

DOCUMENTING THE UNIQUE EXPERIENCES OF LATINAS: Middle to Older Age Cervical Cancer Latina Survivors



Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health

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BACKGROUND

Latinas experience an **unequal burden of cervical cancer than Non-Hispanic Whites (NHWs).**

SCREENING: 25–40% lower rates among foreign-born Latinas.
DIAGNOSIS: 35-40% higher rates among Latinas than NHW.
TREATMENT: 30% more likely to die due to late diagnosis with fewer treatment options.

STUDY AIMS: To document the cervical cancer experiences among middle to older age Latina survivors of cervical cancer.

METHODS

Database of Individual Patient Experiences (DIPEX) methodology using Community Engaged Principles.

- Stakeholder Community Advisory Group
- Collaboration of scholars, clinicians, and patients N:15: Half identify as Latina and/or immigrant
- 120min audio & video recorded interview

Part 1 – Story Sharing

Part 2 – Key Questions

Part 3 – Message/Advice

RESULTS (Phase 1: N=24 & Phase 2: N=27)

DIVERSE AND UNDER-REPRESENTED SAMPLE (N:51)
 All 51 were ≥35 years old - 37 conducted in Spanish and 14 in English; two-thirds reported Low English Proficiency; about half shared being formally or currently undocumented, and one third reported limited formal education.

ISOLATION: Majority reported not sharing
“And especially for Latinas... [Latinas] don't really talk about. You don't want people to think that you were runnin' around out there, doing' things. You know, family - can look down on you and judge you.”
 – 52 years old

STRUCTURAL BARRIERS: About half were unable to drive or lack regular transportation
“Especialmente cuando necesitaba ir cada día. El camino a Portland y no había forma de ir allí un viernes cuando me dieron el quimio.”
 – 65 years old

RELATIONSHIPS: Many were unaware of HPV
“I wanna track him down and be like, ‘Do you know what you did to me? And how many people-’ ...And he's probably married and has children and lives his life. You know? And, like, I didn't get that. I have a life sentence.”
 – 60 years old

HEALTH CARE: About half shared feeling dismissed and seven ended up in ER
“They didn't explain to me what anything was. They just said ‘we are going to have to do this and that.’ That was all. There was no explanation and I still don't know what they did to me.”
 – 85 years old

Messages & Advice to Other Latinas

- Make time for yourself** – “Before I used to have a very clean house, now I make sure to take care of myself.”
- Get a second opinion** – “I felt like I was cheating on my provider or like I was not supposed to.”
- Know your body** – “I was ashamed that I did not know the name of that part of me, no one taught me.”
- Share everything** – “I am now a lot more communicative with providers [and family].”

The overall take-away message is the need to address structural barriers.

CONCLUSION

A myriad of individual, cultural, and structural factors affect Latinas' journeys especially among immigrant Latinas.

THEMES	Latina Immigrant	Latina Non-Immigrant
Faith and Religion	69	8
Money Financial	68	24
Children	66	10
Coping with CC	14	33
Parenting	13	31

Participants life story affected their journey:

Sexual Health History

Trauma, Domestic Violence

Cancer History for self and/or family

THANK YOU!

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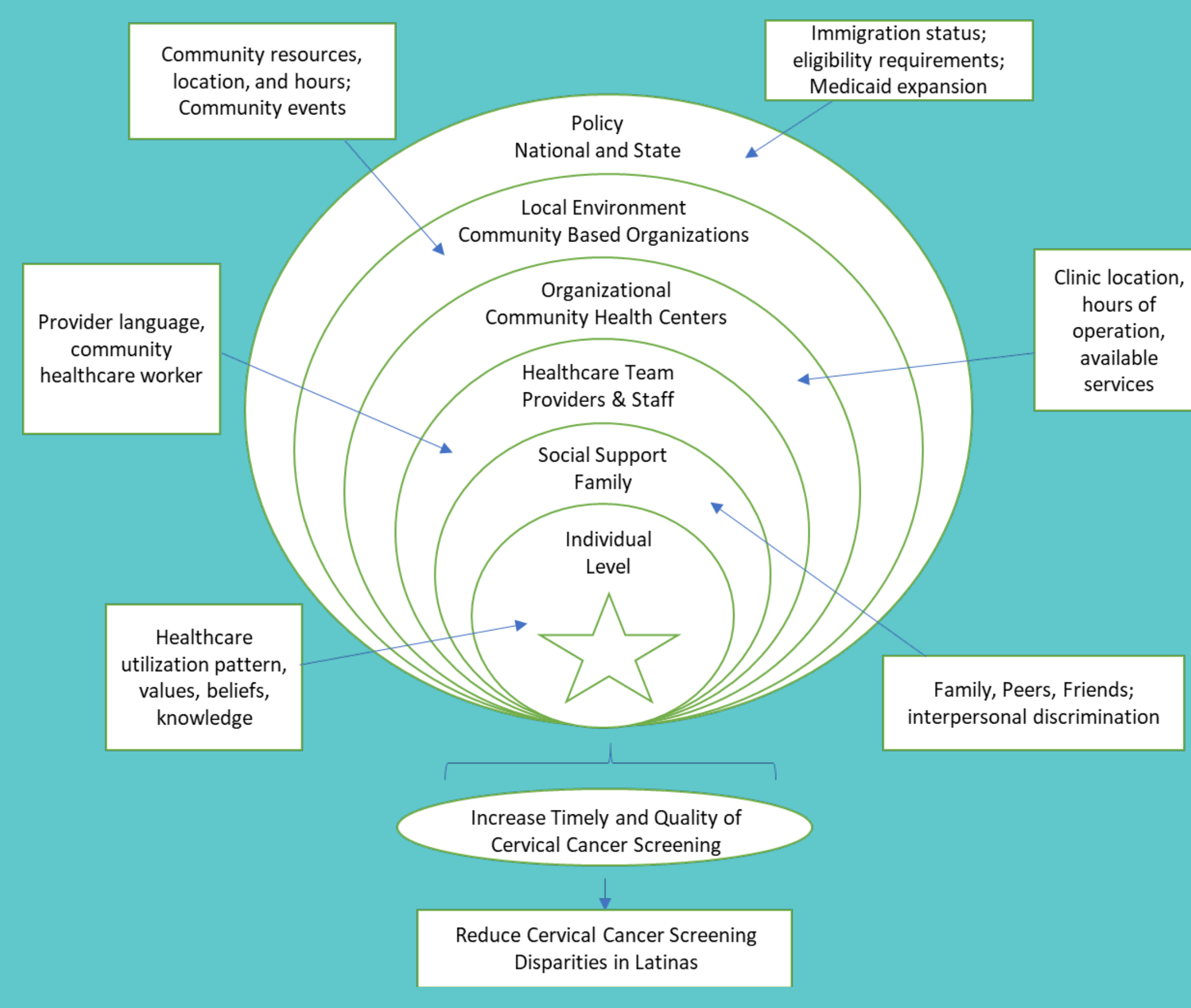


Figure 1: Multi-level model of factors affecting Latina's journey with cervical cancer. An adaptation of Taplin's "Multi-level Influences on the Cancer Care Continuum"⁴. This adapted model illustrates barriers identified by participants.