

# From the community: Esperanza Health Centers names Carmen Vergara as its new Chief Operating Officer



Carmen Vergara, Chief Operating Officer, Esperanza Health Centers (Posted by Emily Gelber, Community Contributor)

By **Community Contributor Emily Gelber**

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**E**speranza Health Centers, a federally qualified health center serving primarily Latino communities on the Southwest side of Chicago, has promoted Carmen Vergara, RN-BSN, MPH to become its new Chief Operating Officer.

Carmen Vergara, who grew up in Little Village where Esperanza's two largest health clinics are located, oversaw healthcare quality and practice transformation initiatives across all of Esperanza's locations. Her leadership and hard work have resulted in Esperanza receiving a National Quality Leader Award from the Health Resources and Services Administration for two years in a row, an award that places Esperanza among the top health centers in Chicago, and among the top 3% of health centers nationwide.

Additionally, Vergara developed and oversaw institution-wide practice change that allowed Esperanza to achieve Patient Centered Medical Home Recognition at all three health center sites. She was the recipient of the

Illinois Nurses Foundation 40 under 40 award in 2016, and was among civic leaders invited to attend the Obama Foundation Summit last month.

"Carmen Vergara has been a real champion for our community. Her passion for our patients and her commitment to innovation and quality make her an exceptional choice to lead Esperanza to new heights of clinical excellence," says Dan Fulwiler, President and CEO of Esperanza Health Centers. "We are extremely fortunate to have Carmen on our team."

Vergara, who will serve as the health center's first Chief Operating Officer, will direct innovation in Esperanza's health care services at a crucial time. In addition to Esperanza's rapid expansion and ambitious goals in clinical er in Brighton Park expected to open in the spring

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