

Dr. Gonzalez to address dementia on nation's largest Hispanic TV network

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A Wayne State University School of Medicine assistant professor will be interviewed about dementia and other health problems among the Latino population by the nation's largest private non-profit Spanish-language network of non-commercial telecommunications systems.

Hector Gonzalez, Ph.D., will be interviewed for the Hispanic Information and Telecommunications Network. With 12.7 million viewers, HITN claims to be the largest distributed Spanish-language cable network in the United States.



Hector Gonzalez, Ph.D

Dr. González, a clinical neuropsychologist and an assistant professor of Medicine and Public Health Sciences, has a joint appointment in the Institute of Gerontology.

He will be interviewed by telephone for the program "Diálogo de Costa y Costa" (Dialog Coast to Coast). Conducted in Spanish, the interview came about, Dr. Gonzalez explained, because colleagues in the Hispanic Community Health Study/Study of Latinos recommended him to HITN.

"It seems there are very few Latinos with expertise on aging and dementia in the country," Dr. Gonzalez said. "Because of the unacceptable dearth of Mexican-American clinicians and scholars, I got into this business to serve my community's health needs. I feel it is both an honor and an obligation to serve the community by providing the best information available in ways that makes sense and have lasting impact."

Dr. Gonzalez noted that the prevalence of dementia among Latinos of Caribbean descent may be higher.

"Our own work with Mexican-Americans, like many of the good people of Detroit and Michigan, indicates the prevalence is no higher than among non-Latino whites," he said. "One thing we do know is that chronic conditions, like diabetes and hypertension, are important risks for dementia among Mexican-Americans. By the way, it is important to remember that Mexican-Americans make up nearly 70 percent of all Latinos in the U.S.

"A lot of older adults are very concerned and fearful of dementia, and rightfully so," Dr. Gonzalez added. "As a public health professional, I will stress the importance of controlling aforementioned risks for dementia. This is important, given there are no cures."

The program is expected to air this month. HITN is available in the Detroit region via Dish Network channels 9401 and 843, and Directv 461.