



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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County Executive

News Release

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Spanish Stroke Smart Campaign Earns National Awards



FREDERICK, Md. – Frederick County's innovative AHORA Stroke Smart Campaign has earned two national awards: a NACo Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties and a Crown Communities Award from American City & County. The awards recognize the campaign for taking a culturally relevant approach to a public health issue.

"We are incredibly proud of the AHORA campaign and the positive impact it has had on our community," County Executive Jessica Fitzwater said. "I was touched last year to meet a woman who credits the AHORA video with saving her life. Receiving these awards is a testament to the hard work and dedication that goes into reaching people in a way that speaks to them."

Strokes are a leading cause of death and disability in Frederick County. Receiving care quickly reduces brain damage and increases chances of recovery.

In 2023, Frederick County unveiled a Stroke Smart campaign to teach the symptoms of a stroke and the importance of seeking medical attention immediately. Patients who receive care within the English-language campaign used BE FAST as a memory aid for people to know the signs of a stroke: Balance, Eyes, Face, Arms, Speech, and Time.

Recognizing that this memory aid did not translate into Spanish, staff conducted research on the best way to assist Frederick County's 11,000-plus Spanish speakers. AHORA was launched in December 2023. Ahora means "now," stressing the need to act quickly.

AHORA stands for:

- A (Andar): Loss of balance or coordination.
- H (Hablar): Difficulty speaking or slurred speech.
- O (Ojos): Loss of vision in one or both eyes.
- R (Rostro): Face drooping.
- A (Ambos Brazos o Piernas): Weakness or numbness in arms or legs.

Several divisions within Frederick County Government collaborated on the public awareness campaign, along with Frederick Health Hospital and several nonprofit organizations. County agencies include Aging and Independence, Communications and Public Engagement, Equity and Inclusion, Fire and Rescue Services, and Health Services.

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Frederick County: Rich History, Bright Future

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The NACo Achievement Awards recognize innovative and effective county government programs that strengthen services for residents. The Crown Communities Award honors outstanding projects that demonstrate excellence in local government. AHORA is one of only six Crown Communities Awards across the nation given out this year. Both awards celebrate the creativity, dedication, and impact of the AHORA campaign.

To learn how you can be Stroke Smart, visit www.FrederickCountyMD.Gov/StrokeSmart, or watch the videos below.



English – [BE FAST](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.Gov/StrokeSmart)



Español – [AHORA](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.Gov/StrokeSmart)

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