

# Advocacy Agenda

*Advancing Health Justice for the Mobile Poor*

2013–2014

Migrant Clinicians Network, Inc. (MCN) will work during the next two years to engage members of our clinical network and all relevant stakeholders to advance health justice for the mobile poor. Our advocacy and education priorities focus on safe and legal entry into the United States, as well as strong and equal protection for workers in all occupations. Advancement in these areas creates the greatest opportunity for all to access high-quality, affordable healthcare.

## Comprehensive Immigration Reform

The recurring debate centers on over-utilization of social and health resources among individuals entering the country without authorization and appears to lose sight of the contributions to industries and local economies immigrant workers and their families provide. Agriculture and other US industries are increasingly dependent upon an immigrant labor force. Considerable momentum is building at both the federal and state levels, including the introduction of legislation in the US Senate, in support of reforming our nation's immigration system. We support:

- A humane, just and affordable immigration process that provides a pathway to citizenship so that immigrants can fully contribute to and participate in the life of our nation.
- Access to programs and public services that meet basic human needs, including education, nutrition assistance and the tax credits that benefit working families.
- Humane treatment of immigrant, migrant, and undocumented populations being held in detention; specifically, the provision of basic and necessary health care needs that prevents the endangerment and loss of life.
- Guest worker programs across US industries that allow workers to participate in the labor force without fear and with equal protection under the law:
  - ▶ Enforce existing laws and strengthen protections for guest workers.
  - ▶ Provide a pathway to citizenship for those guest workers who desire it.
  - ▶ Defend and expand access to work opportunities for those employed through guest worker programs, including removal of administrative barriers to application processes and burdensome documentation and sponsorship requirements.

## Access to Health Care

Removing barriers to health care will enable immigrant and migrant populations to access high quality, preventive and primary care and promote a safe and healthy workforce. Ensuring immigrants can access benefits and programs under the Affordable Care Act ("ACA") will allow them the opportunity to pay for and receive medical care when they need it. We support efforts to:

- Extend quality and affordable health coverage through health exchanges and other programs under the ACA to undocumented immigrants and those who are in the process of changing their documentation status.
- Incorporate immigrant and mobile patients in practice transformation initiatives as outlined under the ACA:
  - ▶ Patient Centered Medical Homes must address the unique health care needs specific to immigrant and migrant populations
- ▶ Incorporate "Meaningful Use" to be a meaningful tool to understand and address health disparities and the unique health care needs specific to immigrant and migrant populations.

