

## Communicating Effectively in the New Immigration Landscape: *Best Practices for Healthcare and Human Services Teams*



*Federal law and public policy regarding immigration is rapidly evolving. Information contained in this document is for educational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice or establish an attorney-client relationship. If patients or caregivers have specific questions, they should contact a lawyer or advocate.*

- 1 Only document a person's immigration status to the extent doing so is required by federal or state law. If you have questions about whether you are required to collect this information from patients/clients, contact your organization's legal counsel and/or risk management team**
  - HIPAA does not protect medical records in all situations
  - Documenting that a discussion about immigration happened is different from documenting a person's actual status
  - If you must ask the person about immigration status, clearly explain why you are seeking the information
  
- 2 Use caution when discussing immigration status with people**
  - Immigration status impacts access to insurance as well other benefits and services
  - In the current climate, initiating conversations about immigration status may decrease rapport and increase withdrawal from care
  - Reassure people that they remain welcome in your clinic/program, and that you are invested in their health and wellbeing
  
- 3 Inevitably some people will withdraw from care or miss appointments**
  - Keep updated contact information so you can reach out
  - Remember people may be facing stressors and situations beyond their control