



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Children's Health Services Research



Indiana Legal  
Services, Inc.

# MEDICAL LEGAL PARTNERSHIP

Presentation to the Social Determinants of Health Data Users Group  
September 14, 2016



# SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH






- Social determinants impact the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities
- Many of the social conditions at the root of poor health can be traced back to civil laws that are unfairly applied or under-enforced, often leading to improper denial of services and benefits that are designed to help people lead healthy lives



## MEDICAL LEGAL PARTNERSHIP (MLP)

- MLP integrates the work of health care, public health and civil legal aid providers to more effectively identify, treat and prevent health-harming legal needs by:
  - TRAINING interdisciplinary professionals to work collaboratively and identify upstream needs
  - TREATING patients' health-harming social and legal needs with legal care ranging from triage and consultation to full legal representation
  - TRANSFORMING clinical practice and institutional policies to better respond to patients' health-harming legal needs
  - PREVENTING health-harming legal needs broadly by detecting patterns and improving policies and regulations that have an impact on population health

# A CLOSER LOOK AT TREATING PATIENTS' LEGAL NEEDS


| I-HELP <sup>®</sup> Issue   | Common Social Determinant of Health                 | Civil Legal Aid Interventions That Help   | Impact of Civil Legal Aid Intervention on Health / Health Care  |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Income</b><br>                            | Availability of resources to meet daily basic needs | <b>Benefits Unit:</b> Appeal denials of food stamps, health insurance, cash benefits, and disability benefits   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increasing someone's income means s/he makes fewer trade-offs between affording food and health care, including medications.</li> <li>2. Being able to afford enough healthy food helps people manage chronic diseases and helps children grow and develop.</li> </ol>  |
| <b>Housing &amp; utilities</b><br>           | Healthy physical environments                       | <b>Housing Unit:</b> Secure housing subsidies; Improve substandard conditions; Prevent eviction; Protect against utility shut off                         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A stable, decent, affordable home helps a person avoid costly emergency room visits related to homelessness.</li> <li>2. Consistent housing, heat and electricity helps people follow their medical treatment plans.</li> </ol>   |
| <b>Education &amp; Employment</b><br>        | Access to the opportunity to learn and work         | <b>Education &amp; Employment Units:</b> Secure specialized education services; Prevent and remedy employment discrimination and enforce workplace rights | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A quality education is the single greatest predictor of a person's adult health.</li> <li>2. Consistent employment helps provide money for food and safe housing, which also helps avoid costly emergency health care services.</li> <li>3. Access to health insurance is often linked to employment.</li> </ol>        |
| <b>Legal Status</b><br>                    | Access to the opportunity to work                   | <b>Veterans &amp; Immigration Units:</b> Resolve veteran discharge status; Clear criminal / credit histories; Assist with asylum applications             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clearing a person's criminal history or helping a veteran change their discharge status helps make consistent employment and access to public benefits possible.</li> <li>2. Consistent employment provides money for food and safe housing, which helps people avoid costly emergency health care services.</li> </ol> |
| <b>Personal &amp; family stability</b><br> | Exposure to violence                                | <b>Family Law Unit:</b> Secure restraining orders for domestic violence; Secure adoption, custody and guardianship for children                           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Less violence at home means less need for costly emergency health care services.</li> <li>2. Stable family relationships significantly reduce stress and allow for better decision-making, including decisions related to health care.</li> </ol>   |

Marple K. *Framing Legal Care as Health Care*. Washington, DC: The National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership, January 2015.

# AN EXAMPLE OF MLP IN PRACTICE

- Attorney physically present in clinic two afternoons per week
- Attorney trains providers to identify unmet health harming legal needs using the IHELP mnemonic
- Providers actively screen patients for unmet health harming legal needs
- Providers connect patients with positive screens to attorneys
- Attorneys meet with patients on site and conduct legal intake as appropriate
- Attorneys advise and represent patients and their families to address unmet health harming legal needs
- Trends may be shared with health care leadership to inform systemic change
- **KEY POINT:** Legal work is a direct extension of the provision of health care, and the attorney is a member of the health care team

## MLP STORIES

- Preserving housing for a patient and her grandchildren
  - Access to necessary durable medical equipment
  - Reduced hospital stay through advanced directives
- 



