Examining the Market Potential for Mental Health Care Needs for Elderly Latinos in Washington State

**Marketing Scenario and Background**

The United States along with several other countries worldwide have just experienced their first wave of Baby Boomers transitioning into ‘elderly’ status. Baby Boomers are individuals born between 1946 and 1964. The number of elderly persons is expected to increase from 35 million to 70 million in the next 25 years. The large number of elderly individuals in this group poses new challenges to American society and especially to the health care industry. We will have to find ways to accommodate existing health care facilities, services, and treatments to the elderly’s growing numbers.

**Marketing Goals**

This analysis will attempt to identify the market potential for mental health needs of elderly Latinos in Washington State. Information regarding facilities and opportunities for Washington State’s elderly Latinos will be examined to aid in this determination. This analysis will help in promoting the need for elderly services with attention focused on mental health issues that are often associated with this largely understudied cohort. This study will also help the State of Washington promote demand for services that cater to the elderly Latino populations and the overall economy of Washington while improving the state’s residents’ lives and well-being.

**Methods and Data**

To aid in establishing the market potential for elderly Latinos, decennial Census data from 2010, provided by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM), and the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics were manipulated to make the case that there in fact is a strong need / demand for medical professionals specializing in mental health who can effectively serve elderly Latino patients. The information used in this study was available at the county level and this is how data has been aggregated and presented in this document. The Washington State Department of Health has identified communities and areas that have a health profession area along with underserved areas throughout Washington.

**Quick Stats on Washington State’s Health Facilities**

- **2,660** Adult Family Homes
- **547** Boarding Homes
- **253** Nursing Homes
- **175** Group Care Facilities
- **156** Community and Migrant Health Centers
- **122** Rural Health Clinics
- **119** Hospitals (1,023 beds for psychiatric care)
- **50** Health Service Corps Providers

**Location quotients (UQ) are a measure that is familiar to regional labor economists as a way to readily compare the industrial activity levels among different areas of the country. In general, location quotients are indices that compare the concentration of a resource or activity, such as employment in a defined area to that of a larger area or base. For example, location quotients can be used to compare state employment by industry to that of the nation (as was done for the above), or employment in a city, county, metropolitan statistical area (MSA), or other defined geographic sub-area to that in the State.**

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

From the analysis above, it appears that there is a large growing elderly Latino population in the United States and especially in the State of Washington. While the tendency is to work hard to serve this population, the State of Washington has the opportunity to provide the much needed services and infrastructure to the aging Latinos. It has been shown that the location quotients for the state make it an excellent area for employment to provide for the elderly Latino population. Although it is also made apparent that the state of Washington is lacking in mental health care facilities and personnel. Washington needs to work with agencies to help expand and locate facilities in these areas and not only create a stronger more diverse economy, but also provide much needed services to those who need them. One next step would be to look at the block group level to better create specific geographic campaigns that would encourage people to enter the mental health care field.