

99-02

STATEMENT OF POLICY IMMIGRANT HEALTH

Policy

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) supports the removal of barriers to appropriate care and improved access to health services for immigrants¹, refugees, asylees, and their families. NACCHO advocates that services be offered in a respectful, culturally sensitive, and confidential manner to assess and assure participation of eligible persons. NACCHO supports the idea of providing public health protection for all persons regardless of immigration status.

Justification

Immigrants, refugees, asylees and their families have needs for preventive services, primary care, acute and chronic medical care, case management, and population-based public health services; and, local health departments are often called upon to provide such services. The provision of such services requires high standards of confidentiality and the removal of inappropriate administrative, cultural, linguistic, and policy barriers to obtaining quality services. The provision of preventive services, primary care, acute and chronic medical care, case management, and population-based public health services benefits individuals and the overall health of the community. In addition, access to these services results in increased productivity by treated individuals and cost savings to the healthcare system. These benefits apply uniformly to immigrants, refugees, asylees, and their families in addition to the general populations in our communities.

Adopted by NACCHO Board of Directors

July 14, 1999

Updated March 2005

Updated March 2009

¹ Immigrant refers to both documented and undocumented immigrants. Undocumented immigrants are sometimes referred to as “unauthorized aliens” by the federal government.

