



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

Community Engagement



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS

The Community Engagement (CE) Core at the Southern California Clinical and Translational Science Institute (SC CTSI) had another impactful year in 2025. Despite significant challenges, including wildfires across Southern California, changes in federal funding, and shifting government priorities, we leaned into collaboration. Together, we strengthened and expanded academic and community partnerships, grew our education and capacity-building programs, and supported a wide range of research and community-driven activities.

We also placed a strong emphasis on disseminating our work with both academic and community audiences through social media, website features, presentations at national conferences and professional meetings, and published manuscripts.

None of this would be possible without our passionate and dedicated CE team and our broad network of community partners, whose commitment continues to improve the health and well-being of our communities.

This report highlights key accomplishments from the past year, including the launch of new capacity-building programs for community health workers, community-based chronic disease prevention trainings developed in collaboration with the Southern California Center for Chronic Disease Research and Prevention, and expanded evaluation and dissemination of our work.



Michele Kipke, PhD
SC CTSI Co-Director and Director for
Community Engagement



Nicole Wolfe, PhD
Co-Director for Community
Engagement at SC CTSI

University of Southern California • Children's Hospital Los Angeles



ABOUT THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CORE

The Community Engagement (CE) core serves as a bridge between academic researchers and local communities, helping to build strong, lasting partnerships to ensure that research reflects community priorities and real-world needs. We work alongside researchers and community partners to support meaningful engagement and create opportunities for collaboration that benefits all people in communities across Southern California.

We offer consultations and hands-on support to help researchers engage respectfully and effectively with communities, while also uplifting community perspectives that inform research questions, design, and implementation. At the same time, we partner with community-based organizations, faith-based groups, healthcare organizations, and others to strengthen relationships and advance shared goals.

Our education, training, and capacity-building programs focus on building health and research literacy, addressing community-identified health topics, countering misinformation, and improving people's lived experiences.

These efforts are designed to build trust and support community leadership, including programs for community health workers and promotoras de salud. Our work is guided by core principles of community engagement including respect, collaboration, and open, bi-directional communication that values community knowledge and lived experience.

Through these partnerships, the CE core works to increase meaningful participation in research, support positive and respectful participant experiences, and advance research that benefits communities.

Community Engagement Core's Conceptual Model



THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM



Left to right: Adriana Argai, Associate Director of Community Engagement with SC3DRP at CHLA; Sara Calderon, Community Outreach Coordinator; Brian Do-Golden, Research and Evaluation Analyst; Nicole Wolfe, Co-Director of Community Engagement; Natayla Seals, Community Outreach Coordinator; Rosalba Cain, Community Outreach Coordinator; Alma Garcia, Community Outreach Coordinator; Mayra Rubio-Diaz, Program Manager.

2025 SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING OVERVIEW

Our communications strategy uses social media, articles, newsletters, and annual reports to raise awareness of our mission and opportunities, strengthen community partnerships, educate audiences about community-engaged approaches to improving health, and support community-engaged work across academic and health settings. In 2025, we continued to refine our approach to more effectively reach and engage audiences through culturally and linguistically responsive content.



Facebook remained a key platform for engaging Spanish-speaking Latino community members, while Instagram supported engagement with community organizations, academic and health institutions, and individuals interested in public health and research impact. Across platforms, community-centered storytelling and partner collaborations consistently drove higher visibility and engagement.

We also maintained a monthly bilingual newsletter and published articles highlighting educational opportunities, community events and resources, health research opportunities, and workforce development initiatives. To support continuous improvement, we monitored key performance indicators including social media engagement, website traffic, and newsletter reach, and used these insights to better align our communications with audience needs and priorities.



Like



Comment



Share

Follow

[@usc.ctsi.community](https://www.instagram.com/usc.ctsi.community)

to learn more about
our community
engagement efforts.