# MLP IN OUR COMMUNITY

## **ESTABLISHED MLP PROGRAMS**

- Eskenazi Health, Midtown Community Mental Health
  - Indiana Legal Services
- Indiana University Health - Methodist
  - Indiana Legal Services
- Eskenazi Health
  - Indiana Legal Services
  - Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic
  - Faegre Baker Daniels
  - Ice Miller

## **EMERGING MLP PROGRAMS**


- Goodwill Nurse Family Partnership
- Indiana Primary Health Care Association

## **LOCAL INNOVATIONS / NATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

- Indiana Health Advocacy Coalition – a model for regional collaboration
- Co-host of the 2016 National MLP Conference
- Collaboration with the AAMC to identify national MLP metrics
- National leader for MLP in mental health settings
- Federally-funded MLP research at the IU School of Medicine



# MLP ACROSS THE NATION

- **NATIONAL CENTER FOR MLP AT GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**
    - Transform the focus of health and legal practice from individuals to populations with an emphasis on the MLP approach;
    - Build and inform the evidence base to support the MLP approach; and
    - Redefine inter-professional education and training with an emphasis on the MLP approach
  - **NATIONAL NETWORK (As of June 24, 2016)**
    - 155 Hospitals
    - 139 Health Centers
    - 126 Legal Aid Agencies
    - 64 Pro Bono Law Partners
    - 52 Law Schools
    - 41 States
    - 34 Schools of Health
- 



# INDIANA HEALTH ADVOCACY COALITION

## WHAT

- Innovative
- Interdisciplinary
- Non-profit
- Focused on comprehensive, patient-centered care

## HOW

- Education
- Coordination
- Collaboration
- Advocacy

## LEARN MORE

- [www.ihac.info](http://www.ihac.info)
- Talk to us!





## How to start an MLP (lawyer integrated into treatment team)

- Start with a pilot. Pick a location and identify the patient population it serves
- Identify what the legal needs are at that site (e.g. Transgender Clinic)
- Identify a physician champion
- Identify a legal partner (legal aid organization; law firm)
- Identify funding or grants
- Sign MOU and BAA
- Determine how MLP referrals will be made and appointments scheduled
- Identify on-site office hours and space for legal partner
- Train medical team to identify patient legal needs

## How to build a MLP 1-day legal aid event

- Identify a legal issue that can be addressed in a brief advice format (e.g. wills & advance directives)
- Identify legal partner (legal aid; law firm). Identify more than just attorney partners. Who will do intake to assess poverty level and appropriateness of request?
- Determine space, time, date. Advertise and pre-schedule appointments for patients. Consider whether employees can participate .
- Think about logistics. Will attorneys need to type and print? These features can present technical challenges.



# Use National MLP resources.

HOME » RESOURCES

Understanding the Civil Legal Aid and Health Care Landscapes

Building Infrastructure and Integration

Training Partners and Students

Screening Patients

Shifting Impact from Patients to Populations

Making the Case for Investment

Measuring Impact

Messaging Medical-Legal Partnership

Academic Articles Library

## Resources

### Setting-Specific Resources

FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SETTINGS

FOR CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS

FOR HEALTH CENTERS

FOR VETERAN HEALTH CARE SETTINGS

### Issue Briefs on Medical-Legal Partnership



Check out the MLP Toolkit:  
[medical-legalpartnership.org/mlptoolkit/](http://medical-legalpartnership.org/mlptoolkit/)

# CONTACT INFORMATION

**Amy Lewis Gilbert, JD, MPH**

Assistant Professor of Pediatrics

Children's Health Services Research

Indiana University School of Medicine

410 West 10th Street, HS 2000

Indianapolis, IN 46202

Tel: (317) 278.7490

EM: [amylewis@iu.edu](mailto:amylewis@iu.edu)

Web: [www.ichsr.org](http://www.ichsr.org)

**Adam Mueller**

Director of Advocacy

Indiana Legal Services, Inc.

151 N. Delaware St. #1850

Indianapolis, IN 46204

Tel: (317) 829-3174

EM: [adam.mueller@ilsa.net](mailto:adam.mueller@ilsa.net)

Web: <http://www.indianalegalservices.org/>