

BACKGROUND

- North Carolina (NC) expanded Medicaid in December 2023
- Latina/o/e/x or Hispanic individuals (*la comunidad Latina*, as preferred by the community¹) continue to face barriers to enrollment.²⁻⁵
- While *la comunidad Latina* represents 11% of NC, they experience one of the highest uninsured rates in the state and country.⁶
- Among eligible but still uninsured adults (aged 19-64):
 - 38% are part of *la comunidad Latina*
 - 17% are Black
 - 9% are White⁶
- Community Health Workers have reduced health barriers, during COVID-19, yet remain underutilized in outreach efforts.⁷⁻⁹

APPROACH

Objective: Project FIEL-NC (Fostering Insurance Enrollment among Latinos in NC) aims to increase enrollment in health insurance among *la comunidad Latina* in NC who are uninsured, yet eligible for health insurance.

Methods: We recruited two participant groups:

- Community Members (CMs, n=29)** in *la comunidad Latina* who have considered, attempted to, or successfully enrolled in Medicaid
- Community Health Workers (CHWs, n=63)** involved in Medicaid expansion outreach efforts

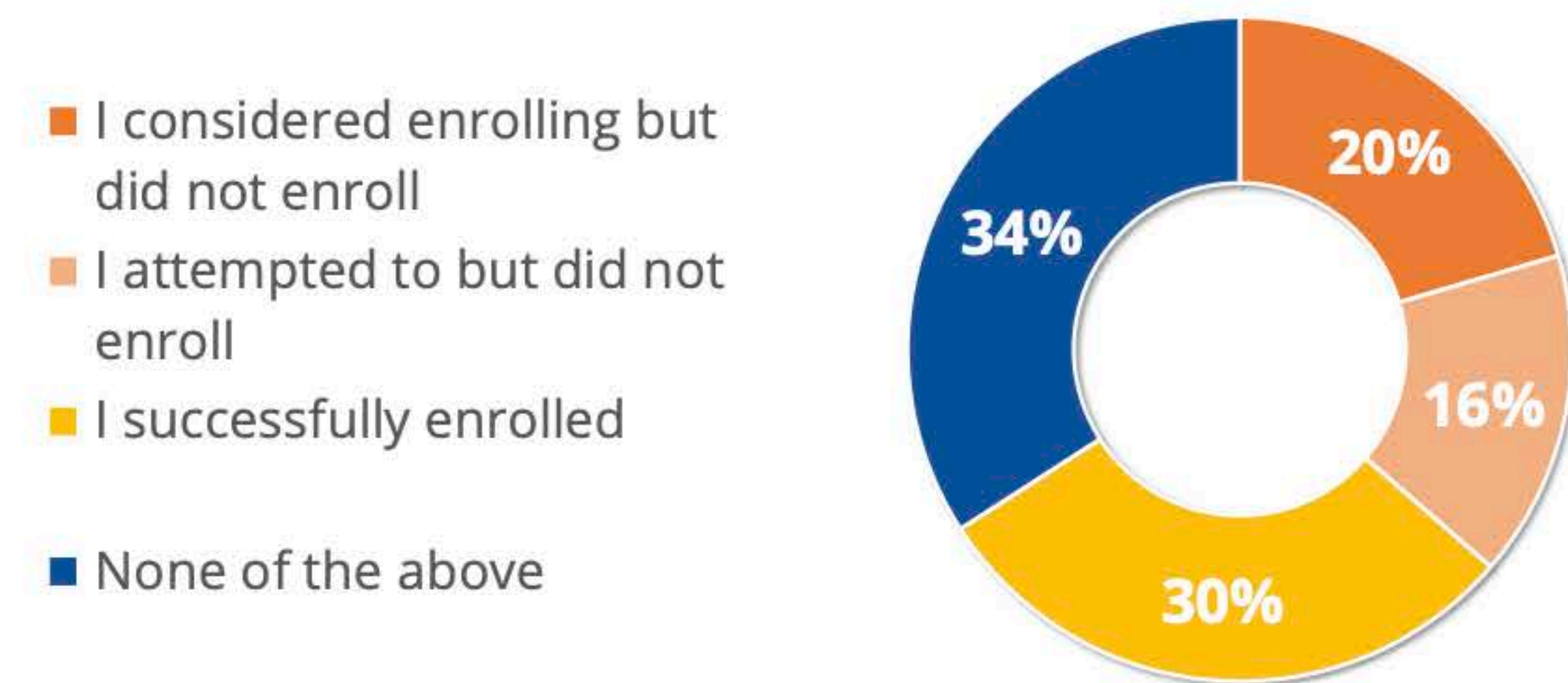
Developed surveys in English and Spanish to assess participant demographics and experience with Medicaid after expansion with the following aims:

