Public Communication of Science: The Experience of the Rio Grande Valley Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center for Minority Aging Research

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Introduction: There are multiple models of public communication of science. Some models focus on communication within the science community, while others involve public participation. At the Rio Grande Valley AD-RCMAR, we hope to implement a public outreach program to aid in the dissemination of accurate information regarding Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

Objective: The purpose of this project was to identify behavioral change models that will allow the RGV AD-RCMAR to increase awareness and engagement of brain aging, including Alzheimer's disease, within the Rio Grande Valley.

Methods: A literature review was conducted to identify models of behavioral change that will assist the center in the dissemination of science. Public communication models were narrowed down to models that aligned with the goals of the center.

Results: We identified four models and found that the Precaution Adoption Process Model (PAPM) and the Tailored Health Communication (THC) model were grounded in behavioral change and would best fit the needs of the AD-RCMAR. We integrated these models by building profiles to highlight Latinx researchers and a database of neuroscience seminars that will aid in the increased awareness and recruitment of individuals on topics that are tailored to their interests.

Discussion: In order to make an impact, we must consider human behavior. By integrating the PAPM and THC models, individuals will have access to topics that are tailored to what they are searching for, which will result in raised awareness.

Conclusion: These models will allow us to raise engagement and awareness in the RGV and support the recruitment of participants in research. There are some factors to consider prior to implementing these models including Hispanic values and their effect on involvement and communication of scientific information. Then, we will begin to question the changes in the levels of engagement and action.

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