2025 SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING OVERVIEW



TOTAL NUMBER OF POSTS

25

18

AVERAGE REACH PER POST

361

102

AVERAGE NUMBER OF VIEWS PER REEL TYPE POST

618

105

TOTAL FOLLOWERS GAINED IN 2025

160

38

TOP PERFORMING POSTS OF 2025



4.1K+ PLAYS
84 INTERACTIONS
2,584 REACH



1.2K+ PLAYS
40 INTERACTIONS
464 REACH



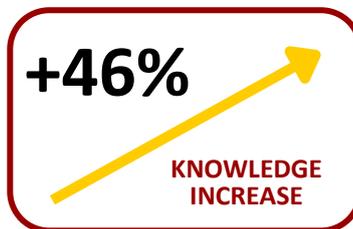
647 PLAYS
29 INTERACTIONS
454 REACH



EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

2025 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS DIABETES MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The Diabetes Management Training Program is a five-week series designed to build participants' knowledge, confidence, and practical skills for managing diabetes. Each 1.5-hour session includes interactive discussions, hands-on activities, practical health education, and guided goal setting. Topics include an overview of diabetes, healthy eating, physical activity, blood sugar monitoring, medication management, stress reduction, and overall diabetes wellness. The program, which is open to adults ages 18 and older with type 2 diabetes or who meet eligibility criteria for prediabetes, fosters peer learning and support through group-based sessions led by trained facilitators.



In 2025, Diabetes Management Trainings were delivered to 161 participants across nine cohorts with results showing strong impact. By building skills and confidence, the program supports long-term wellness and sustainable lifestyle change.



COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER CERTIFICATION TRAINING

The Community Health Worker (CHW) Certification Training Program was piloted as an eight-week, 40-hour certificate program designed to prepare participants for real-world CHW roles through culturally responsive, competency-based training. Delivered in a formal academic setting, the program builds foundational knowledge and practical skills

aligned with the Medi-Cal CHW Benefit and the C3 National Core Competencies for CHWs. Participants strengthen their ability to work across diverse health and community settings, build professional connections with fellow CHWs, and enhance their capacity to support individuals, families, and communities. Upon completion, participants receive a diploma reflecting the total number of training hours completed. The program launched in May 2025 with funding from the Sharon D. Lund Foundation.

Program outcomes demonstrate meaningful impact. Participants consistently reported feeling more confident, knowledgeable, and better equipped to empower others and support community health efforts.



| POST-TRAINING | 3-MONTH FOLLOW-UP |
|---|--|
| <p>+33%</p> <p>KNOWLEDGE INCREASE</p> | <p>95%</p> <p>Reported applying their new skills in practice</p> |
| <p>+36%</p> <p>CONFIDENCE INCREASE</p> | <p>57%</p> <p>Had taken steps to advance their community-based work</p> |



CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION TRAINING

The Chronic Disease Prevention Training is a five-week, in-person program consisting of weekly 1.5-hour sessions and is open to community members and professionals developed and implemented by the Southern California Center for Chronic Disease Research and Prevention (SC3DRP) in partnership with SC CTSI CE. The training builds participants' knowledge and skills to understand and prevent common chronic conditions, including diabetes, hypertension, fatty liver disease, heart disease, and obesity. The program emphasizes healthy lifestyle behaviors through nutrition education, physical activity promotion, and stress management strategies.



Participants are also empowered to navigate and advocate for themselves within the healthcare system, strengthening access to care and communication with providers. Learning is reinforced through interactive discussions and hands-on activities.

In 2025, three Chronic Disease Prevention Trainings were delivered, reaching 61 participants with results showing strong impact and all respondents rated the training as valuable or very valuable in their work as Promotoras or Community Health Workers.



POST-TRAINING

+60%

KNOWLEDGE INCREASE

+41%

CONFIDENCE INCREASE

6-MONTH FOLLOW-UP

88%

Reported applying the training content

47%

Noted positive changes in the communities they survey based on applying what they learned

ONGOING PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

In 2025, we delivered 72 culturally tailored, language-specific educational workshops, engaging 1,688 participants across South, Central, and East Los Angeles. Offered in English and Spanish, the workshops were designed in response to community-identified interests and needs. Workshops were delivered in collaboration with a broad network of partners, including local schools, faith-based organizations, community-based groups, and government agencies.

Workshop topics spanned a wide range of health issues, including an introduction to health research studies, Alzheimer’s disease and mental health. In partnership with the Southern California Center for Chronic Disease Research and Prevention (SC3DRP) additional workshops focused on nutrition, diabetes, chronic disease prevention, mental health, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, obesity, and dyslipidemia. On average, six workshops were delivered each month with approximately 24 participants per session, reflecting sustained community engagement.



Evaluation results demonstrated positive outcomes, with participants reporting an average knowledge percent increase of 18% with 93.5% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they felt confident applying the information in their daily lives. Additionally, 78 participants expressed interest in learning more about future research opportunities.



