HEALTHCARE BLOG POST

Headline or Subject Line (8 words or fewer): Taking Care of Patients in Spanish
Subhead (Describe story: 120 characters or fewer): Our Team Members Support Their Communities Throughout Their Healthcare Journey
By Willette Marchany Rivera

Body Copy:

Latino patients are no strangers to experiencing communication challenges in healthcare settings. Just under half (46%) Hispanic adults in the U.S. say they have a close friend or family member who needs a Spanish-speaking healthcare provider or translator. *

That's why when our Spanish speaking patients reach out to us, our bilingual patient care advocates (PCAs) are here for them. Our own Verenis Hernandez Vargas, a dedicated team member and proud Latina, shares how providing a patient experience in Spanish helps enable seamless access to our services.

Born and raised in New Jersey to a Mexican American family, Verenis is aware language barriers have caused challenges related to medication adherence. Having witnessed similar situations throughout her life and career is what inspired her to become a PCA. "It hit home with me," she said. Thinking of her own mother, who has limited English proficiency, Verenis knew the struggles. She wanted to help the people in her community communicate, allowing them to 'get things done'.

While she started working at AllianceRx Walgreens Pharmacy in 2019 with English-speaking patients, about a year ago Verenis volunteered to become one of our agents certified in Spanish. She wanted to provide service in her first language to help bridge the gap for Spanish-speaking patients. Whether it was taking their medication orders, answering their questions or calling back for a prescription follow up, Verenis put her language skills and her cultural upbringing to the task.

Most rewarding to Verenis is knowing she provides some relief to the patients. They thank her for helping with what they thought was going to be harder without language support. In her own words, "I want patients to know even if there is a communication barrier, there are always people that want to go above and beyond for them. I always wanted to be that person for other people. I love the opportunity AllianceRx Walgreens Pharmacy gives us to be that person for somebody else who doesn't speak English or has a hard time speaking it. I am glad I can use my voice here to help our patients."

To continue supporting the communities we serve throughout the nation, AllianceRx Walgreens Pharmacy also offers the following Spanish language resources for patients:

- Planning tools and checklists
- Prescription labels
- Pharmacist Tips
- Welcome and specialty condition booklets
- Qualified interpreters
- Social media outreach and content on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter

Taking care of our patients in Spanish is one of the many ways we provide hope and care for better tomorrows. At AllianceRx Walgreens Pharmacy, we celebrate our team members and patients, the communities they represent and are honored to be able to support them in their healthcare journey.

**Source: Pew Research Center (2022)*

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