



ASN Statement on Foreign-Trained Physicians' Contributions to the U.S. Health System

International medical graduates (IMGs) play a substantial role in the nation's health care system and in its unprecedented efforts to fight COVID-19. Nearly 25% of US physicians are IMGs. The nephrology specialty, in particular, relies on IMGs and honors the contributions of all foreign-trained physicians¹. In fact, more than 20,000,000 Americans live in areas where at least one-half of physicians are foreign-trained (a rate that is higher for patients living in rural areas), highlighting the nation's reliance on their dedication to their patients and their expertise.

The American Society of Nephrology (ASN) is concerned by the recently proposed rule from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to eliminate "duration of status" as an authorized period of stay for certain nonimmigrant visas (F, I, and J). Nearly 50% of US nephrologists are IMGs, and the society will comment on the proposed rule in the near future.

ASN firmly supports the dismantling of barriers that prevent foreign-trained doctors, nurses, and other health professionals from securing the stable immigration status and providing care to the millions of Americans who desperately need it. The United States is facing a health care crisis, already exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, 135 US counties lack a single physician, and the Association of American Medical Colleges estimates that the nation will be short nearly 122,000 physicians nationwide by 2023²³.

ASN is closely monitoring developments related to immigration and the nephrology workforce. Additionally, the society advocates for policies that ensure the millions of Americans with kidney diseases, kidney failure, and kidney transplants receive the highest-quality care possible, which requires a well-trained workforce. The following list highlights these efforts:

- ASN Press Release - [American Society of Nephrology Statement Donald J. Trump's Executive Order on Immigration](#), January 31, 2017
- ASN and American College of Physicians Members [Joint Letter to Department of Homeland Security Secretary John F. Kelly](#), February 7, 2017
- ASN and Association of American Medical Colleges Members [Joint letter to President Donald J. Trump on Executive Order](#), February 1, 2017
- ASN Statement – [ASN Supports the Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act](#), Fall 2019
- ASN [Letter to Congress – COVID-19 Recommendations](#), March 25, 2020 (Immigration policy recommendations on Page 5)

¹ <https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/workforce/interactive-data/active-physicians-who-are-international-medical-graduates-imgs-specialty-2017>

² <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/issues/healthcare/>

³ <https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/press-releases/new-findings-confirm-predictions-physician-shortage>

- Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS, which includes ASN) [Letter to Congress – Maintaining the Nation’s Physician Workforce during the Covid-19 Pandemic](#), May 19, 2020
- [Kidney News Online Overview of ASN Policy Positions](#), May 21, 2020
- ASN [Letter to Congress – Supporting the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act](#), May 29, 2020
- CMSS [Letter to Departments of Labor, State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services](#), July 7, 2020
- ASN President Anupam Agarwal, MD, FASN, [opinion piece in The Hill](#) calling for the passage the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act, July 30, 2020

ASN will continue to work to remove barriers that prevent foreign-trained physicians from contributing to the nation’s health care.

To discuss ASN’s statement on foreign-trained physicians’ contributions to the US health system, please contact ASN Senior Director of Policy and Government Affairs Rachel Meyer by email at rmeyer@asn-online.org or telephone (202) 640-4659.