

Health Center Medical -Legal Partnership Environmental Scan



Findings and Examples from the
Field Webinar

APRIL 26, 2023

HRSA

Health Resources & Services Administration

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Today's Moderator



Bethany Hamilton, JD

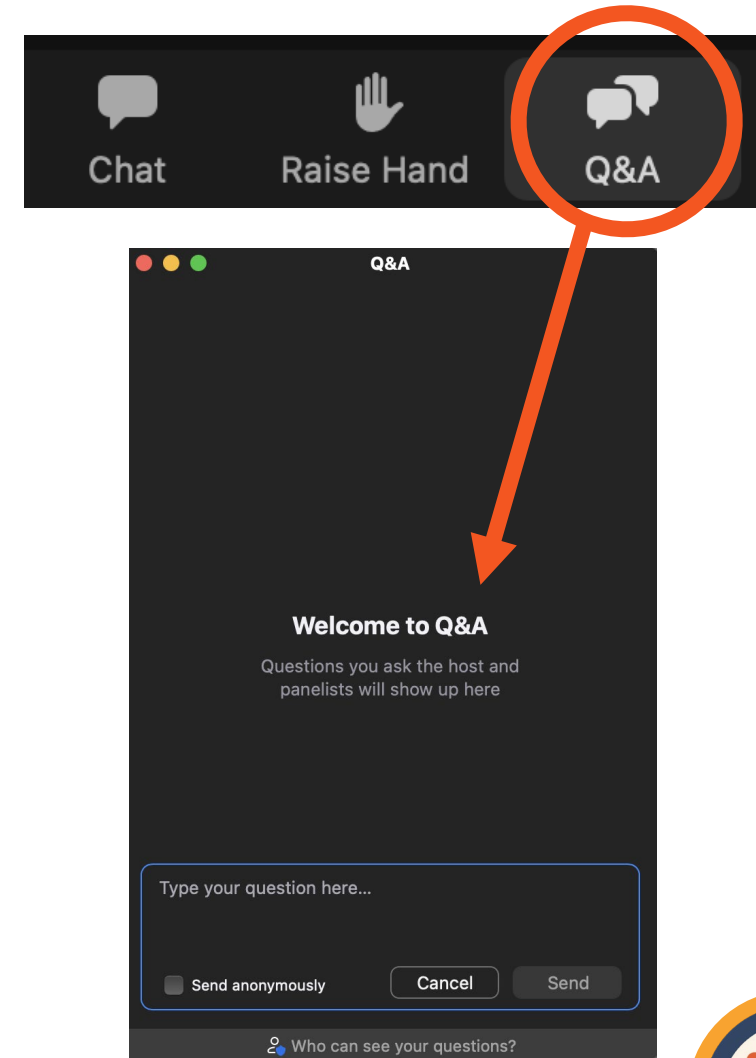
Co-Director

National Center for Medical -Legal Partnership



Housekeeping

- Attendees are muted throughout the webinar.
- Type questions into **Questions & Answers pane**.
- To activate captions, select “Live Transcript” and “Show Subtitle.”
- This webinar will be recorded and shared at medical-legalpartnership.org/resources/
- Need tech support during the webinar? Send a message via chat to the “Host” from the NCMLP team or email us at ncmlp@gwu.edu.



Objectives

Through our funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), we focus significant effort in the health center community, providing training and technical assistance to health centers, HCCNs, and PCAs on three main objectives:

1. ***Population Health*** by increasing the number of health centers that address health related legal needs of patients to improve population and community health;
2. ***Health Equity*** by increasing the number of patients screened for unmet legal needs that may affect health outcomes; and
3. ***Building Medical -Legal Partnerships (MLPs)*** by increasing the number of health centers that implement MLPs to address the social determinants of health (SDOH).



Health Center MLP: What do we already know?



What do we already know about the Health Center Model , Services, Patients, and their MLPs?

Health Center *Model*

- “War on Poverty” and **Section 330 of the Public Health Services Act of 1965**
- The Health Center Program
 - Administered by HRSA
 - Health Centers are **commonly referred to as Federally -Qualified Health Centers** , or FQHCs
 - FQHC is actually a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services payment designation
 - Section 330 Grant-Funded Health Centers
 - Meet all program requirements and receive the federal award funding
 - Community, Migrant, Homeless, and Public Housing Health Centers
 - Some Health Centers are *not* Section 330 Grant-Funded
 - Health Center Program “Look-Alikes” are HRSA-designated health centers that meet all of the program requirements but do not receive federal award funding
- As of 2021, nearly 1,400 health centers and more than 14,000 delivery sites serving more than 30 million people a year in communities across the United States.



What do we already know about the Health Center Model, **Services** , Patients, and their MLPs?