THE FUNDAMENTALS OF HEALTH RESEARCH TRAIN-THE-TRAINER FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

As part of our ongoing capacity-building efforts to expand research education, we continued the Fundamentals of Health Research Training Program in 2025. This train-the-trainer program is designed for Community Health Workers/Promotores de Salud (CHW/P) and features an interactive 12-hour curriculum covering core topics such as health research fundamentals, types of research, the research process, and participant protections. Participants also develop and present a research project addressing a health issue relevant to their community thereby strengthening their ability to educate others and promote informed participation in research. The program is delivered in collaboration with community partners and emphasizes practical application of research knowledge in community settings.

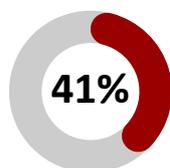


In 2025, four trainings were delivered across four cohorts, reaching 34 CHW/Ps. Participants demonstrated an average knowledge percent increase of 21.7% from pre- to post-training, with full knowledge retention at the three-month follow-up. Among participants who completed the three-month follow-up survey, 100% reported conducting workshops, sharing research information, or delivering educational materials based on the training. Together, these outcomes highlight the program's lasting impact in empowering CHW/Ps to engage their communities in health research and advocacy.

3-Month Follow-Up



32% Are currently enrolled or are now participating in a clinical trial or research study since taking the training.



41% Reported referring someone to a clinical trial since completing the training.

Participants exhibited strong confidence levels.



Average rating for explaining clinical trial risks.



Average rating for teaching health topics.



Average rating for explaining clinical trial benefits.



