



American Medical Women's Association  
The Vision and Voice of Women in Medicine since 1915

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Contact: [associatedirector@amwa-doc.org](mailto:associatedirector@amwa-doc.org)

## American Medical Women's Association Denounces "Public Charge" Rule

**Schaumburg, IL...** Under the direction of the Trump administration the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has issued a rule that would change the criteria in defining a "public charge", which determines if an immigrant is likely to become dependent on government assistance. The American Medical Women's Association (AMWA) expressed serious concerns over the proposed rule which they say would limit access to healthcare for families, especially women and children.

"AMWA has made a commitment as an organization to universal access to care", said Connie Newman, MD President of AMWA. "Using fear to stop immigrant families from accessing healthcare will cause a significant decrease in CHIP and Medicaid enrollment. The impact would be particularly harsh on pregnant and postpartum women and children, resulting in poorer maternal and child health, education, and financial outcomes."

According to the *Kaiser Family Foundation*, if the proposed rule leads to Medicaid disenrollment rates ranging from 15% to 35% among Medicaid and CHIP enrollees living in a household with a noncitizen, between 2.1 to 4.9 million Medicaid/CHIP enrollees would disenroll.

The rule goes even further as to add several programs to the "charge" list that immigrant families depend upon for basic care such as section 8 housing assistance, Medicare Part D low income subsidy, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits and non-emergency Medicaid with limited exceptions.

"This is a direct hit to access to care and hinders our ability to deliver healthcare to most vulnerable families in America", said Theresa Rohr-Kirchgraber, MD Chair, Advocacy Committee. "AMWA stands committed in our extreme opposition to the "public charge" rule and plans to submit commitments reflecting our concerns before the December deadline."

The rule released by DHS allows for the public to submit comments within 60 days of becoming posted online through the Federal Register. After reviewing the submissions DHS will announce the final rule change.

### ABOUT AMWA

Founded in 1915, the American Medical Women's Association functions at the local, nation, and international level to advance women in medicine and improve women's health. AMWA achieves this by providing and developing leadership, advocacy, education, expertise, mentoring and strategic alliances. For more information, visit <http://www.amwa-doc.org>.