Purpose:

Developing a Novel Intervention to Improve Health Literacy among Wisconsin Latinos will bridge the divide between the Latino population and access to accurate and understandable information about diabetes risk and prevention. Partners will create a culturally appropriate and theory-based Spanish-language teledrama with characters whose dialogue, interactions, and experiences yield accurate information and positive socio-behavioral modeling. The main outcome measure will be whether Latino participants who are exposed to a diabetes-based telenovela will yield higher scores on post-tests of diabetes knowledge than scores obtained during the pre-test.

Addressing local needs of the targeted population in ways that are culturally sensitive and inclusive:

A major goal and guiding precept of the project has been to maintain a high level of community participation to ensure cultural sensitivity and linguistic accessibility within the Latino community in Wisconsin. Since the project seeks to improve diabetes-related health literacy in this population, such elements are critical to the success of the project. The community input process has included the recruitment and ongoing interactions with an Expert Panel (EP) and a Community Advisory Board (CAB). In addition to ensuring the cultural appropriateness of all project goals and activities, the EP has helped to confirm the accuracy of the diabetes messages within the script, while the CAB has guided the infusion of Latino cultural aesthetics. Partners plan to continue work with these two groups through the end of the study. Partners have also conducted numerous in-depth interviews with Latino community members diagnosed with Type II Diabetes. The insights from these individual narratives have helped to shape the story and characters portrayed in the telenovela.

Informed by research, evaluation and systematic data collection:

The study intends to measure changes in diabetes-related health literacy (knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral intentions) by relying on speech comprehension (oral literacy) rather than print literacy. The study team will work closely with the EP to review current print tests of relevant measures and the translation of question items into a lay language for oral testing. Changes will be made to the instrument based on EP advice and the instruments will be piloted with bilingual members of the study team, UCC staff, and volunteers from the CAB to ensure overall reliability (test-retest procedures) and survey understandability (linguistic and semantic acceptability).