



# Meeting the Needs of Immigrant Patients: BMC Policies, Advocacy, and Resources

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# Agenda

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1. Task Force Introduction
2. Policy on Immigration Officials
3. Documentation in Medical Record
4. Hospital Advocacy
5. Policy Impacts – The Chilling Effect
6. Resources for Immigrant Patients
7. Questions

# 1. BMC Immigrant Task Force

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*Our mission is to identify and respond to challenges in the evolving immigration policy landscape that may impact health care delivery to BMC patients.*

# Task Force Activities

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- Policies on immigration officials in hospital
- Guidance on documentation in the medical record
- Family Preparedness Plans
- Advocacy on Public Charge
- Research study on Public Charge
- Staff education
- Photo ID policies
- Signage

# Join the Immigrant Health Task Force

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Visit our website for additional resources:

<http://internal.bmc.org/ImmigrantTaskForce.htm>

Want to join? Email: [lily.sonis@bmc.org](mailto:lily.sonis@bmc.org) or [sondra.crosby@bu.edu](mailto:sondra.crosby@bu.edu)



## 2. Policy on Immigration Officials

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### Public Safety Policy on Immigration Officials

What should you do if external law enforcement (such as police officers, FBI agents or ICE agents) arrived in your area, for any reason? The answer is to call Public Safety at 4-4444. All external law enforcement agents are required to contact Public Safety when they arrive on the BMC campus. Public Safety will verify the identity of law enforcement, escort them if they are permitted to be on campus, and act as your liaison.

Public Safety is here to support you and your patients and help you comply with BMC policies and the law. The Office of General Counsel is also always available at 8-7901/pager 1523. If your department would like training on this topic, please contact Connie Packard, executive director of support services and deputy chief of Public Safety at 8-4935 or [Connie.Packard@bmc.org](mailto:Connie.Packard@bmc.org).

<http://internal.bmc.org/ImmigrationResources.htm>

# 3. Documentation of Immigration Status

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- Though medical records are highly protected, there are rare instances in which outside entities can obtain them through a legal process.
- Avoid using the following terms in the medical record:  
“undocumented” “illegal” “without papers”

# Do's and Don'ts for Documentation

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Rather than documenting a patient's *immigration status* instead document the medically-relevant consequence of such status.

DO's	DON'Ts
"Patient is only eligible for MassHealth Limited and SNFs won't accept"	"Patient is illegal and can't get insurance and SNFs won't accept"
"Referred to legal resources"	"Patient's TPS status is expiring and needs support"
"Patient's sister has moved out of Massachusetts. Patient experiencing stress."	"Patient's sister was deported back to their home country"

# Documenting in the Problem List

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- In some cases, it may be important to identify an immigration related stressor in the Problem List in Epic
- The recommended entry for the problem list is “psychosocial”

# Questions about specific cases

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- ***If you have a question about documentation related to a particular patient,*** contact General Counsel, at 617-638-7901 or the lawyer on call at pager 1523

# 4. Hospital Advocacy

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- Tracking legislation and maintaining relations with public officials
- Engaging in the Federal rulemaking process
  - Public comment – e.g. USCIS public charge, HUD mixed-status proposed rules
- Connections to the broader immigrant advocacy community
  - State/local – MIRA Coalition and Immigrant Healthcare Access Coalition (IHAC)
  - National – Protecting Immigrant Families

# 5. Policy Impacts – The Chilling Effect

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- New immigration policies have created a climate of fear
  - ICE enforcement, asylum changes, public charge, family separation, etc.
  - May lead people to avoid using healthcare and other services
- Public Charge Impacts
  - Fear of using services that might make a person a public charge
  - Chilling effect - people avoiding services unnecessarily

# 6. Resources for Immigrant Patients at BMC

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- Citizenship and Immigration Rights Navigator (CAIRN)
- Immigrant and Refugee Health Program
- Boston Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights

# CAIRN Services

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- Referrals to legal services
  - Asylum, Lawful Permanent Residence, Citizenship, Special Visas, Visa extensions, TPS, DACA, Medical Deferred Action, Undocumented
- Legal Clinic
- Consultation
- Application Assistance
  - Forensic Evaluation for Asylum, I-693 Medical Exam for Lawful Permanent Residence, N-648 Medical Disability Waivers for Citizenship

# CAIRN Contact Information

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Location: Shapiro 5B

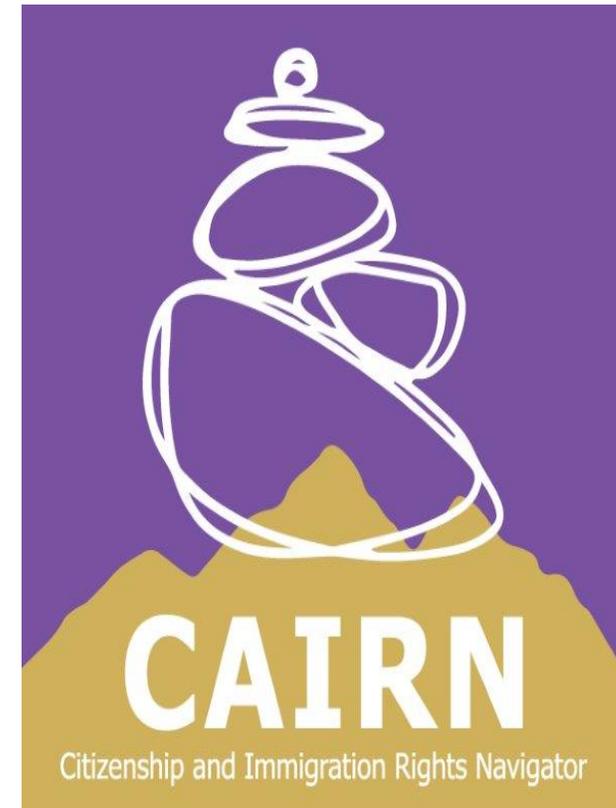
Phone: 617-414-9366

Epic: Send msg to Immigrant

Health Center Pool

Email: Send email to DG-BMC

Immigrant Health Center



# Additional Resources for Immigrant Patients

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- **Immigrant and Refugee Health Program**

- Primary Care for Immigrant and Refugee Patients
- Send Epic message to Immigrant Health Center Pool or send email to DG-BMC Immigrant Health Center

- **Boston Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights**

- Mental Health Services for Immigrant and Refugee Patients/Survivors of Torture
- Call BCRHHR, x4-4794 or email Dana Rous, Associate Director of Client Services [dana.rous@bmc.org](mailto:dana.rous@bmc.org)

# Resources outside BMC for Immigrant Patients

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- Immigration Legal Resources
- Know Your Rights Cards

**Everyone in the US has rights. If you are questioned by immigration or law enforcement, you can say:**

- I have a Constitutional 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment right to be silent.
- I am not answering your questions (only give your name).
- I am not opening the door unless you have a signed warrant.
- I want to talk to my lawyer: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

# Questions?

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