

Abstract/Project Aim:

As of February 2020, the Trump administration was allowed by the US Supreme Court to implement a new rule with regard to *public charge* regulations. Briefly, the new public charge regulations would establish participation in public programs, health status, and income as negative factors in determining if legal immigrants are able to successfully obtain legal permanent residency. The negative impact of changes to public charge were observed in both the literature and firsthand through health advocacy work. Immigration advocates, as well as critics of the changes to public charge, had long believed that the new regulation would cause immigrants and their families to be less likely to use vital resources they need. Furthermore, the regulation induced a “chilling effect” defined as causing immigrant communities as a whole (even if not affected by the regulation) to not participate in public programs or obtain medical care. The specific aim of this project was to:

1) mitigate the “chilling effect” (unaffected people disenrolling from programs, people disenrolling from unaffected programs, or not enrolling in the first place) by first identifying key themes contributing to the chilling effect and subsequent propagation of misinformation through qualitative interviews with key stakeholders.

2) provide accurate and easily accessible information on public charge (and various versions of the rule) to the largest health and immigration advocacy groups in Massachusetts through creation of a constantly updated multilingual electronic flyer. This two-pronged approach was created with the intent to identify local concerns with public charge and through a health advocacy approach provide a solution to identified problems by addressing misinformation.