Health Center *Services*

- Community-based and patient-directed
- Comprehensive, high-quality primary care and preventive services regardless of patients' ability to pay
 - Medical, dental, behavioral, and other health care services.
- Services are delivered in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner
- Employ inter-professional teams and patient-centric approaches.
- Provide care coordination and other **enabling services** that facilitate access to care.
 - **Since 2014, enabling services have include “civil legal aid services” as an example of eligibility assistance and additional enabling/supportive services.**

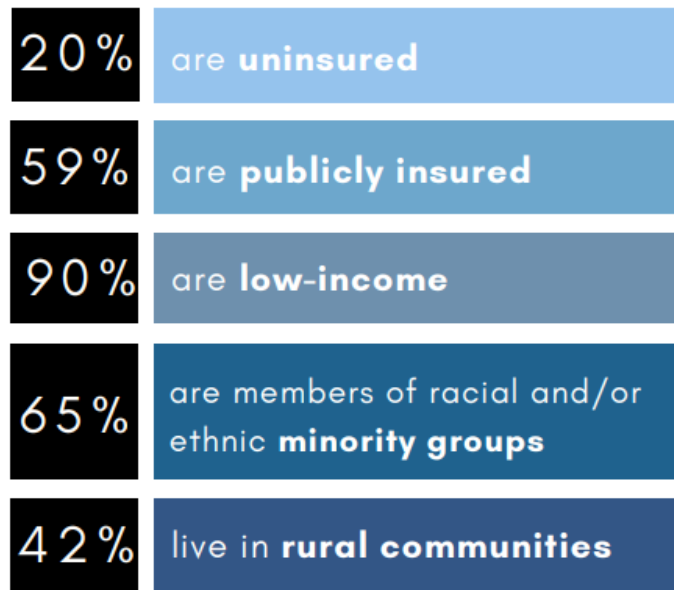
(See [HRSA's Service Descriptors for Form 5A: Services](#))
- Collaborate with other providers or programs to improve access to care and community resources, such as those that address social determinants of health.



What do we already know about the Health Center Model, Services, Patients, and their MLPs?

Health Center *Patients*

1 in 11 Americans are health center patients, of whom:

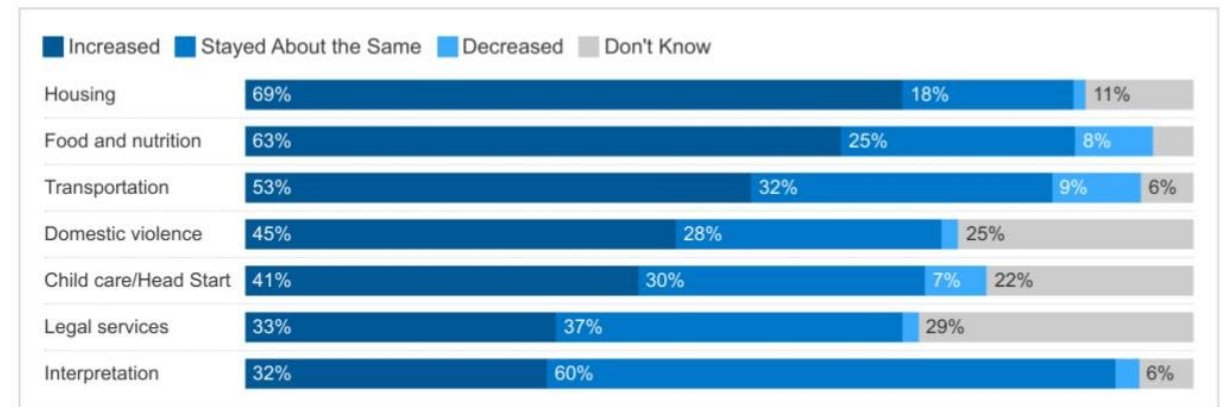


Source: See NACHC's [America's Health Centers: 2022 Snapshot](#) (August 2022)

Figure 19

Health centers reported an increase in the number of patients seeking social and supportive services during the pandemic

Compared to before the pandemic, has your health center seen a change in the number of patients currently seeking the following services?



NOTE: N/A responses were not counted in these calculations. "Housing" services include housing placement and support paying utilities.
SOURCE: KFF and Geiger Gibson/RCHN Community Health Foundation Survey of Community Health Centers in the U.S., 2021.



Source: See NCMLP's [Webinar Presentation delivered by Brad Corallo of KFF on "Health Center Patients' Shifting Needs During the COVID-19 Pandemic"](#) (September 20, 2022)



What do we already know about the Health Center Model, Services, Patients, and their **MLPs**?

Health Center-Based *Medical-Legal Partnerships (MLPs)*

- Approximately 163 health centers operate medical-legal partnerships to embed lawyers on the health care team to help health centers treat patients' immediate social needs and also deploy upstream strategies to address the social determinants of health.



Health Center MLP: What don't we know?



Meet the MLP Scan Team



Marsha Regenstein, PhD

Professor

The George Washington University



Jennifer Trott

Research Scientist

The George Washington University



Jacqueline Baños

Senior Research Associate

The George Washington University



MLP Guest Speakers



Ranie Thompson
Director of Legal Services
CrescentCare (New Orleans, LA)



Anna Kirkman
Associate General Counsel
Eskenazi Health Center (Indianapolis, IN)



Health Center MLP Environmental Scan - Findings



Presented by

- Jacqueline Baños, Senior Research Associate, The George Washington University
- Marsha Regenstein, PhD, Professor, The George Washington University

Understanding Medical -Legal Partnerships in Health Centers

- **A Medical -Legal Partnership (MLP)** is an intervention that embeds civil legal aid professionals within a health care organization to address health-harming social issues that have remedies in civil law. This is commonly implemented through an arrangement known as a memorandum of understanding or other agreement with a civil legal aid organization or other pro bono services to facilitate the provision of legal services to patients.
- In 2014, HRSA recognized civil legal aid as an “enabling service” that health centers could include under their federal grants. Health centers became a fast-growing sector for MLP adoption because they:
 - Have substantial knowledge of communities they serve
 - Serve and provide care to most vulnerable and underserved communities
- This environmental scan presents up-to-date information about MLPs operating in health centers (Federally Qualified Health Centers and Look-alike programs)

