

SB 1570-1

On February 2nd, a headline in the Oregonian read, “ICE fears keep Oregon immigrants from seeking medical care: ‘We’re seeing a massive disruption’ “ They reported “growing pattern of people delaying or forgoing medical care, driven by fear.”

As documented by the Oregon Nurses' Association:

Under the Trump administration, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents have targeted hospitals, clinics, schools, and places of worship for crackdowns on immigrants--spreading fear, causing harm, compromising care and putting lives at risk.

In Oregon, federal officers have already:

- Shot two people in a hospital parking lot.
- Arrested an entire family who was trying to take their sick 7-year-old daughter to the ER. The 7-year-old was taken from the hospital parking lot and reportedly not seen by a healthcare provider until 5 days later while in ICE custody.

Federal immigrations officers also bring detainees from the Portland ICE facility and people injured in ICE actions to local hospitals for healthcare. While there, federal immigration officers have reportedly:

- Pressured nurses and physicians to skip assessments, tests, and monitoring in order to discharge detained patients more quickly.
- Removed patients from hospitals against medical advice.
- Refused to step away during private health conversations that include protected health information between providers and patients.
- Been present during sensitive medical exams, mental health assessments, and patients’ bathroom use
- Freely roam halls and hospital departments
- Entered hospitals without proper identification
- Been in restricted areas where the protected health informations of patients was accessible

These actions undermine trust in healthcare providers and healthcare systems, violate HIPAA, and jeopardize patients' care.

Nurses, doctors and patients can't allow our healthcare decisions to be dictated by a man with a gun. Oregon must hold federal officers accountable to the same standards as state and local law enforcement.

Oregon Senate Bill 1570-1

- Prevents hospitals from being weaponized by federal agencies.
- Protects patients' health information and privacy
- Stops dangerous behavior and overreach by ICE and CBP
- Prohibits retaliation against healthcare workers who report violations or provide patients with legal information
- Allows all people to access healthcare without fear

by preventing immigration agents from being in patient care areas without a warrant; classifies immigration status and place of birth as protected health information; safeguards all patients' private healthcare information; and allows workers to provide patients information about their legal rights.

SB 1570-1 helps hold federal agents accountable and protects patients and providers.

For all these reasons, we strongly urge you to protect the welfare and human dignity of immigrant populations and their safe access to healthcare. We also strongly urge you to protect our medical care facilities and patient medical data from abuse by ICE and CBP. We stand in support of SB 1570-1.

Sincerely,

Beth Genly
Forest Grove, Oregon
Member, Steering Committee, Indivisible Forest Grove