

Publicly Provided and Private Health Insurance in Immigrant Populations

Derek Christopher

University of California Irvine

I study the effect of Medicaid eligibility on health insurance and employment decisions in the context of immigrants in the United States. Using a fuzzy differences-in-discontinuities design that exploits variation in Medicaid eligibility rules across states, I find evidence of crowd out effects of Medicaid on private insurance. The crowd out appears to be driven by immigrants who take up Medicaid in place of insurance they otherwise would have purchased. In other words, Medicaid reduces rates of coverage by privately purchased health insurance, but I do not find a similar reduction in employer-provided health insurance. I also find some evidence that Medicaid reduces the uninsured rate among low-income immigrants. I do not find evidence that Medicaid reduces labor supply among immigrants. The study seeks to inform policymakers as greater consideration is given to the expansion of public health insurance and the use of public charge rules to determine an immigrant's eligibility to reside in the U.S.

Keywords: Immigration, public charge, health insurance, crowd out

JEL Classification: H4, H5, I1, I3, J6

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