Conducting the Health Center MLP Environmental Scan

Identifying MLPs in Health Centers

- Screening questionnaire was sent to health center administrators to:
 - Determine whether they had an MLP
 - Identify health center screening and referral practices related to patient legal needs
- Questionnaire distributed February 2023 with a 20% response rate

Health Center MLP Characteristics

- A follow-up questionnaire sent to health centers determined to have an MLP to ask about their characteristics
 - 99 health centers reported having an MLP
 - 66 health centers reported being in the planning stages of establishing an MLP
- MLP characteristics questionnaire yielded a 58% response rate

Estimated Number of MLPs in Health Centers

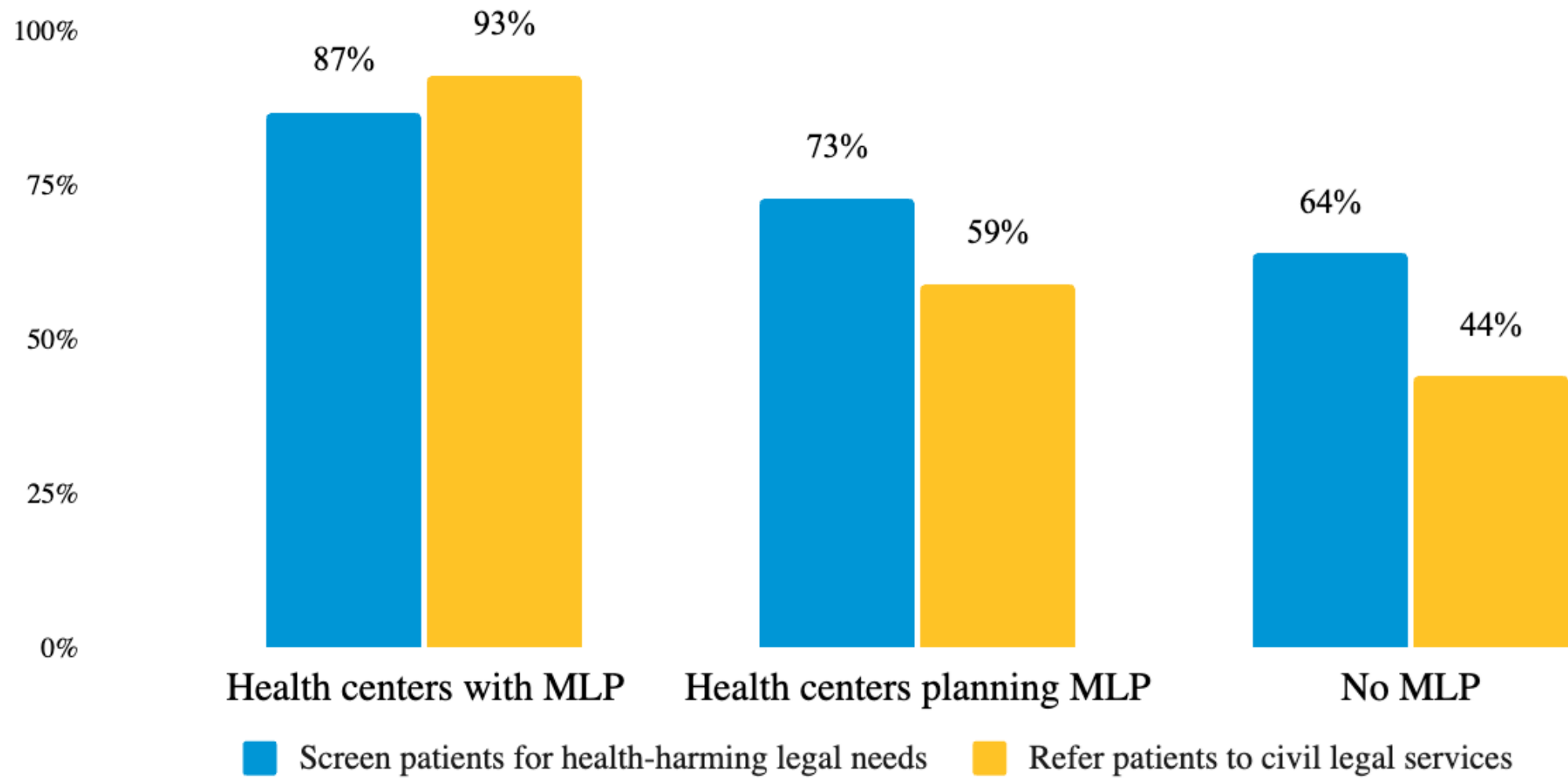
Given the number of MLPs identified in this environmental scan, we estimate there are approximately 150 to 200 MLPs in health centers with an additional 100 to 150 in the planning stages.