- Assess the experiences of CHWs and CMs with NC Medicaid expansion
- Understand CHWs' experiences in health insurance outreach during Medicaid expansion.

Analysis: Used Chi-squared and Fisher's Exact test in STATA to identify associations between demographics, health literacy, and enrollment outcomes.

RESULTS

Medicaid Enrollment Outcomes among Community Members following Expansion



Among those who did not enroll in Medicaid post-expansion, **36%** were uninsured. Women were significantly more likely to remain uninsured.

Survey Demographics

	CMs	CHWs
Age	18-26	1 (4%)
	27-40	14 (54%)
	41-50	8 (31%)
	51-64	3 (12%)
	65+	0
	Prefer not to respond	0
Gender	Woman	19 (70%)
	Man	8 (30%)
	Other*	0
Race	White	15 (58%)
	Black or African American	1 (4%)
	Indigenous American/Native Alaskan	1 (4%)
	Asian	0
	Other	9 (35%)

	Community Members (CMs) Findings	Community Health Workers (CHWs) Findings
Language & Country of Birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33% CMs were born in the United States 88% speak Spanish; 50% preferred Spanish for health-related materials. <p>CM Quote: Language Access “ I believe the impact on the community would be greater if the information were provided directly in Spanish and made available in recreation centers that are more accessible to the community. ”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 94% CHWs born outside of USA 98% speak Spanish; 84% preferred Spanish for health-related materials. 100% of CHWs report Spanish is spoken in the communities they serve; 40% report English, and 2% Náhuatl. <p>Top 3 CM & CHW Countries of Birth Mexico (44), United States (12), Honduras (5)</p>
Experience with CHW-led outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 73% of CMs have received information or help from CHW, with 88% agreeing that “CHW helped me a lot” <p>CM Quote: Improving Outreach “ Develop campaigns that reflect the diversity of North Carolina's communities, using culturally appropriate imagery and language. Hire community ambassadors who understand the unique needs and concerns of specific populations. ”</p>	<p>Counties where participating CHWs served <i>la comunidad Latina</i></p> <p>MAP KEY: # of CHWs that indicated they reach <i>comunidades Latinas</i> in a given county</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - 4 5 - 8 9 - 12 13 - 16 17 - 20 Over 30
Health Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% CMs reported minimal or no knowledge of health insurance Spanish-speaking or foreign-born CMs were more likely to have lower health knowledge and remain uninsured if not enrolled in Medicaid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHWs reported higher health literacy, with 26% average and 65% above average health insurance knowledge. 72% have completed the CHW certification More years as CHW was associated with higher health literacy. No significant associations with demographics

CONCLUSIONS

- Despite expanded Medicaid eligibility, many eligible CMs remained unenrolled.
- Spanish-speaking, foreign-born women face compounding barriers and are more likely to remain uninsured without Medicaid compared to English-speaking, U.S.-born men.
- Findings highlight the need for culturally and linguistically appropriate resources
- CHW play a key role in improving language concordance, health literacy, and community trust.

NEXT STEPS

- Conduct focus groups to further explore experiences among *la comunidad Latina*
- Future studies should include eligible CMs unaware of their eligibility, recognizing the diversity within the community

To enhance Medicaid enrollment, we recommend CBOs and policymakers:

- Expand health outreach** to reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity in *la comunidad Latina*
- Invest in CHW-led outreach** that provides trusted and culturally/linguistically appropriate support
- Support CHW education and trainings** to ensure accurate, culturally appropriate outreach

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, REFERENCES, AND MORE INFORMATION

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For references and more study information, scan the QR code:

