

Bringing lawyers onto the health center team to promote patient & community health

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Housekeeping

- Everybody joined in muted
- Type questions in **the chat function**
- Webinar will be recorded

Handouts

- MLPs in Health Center Guide
- How Many Lawyers do You Need to Meet the Legal Needs of Our Patients
- Literature Review: Making the case for MLPs, 2013-2020

The Health Center MLP Toolkit & Webinar Series

Our Toolkit and Training Opportunities

Target Audience: Staff from health centers, PCAs, HCCNs, and MLPs at any stage.

Structure: 5-part webinar series with presentations led by MLP experts from the field addressing select topics from the Health Center MLP toolkit. Some webinars will include extended time for “office hours.”

Registration: Use the link at the end of this webinar and through the chat box.

Recordings: All webinars are recorded and will be available afterward under “webinars and trainings” tab of the NCMLP website.

Acknowledgements

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About the National Center

National Center for Medical  Legal Partnership

AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Our Mission and Purpose

We're helping to build an integrated health care system that better addresses health-harming social needs by leveraging legal services and expertise to advance individual and population health.

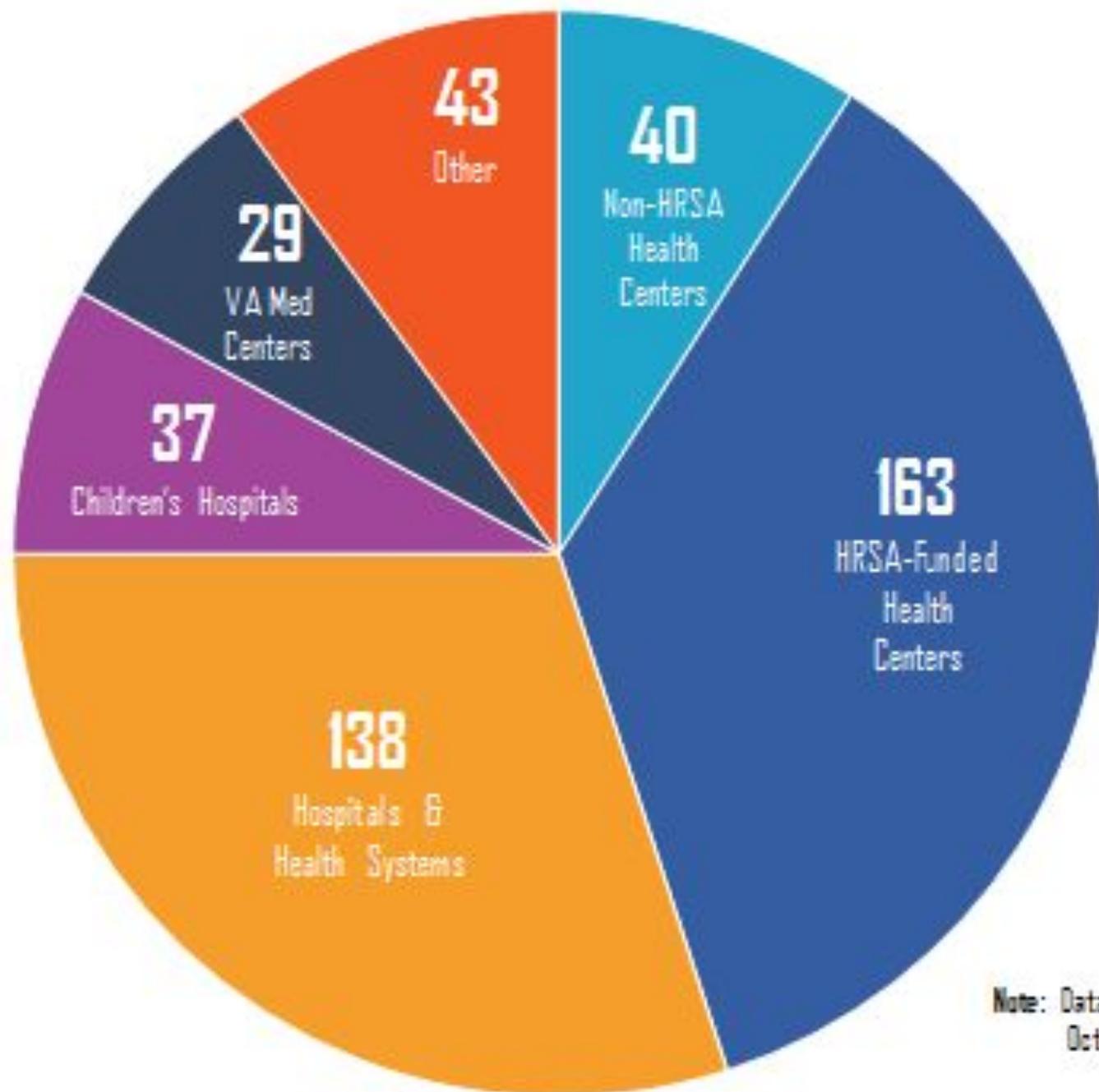
Medical-legal partnerships integrate the unique expertise of lawyers into health care settings to help clinicians, case managers, and social workers address structural problems at the root of so many health inequities.

How would you best describe the stage of your MLP work?

- New to MLP
- Planning an MLP
- Actively running an MLP

The MLP Landscape

MLPs at
450
health care
orgs in
49
States & D.C.



Note: Data current as of
October 2, 2020.

Health centers represent the fastest growing sector

for medical-legal partnership adoption across the health care system

Contact us to tell us about the MLP activities at your organization:

Danielle at nrahajas@gwu.edu or April at aprildaniels@gwu.edu

Laying the Foundation, Part I

Learning Objectives

- Build capacity on integration of legal services to address SDOH needs
- Discuss strategies to guide conversations with legal partners on SDOH needs
- Discuss strategies to guide conversations with legal partners on lawyer FTEs
- Explore opportunities to build or contract integrated legal services



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So you want to integrate legal services into care delivery model.

Why?

The Bottom Line:

Lawyers help patients address urgent social needs that are barriers to health.

Offering legal services at or through a health center allow access to services in a trusted environment.

Health centers leverage legal expertise to shape clinical practices and inform clinic-wide solutions that help address many patients' needs without a referral to the lawyer.

Healthier Patients

What is a Medical-Legal Partnership?

MLPs embed lawyers as members of the health care team, creating:

- Healthier patients
- A stronger health center workforce
- Improved health equity

Core MLP activities include:

Legal Assistance

to address patients' social needs & help the health center workforce operate at "top of license"

Training

to build knowledge, capacity & skills that strengthen the health center workforce's response to SDOH

Clinic-Level Changes

that leverage legal expertise to shape clinical practices to address many patients' needs at once

Policy Change Strategies

that advance healthy regulatory, administrative, & legislative policy solutions for whole communities

True or False?

Legal needs are a subset of social needs that have legal solutions.

Which social needs are legal needs?

Answer: True

Legal needs are a subset of social needs that have legal solutions.

Where do legal services fit within a health center's response to SDOH?

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

are broadly defined by the World Health Organization as the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age. These circumstances are shaped by economic and social policies, political systems, and social norms, and they contribute significantly to health disparities.

SOCIAL NEEDS

are the more immediate, individual needs that patients enter the health center with every day as a result of social determinants of health.

LEGAL NEEDS

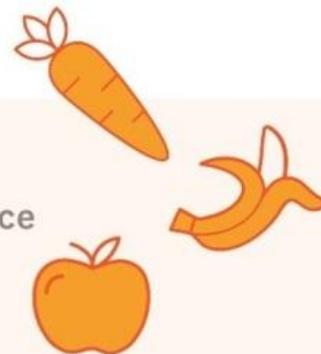
are, simply put, the subset of social needs that have legal solutions. The distinction in this guide is made to help health centers understand where lawyers can be helpful*.

FOR EXAMPLE

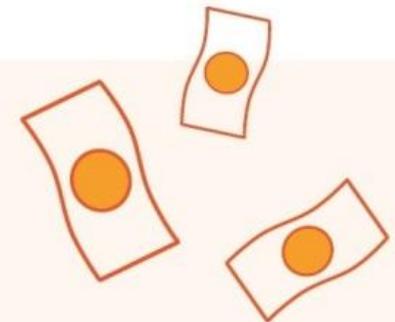
A food desert



A family's need for fresh produce today



A family's need to file an appeal after their SNAP benefits are incorrectly cut



How different team members address social needs while working at “top of license”

A FAMILY OF 4

is struggling to make rent after one Mom is unable to work during her cancer treatment.



A Community Health Worker

can help the patient fill out applications, pull documents together, and may go to benefits office with her.

A Case Manager / Social Worker

may work with the patient to determine what housing, disability, insurance, and food benefits she is eligible for. They write support letters and gather medical documentation as needed.

A Lawyer

may advise the patient about the Family Medical Leave Act and job protections to help ensure her job is waiting for her after treatment. They can help CHWs and case managers understand benefit eligibility and problem-solve as needed. They may assist the patient with appeals if benefits are denied.

MLP is one of the only interventions that tackles individual needs AND underlying policies

Training activities and direct legal services help health centers address individuals' legal needs.

When a landlord refuses to make improvements to an apartment with mold, an MLP lawyer can enforce safe housing laws to get the mold removed.



By detecting patterns in patients' needs and using upstream strategies to target unhealthy policies, MLPs prevent future problems and advance health equity.

An MLP team works together to change their city's lead ordinance to prevent children from being lead poisoned at home.

How lawyers help address patients' social needs

I-HELP™	How Lawyers Can Help
Income & Insurance	 Food stamps, disability benefits, cash assistance, health insurance
Housing & utilities	 Eviction, housing conditions, housing vouchers, utility shut off
Education & Employment	 Accommodation for disease and disability in education and employment settings
Legal status	 Assistance with immigration status (e.g. asylum applications); Veteran discharge status upgrade; Criminal background expungement
Personal & family stability	 Domestic violence, guardianship, child support, advanced directives, estate planning

Ready to Build or Improve?
Let's Begin the Conversation.

OCTOBER 2020

Bringing lawyers onto the health center care team to promote patient & community health

.....
A planning, implementation, and practice guide
for building and sustaining a health center-based
medical-legal partnership



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Conversations to Help Your Health Center Lay a Strong Foundation for a Medical-Legal Partnership

Available at: medical-legalpartnership.org/resources

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About Whitman-Walker Health



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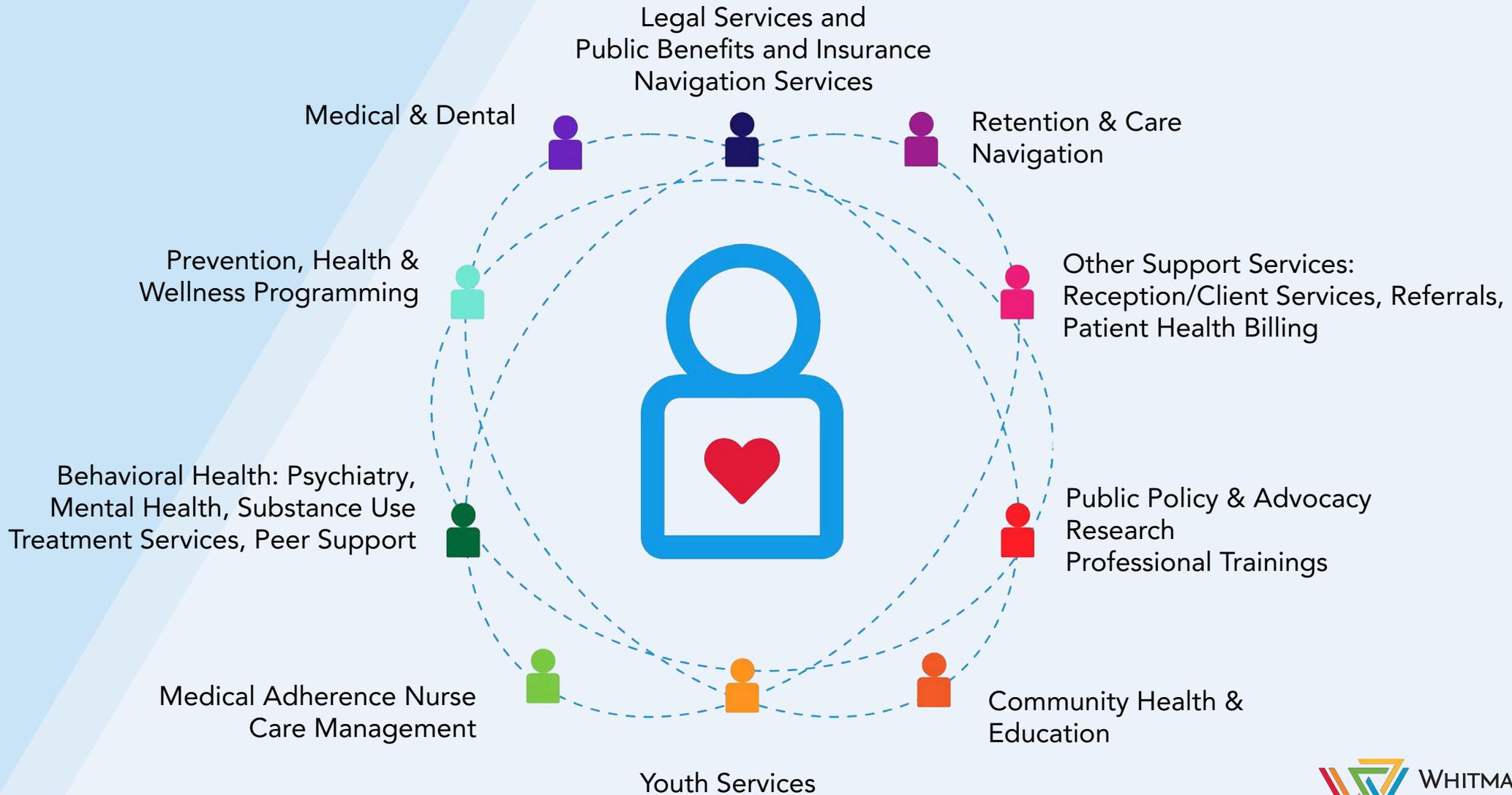


