

Study to Test Efficacy of Text Message Support for Latino Caregivers

CuidaTEXT sends daily messages with tips and information to support Latino caregivers of people with dementia.

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To support Latino [caregivers](#) of people with dementia, University of Kansas (KU) researchers are testing a text message program that delivers daily messages with information on caring for someone with [dementia](#), self-care tips and more, according to a [KU news release](#).

Nearly 7 million older adults have Alzheimer's or another form of dementia, according to the [Alzheimer's Association](#). Most dementia caregivers (70%) report that providing care is stressful due to factors such as cost, coordinating with multiple doctors, scheduling appointments, getting help taking a break and more. According to KU, Latino caregivers may be at greater risk for [depression](#) and [anxiety](#).

"Latinos have a higher prevalence of depression than non-Latino whites already, and it increases over time, and that could be attributed partly to social determinants of health, such as not being able to afford health care and having less access to caregiving support," said principal investigator Jaime Perales Puchalt, PhD, MPH, an assistant professor of neurology at the University of Kansas Alzheimer's Disease Research Center.

Researchers developed CuidaTEXT to support Latino caregivers with daily automated text messages with helpful tips and information on caring for someone with dementia, end-of-life issues, self-care, social support and more.

Supported by a five-year, \$4 million National Institutes of Health [grant](#), this program follows a preliminary study that tested the text messaging service on a small group of 24 Latino caregivers who found it to be helpful and easy to use.

The new study will extend its reach to nearly 300 Latino caregivers of people with dementia across

the United States and Puerto Rico. Participants must be at least 18 years old and have some depressive symptoms.

One group of participants will be enrolled in the CuidaTEXT program; the other group will not have access to it until the end of the study.

Individuals in the CuidaTEXT program will receive about one text per day for six months and have access to on-demand texts offering tips on how to care for themselves and their care recipient.

By the end of the study, researchers hope that the caregivers receiving daily texts will experience less stress and fewer depressive symptoms and have developed better coping skills. If the program is successful, they aim to launch CuidaTEXT in community institutions and associations.

"It needs to be offered at a national level by multiple community-serving entities so that everyone can use it," Perales Puchalt said.

For more, click [#Dementia](#). There, you'll find headlines such as "[Millions of Aging Americans Are Facing Dementia by Themselves](#)," "[Alzheimer's Disease May Damage the Brain in Two Phases](#)" and "[Blood Test Identifies Alzheimer's Disease With About 90% Accuracy](#)."