ADANN SPANISH LANGUAGE OUTREACH PROJECT
Research Brief: Understanding Regional Context
REGION 8 Rocky Mountain ADA Center

ada National Network
Information, Guidance, and Training on the Americans with Disabilities Act

Background
The Spanish Language Outreach Project (SLO) is a new five-year collaborative national initiative of the ADA National Network (ADANN), ten regional ADA Centers, and the ADA Knowledge Translation Center. The first stage of the SLO project (2022-2023) aimed to develop a deeper understanding of the context of Spanish-speaking communities and assess their ADA-related information needs through research and expert consultation nationally and within each of the ten regions.

Region 8 Summary
Region 8 includes the states of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Utah. As of 2021, the largest minority group in the region was Hispanic and Latinos with a population of approximately 2 million people. In each state, more than 8% of the Hispanic population had a disability.

Data and Methods
Using a participatory process, the project team identified community members and conducted semi-structured interviews. Participants interviewed included 4 community members: 3 in South Dakota and 1 in Colorado. Half the participants were male, and half were female. Half the participants had some knowledge about the ADA. Community members were associated with community resource centers with each having roles such as director of programs, resource manager or director of IT.

Findings and Key Highlights

In Region 8, language barriers include the lack of information in Spanish from known organizations, the lack of bilingual staff, and the lack of translation services. Stigma associated with disability and mental health is also a barrier to accessing information and services. Additionally, immigration is a barrier as it represents a lot of fear for the community. Participants also shared that racism could lead to reduced access to services and information, housing problems, and a lack of respect for the community in the workforce and other areas. Last, there are only a few places in the area in which Latinos/Hispanics can receive support. The availability of resources is scarce, and people need to travel to get some support or service.

Barriers	
Lack of information in Spanish Bilingual staff Translation and interpretation services Stigma Immigration Racism in housing Racism in the workforce Low access to resources	*"We wish we had more persons who knew how to navigate social work and also be able to understand the cultural part of interpreting when someone is having a mental health crisis."* *"When we think about the Latino community, if you have to go see a psychologist that means you're crazy… You keep that quiet, you don't go out and ask people, "Hey do you know any psychologist? I need some help?" You know, that would make you less manly type of thing, and so the negative connotations of needing assistance or finding help is just a barrier in itself when you bring Latino culture into another culture."*
Access to Information	
Social media Word of mouth Text messages Community stores and churches	*"We take our brochures, different resources that we have, and distribute them to all the people that need them. We also try to put flyers on all the Hispanic stores around the area, and the churches as well. We are in contact with a couple of priest and other people that the Hispanic community see more."*

Recommendations

Recommendations include more community engagement, better material in Spanish, and more partnerships with local organizations and community leaders. Specific strategies included:
- Partnerships with community organizations
- Improving materials in Spanish through plain language and better translation services

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