Providing affirming care and dedicated legal services to help communities overcome health inequities for more than 30 years.



WHITMAN-WALKER HEALTH
we see you.

Whitman-Walker Health's Integrated Patient-Centered Care Team





Legal Services Role on the Care Team to Address Health Harming Legal Needs by:

PROVIDING

continuum of legal assistance to thousands of patients: direct representation, counseling, problem-solving

NAVIGATING

eligibility, enrollment/renewals, and coverage issues through Public Benefits and Insurance Navigators who also screen patients for legal barriers to access and care

EMPOWERING

clients and other service providers through education and know-your-rights outreach

IMPROVING

the local/national programs and systems on which our clients rely by working to remove systemic barriers

How is your MLP addressing SDOH problems?

- All patients, specific social needs
- Specific patient population, all social needs
- All patients, all social needs
- Other



What SDOH problems do we want to address?

Three approaches

All patients, specific social need

Example

The most common unresolved social needs among the health center's patients pertain to housing*, so MLP resources are focused there. Any clinician or staff member can refer any patient to the MLP lawyer for assistance with evictions, housing conditions, housing subsidies, etc. The health center may or may not choose to expand to other issues in the future.

**This could also be access to public benefits, access to educational supports, etc.*

Specific patient population, all social needs

Example

The health center's needs assessment reveals that pregnant people* would benefit most from legal services. Any clinician or staff member can refer any pregnant person to the MLP lawyer for any identified social need. The health center may or may not choose to expand to other groups in the future.

**This could also be children with asthma, individuals experiencing homelessness, people who use behavioral health services, people with substance use disorders, socially vulnerable older adults, people with diabetes, transgender individuals, etc.*

All patients, all social needs

Example

Any clinician or staff member can refer any health center patient to the MLP lawyer for any identified social need.

TRANSGENDER HEALTH & MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIPS

 TRANSGENDER describes people whose gender identity (i.e. the inner sense of one's gender) differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

CONTACT

For more information about medical-legal partnership:

**National Center for
Medical-Legal Partnership**
www.medical-legalpartnership.org

For more information about LGBTQ+ health:

**National LGBT Health
Education Center**
www.lgbthealtheducation.org

Partnering with Legal Services to Address Social and Structural Issues that Impede Quality Health Care for Transgender People

Discrimination in all sectors of society, including in education, health care, housing, and employment, makes transgender people disproportionately vulnerable to depression, suicidality, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance use disorders, physical and sexual victimization, and HIV infection. Transgender people have a critical need for access to quality, gender-affirming health care, as well as access to legal services that support them in addressing discrimination.^{1,2,3,4,5} To truly meet the complex needs of transgender patients, health care teams benefit from legal expertise to help navigate problems that go well beyond the health center's door. Health centers that serve transgender patients are starting to integrate on-site legal care through **medical-legal partnerships (MLPs)** in order to provide patients with legal services for social and structural issues that are directly affecting their health.

