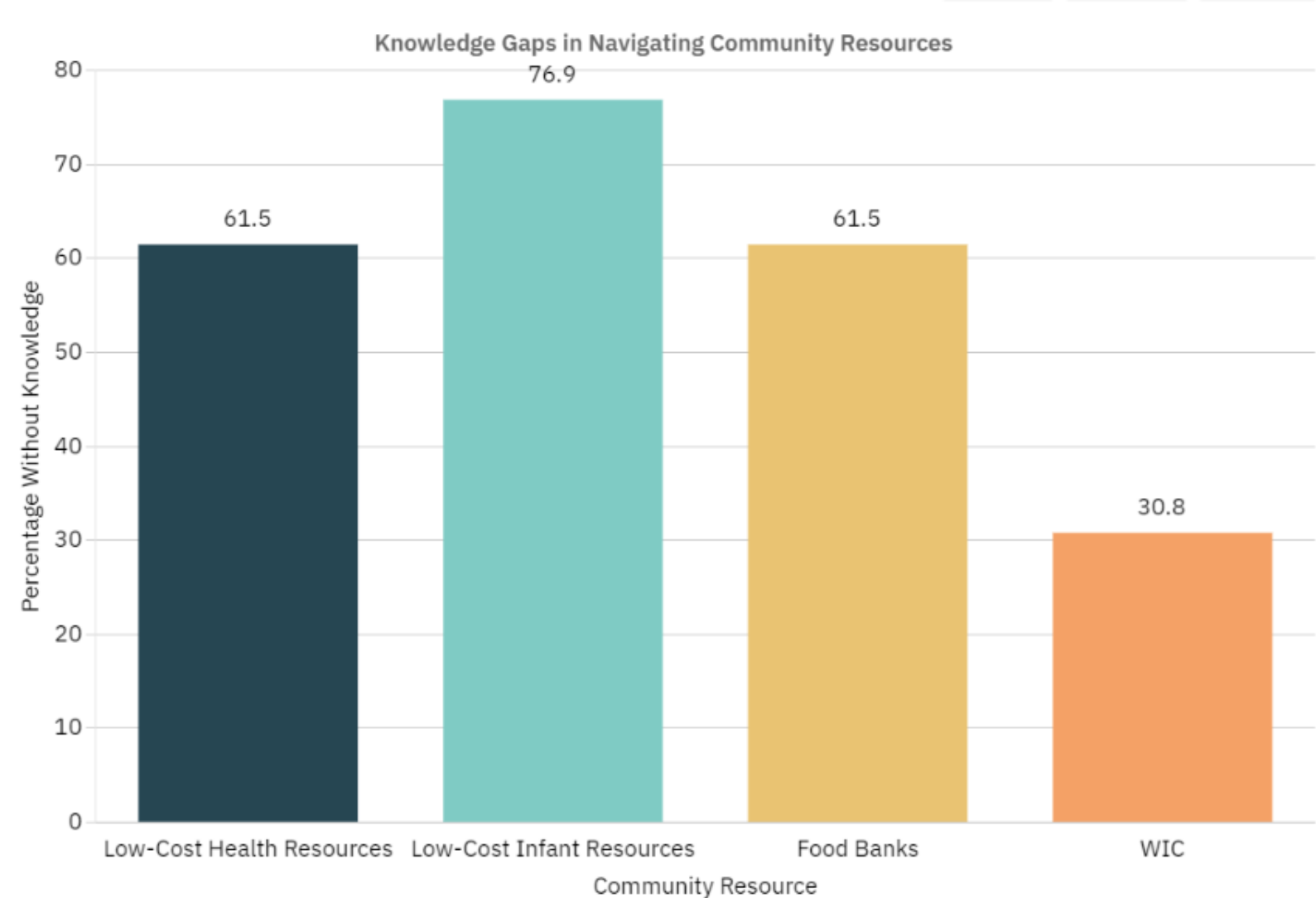
Introduction

- **Latinos are one of the fastest-growing minority populations in the United States**, yet they face disproportionate health disparities driven by language, educational, and socioeconomic barriers.
- **Interpreter services are essential for ensuring equitable care**, but additional strategies are needed to overcome social and linguistic barriers that persist beyond the clinical setting.
- **Bilingual community health workers (CHWs)** improve health literacy, facilitate system navigation, and enhance patient engagement through culturally and linguistically tailored support.



Barriers to Navigating Health-Related Resources

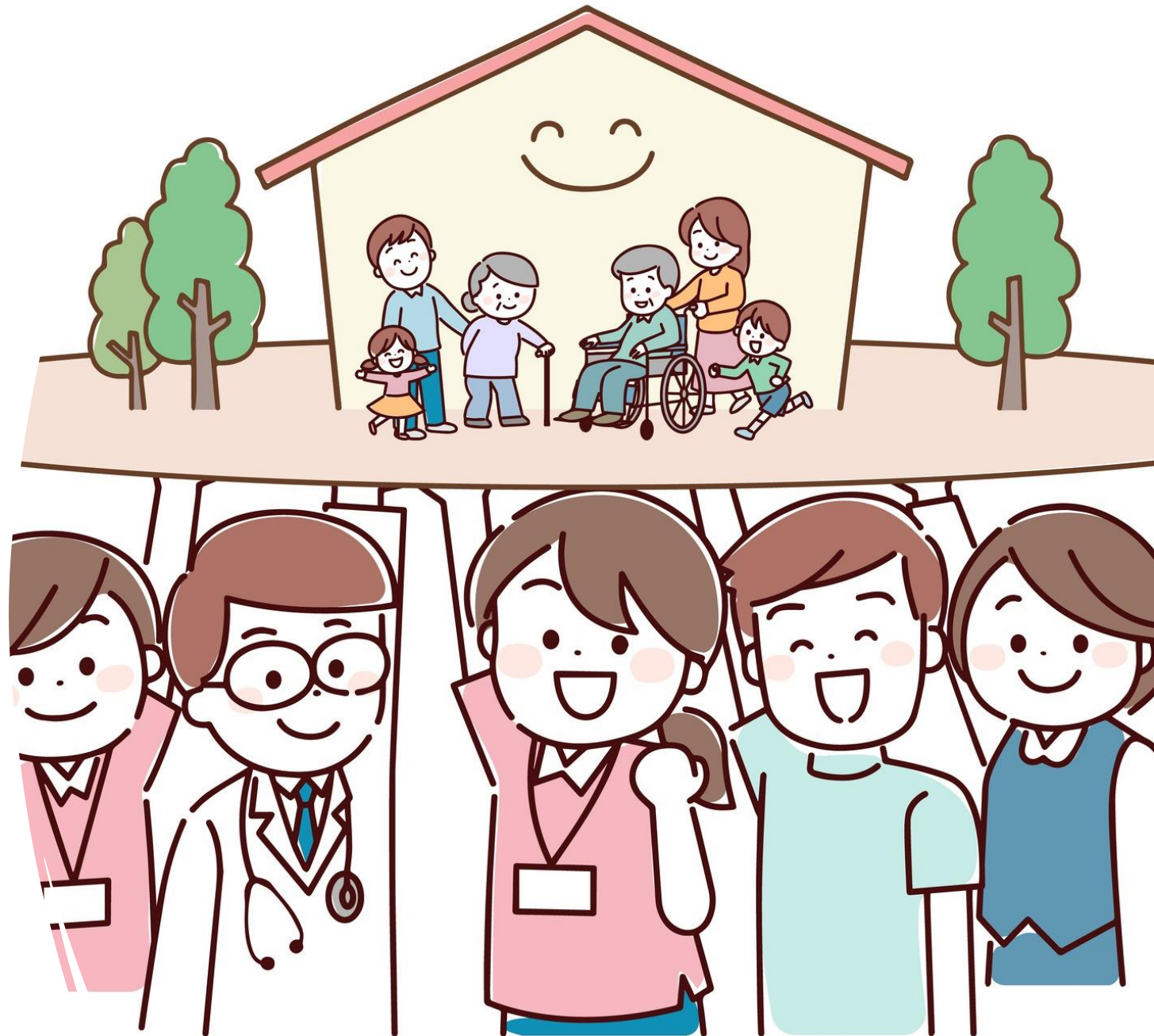
During our community baby shower, many Latina mothers reported absolutely "no knowledge" of how to navigate key resources including food banks, infant support services, and WIC.



So how CAN we improve utilization of health services among Latinos in Cincinnati?

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are the answer!

Some healthcare systems have initiated programs (TriHealth, Cincinnati Children's, and the Public Health Department), but access must be universal to reach all those facing sociocultural barriers to health.



What is a Community Health Worker?

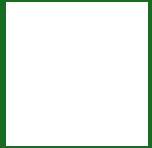
CHWs are frontline public health workers who come from the community and function as intermediaries between healthcare providers and community resources. They work longitudinally with patients to improve health literacy, help navigate healthcare systems, and connect patients to essential resources, leading to increased efficacy of healthcare interventions (Rohan et al).



Data Analysis and Community Impact



CHWs serve as culturally and linguistically concordant bridges between health systems and underserved populations, increasing health equity by connecting patients to both medical and nonmedical resources.



Integration of CHWs into care teams provides measurable health benefits including improved management of chronic conditions, reduced hospitalization rates, and better birthing outcomes (Mistry et al. 2023).



Bilingual CHW interventions for Spanish-speaking populations are cost-effective, reducing long-term healthcare expenditures and achieving favorable cost per quality-adjusted life year gained (Brown et al. 2013).

Policy Analysis and Recommendations



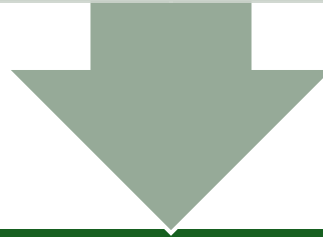
Current Policy

Any government agency, including public or nonprofit hospital agencies, may grant special pay supplements up to 5% to attract new or support current bilingual individuals whose positions involve speaking or writing in a non-English language.

