ADANN SPANISH LANGUAGE OUTREACH PROJECT
Research Brief: Understanding Regional Context
REGION 3 Mid-Atlantic 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 3 Summary

This research brief reports on the key findings from the ADANN Region 3, Mid-Atlantic ADA Center. Region 3 includes the states of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, West Virginia, and District of Columbia. As of 2021, the population is approximately 30 million people, with the District of Columbia and Maryland having the largest Hispanic population at 11.3% and 11% respectively. In each state, more than 7% 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 5 community members: 3 in Virginia, 1 in Pennsylvania, and 1 in Maryland. Most of the participants were female with minimal knowledge about the ADA. Most interviews were conducted in English. Participants were associated with faith-based organizations, community resource centers or disability organizations with each having roles such as volunteer, parent, consultant, and resource manager.

Findings and Key Highlights

In Region 3, language barriers included a lack of translation services, bilingual staff, and a lack of competency from service providers. Another barrier was the fear of deportation and federal or state entities due to undocumentation. Many participants in the Spanish speaking community did not know what resources and programs were available because that information was not getting to their community, or they did not know what rights and services they qualified for. Another common barrier was the lack of health services, transitions services, and housing. Last, discrimination, trying to survive and technology, specifically for older people, were also barriers mentioned.

Barriers	
Translation and interpretation services Accessibility of the information Lack of information in Spanish Practicality of the information Fear Lack of awareness/services Lack of information about rights Immigration Discrimination Survival mode Technology	*"People may get the information but they don't know the next step, like they may get a flyer but they don't know what to do next."* *"Americans that have been here for a long time they have the generational awareness that we typically don't have and since people are in that survival mode, there is not a lot of time or resources to build communities or build things for ourselves so there is a lack there."* *"A lot of the times Hispanics or Latinos are in survival mode so they're ability to care for their relatives or children with disabilities is going to be less because they're at work more or they can't afford that type of care so it's a structural thing more than anything."*
Access to Information Social media Word of mouth Text messages and calls TV and radio	*"Having conversations with people is a guarantee that you can share information."* *"Using the radio stations has been the most effective tool, it's very effective in the construction side where we want to reach out to the Latino community."*

Recommendations

Recommendations include more training programs for the community including leaders. Also, increase partnerships with trusted leaders, and include community dialogues. Specific strategies included:

- Train the trainer programs for community leaders
- Partnerships with community leaders
- Connect with faith-based organizations
- Community dialogues to answer questions and provide a safe space for conversations

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