- MLPs in health centers are in 27 states across the country including DC and US territories
- A majority were established after 2014 when civil legal aid was first deemed an “enabling service” by HRSA

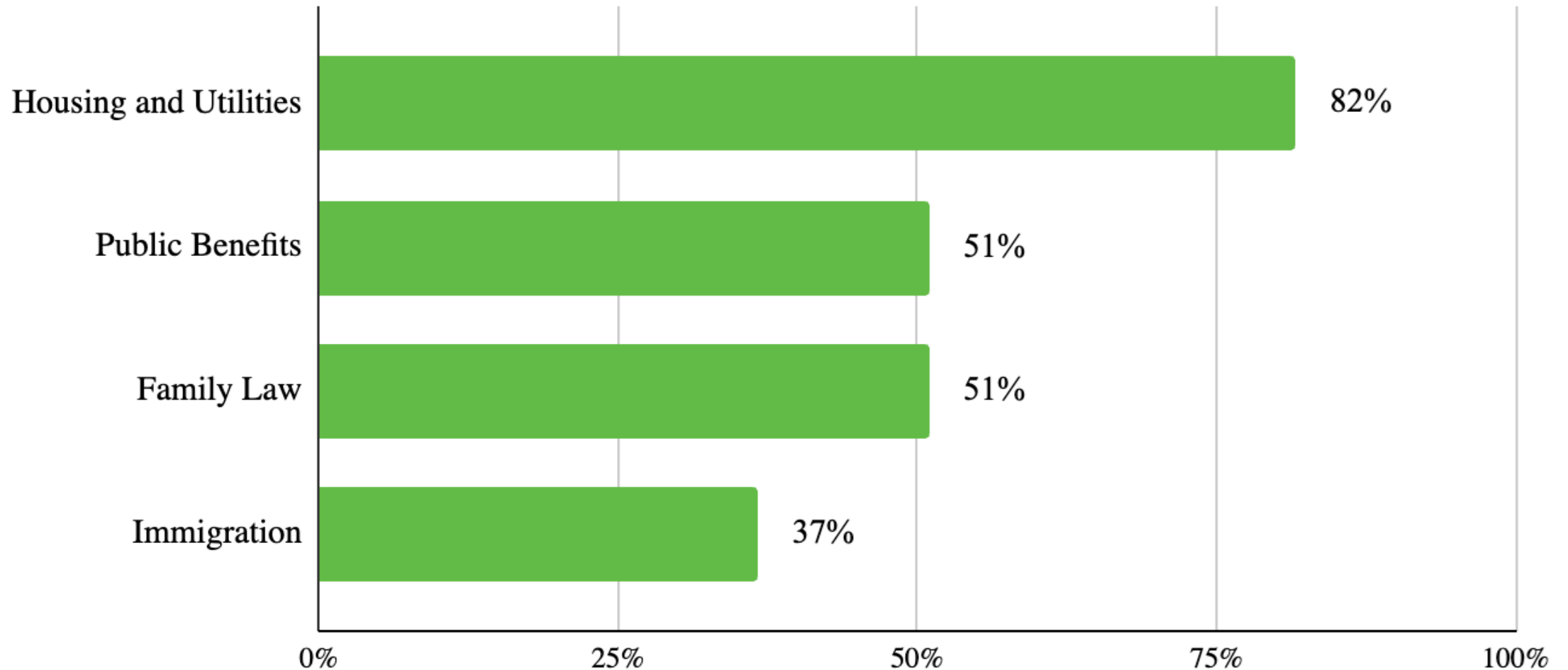
How Health Centers Address the Health-Related Legal Needs of their Patients

Most health centers address their patient's health -related legal needs through screening and referrals	
Health centers that screen patients for potential health -harming legal needs	72%
Health centers that refer patients with health -harming legal needs to civil legal services	63%

Health centers with an MLP are more likely to offer screening and referral services for their patients

