



Florida Health Care Providers: Are Your Immigrant Patients Afraid to Seek Care?

Over the past two years, healthcare providers have witnessed their immigrant patients' reluctance to seek medical care due to fears of deportation. There is also a rising fear among immigrant families that receiving health care coverage—***even for United States citizens***-- will hurt the family's ability to stay in the country. These fears are linked to draft proposed changes to the "public charge" rule. (More information on the back of this flyer). If the proposed rule changes go forward, your patients, their families and our communities will suffer.

There is an urgent need to educate the public and decision makers. ***Health care providers play a critical role in providing examples of how your patients' health is being hurt by the current anti-immigrant climate. Please share your anecdotal observations --not patient-protected health care information and join the [national campaign to Protect Immigrant Families](#).***

Here are some typical patient scenarios:

- Carlos and Anna are farmworkers who have been living in Homestead, for the past ten years. Their 5-year-old son, Jose a U.S. citizen, receives Medicaid. When Jose was three, he was diagnosed with autism and has been receiving speech and behavioral therapy. The therapies are helping but the parents are afraid to continue his treatments.
- Maria, a 19-year-old legal permanent resident, arrived in Miami from Cuba when she was five years old. She is currently working part-time, attending Miami-Dade College, and is married to a citizen. Neither Maria nor her husband have insurance through their jobs. They just got news that Maria is pregnant and are eager to begin prenatal care. Although Maria is now eligible for Medicaid, they are scared about enrolling because Maria wants to sponsor her mother, who is still in Cuba, to join the family in Miami.
- Pierre, a landscaper, moved to Miami from Haiti in 2002. He and his wife, a U.S. citizen, have two citizen children, ages 1 and 3, who were enrolled in Medicaid and have been receiving periodic health screenings and vaccinations through the program. When the children did not come for their regular health screens, you contacted Pierre and he told you that he and his wife dis-enrolled the children because they fear Medicaid enrollment will hurt his chances of staying with his family in the U.S.

If you have patients with similar stories, please contact Miriam Harmatz, Harmatz@floridahealthjustice.org, Michelle Adams, Adams@floridahealthjustice.org, 6.27.18