

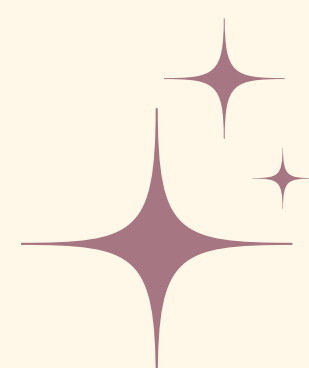


# The Psychological Effects of Mental Healthcare Access for Immigrants

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# Agenda

Our  
Connection

Barriers of  
Seeking Help

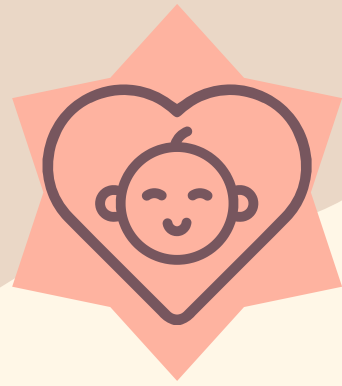
What is a Health  
Disparity?  
What is Mental  
Illness?

Effects on Our  
Communities

Causes of  
Mental Illness

Call to Help

# Our Connections



We are all children of immigrants.

We live in predominantly immigrant communities.





# What is a Health Disparity?

A preventable difference in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged populations.

# An Overview of Mental Illness

Mental illnesses are conditions or disturbances in an individual's emotional thinking, behavior, and/or cognition.





# **What Causes Immigrants to Experience Mental Illnesses?**



# Causes

- 1 Discrimination & Acculturative Stress
- 2 Immigration Status
- 3 Risk of Deportation (ICE)



# What is Acculturative Stress?

The psychological and physical strain that people experience when they transition to a new culture.

This can occur when the adaptation demands exceed the available resources.



# Discrimination & Acculturative Stress

Immigrants may experience discrimination and adaptation difficulties, which could lead to issues in obtaining access to health care, jobs, and housing, among others.



**Fatigue**

**Chest  
Pains/High  
BP**

# **Physiological**

**Sleep  
Problems**

**Increase in  
Adrenaline  
and Cortisol**



**Muscle  
Aches and  
Headaches**

**Immune/  
Digestive  
System**

# Immigration Status

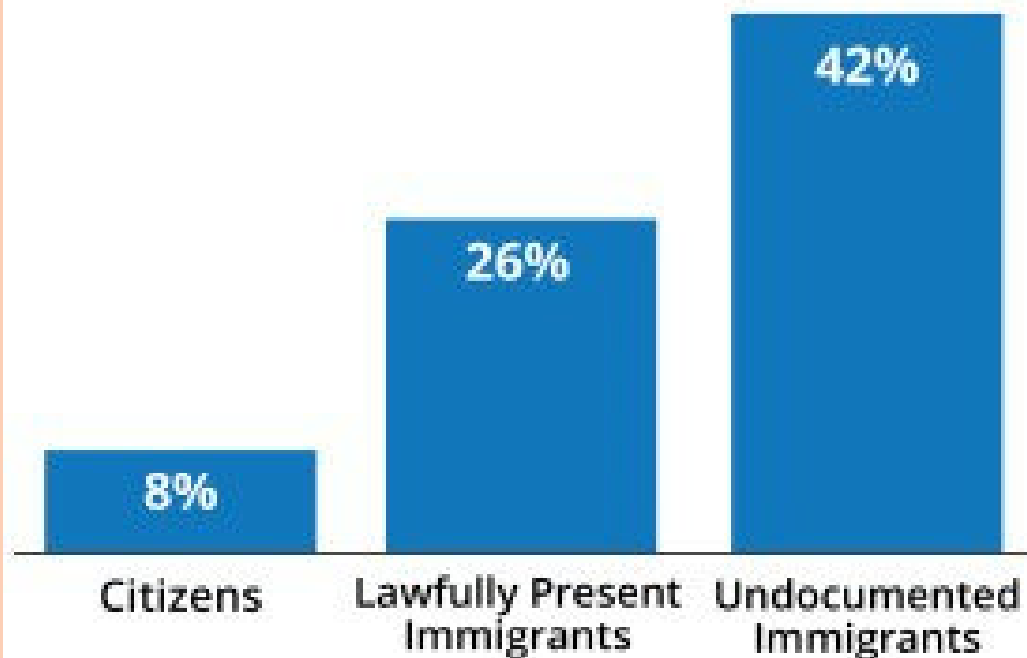
- Undocumented immigrants face greater scrutiny and stigmatization than documented immigrants in their communities leading to social isolation.



