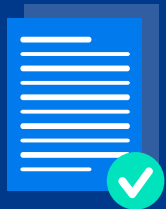




ICE is using smartwatches to track pregnant women, even during labor: “She was so afraid they would take her baby”



CICS 127 Session 2 Presentation 2
Anoushka Kunder



The Case that Started it all



A Colorado ER, September 2025

- A 9 month pregnant woman from central Asia arrived to the ER wearing an ICE mandated non removable smartwatch
- She needed a C-section, which requires removing all metals to avoid burn/electrocution, but the watch couldn't be easily removed
- The woman feared ICE agents would take her newborn

3 pregnant patients with VeriWatches seen by the same 2 nurses

Low battery watch, she feared ICE would think she fled

No medical protocol exists, staff don't know what happened to her afterward





About VeriWatch & ATD Program



Veriwatch Device

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- VeriWatch was introduced in 2023 under Biden as a more discrete version of ankle monitors
 - A June 2025 ICE memo states pregnant women in ATD receive smartwatches, but the watch is non removable

ATD Program

- Alternative to Detention, allows immigrants to await court hearing at home or if they subject to intense monitoring
 - BI inc. (originally cattle monitoring company) holds an exclusive contract under DHS
 - 180,000 people are enrolled in the program
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Surveillance is interfering with Medical Care



Delayed C-Sections



"Doing a C-section 20 minutes before something bad happens can prevent it (emergencies)" - Bhuiyan (2025)

Pre-eclampsia Risk

A patient with pre-eclampsia, causes severe swelling feared the watch would cut off circulation. She was in tears but refused removal, terrified ICE would take her baby

Avoided Prenatal Care

One Colorado nurse had at least 3 pregnant patients arrive for their first prenatal visit between 34-38 weeks, well past the recommended start of care, due to fear of enforcement

Nationwide Effect

In Chicago, a major health center saw 30% fewer patient visits and 40% fewer patients picking up medications since Trump took office. California nurses documented similar drops.



Connection to PIT



Surveillance and Social Control

In addition to tracking location, the Veriwatch influences behavior, making patients refuse necessary medical care

Privatization of State Power

BI Inc. holds an exclusive 20 year government contract with DHS, with little oversight or accountability

Effects on Public Health

Enforcement fear deters individuals from seeking care before labor, immigration and tech policy is now a public health crisis

Tech Deployed without Safeguards

No medical emergency protocol was created, public interest and health was not considered when deploying the technology

Works Cited

Bhuiyan, J. (2025, December 10). *ICE is using smartwatches to track pregnant women, even during labor: "She was so afraid they would take her baby."* The Guardian; The Guardian.

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/dec/10/ice-tracking-pregnant-women>