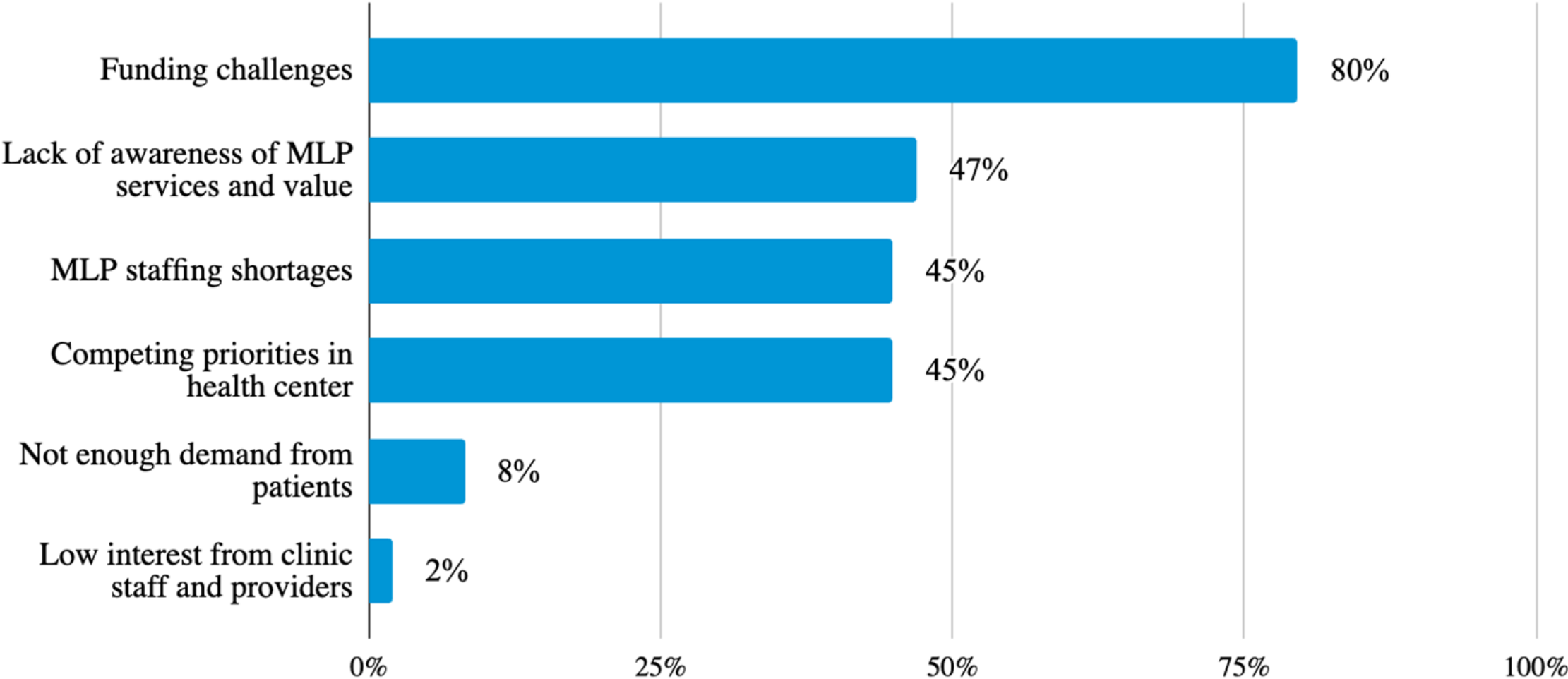


Most common legal issues addressed by MLPs in health centers



Note: This table represents the percent of respondents that indicated the legal issue as one of their top three legal issues addressed by the MLP. We identified four issues that MLPs commonly addressed across all respondents.

Challenges associated with sustaining or expanding MLP programs

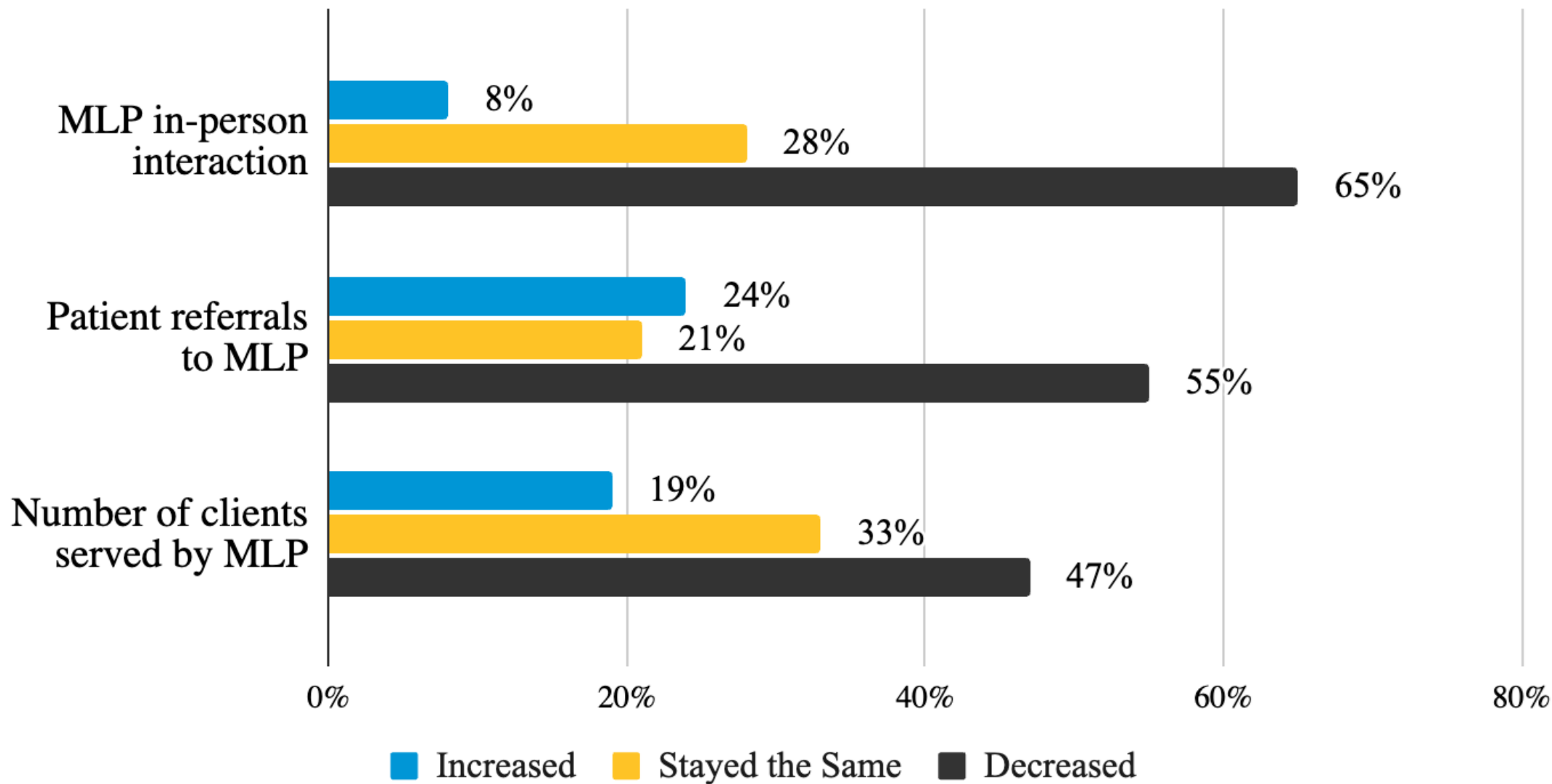


Note: This table represents the percent of respondents that indicated that these issues are among their top three challenges for expanding or sustaining MLP operations.

