**RESEARCH SUMMARY**

# Employment, Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Ticket to Work Program: Perspectives of Latinos with Disabilities

## A Quick Look

Latinos with disabilities may be difficult to outreach because of language and culture. This study explored the employment, vocational rehabilitation (VR), and Ticket to Work (TTW) experiences of Latinos with disabilities.

## Key Findings

* Top barriers to employment included lack of adequate transportation, difficulties with speaking the English language, inadequate levels of formal education, and negative employment attitudes toward workers with disabilities.
* Participants expressed concerns with the VR system and VR counselors' lack of responsiveness and collaboration.
* Participants also reported prejudiced attitudes on the basis of ethnic minority status among employers and VR counselors.
* Latinos with disabilities have employment needs and concerns that are unique to their group.
* Language barriers, limited formal education, and perceived discrimination on the basis of disability and ethnic minority status have been obstacles to employment success.
* It is vital that outreach efforts to serve this community be responsive, collaborative and culturally competent.

## Putting It Into Practice

* Majority of the clients focus on client-counselor relationship
* Participants spoke about counselor’s failure to return telephone calls and failure to follow through with specific tasks
* Participants felt that counselors held the power in VR relationships because they tended to develop work plans in a non-collaborative manner
* Participants felt that non-Latino counselors were inattentive and unresponsive
* Participants expressed a need for more Latino counselors to minimize language barriers

## Learn More

* Focus group participants were recruited from a rehabilitation hospital and two disability related hospitals and two disability-related organizations located in a large Midwestern city. Seven focus groups were conducted with 45 working-age Latinos with disabilities, who were either employed or seeking employment.
* Giles, F. (1992). The vocational rehabilitation of minorities. T. Wright & P. Leung. The unique needs of minorities with disabilities: Setting an agenda for the future. Washington, DC: National Council on Disability. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 358 592), 83-97.
* Santiago, A. M., & Villarruel, F. A. (1996). Latino access to rehabilitation services: Evidence from Michigan. American Rehabilitation, 22(1), 10-17.

## Source

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