

# IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON TORONTO'S SPANISH-SPEAKING LATIN AMERICAN POPULATION

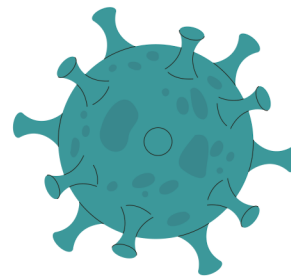
Study by CMHA-Toronto and Wellesley Institute on the challenges faced by Spanish-Speaking Latin Americans in the GTA during COVID-19



156,455 (3%)

Latin Americans in Toronto

2021



11,197 (8%)

Of all COVID-19 cases in Toronto were Latin Americans

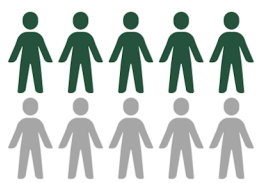
2021

## Literature Highlights<sup>1</sup>

- Second-highest mortality rate among Canadian immigrants
- Lower early vaccination rates compared to non-racialized residents
- Lower mental health rates compared to other racialized groups
- Higher unemployment rates

## Study Findings

### Study Sample



2022

15 Participants

Had Covid-19 or cared for someone with it

10 Participants

Latin American service providers

- Lack of access to Spanish language information and services
- Barriers to online health services
- Increased mental health challenges for caregivers
- Increased exposure to the virus due to overcrowded housing, employment in essential roles, and a lack of paid sick days
- Healthcare barriers for the uninsured:
  - clinic rejections and a lack of provider awareness about healthcare eligibility
  - fear of deportation and family separation

# RECOMMENDED POLICY DIRECTIONS



## Language Support

Increase the number of professional interpreters in healthcare and standardized language interpretation services in Ontario's healthcare system



## Digital Access

Invest in internet access and devices for underserved communities and train healthcare providers for culturally appropriate virtual care



## Caregiver Support

Establish financial support and comprehensive programs for mental health and caregiver assistance



## Uninsured Healthcare

Reinstate and standardize the Physician and Hospital Services for Uninsured Persons Program across Ontario hospitals



## Funding for Community Health

Increase funding for community health centers and uninsured clinics to enhance primary healthcare access



## Professional Training

Enhance awareness and training for healthcare professionals caring for uninsured populations

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### 1 Literature Sources:

Ng, E. (2021, June 9). COVID-19 deaths among immigrants: Evidence from the early months of the pandemic. Statistics Canada.  
Iveniuk, J., Amberber, N. & McKenzie, K. (2021). Persisting inequities in second doses of COVID-19 vaccines. Wellesley Institute.  
Hernandez, A. & Mata, F. (2021, August 3). Latin Americans face a stubborn pay gap in Canada, data shows. The Conversation.  
Statistics Canada. (2022, June 7). Self-rated mental health decreases after another year of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Canadian Mental  
Health Association  
Toronto

