

Supporting Immigrant Communities

Revised April 11, 2017



OVERVIEW

During the presidential campaign, negative rhetoric around immigrants had a real impact on our patients. Since taking office, President Donald Trump has signed executive orders and memoranda that have a direct and detrimental impact on immigrants, their communities, and the community health centers that care for them.

Patients of community health centers have gone so far as to cancel appointments and question whether to maintain their enrollment in programs like Medicaid. Fears of deportation are putting the health of our patients and their communities at risk. New, more restrictive federal immigration policies are impacting primary care provider recruitment.

California's elected leaders have been steadfast supporters of our immigrants and we appreciate their continued support.

THE PROBLEM

ICE Raids: The President's call for increased Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids has directly impacted our patients. Health Centers have been forced to evaluate policies and reassure patients that they should continue to seek services.

Fears of deportation have become so acute that our clinics are seeing an increase in behavioral health and mental health conditions like depression, anxiety and stress.

Workforce: Many health centers rely on qualified healthcare providers who are authorized to work in the country under the terms of a visa or work permit. These providers are familiar with the communities they serve and are providing care that is culturally and linguistically appropriate.

We are already experiencing a severe shortage of health care providers throughout California, and any changes to current visa and work permit rules could

further hamper our health centers' ability to serve their patients.

Nationwide, more than 2 million health care workers are foreign-born. A quarter of practicing physicians are graduates of foreign medical schools and 17 percent of trainees right now are from foreign countries.

The Association of American Medical Colleges, which has repeatedly warned of a U.S. doctor shortage, identified 260 applicants to residency programs from the seven countries included on the first immigration ban alone.

The average resident treats about 3,000 patients, according to AAMC, so those 260 applicants could treat up to 780,000 patients if they are allowed to matriculate.

OUR POSITION

California's community health centers maintain our commitment to serve everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. We are the foundation of the state's safety net which serves millions of low-income, vulnerable communities.

CaliforniaHealth+ Advocates will continue to support and advocate for legislation that protects immigrants and furthers community health centers' mission of providing high-quality care to all Californians.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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TALKING POINTS

- For decades, community health centers have provided care to everyone, regardless of ability to pay, their immigration status, or their individual circumstances. Our goal is a healthy community and that requires universal access to primary care services.
- We remain committed to providing care to everyone and will fight for policies that ensure community health centers are safe places to receive care and support.
- California has spent decades developing programs that ensure access to care for all Californians, such as the Health for All Kids Act, which allows hundreds of thousands of children from low-income families to enroll in Medi-Cal regardless of their immigration status.
- President Trump's recent executive orders on immigration and immigrants are having a detrimental impact on community health centers' patients and workforce.
- They are causing fear of deportation, resulting in patients cancelling their medical appointments and dis-enrolling from programs for which they are legally eligible, putting their health and the health of their community at risk.
- As a health system that is committed to speaking our patients' language, honoring their traditions, and valuing their experience, we rely on healthcare providers and staff who themselves are immigrants or Dreamers (DACA). Any executive order that limits their ability to serve their community will hurt community health centers.
- Nationwide, more than 2 million health care workers — including more than 200,000 nurses — are foreign-born. A quarter of practicing physicians are graduates of foreign medical schools and 17 percent of trainees right now are from foreign countries. (Politico)
- The Association of American Medical Colleges, which has repeatedly warned of a U.S. doctor shortage, has identified 260 current applicants to residency programs from the seven countries included on the immigration ban alone. The average resident treats about 3,000 patients, according to AAMC, so those 260 applicants could treat up to 780,000 patients if they are allowed to matriculate.
- **PROVIDE REAL LIFE EXAMPLES FROM YOUR HEALTH CENTER.**