Promotoras Improving Mental Health of Immigrant Patients

The information in this document is not meant to provide legal advice or to substitute for the guidance, counsel or advice of legal counsel on any matters particular to a specific primary care clinic.
Presentation Overview

• Who is CPCA and CaliforniaHealth+ Advocates?

• Immigration Policy – Impact on Patients Mental Health

• Promotoras Reducing Mental Health Stigma
  – Value of CHWs / Promotoras in health and data from clinics

• Clinics and Immigration: How Promotoras can help Immigrant Patients
  o Mental Health of Immigrant Patients
  o Access to Healthcare
  o Immigrant Resources for clinics and Promotoras

• Barriers of CHW / Promotora integration

• Responding To Fears – Why Health Centers Should be Involved in Public Charge Advocacy

• Resources
California Primary Care Association

Mission

• The mission of CPCA is to lead and position community clinics, health centers, and networks through advocacy, education and services as key players in the health care delivery system to improve the health status of their communities.

• CPCA was founded in 1994 to create a unified, statewide voice for community clinics and health centers.

More than 1,300 Community Health Centers (CHCs) in California
CaliforniaHealth+ Advocates is an independent 501(c)(4) social welfare organization that is an affiliate of the California Primary Care Association.
California’s Community Health Centers

The Patients

California
1 out of 6 Californians served by community health centers

Patients 6.5 Million
Encounters 20 Million

Special Populations

36%
Non-English Speaking

Encounters 2,466,721
Patients 620,475
Migratory Workers

Increase of Medi-Cal Patients Served by CHCs

By Race | Ethnicity

HISPANIC 55%
UNKNOWN 17%
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER 8%
BLACK 7%
NATIVE AMERICAN 2%
WHITE 9%
MIXED RACE 7%

Immigration Policy – Impact on Patients Mental Health

Taking a Pulse: Fear and Anxiety Among Immigrants

- MCN's 2018 poll on the rising anxiety and distress among immigrant patients and healthcare clients.
- 91 healthcare providers were surveyed, including nurses, physicians, and administrators.

Below are representations of a couple of the questions asked to those who were surveyed.

- Have you perceived a change in your migrant patients' feelings toward receiving health care?
  - Yes (60.84%)  No (39.16%)

- Have you perceived a change in the obstacles that your and migrant patients face to receive care?
  - Yes (57.54%)  No (42.46%)
“One patient, a Spanish-speaking woman in her late thirties, broke down crying as soon as I handed her the packet. She felt enormous stress due to all of the anti-immigrant policies being proposed and scared for her family, especially her children.”

- California Clinic Provider
Immigration Policy – Impact on Immigrant Children and their Parents

• CPCA partnered with The Children’s Partnership (TCP) and California Program on Access to Care (CPAC) to conduct a provider survey to capture the mental health of immigrant children and parents.

• Methodology: electronic survey (n=151)
  – Survey conducted September 2017
  – 62% of respondents provide mental health care to immigrant families, and many also provide complementary services such as primary care, pediatric care, and case management.

“The children are scared for their parents…”
Health Provider, California
Provider Survey Results

• Among Children in Immigrant Families, Health Care Providers Reported:
  – 90% Increase in anxiety and fear due to detention and deportation
  – 70% Increase in depression systems
  – 50% increase in anxiety and depression diagnosis
  – 25% increase in seeking mental health care
  – 62% increase in concerns about enrolling in public benefit programs, like WIC and Medicaid
Fear in Immigrant Patients - Impact on Mental Health

California Children in Immigrant Families: The Health Provider Perspective

1 in 2 CHILDREN HAVE AN IMMIGRANT PARENT

California is at the forefront of passing immigrant integration policies. Yet in surveying health care providers in the state, it is evident that current national anti-immigrant rhetoric is impacting the health of children in immigrant families.

Among Children in Immigrant Families, Health Care Providers Reported:

- 90% Increase in anxiety and fear due to detention and deportation
- 70% Increase in depressive symptoms including sadness, sleepiness, loss of appetite, and loss of interest in daily activities
- 42% Increase in skipped scheduled health care appointments
- 50% Increase in anxiety and depression diagnoses
- 25% Increase in seeking mental health care

Among Parents:

- 70% Increase in anxiety of taking children to school or recreational activities due to fear of immigrant enforcement activities
- 67% Increase in concerns about enrollment in Medi-Cal, WIC, CalFresh and other public programs. While 40% expressed interest in opting out of these programs

"The kids are more worried than the adults, due to this issue and not understanding the details. Also, I find it's being discussed at school without any context and bringing on more fear, much more than at home."

*Data represents percentage of surveyed providers who agreed with each statement.
More information and resources available at: www.childrenspartnership.org/priorities/healthy-mind-healthy-future/
Promotoras Reducing Mental Health Stigma
Who are Promotoras in Healthcare

• Promotoras are frontline public health workers who are a trusted member of and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served.

• Trusting relationship enables the Promotoras to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community
  o helps facilitate access to series and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery.

• A CHW also builds individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support, and advocacy.
  ~American Public Health Association~
Value of CHWs / Promotoras in Healthcare

• CHWs (also known as Promotoras, health coaches and by a number of other titles) have demonstrated their ability to improve health behaviors and outcomes, particularly for racial and ethnic minority communities.

• CHWs provide culturally responsive services, including:
  o educating patients and clinical staff;
  o identifying resources;
  o providing case management;
  o supporting care coordination activities; and
  o Becoming part of an individual’s support network.
Data: CA Health Centers Utilizing CHWs and / or Promotoras

• More than 45 member health center organizations of CPCA report utilizing CHWs / Promotoras.