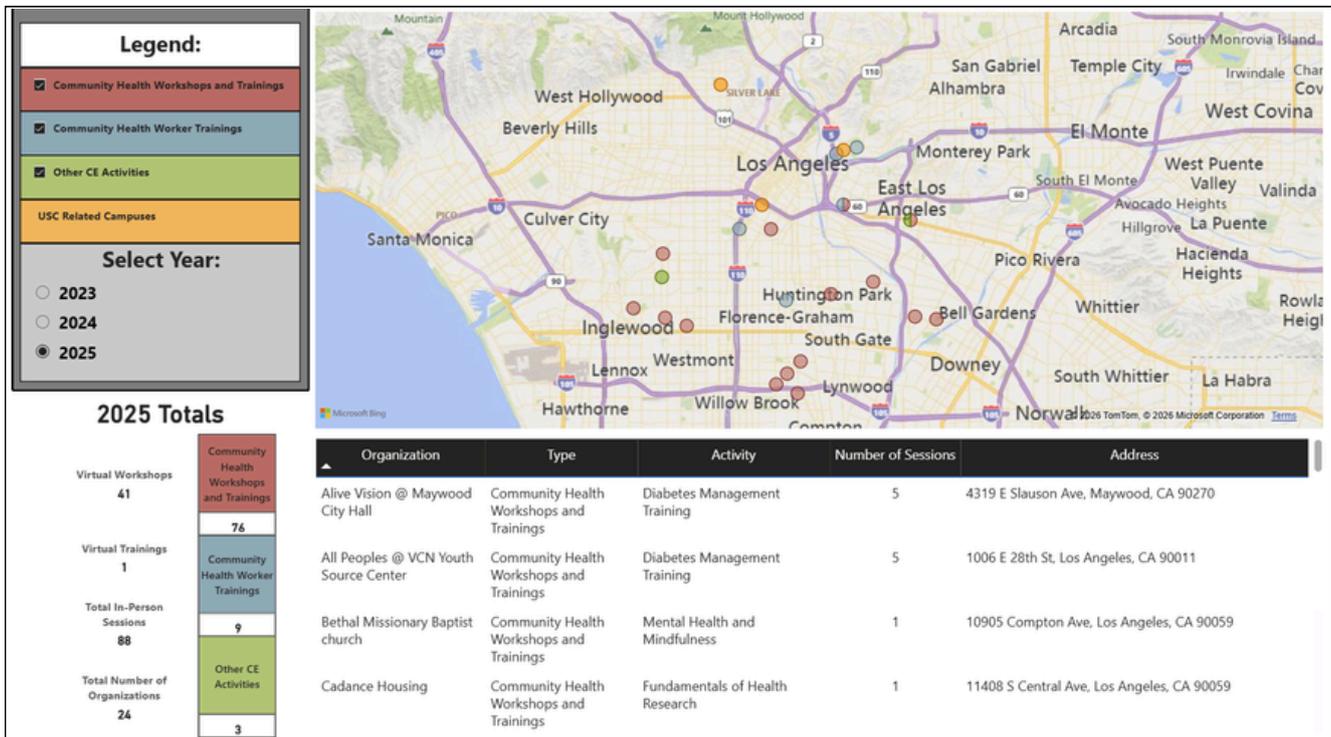
COMMUNITY HEALTH EVENTS

Through partnerships with the L.A. Care Community Resource Centers in East Los Angeles and South Los Angeles, the USC Alfred E. Mann School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, and USC-supported researchers, we hosted free community health screening events. These events provided glucose and cholesterol testing, blood pressure and body composition screenings, liver health screenings, along with health education, resources, and connections to care.

These events strengthened trust and sustained relationships with community members by creating welcoming spaces for ongoing engagement. These partnerships demonstrate the power of collaboration and reflect SC CTSI's commitment to improving health and well-being across Los Angeles communities.



2025 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES MAP



The map above marks the locations of workshops, trainings, and other community activities that the CE team either coordinated or attended in 2025.

View the interactive map here: <https://bit.ly/3QeVVHX>



INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Through our partnership with California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA), we continued to build on the success of our semester-long internship program for Master of Public Health students. This program provided hands-on, real-world experience, allowing students to apply their academic training while supporting community-centered work. Interns designed and implemented community-focused projects, assisted with evidence-based health interventions, supported the administration of key programs, participated in community health events, and contributed to data collection, analysis, and research skill development through weekly team meetings and project work.

In addition, we hosted two Master of Public Health interns from the University of Southern California as part of their practicum requirement. These interns analyzed data from health education workshops, trainings, and community listening sessions, translating findings into actionable strategies to address community-identified health needs.



Quran Durant, MPH (CSULA)



Yanet Escobedo, MPH (CSULA)



James Settles, MPH (USC)



Claire Woodrow, MPH (USC)

PRESENTATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

Dissemination of our work remains a key priority, ensuring that findings and lessons learned are shared broadly with community partners, academic colleagues, and our extended network. Throughout the year, we shared our work through presentations at national and regional conferences, peer-reviewed publications, and articles featured on our website. These dissemination efforts support transparency, promote shared learning, and help extend the impact of our community-engaged work.

Poster Presentations at the Association for Clinical and Translational Science (ACTS) Annual Meeting in Washington DC in April 2025

- “Promoting health equity through social media: A community engaged approach to bidirectional public health communication.” Nicole Wolfe, PhD; Andrea Diaz; Brian Do-Golden, MPH, CHES®; Mayra Rubio-Diaz; Michele D. Kipke, PhD
- “Visualizing Impact: Operationalizing Community Engagement Evaluation using the RE-AIM Framework.” Brian Do-Golden, MPH, CHES®; Nicole Wolfe, PhD; Nicole M.G. Maccalla, PhD; Michele D. Kipke, PhD



