



Policy Brief

Title: *The Impact of U.S. Immigration Policies on Health Outcomes in Hispanic Communities*

Issued by: *The National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN)*

Date: May 21, 2025

Executive Summary

The National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN) advocates for equitable, evidence-based healthcare policies that protect and uplift immigrant and Hispanic communities. Recent executive actions by the Trump administration, including the declaration of a national emergency on January 20, 2025, have dramatically shifted immigration policies—revoking critical Biden-era protections and introducing restrictive measures that worsen health disparities. These changes heighten systemic inequities in healthcare access, particularly for undocumented immigrants and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

Key Issues

- **Increased Barriers to Healthcare Access**
New executive orders prioritize detention and deportation, expanding enforcement criteria and cutting federal support to sanctuary jurisdictions. These actions discourage immigrants from seeking timely care, resulting in worsened outcomes for chronic illnesses like diabetes and hypertension.
- **Mental Health Crisis**
Fear-driven immigration rhetoric and policy have generated widespread anxiety and trauma in immigrant communities. Children skip school, and families avoid public spaces, fearing ICE raids. This pervasive stress has deep implications for mental health and social stability.
- **Revocation of Supportive Policies**
Rescinded orders have eliminated frameworks addressing root causes of migration, family reunification, and refugee integration, undermining broader health equity goals.
- **Environmental and Climate Health Overlooked**
Immigration policies ignore the role of climate change and environmental degradation in driving migration and harming public health, particularly among vulnerable communities.
- **DACA Recipients Remain at Risk**
Over 538,000 active DACA recipients face barriers to healthcare access, lacking

eligibility for Medicaid, CHIP, or ACA coverage. Despite protection from deportation, they remain in legal limbo with no path to citizenship.

Policy Recommendations

1. **Advance Comprehensive Immigration Reform**
Congress must pass humane, evidence-informed immigration reform, including pathways to citizenship and protection for DACA recipients.
 2. **Ensure Universal Healthcare Access**
Expand eligibility for federally funded healthcare programs to include all immigrants, regardless of status, and remove exclusions affecting DACA recipients.
 3. **Invest in Culturally Competent Care**
Support training and infrastructure that ensures healthcare delivery is linguistically and culturally appropriate for Hispanic and immigrant populations.
 4. **Prioritize Mental Health Services**
Increase funding for mental health programs targeting immigrant communities, especially children and undocumented individuals suffering from trauma and stress.
 5. **Reinstate and Strengthen Family Reunification and Refugee Integration Programs**
Restore interagency efforts focused on family unity and provide resources for resettlement and health integration services.
 6. **Address Environmental Health Determinants**
Integrate environmental justice into immigration and health policies, recognizing the impact of climate change on migration and community health.
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Conclusion

Healthcare inequities rooted in immigration status are unacceptable in a nation that values equity and justice. As frontline providers and advocates, the National Association of Hispanic Nurses urges policymakers to adopt inclusive policies that uphold the dignity, health, and well-being of all communities. A reformed immigration system—guided by compassion and grounded in scientific evidence—is essential for achieving health equity in America.

Contact Information

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