How the COVID-19 Pandemic Impacted MLPs in Health Centers

- The pandemic shifted how MLPs were able to operate and address patient needs at health centers
 - 65% of MLPs reported a decrease in in-person interaction with health center patients
 - Patient referrals to the MLP and the number of clients served also decreased during the pandemic
- Health center MLPs maintained their:
 - Funding, dedicated time from the legal professional, and the variety of legal issues addressed by the MLP
- 63% of MLPs are currently maintaining an on-site presence at health centers

The COVID-19 pandemic decreased MLP in-person interaction, patient referrals to MLP, and the number of clients served by MLP



Takeaways and Opportunities for the Future

- MLPs in health centers can provide accessible legal aid to people and communities that may not otherwise seek out legal aid or have access to these services
- There continues to be growth and interest in establishing MLPs in health centers, but funding to sustain and expand existing programs continues to be a major challenge
- The National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership has developed several resources and convenes stakeholders to help health care organizations and legal partners establish and maintain MLP programs

CRESCENTCARE LEGAL SERVICES

Ranie Thompson
Director of Legal Services
CrescentCare (New Orleans, LA)



CRESCENTCARE LEGAL SERVICES

Working for Health and Justice

- A department of CrescentCare Health Center.
- Statewide Free legal assistance to people living with HIV.
- We work
 - holistically at the intersection of health and health-harming legal needs (SDOH).
 - collaboratively with community-based organizations and other vulnerable populations.
- Staff
 - 7 Attorneys
 - 2 Legal Secretaries
- Locations:
 - New Orleans
 - Baton Rouge

Our Mission and Model

- Strengthening our entire community through whole-person healthcare and education.
- Holistic and comprehensive integrated approach to health and wellness.
- MLP is a department within the clinic and is integrated into the clinic's service model.



OUR WORK

Direct Services • Advocacy • Impact Litigation • Education • Outreach

Public Benefits

- Social Security (Appeals, Reconsiderations, Overpayments) • Unemployment • Medicaid • SNAP

Discrimination/Individual Rights

- Healthcare • Employment • Housing • Privacy • Disability • Sexual orientation • Gender identity

Consumer/Debtor Rights

- Medical debt • Student loan rehab and discharges

Permanency Planning

- Wills • Powers of Attorney • Small Successions • Advanced Medical Directives

Name and Gender Marker Change

- Pro se Name Change Petitions • Document/Records Updating (driver's license/ID/Passports, birth certificates, and Social Security records).

Immigration

- Special Immigrant Juveniles Status (custody, immigration, work permits, Medicaid)

| Ending
| The
| HIV
| Epidemic

City of Baton Rouge

- Combines advocacy, outreach and direct services
- Removes barriers to service access
- Expands reach into the community.
- Resources targeted to areas with highest new HIV diagnoses.
- Has been successful ~
 - 30 new cases
- Development of new MLP with a partner RW provider in BR.

Children's Immigration MLP

(Partner: New Orleans Children's Health Project)



- **125** - referrals

- 80 received legal services

- **36** - SIJ applications approved

- **53** - Medicaid Enrollment

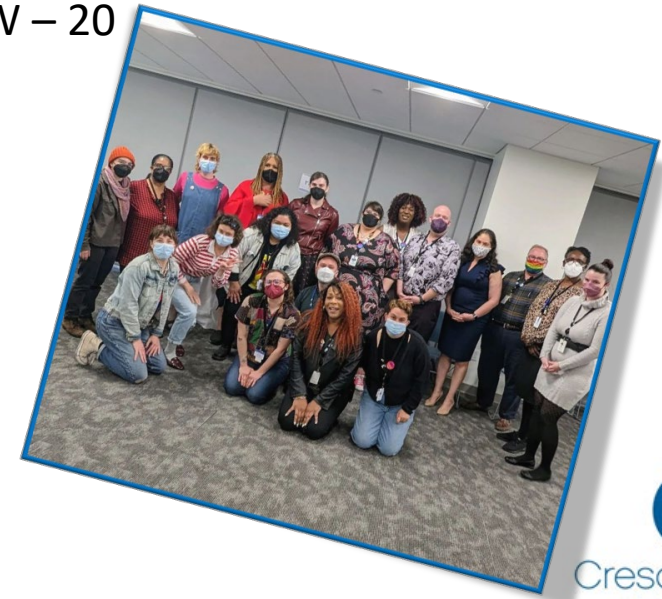
- Reduced # of patients on sliding fee-scale & financial assistance program

Name Change Legal Clinic

(Partners: Real Name Campaign NOLA & CC Gender Clinic, TAC, & T'Cher NOLA Initiative)

- **56** Clients Served (07/01/2021-03/31/2023)