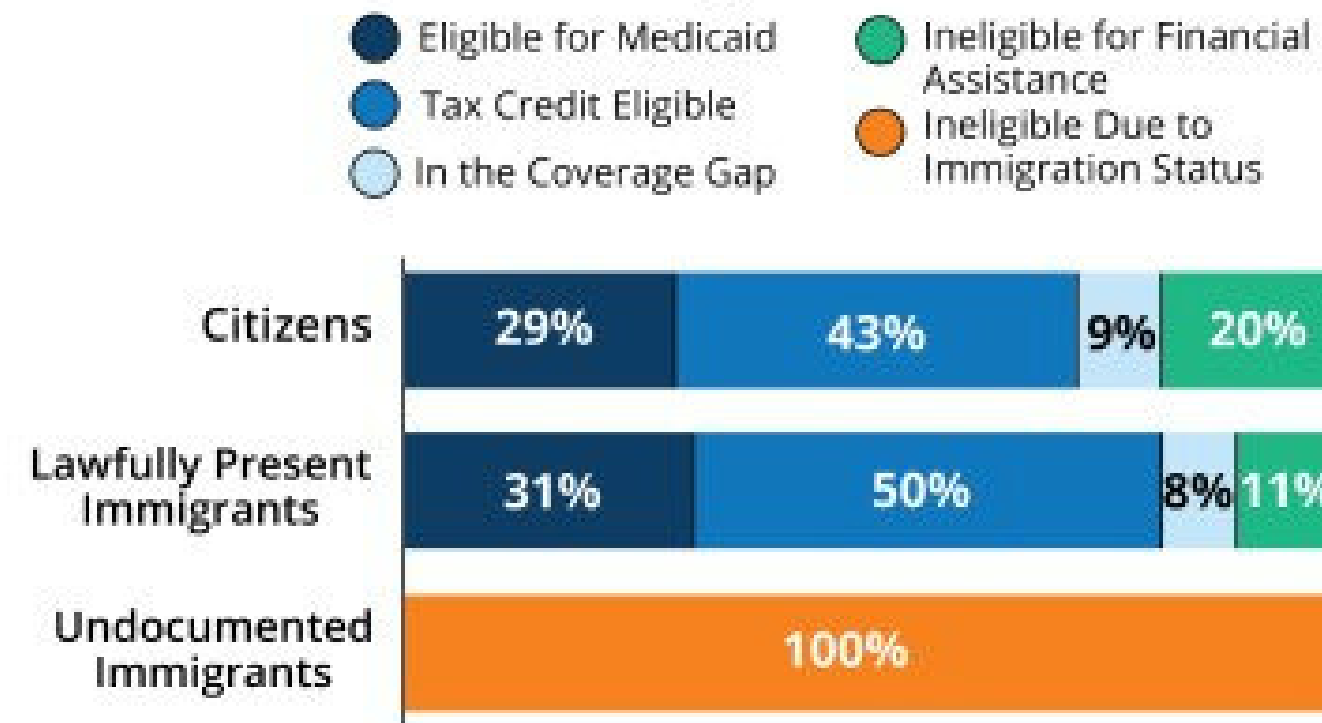
# Undocumented vs Documented (Health Insurance)

## Noncitizen Immigrants Are More Likely than Citizens to be Uninsured and Face Barriers to Enrolling in Health Coverage

Uninsured Rates  
by Immigration Status, 2020



Eligibility for Affordable Care Act Health  
Coverage Among Nonelderly Uninsured by  
Immigration Status



# What is ICE?

ICE is supposed to...

dismantle transnational criminal networks that target the American people and threaten our industries, organizations and financial systems.



