

AHRQ Grantee Profiles



Grant Title: Insuring Uninsured Children

Principal Investigator: Glenn Flores, M.D., Distinguished Chair for Health Policy Research

Institution: Medica Research Institute

Grantee Since: 2000

Type of Grant: Mentored Clinical Scientist Development Award

When Glenn Flores, M.D., testified before the U.S. Congress in 2005 about the magnitude and impact of children who lack health insurance, he may not have expected just how far his research findings would reverberate. Dr. Flores, the Distinguished Chair for Health Policy Research at Medica Research Institute, Minneapolis, MN, told lawmakers that 8 million children lacked insurance, with Latinos at greatest risk. His research, funded by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), also found that uninsured children who received community-based care management were eight times more likely to eventually receive health insurance coverage because of the involvement of case workers who were able to resolve barriers to care.

Two years later, Dr. Flores' testimony led to the introduction of the Community Health Workers Act of 2007, a measure intended to address some of these long-standing disparities. In the Senate, the measure was sponsored by former Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM); the House sponsor was former Representative Hilda Solis (D-CA). Key provisions of the Act included funding to community-based organizations for health education, promotion, prevention, and outreach in minority communities that are underserved and underinsured. Although the bill did not pass in its original form, Dr. Flores' research, in part, led to a section on community health workers as a key resource for identifying and enrolling uninsured children that was included in the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA) of 2009.

His efforts to extend insurance to children at the Federal level came nearly a decade after Dr. Flores received a [Mentored Clinical Scientist Development Award](#) from AHRQ. That research grant sought to identify factors barring parents, especially among the Latino population, from obtaining health insurance for their children. A second goal was to conduct a randomized controlled trial to evaluate whether case managers were more effective than traditional methods in helping uninsured children get health care services.

Witnessing the plight of uninsured but seriously ill children served as a driving force in Dr. Flores' career development. "AHRQ funding has helped to make a fundamental impact in my ability to achieve my career goals of highlighting and striving to remedy health care quality issues, such as uninsured children and the racial and ethnic disparities in children's health and health care," said Dr. Flores.

Consistent with its mission, AHRQ provides a broad range of extramural research grants and contracts, research training, conference grants, and intramural research activities. AHRQ is committed to fostering the next generation of health services researchers who can focus on some of the most important challenges facing our Nation's health care system.

To learn more about AHRQ's Research Education and Training Programs, please visit: <http://www.ahrq.gov/training>.

