

Expanding Health Care Access to Immigrants in Texas

Presented by Jennifer Eldridge

Investing in Texas: Financing Health Coverage Expansion

Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs

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Agenda

- Defining the population
- Barriers to coverage
- Who serves this population?
- Community Health Centers (CHCs)
- CHC expansion

Defining the Population

- 1.8 million immigrants in Texas
 - 78% of immigrants are Hispanic
 - ~500,000 immigrants are undocumented
- 4.5 million uninsured in Texas
 - 24% of uninsured are immigrants
 - 86% of uninsured immigrants are Hispanic

Barriers to Coverage

■ Private:

- Noncitizens more likely to work in industries that don't offer insurance (service, agriculture, construction)

■ Public:

- Perceived and real barriers
- Misconceptions regarding impact on immigration status
- Culture, language, quality of service
- 1996 PRWORA welfare reform

Barriers to Coverage:

1996 PRWORA Welfare Reform

- Established “qualified” and “not qualified” immigrant categories
- Imposed five-year bar period for those entering U.S. after August 1996
- Texas did not opt to offer benefits to immigrants following five-year bar
- Created confusion especially in mixed-citizenship families

Who Serves This Population?

- County-funded programs
 - Hospital districts (112 counties)
 - Public hospitals (32 counties)
 - CIHCP (138 counties)
- Charity clinics
- Community Health Centers (CHCs)

Community Health Centers

- Overview
- 31 CHCs operate 201 sites throughout Texas
- Who is served:
 - Hispanic
 - Poor
 - Uninsured
- Critical part of the safety net for immigrants

Community Health Centers: CHCs Operating in Texas Border Counties

CHC	Counties Served	Sites Operated	% Hispanic
Brownsville	Cameron	4	99%
Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe	El Paso	9	99%
Centro San Vicente	El Paso	3	99%
Community Action Council of S. Texas	Jim Hogg, Starr, Zapata	12	99%
Gateway	Webb	6	99%
Nuestra Clinica del Valle	Hidalgo	6	99%
Su Clinica Familiar	Cameron, Willacy	6	98%
United Medical Centers	Kinney, Maverick, Val Verde	11	91%
Valley AIDS Council	Cameron, Hidalgo, Willacy	3	87%

Community Health Centers: Services Offered

- Preventive health services
- Emergency medical services
- Pharmaceuticals
- Transportation
- Referrals for advanced care
- Health education/outreach

Community Health Centers: Barriers to Advanced Care

- “Tin Cup” medicine
- The “second border”
- The “gatekeeper” system

CHC Expansion

- December 2001: Congress approved largest-ever increase in CHC funding (\$175 million for FY 2002)
- NACHC Goal: double the number of CHCs over the next five years
- TACHC Statewide Strategic Plan

CHC Expansion: TACHC Statewide Strategic Plan

- Expansion over next five years:
 - New site development:
325,361 new patients (75% increase)
 - Current site expansion:
247,993 new and current patients
- Expansions to 247 new and existing centers
- Hiring 338 new providers
- Requires \$99 million additional funding

Conclusions

- CHCs provide accessible, affordable, high-quality, and culturally-sensitive care to immigrant population
- CHC expansions could pick up undocumented and post-1996 immigrants not covered by waiver
- Timing is right – CHCs in the spotlight

Discussion Issues

- What is the feasibility of CHC expansion in Texas?
- How would pursuing a Medicaid waiver impact CHCs and the immigrant population?
- What other options are there for expanding access to immigrants in Texas?
- Continue Medicaid waiver discussion