Journal Publications

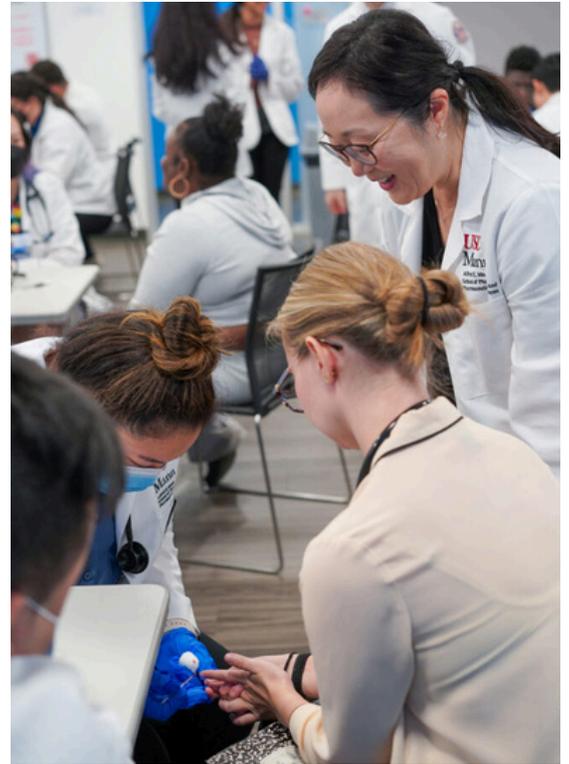
- “The Fundamentals of Health Research training for community health workers: a mixed-methods study” Nicole Wolfe, PhD; Andrea Diaz; Brian Do-Golden, MPH, CHES®; Esther Karpilow; Mayra Rubio-Diaz; Michele D. Kipke, PhD. *Frontiers in Public Health*. 13:1610413. Published June 18, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1610413>
- “Operationalizing Community Engagement Evaluation: A Structured and Scalable Approach Using the RE-AIM Framework and Net Effect Diagrams” Brian Do-Golden, MPH, CHES®; Nicole Wolfe, PhD; Nicole M.G. Maccalla, PhD; James Settles, MPH; Michele D. Kipke, PhD. *Journal of Clinical and Translational Science*. 9(1), e255. Published Oct 29, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1017/cts.2025.10190>
- “Assessing the Understanding of Chronic Diseases in the Latino community of Southern California: A Qualitative Study” Nicole Wolfe, PhD; Adriana Argai, MSc; Alma Garcia; Rosalba Cain; Anna Peare, MPH; Michael I Goran, PhD; Michele D. Kipke, PhD; Lourdes Baezconde-Garbanati, MPH, PhD. *American Journal of Public Health*, 115(S2). Published June 20, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2025.308083>



PRESENTATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

News Articles

- SC CTSI Organizes Health Screening Event at Newly-Opened Community Resource Center in South L.A. ([Link to article](#))
- Research paper on SC CTSI's Community Health Worker training published in "Frontiers in Public Health" ([Link to article](#))
- Community Health Workers Graduate from USC-CHLA Certification Program ([Link to article](#))
- New publication highlights application of RE-AIM framework to evaluate effects of community engagement work ([Link to article](#))



For more information about the work being done at SC-CTSI, visit the SC-CTSI news articles webpage at www.sc-ctsi.org/news



THANK YOU AND LOOKING AHEAD

Thank you to our community members, partners, and supporters for your trust, collaboration, and shared commitment over the past year. Your voices and contributions continue to guide this work and make meaningful progress possible.

As we look ahead, we are excited to expand our Community Health Worker (CHW) certification program with additional cohorts and continue to grow our diabetes management program, reaching more community members through our strong partnerships. We will also offer capacity-building trainings focused on chronic disease prevention and the fundamentals of clinical research. Together, these efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to meeting community needs and strengthening partnerships in the year ahead.



University of Southern California • Children's Hospital Los Angeles



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

- All Peoples
- Allied Vision
- Champions in Service
- Chicas Mom
- Community Resource Center (L.A. Care, Blue Shield Promise)
- East Los Angeles Women's Center
- El Quiosquito
- El Sol Neighborhood Engagement Center
- Epiphany Counseling
- Esperanza Community Housing Corporation
- Florence Firestone Community Organization
- Hope Street Group
- Irth
- Plaza Comunitaria Sinaloa
- Un Paso Más en la Inclusión
- Unidas por la Salud
- USC Pathways
- Visión y Compromiso
- Weingart East Los Angeles YMCA

HEALTH INSTITUTIONS

- AltaMed
- Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science
- Children's Hospital Los Angeles
- Clínica Romero
- Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine
- Keck School of Medicine of USC
- Kedren Health
- Southern California Center for Chronic Disease Research & Prevention (SC3DRP)
- USC Alfred E. Mann School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
- USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center

FOUNDATIONS

- The Sharon D. Lund Foundation

SCHOOLS

- Gage Middle School
- Hillcrest Drive Elementary
- Linda Marquez High School
- Loren Miller Elementary School
- Los Angeles National Land Trust - Fremont High School
- South Park Elementary
- Windsor Hills Elementary

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Los Angeles City Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, 8th District

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

- McCarty Memorial Methodist Church
- Saint Mark United Methodist Church

HOUSING

- Good Shepherd Manor
- Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles - Nickerson Gardens
- Linc Housing - Cadence Apartments

CONSORTIUMS & COALITIONS

- California Hospital Community Coalition
- Los Angeles CHW Consortium
- San Diego County Promotores Coalition

FEDERAL AGENCY

- National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS)
- National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities
- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- NIH Community Engagement Alliance (CEAL)

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- American Public Health Association
- Association for Clinical and Translational Science (ACTS)