- NonRW 36
- RW – 20



07/01/2021-06/30/2022

Case & Service Statistics

Cases

- 463 Cases opened
- 450 Cases closed
- 381 Cases open as of 1/30/2023

Services

- >**1000** Unduplicated Clients Served
- >**8,000 hours** of service to those clients
- >**200 hours** of outreach, education and advocacy

Economic Impact

Discrimination/Individual Rights

- **\$59,418** settlement funds to clients in discrimination cases
- **\$6,016** Attorneys Fees included in settlement

Social Security

- **\$201,334** SS benefits backpay
- **\$17,173** ongoing benefits

ESKENAZI HEALTH

Anna Kirkman

Associate General Counsel
Eskenazi Health Center (Indianapolis, IN)

ESKENAZI
HEALTH

Eskenazi Health: Celebrating 15 years of Medical-Legal Partnership

Who are we? Eskenazi Health is part of the Health & Hospital Corporation of Marion County and serves as the safety net health system in Indianapolis, with an urban hospital campus, several community mental health centers, and a federally qualified health center with 12+ primary care sites.

How do we staff our MLP? Indiana Legal Services (a legal services corporation) is our primary legal aid partner. The MLP is fully integrated within Eskenazi Health Center (FQHC) and the community mental health center locations. ILS also staffs the Gender Health specialty medicine clinic at the hospital. Paralegals have returned to in-person MLP office hours in 2023.

The logo for Eskenazi Health, featuring the word "ESKENAZI" in blue and "HEALTH" in yellow, both in a sans-serif font, set against a light gray background.

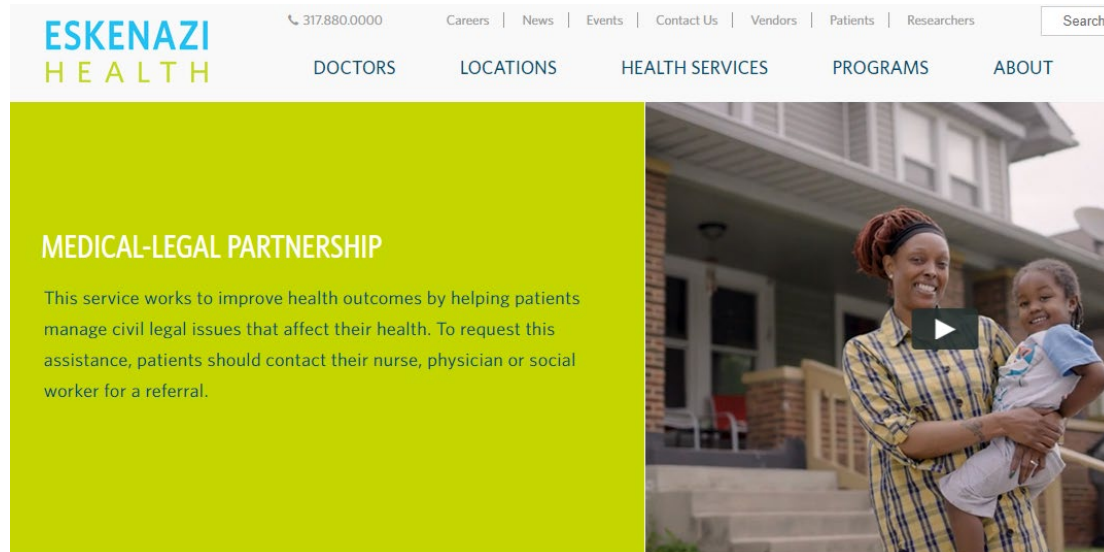
ESKENAZI
HEALTH

The logo for Indiana Legal Services (ILS), featuring the letters "ILS" in white on a black rectangular background, followed by two horizontal black bars, and the text "EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE" in black to the right.

ILS ——— EQUAL
ACCESS
TO JUSTICE

Scope of Services

- Housing
- Gender marker changes/name changes
- Expungement
- Consumer rights
- Immigration
- Family stability
- Benefits
- Education law
- Decision-making
- Guardianship



The screenshot displays the Eskenazi Health website. The header includes the phone number 317.880.0000 and navigation links for Careers, News, Events, Contact Us, Vendors, Patients, and Researchers. A search bar is located on the right. The main navigation menu features DOCTORS, LOCATIONS, HEALTH SERVICES, PROGRAMS, and ABOUT. The featured content area has a green background on the left with the heading 'MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP' and a video player icon. The text below the heading reads: 'This service works to improve health outcomes by helping patients manage civil legal issues that affect their health. To request this assistance, patients should contact their nurse, physician or social worker for a referral.' On the right, there is a photograph of a woman in a yellow and blue plaid shirt holding a young child in front of a house.

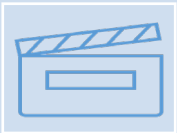
Housing Rights & Eviction Helpline



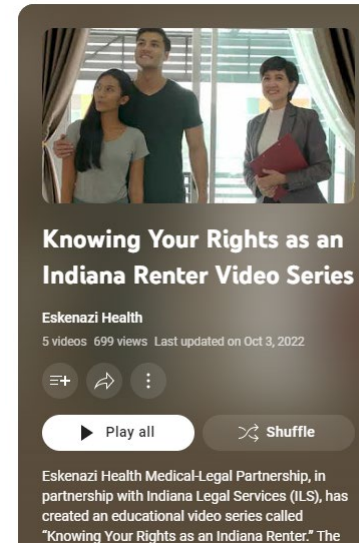
In 2020, we received a \$300,000 grant from the Eskenazi Health Foundation to launch the Housing Rights & Eviction Helpline.