# Risk of Deportation (ICE)

- ICE's process of examining/deporting immigrants is harmful to immigrants' mental health and they do not receive adequate healthcare.







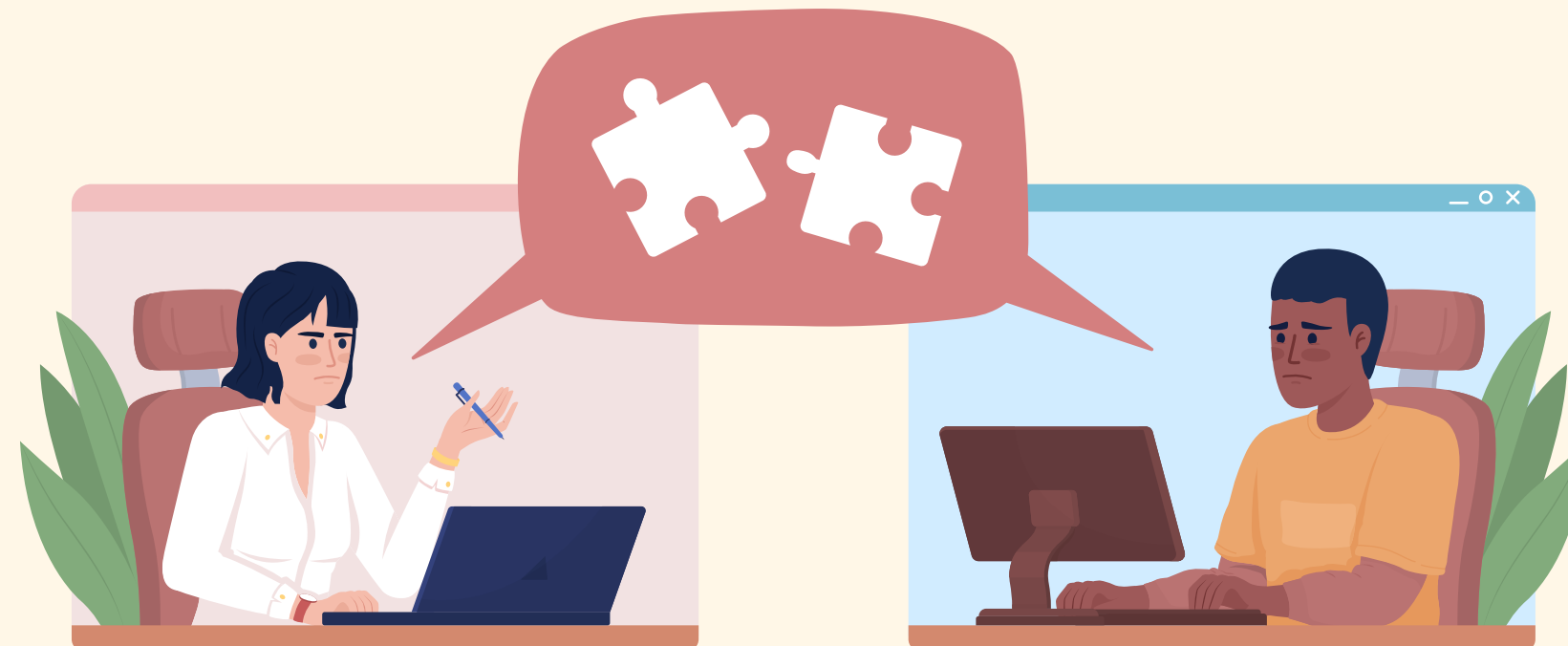
# **What are the Barriers for Immigrants Seeking Mental Help Support?**

# Barriers

**Complexity  
in applying  
for health  
benefits**

**Lack of  
cultural  
competence  
in healthcare  
workers**

**Socioeconomics**



# Applying for Health Benefits

- Inconsistent eligibility and verification



- Prejudiced legislation

- High costs of reapplication and lack of dedicated support



# What is Cultural Competence?

The ability of healthcare systems and providers to provide care that meets the social, cultural, and linguistic needs of patients with diverse values, beliefs, and behaviors.