•House Bill 390, Section 124.181 of Ohio Revised Code and Rule 123: 1-37-06

Any person wanting to execute a training program for CHWs must apply to the board of nursing for approval.

•House Bill 216, Sections 4723.87 and 4723.88 of Ohio Revised Code



Recommendations

Leverage income potential to trusted and diverse community members to attract a robust population of potential CHWs.

Foster the development of programs to create more CHW positions utilizing the board of nursing application pathway.

Advocacy Strategy

Establish centrally or independently run CHW programs via public health department.

Recruit trusted community members to serve as CHWs.

Create a central certification program based on curriculum used by centers such as Cincinnati State University.

Provide further incentives for hospitals around Cincinnati to employ CHWs.

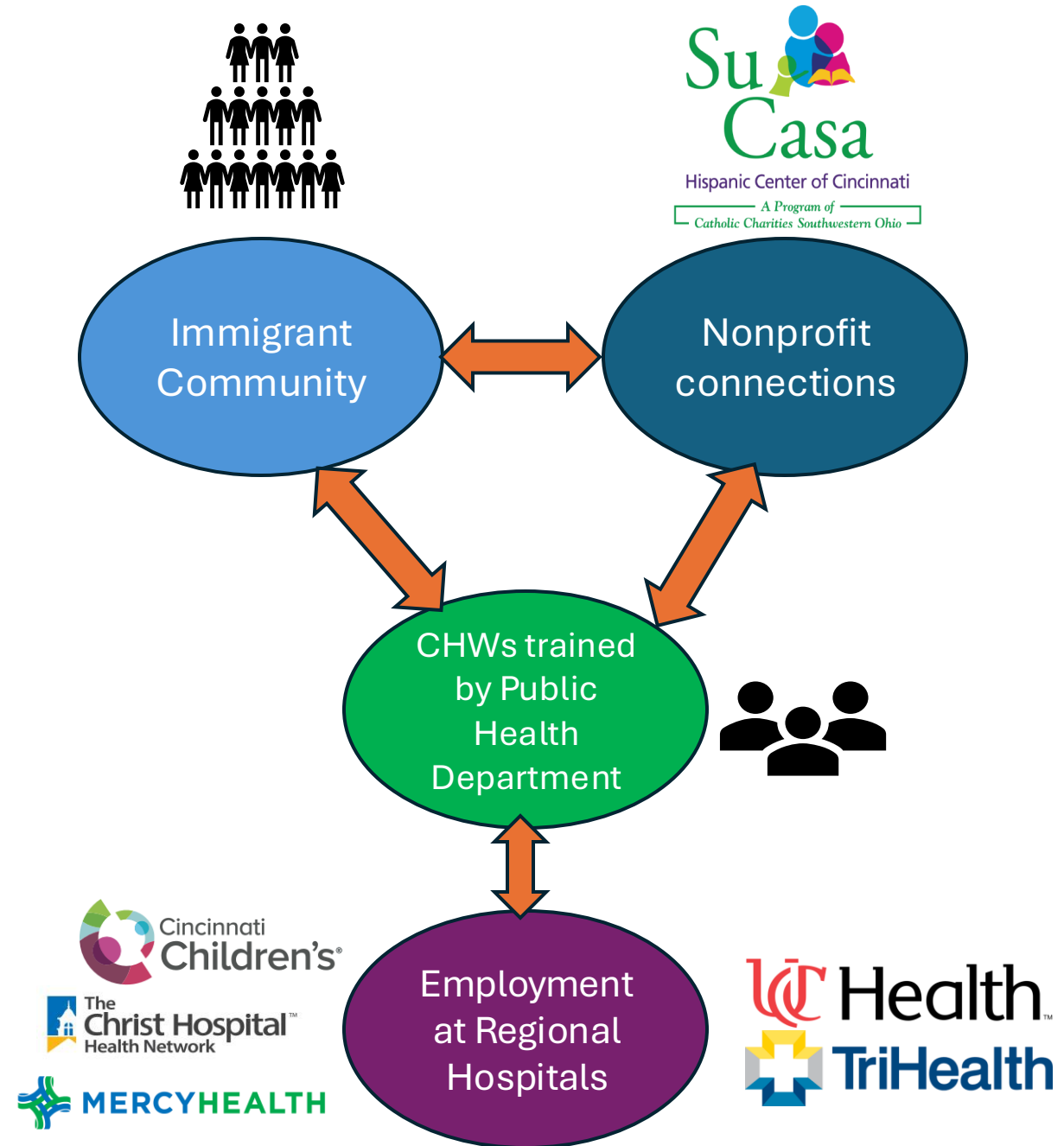
Conclusion

CHWs enhance opportunities for...

Equitable
healthcare access

Longitudinal social
support

Improved immigrant
healthcare



Citations

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