Our partners at ILS staff the phone line 3 days a week and respond to eviction and habitability crises.



We scripted, recorded, and produced a 5-part video series called *Knowing Your Rights as an Indiana Renter*, available on the Eskenazi Health YouTube channel.



- 1  Knowing Your Rights as ar
Eskenazi Health • 582 views • 1 yea
7:21
- 2  Knowing Your Rights as ar
Eskenazi Health • 251 views • 1 yea
5:05
- 3  Knowing Your Rights as ar
Eskenazi Health • 772 views • 1 yea
6:14
- 4  Knowing Your Rights as ar
Eskenazi Health • 233 views • 1 yea
7:10
- 5  Knowing Your Rights as ar
Eskenazi Health • 633 views • 1 yea
6:12

Nominated in 2023 for America's Essential Hospitals *Gage Awards*, and in 2022 for Indianapolis LISC *Love Thy Neighborhood Award*

Pro Bono Partners

Law firms Faegre Drinker and Taft provide *pro bono* representation when families need guardianship of incapacitated adult loved ones.



Faegre Drinker also assists with End-of-Life planning, including an annual legal aid clinic day.

ESKENAZI HEALTH

Free Legal Aid Clinic: Wills and Advance Planning

PRESENTED BY ESKENAZI HEALTH MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP
AND FAEGRE DRINKER

Tuesday, June 27, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Faegre Drinker Conference Room
Sandra Eskenazi Outpatient Care Center, 720 Eskenazi Ave.

*Appointments are strongly encouraged, but walk-ins are welcome.
For an appointment, please call 317.880.4814.*

Advance planning allows you to document your preferences for future care in the form of a legal document. It also gives you the opportunity to choose someone to make medical and financial decisions if you become unable to do so. Assistance in preparing a last will and testament will also be available.

Lawyers from Faegre Drinker will be on site and may be able to help you with:

- Creating a will, which allows you to plan for your family's future
- Appointing a financial power of attorney
- Appointing a health care representative

Please note this event is for Eskenazi Health patients only and will only assist with advance care planning. This is a brief advice clinic. If you have questions, please contact Anna Kirkman at anna.kirkman@eskenazihealth.edu or Alissa Fisher, legal and compliance operations analyst, at alissa.fisher@eskenazihealth.edu.



Community Partners

The Joseph Maley Foundation “Family Support Program” pairs trained *pro bono* attorneys with families to provide education related advocacy.

Eskenazi Health, through the MLP, refers families for help navigating the Individualized Education Plan process and education-based services.



Coming Soon

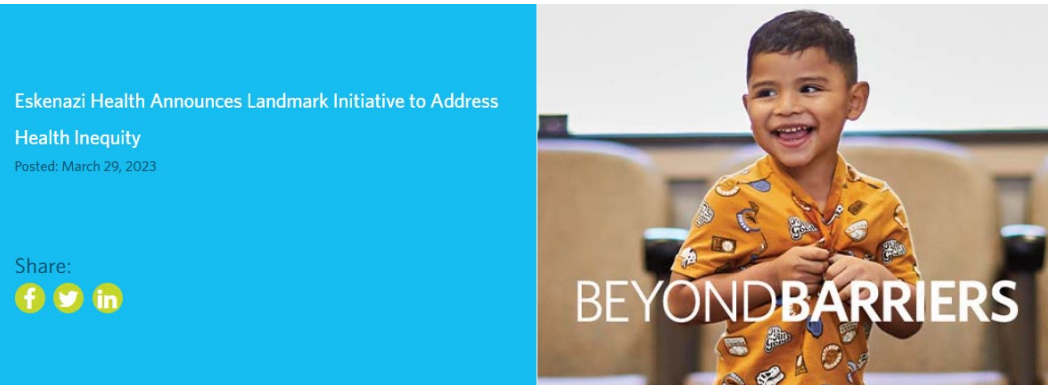
A self-service Legal Aid Kiosk, granted by the Indiana Bar Foundation, will be installed at the Sidney & Lois Eskenazi Hospital Campus in Q2/Q3 of this year.



MLP Sustainability & Commitment to Addressing Social Determinants of Health

ESKENAZI
HEALTH

- Beyond Barriers is about Eskenazi Health's commitment to generational change, by working collaboratively throughout the neighborhoods of Indianapolis to advance health equity and improve life expectancy.
- "This model is not intended to research or retest the known principles of the social determinants of health. This is about activating those principles to dramatically improve longevity and quality of life."
- The MLP is part of a larger investment in and commitment to comprehensive interventions to address health disparities.





PANEL DISCUSSION

Question for Panel

What is something that you did not ask MLPs in the environmental scan, but you would like to learn more about or explore?



Question for Panel

Do you have any lessons learned from the pandemic's impact on your MLP?



Question for Panel

How do you keep stakeholders informed and engaged?





ANY QUESTIONS

THANK YOU!

Please take a moment to fill out our feedback survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6CWHVRC>





RESOURCES

Health Center Medical-Legal Partnership Environmental Scan



Findings Fact Sheet

Available Now

[The Health Center MLP Toolkit](#)



[The Academic MLP \(Report\)](#)