• About 30 health center organizations reported that CHWs / Promotoras are part of the patient care team.

• 40 health center organizations reported that CHWs / Promotoras serve as a liaison between members of the community and services offered, including health and social services.
Health Centers and Immigration: How Promotoras can help Immigrant Patients
Immigrants Access to Mental Health Services

• Studies have shown that immigrants from Asia, Latin America, and Africa use mental health services at lower rates than nonimmigrants

• Promotoras are suggested to be an effective and economic method to help extend health promotion and existing service delivery efforts to marginalized populations
How Promotoras can Help Reduce Fears in Immigrant Patients

• Linking immigrant patients with community resources (naturalization, Know Your Rights workshops, finding a lawyer).

• Helping immigrant patients understand and navigate the health system while also helping patients understand their health care rights.

• Informing patients of how and where to access healthcare services

• Helping immigrant patients understand the importance of receiving health and mental health care.
  o Help patients overcome cultural barriers to care
Health Center Services Enabled by Promotoras

- **Internal:** appointment reminders, no-show follow-up
- **External:** de-stigmatize access to BH care
- **Coffee Connection at schools for parents**
- **Addresses “symptoms” of BH need**
- **Discusses “symptoms” of SUD need**
- **Linkes patients to care**
Barriers for Integrating CHWs in Clinics

• CHWs / Promotoras are not billable providers under the Prospective Payment System (PPS) method of reimbursement used by clinics. Meaning that clinics cannot bill for services provided by CHWs, making it hard to pay CHWs for their work.
  o However, it’s likely that clinics who provide CHW services will see a slight increase in the cost of doing business, which can increase the PPS rate received for each patient.

• Lack of understanding by clinical staff, including management, regarding the benefits of utilizing CHWs / Promotoras to help provide culturally appropriate and culturally relevant health care to diverse patients.

• Minimal evidenced based studies that quantify the impact that CHWs / Promotoras have in improving the health of patients.
Responding To Fears – Why Health Centers Should be Involved in Public Charge Advocacy
Public Charge: How will Communities be Impacted

• Immigrants ability to become permanent residents is jeopardized if they enroll in Medicaid, SNAP or use housing assistance.

• The chilling effect will drive eligible families away from enrolling in programs that help them stay healthy and pay for medical care at community health centers
  – Increasing the number of uninsured patients

• Many immigrant families may avoid seeking healthcare until their condition deteriorates, which could increase avoidable emergency room visits.
  – Increase in healthcare costs
How Will Health Centers be Impacted?

• Staff will need to be retrained, in particular enrollment staff, to ensure they can answer questions from immigrant patients who may qualify for Medicaid.

• If the proposed policy changes go into effect, it will no longer be possible to assure patients that using Medicaid won’t affect their immigration status.

• Each Clinic will need to decide how to talk to immigration patients about the possibility that receiving essential benefits could affect their ability to adjust their immigration status.

• Since health centers may no longer be able to enroll all their immigrant patients into public benefit programs, or offer them the sliding fee scale, it could raise the cost of providing services to patients.
Getting Involved - Next Steps

• Immigration Webinar Series – Stay Tuned for more trainings


• Join Us:
  – National Health Center Immigration Workgroup
  – PIF Campaign
  – CA PIF Coalition (CIPC)
  – PIF Funded Coalition
Available Resources
How are Clinics Responding to Fears & Increased Mental Health Issues

• Established written policies that:
  o Designate areas in your clinic as private spaces (having an intake person by the main entrance can help create waiting room as a private space)
  o Designate a specific person or persons as responsible for handling contacts with law enforcement officials.
  o Specify when and what information must be provided to law enforcement, while outlining how patients should be notified of this.

• Provide posters, Know Your Rights cards and educational materials advising patients of their rights.

• Create an environment where ALL patients feel safe in obtaining healthcare services
  o Have welcome signage throughout the clinic
  o Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services
Immigration Resource Page

Know Your Rights information in various languages, including:
- Tagalog
- Spanish
- Chinese
- Arabic
- Korean
- Mongolian

FAQs and Talking Points
• Immigration FAQs to help frontline staff answer patient questions.
• Immigration talking points that can be used for meetings with press or legislators

Resources for DACA and DACA employers

Free Trainings for providers, patients, and community
– Know your rights
– Legal help

New Webpage:
Public Charge Advocacy Toolkit
Immigration Sample Policies and Procedures

1) Internal Protocol for Interacting with Immigration Officials and Law Enforcement

2) Disclosure of Personal Health Information

3) Private and Public Spaces in a Clinic

4) Creating an Integrated Rapid Response Team

5) Training Clinic Staff on Immigration

6) Messaging to Patients
   - CaliforniaHealth+ Advocates Immigration Talking Points for Clinic Staff

Sample Policies Available at: CPCA’s Immigration Resource Page
Overview of Immigration Sample Policies and Procedures

- Create a Rapid Response team with members of the community, like attorneys and local media

- Specify when and what information must be provided to law enforcement, while outlining how patients should be notified of this.
  - Under certain circumstances HIPAA allows covered entities, to decide when to disclose personal health information
  - Health centers should implement policies that are protective of patient health information, and ONLY allow staff to disclose this information when required by law or when patient consent is provided.

- Identify signage requirements (incl. language) for organization’s sites

- Designate areas in your clinic as private spaces (having an intake person by the main entrance can help create waiting room as a private space)
  - Fourth Amendment: Expectation of Privacy
  - Your policies and procedures should indicate who is allowed on the premises and who’s not.
Contact Information

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