

**How does the election of an
anti-immigrant president affect health
and social service utilization?
Findings from Southeast Michigan**

Presented by:

Paul J. Fleming, PhD, MPH
Richard Bryce, DO

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Presenter Disclosures

Paul Fleming & Richard Bryce

(1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No relationships to report.

Authors:

Paul J. Fleming (@FlemingPaulJ)

William Lopez (@Lopez_WD)

Hannah Mesa (@Hannah_mesa)

Monika Doshi

Raymond Rion

Richard Bryce

Ellen Rabinowitz (@wcpublichealth)

Michigan School of Public Health

Michigan School of Public Health

Michigan School of Public Health

Michigan School of Public Health

Packard Health

CHASS / Henry Ford Health System

Washtenaw County Health Department

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Overcoming the Chilling Effect Project



Expanding Access to All



Immigration & the 2016 Election

- Dehumanizing and anti-immigrant rhetoric
- Expanded number of ICE agents and 40% increase in detentions in first year of Trump presidency
- Expanded targeting criteria for detentions and deportations



Anecdotal Evidence of the ‘Chilling Effect’

- Clinics across U.S. reporting more no-shows from immigrant clients
- Heightened anxiety among immigrant communities
- CHASS, Packard Health, & Health Dept. noticed changes



Immigrants & Health-care in Michigan

- People affected included undocumented immigrants and their families (i.e. 'mixed-status families')
- 130,000 undocumented immigrants in Michigan
- Excluded from Medicaid, ACA, employer-based insurance
 - Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Health Departments fill the gap
 - Often are trusted resources for immigrant communities

Research Question:

***What changes have healthcare
and social service providers
seen since the 2016
presidential election?***

28 in-depth interviews with healthcare & social service staff

- Conducted between April and August 2018
- CHASS (n=13), Health Dept. (n=10), Packard Health (n=5)
 - Providers
 - Enrollment specialists
 - Community Health Workers
 - Patient advocates
 - Front Desk Staff
 - Drivers

Analysis of Interviews

- Interviews recorded and transcribed
- Memo-writing and transcript summaries
- Applied deductive and inductive codes to transcripts
 - E.g. Fear, ICE/Police, Transportation
- Matrices and meetings with analysis team to confirm/check findings

Findings:

Three Inter-related Themes

- **Increased & pervasive fear** of deportation and family separation among undocumented immigrants & their families
- This fear has resulted in **fractures in community cohesion**
- **Strategic behavior change** among undocumented immigrants & their families to prevent deportation



Art by: KATIE JO SUDDABY

Theme #1

Increased & pervasive fear

- Undocumented immigrants and their family members feared being separated from the family, friends
 - *“They're fearful. They are so much more fearful now than they were 2,3,4,5, 10 years ago...huge, huge impact, huge difference.”* - Isabel, Patient Advocate, CHASS
- Fear was most acute immediately after the election
 - *“Straight fear. Between the election and the actual inauguration I think was the worst cause there was a lot of ‘we have no idea what’s going to happen’ and just a lot of fear people would just come in and say ‘I’m afraid’.”* – Vanessa, Provider, Packard Health

Theme #1: Increased, and pervasive fear

- Some questioned whether fear was due to actual detention/deportations or simply the rhetoric
 - *“The **rhetoric that that comes out from Donald Trump**, I think the patients definitely feel it...it's not even just the ones that are undocumented, **I think the community feels it.**”* –Brian, Provider, CHASS
- Deportation is not new in Trump era, but rapid changes create fear
 - *“It just doesn't seem like there's any rhyme or reason and what makes me more nervous is the rhetoric creates fear but **now the inconsistency creates more fear.** The inconsistency of [Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents] and how they work...**[it's] paralyzing.**”* –Brian, Provider, CHASS

LOVE & DIGNITY BEYOND BARS & BORDERS



Art by: FAVIANNA RODRIGUEZ

Theme #2

Fractures in Community Cohesion

- Fractures between immigrants and non-immigrants
- Fractures within immigrant communities

Theme #2: Fractures in Community Cohesion

- Increased racism & discrimination against immigrants

*“A lot more people seem to be coming out more racist and more against the Hispanic communities so I think some of them are more like you know they don't wanna go out to the stores or do anything where they're gonna have that com- like that complication or be like well where's your green card or where's this and then they gotta be like you know they get nervous I feel like sometimes **yeah I think the election affected the community a little bit.**” – Gabriella, Receptionist, CHASS*

Theme #2: Fractures in Community Cohesion

- Impact within immigrant communities

*“So, after a family member has been detained by ICE, that family is seen in a way as tainted. So, their communication and their contact with other community members, family members, friends, **they’re are kind of like the plagued family, ‘oh, ICE has been to that house we are not going to associate with them anymore.’**”* Jennifer, Patient Advocate, Packard Health



Theme #3

Strategic Behavior Change

- Clients strategically adopt behaviors to limit possibility of deportation and family separation
 - Limiting travel to appointments
 - Limiting trips to the grocery store or parks and recreation
 - Avoiding WIC & other social services

Theme #3: Strategic Behavior Change

Limiting visits to the clinic

- Fewer immigrant clients immediately after the election
 - *“Once elections took place and we had a new president in place, you had clients that weren’t coming. I mean, the office was again **literally empty for a couple of weeks**. At least because people were afraid to come in”* – T, Enrollment Specialist, Health Dept.
- Increased no-shows when immigration enforcement occurs
 - *“I had a lady that she was very honest, she was like **‘I’m not going out, I heard that, my grandson told me that immigration doing a round and I’d rather just stay home’**...and she’s like ‘yeah I’m just going to call back to reschedule.’”*– Martha, Receptionist, Packard Health

Theme #3: Strategic Behavior Change

Limiting visits to the clinic

*“I have a [diabetes] patient that barely ever leaves her house. She’s just scared, she’s really really scared... **[The fear] makes their A1C numbers go through the roof. Because they’re stressed out all the time. They’re always looking over their shoulder. Sometimes they’ll go a week or two without medication because ‘I can’t find anyone to take me’ or ‘I can’t find anyone to pick it up for me.’... or because they just don’t feel safe enough to come out.**”*

– Jessica, Community Health Worker, CHASS

Theme #3: Strategic Behavior Change

Limiting trips to grocery store, parks

- Limiting exposure at parks or outdoor activities
- Potential impact on food security
 - *“They're stressed, they're depressed, they have anxiety, people that don't want to come out of their house, **people that are afraid to go shopping for groceries because they don't want to put themselves at risk.**” – Adriana, Enrollment Specialist, Health Dept.*

Theme #3: Strategic Behavior Change

Avoiding WIC & other government services

- Concern about giving their name/phone number to federal government program
 - *“Back in the year or so they stopped coming to their appointments. We have clients who would call us and tell us **they don’t want nothing to do with WIC only because of immigration**”* – Jimena, WIC Specialist, CHASS
- Fear about the upcoming ‘public charge’ rule

Discussion

- Staff are seeing and experiencing this 'Chilling Effect' with clients
- Current immigration enforcement system has devastating effects on families, communities and ultimately impacts public health



Discussion: What should we do?

- **Create welcoming spaces**
- **Speak up**, share data and stories on how immigration system has negative impact on public health
- **Adapt**, find creative ways to reach immigrant clients with services
 - Tele-medicine or telehealth
 - Expanded transportation
 - Community Health Worker outreach
- **Advocate**, push for family-friendly immigration policies that consider public health



Thank You

Contact:

Paul J. Fleming
pauljf@umich.edu
@FlemingPaulJ

Richard Bryce
rbryce@chasscenter.org