LEARN MORE
Fact sheet series examines benefits of MLP services on a variety of populations.

<https://medical-legalpartnership.org/mlp-resources/privacy-brief/>



Name and Gender Change Clinic

WWH's Name and Gender Change Clinic launched in June 2012, in partnership with Trans Legal Advocates of Washington (TransLAW), which provides financial assistance to clients!

Since 2012, Legal Services is proud to have:

Organized and staffed

87 Clinics

with immigration screening

Served

2,000+ Clients

Trained

300+ Volunteers

Delivered

\$25,000 +

*Client financial assistance
thanks to TransLAW*



Assessing social needs

1. Review data from existing screening tool(s)
2. Speak with staff & clinicians in each dept
3. Take stock of existing priorities & capacity
4. Examine EHR data to help identify / determine volume of potential priority patients
5. If necessary/feasible, do separate legal needs assessment

Which of the needs you identified have legal solutions?



How many lawyers do we need to meet the need(s) we identified and accomplish our goals?

Factors that impact an MLP lawyer's capacity

1. Patients may need help with more than one issue.
2. More complicated problems take more time.
3. Legal assistance is only one function of an MLP lawyer. They also engage in training, curbside consults, clinic- and policy-level change activities.
4. Some MLPs include other legal professionals like paralegals.
5. Capacity is affected by whether you choose “build it” or “contract it” model.

Legal Services

Public Benefits

Medicaid

ADAP

QMB/Medicare

Identity Docs

Court Order for Name Change

DMV/Birth Certificate

SSA/Passport

Estate Planning

Wills

Powers of Attorney

Advance Medicare Directives

Immigration

Asylum

DACA/TPS

Work Permits/Green Cards

Discrimination

Employment/School

Housing/Public Accommodations

Health Care

Insurance

Health

Disability

2019 Cases & Clients

Legal Services and PBIN

4,497 cases for
2,603 clients

Legal Services only

1,518 cases

Public Benefits and Insurance Navigation Services

Eligibility and Enrollment

Public Insurance

Individual Insurance

Programs to reduce costs
(ADAP, ACA, subsidies, SFS)

Navigating Care

Health Insurance Literacy

Connections to Care

Social Needs & Other Services

Coverage Disputes

Prescriptions

Medically necessary services

Cost of care and access

Screening for Health Harming Legal Needs

Insurance Issues

Immigration

Employment / Income / Housing

Identity Docs to Update

2019 Cases & Clients

Public Benefits &
Insurance Navigation

2,979 cases

Estimate of time involved in MLP services

MLP Activity	Time Involved
Bi-Directional Training	4 – 10 hours (per 1-hour training)
Curbside Consult	15 minutes – 4 hours
Initial Legal Intake / Legal Assessment / Check-up	30 minutes – 2 hours
Legal Advice to Patient	1 – 4 hours
Legal Representation of a Patient	4 – 80 hours
Facilitated Referral	30 minutes – 2 hours
Clinic-level change activity	Varies widely
Policy-level change activity	Varies widely, likely 10 – 100 hours

Three estimates of what 1 FTE lawyer can do





Build it as a direct service or contract it: How will we staff our integrated legal services?

Benefits of each model

BUILD IT AS A DIRECT SERVICE

Recruit & hire lawyers as employees of the health center

- Automatically aligned with health center priorities
- Full control over allocating legal services
- Easier to fold lawyer into operations
- Lawyers more involved in creating workflows

CONTRACT IT

Contract legal services from a community-based legal organization

- Purchasing depth of expertise & broad capacity
- Access to supervision for legal team
- Legal org can take referrals outside individual lawyer's expertise



Questions



Reminders and Additional Resources

Resources:

- Health Center MLP toolkit and our COVID-19 Digest are online at: <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/resources/>

Upcoming Events:

- **Dec. 3, 2020:** “New Medical-Legal Partnership Practices and Strategies in Agricultural Worker Communities” by NCMLP and farmworkers Justice [Register](#) today.
- **Dec. 17, 2020:** “Laying the Foundation for Lawyers on the Health Center Team Part II: Funding, MOUs & Sustainability” (with office hours) by NCMLP [Register](#) today.
- **Jan. – Feb., 2021:** Learning Collaborative on Housing Issues. More information coming soon [here](#).

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