Medical Legal Partnership (MLP) Addresses Health-Harming Legal and Social Needs

As many as 40% of negative health outcomes are attributed to social and legal factors, such as income, educational attainment, environment, access to food and housing, and employment status. Four out of five physicians say their ability to provide quality medical care is impeded by their inability to meet patients’ social needs.

MLP in Action

MLPs integrate the expertise of legal, healthcare, public health, and social service professionals and engage in the following core activities:

**TRAIN** healthcare, social services, public health, and legal teams to identify social and legal needs when they arise in the healthcare setting.

**SERVE** patients through direct legal representation, social work, and advocacy.

**COORDINATE** across disciplines and systems to improve institutional policies and regulations.

**PREVENT** social and legal needs from multiplying through pattern identification and advocacy.

MLP Provides Cost-Savings to Healthcare Providers

In 39 Illinois counties, MLPs lower healthcare costs by:

- Reducing ER visits, hospital admissions, and inpatient length of stay
- Increasing Medicaid reimbursements
- Increasing patient and physician satisfaction by providing a comprehensive continuum of patient care
- Lowering stress for children, and promoting greater health in adulthood
- Reducing school absences for pediatric patients

MLPs Receive National Support and Recognition

MLPs have been recognized for their ability to address health-harming legal and social needs and reduce the cost of healthcare by the American Medical Association, American Hospital Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Bar Association, Equal Justice Works, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the National Nursing Centers Consortium.

The Need for MLP

**1.2 million**
Children at risk of serious health problems due to residential environmental hazards in Cook County

**1,167,370**
People below 200% of the federal poverty line in Chicago

**526,000**
Adults in Illinois with a mental illness, more than half of whom remain uninsured

**1.9 million**
Annual emergency department visits for asthma nationally

**25%**
Children in Illinois who have lead poisoning

**24 million**
Households choosing between “heating or eating” nationally

**10,000**
Homeless veterans in Illinois
MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP

Integrating Lawyers into Healthcare to Achieve Health Equity and Social Justice in Illinois

MLP in Illinois

In response to the overwhelming effect of health-harming legal and social needs, Medical-Legal Partnerships have been established in 39 counties in Illinois, yet 63 counties have no such services.

AIDS Legal Council of Chicago
Chicago Medical-Legal Partnership for Children
East Central Illinois MLP (Champaign)
Metro East Medical-Legal Project
Heart of Illinois MLP

Health Disparities Project of the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights
Health Justice Project of Loyola University Chicago School of Law
Medical-Legal Partnership Project of WellSpring Resources
SSI Homeless Outreach Project (Chicago)

Prairie State/Lovell Veterans Legal Advice Clinic
Medical-Legal Partnership of Southern Illinois (Carbondale)
Northern Illinois University College of Law Health Advocacy Clinic

I-HELP

MLPs provide legal care to support patient health in the following areas:
Income support and bankruptcy (SNAP, TANF, SSI/SSDI)
Housing (conditions, evictions, foreclosure, utilities) and health benefits (Medicare/Medicaid, ACA Marketplace)
Employment, education, early intervention
Legal status (immigration)
Personal and family stability, safety, elder law (domestic violence, guardianship, family law)

*Courtesy of National Center for Medical Legal Partnership

MLP Resources

The National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership, http://medical-legalpartnership.org

*Dark blue represents counties served by MLP in Illinois