# Lack of Cultural Competence of Healthcare Workers

## Sociocultural Dislocation:

There is a disconnect between their cultural norms and those of the host country. Leading to feelings of isolation and difficulty in adjusting.

## Discriminatory Policies:

These policies can increase mental health problems and create additional barriers to cultural adaptation.

# Impact on Patients





**Insurance coverage**

May not include access to mental health services or coverage may only be for serious mental illnesses.

**Low-Income Jobs**

This presents a barrier in accessing quality services and help.

**Income inequality**

Limits immigrants' ability to advance in the USA, preventing access to support in the long term.

**Socioeconomics**

# How This Affects Our Community?

According to The Massachusetts Immigration and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA)

- About 1.2 million citizens in Massachusetts are immigrants.
- About 47,000 live in the city of Worcester.
- Greater than 25% of immigrants in Worcester were diagnosed with depression.

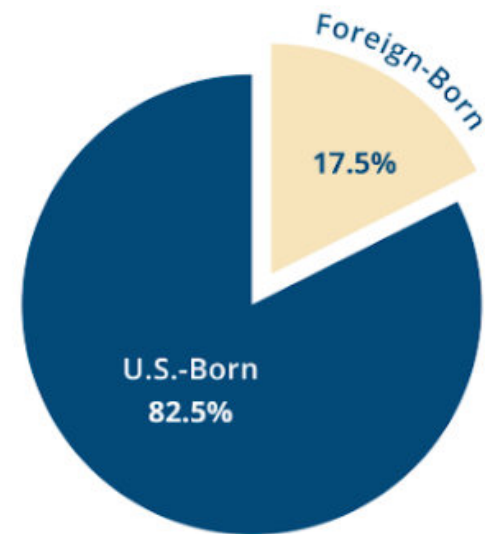


# Distribution of Immigrants in MA

## How many immigrants are there in Massachusetts, and who are they?

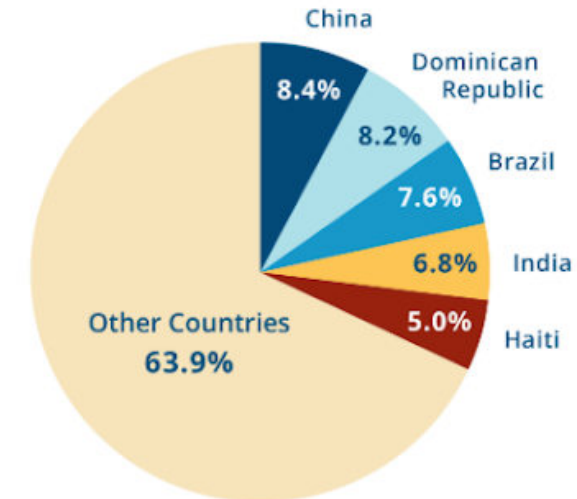
There are approximately **1.2 million immigrants** in Massachusetts.

About one in every six (17.5%) Massachusetts residents is foreign-born.



Source: Institute of Immigration Research analysis of the American Community Survey (ACS) 2018-2022 5-year sample data from Integrated Public Use Microdata Sample

The five largest immigrant populations in Massachusetts are from:



Source: Institute of Immigration Research analysis of the American Community Survey (ACS) 2018-2022 5-year sample data from Integrated Public Use Microdata Sample

	Number of people	Percentage
<b>Massachusetts Population 2024</b>	7,020,058.00	100%
<b>Massachusetts Population 2024 Total Immigrants</b>	1,263,610.44	18%
<b>Massachusetts Population 2024 Non-Citizen</b>	554,584.58	7.9%
<b>Immigrant that did not consult with mental health professional due to cost</b>	80,871.07	6.40%

# Call to Action



- Collaboration with Community Organizations



- Policy Advocacy

- Education and Awareness







**THANK  
YOU!**



Q  
A



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