

Update on our Medical-Legal Partnership in G'ville

Kirby Mitchell
January 19, 2019
Community Access to Children's Health
(CATCH) meeting in Charleston

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Today's presentation:

1. What's an MLP? ... (start with a case example)
2. What's new with our G'ville MLP?
3. MLP opportunities and challenges in South Carolina

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One of my first MLP
clients: Keosha Brown

(her daughter had a
"medical problem,"
right?)

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What is an MLP?

Usually this takes the form of a partnership between a "safety net" hospital and a civil legal aid office...

A medical legal partnership (MLP) takes an integrated upstream approach to addressing and preventing **health-harming civil legal barriers** to patients' health.

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Medical-Legal Partnership (MLP), *noun*, \me-di-kəl lē-gəl pärt-nər-ship\

"legal aid" lawyers embedded in a health care facility to provide comprehensive care by addressing patients' **health-harming civil legal needs**.

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But, wait.... What exactly is "legal aid"?

Free
Legal
Aid



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"Legal Aid" office in downtown G' Vegas



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What is "Legal Aid" ?

- South Carolina Legal Services (SCLS) is a statewide private non-profit law firm that provides civil legal services to protect the rights and represent the interests of low-income South Carolinians. www.sclegal.org



How is SCLS Funded? several sources....

- [Legal Services Corporation \(LSC\)](#) - \$ set by U.S. Congress every year.
- [S.C. Bar Foundation](#) - IOLTA funds
- [United Ways, VOCA, IRS, Title III\(B\)](#), etc.

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Need a Lawyer... What If You Can't Pay?

Generally in the U.S., here are your options:

Criminal Cases: Public Defender

Civil Cases: No right to counsel, but maybe "legal aid" can help.

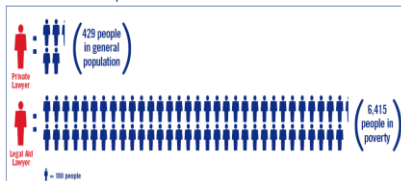
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Justice Gap ("Legal Aid")

Only one legal aid attorney is available for every 6,415 low-income people

Table 6: Comparison of Private Lawyers to General Population and Legal Aid Lawyers to Low-Income Population



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OK, so back to... What's an MLP?

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A medical legal partnership (MLP) takes an integrated upstream approach to addressing and preventing health-harming civil legal barriers to patients' health.

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'Value-based care' can help reduce costs vs. traditional 'fee-for-services' model



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Wide variety in MLPs across the U.S.

Currently established in 333 healthcare institutions in 46 states, with many different specialty areas, including:

- o 155 Hospitals
- o 139 Health Centers
- o 34 Medical / Health Schools
- o 126 Legal Aid Agencies
- o 52 Law Schools
- o 64 Pro Bono Partners



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Lots of diversity among MLPs across the U.S.... some focus area include:



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....and thus: the SC Medical - Legal Partnership (MLP) in G'ville.

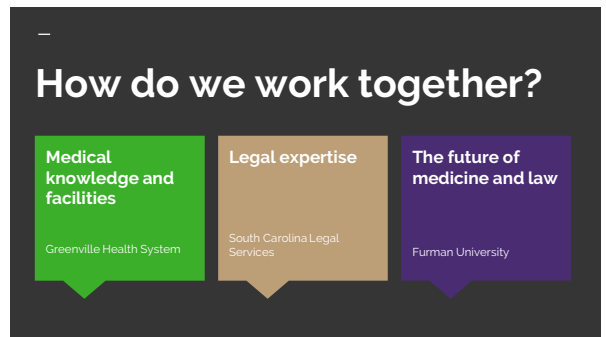
Build a healthcare team able to identify, treat and prevent health-harming legal needs for patients, clinics, and populations.



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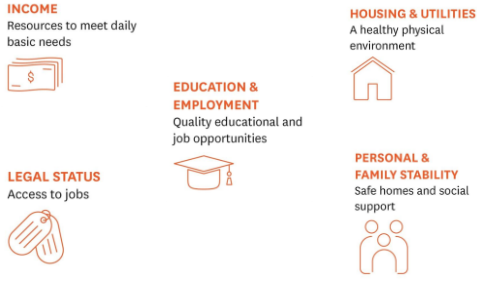


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Remember the I-HELP™ acronym, developed by the National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership.



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What's new with our MLP?

1. Started in GHS Behavioral Pediatrics.... (fall 2016)
2. ... expanded to GHS Pediatrics (early 2017)
3. got a big grant (\$ 592,000 from Healthy Greenville) to expand into GHS Geriatrics... (may 2018)
4. recently got a really big grant from The Duke Endowment for \$ 1 million* for South Carolina's 2 MLPs (G'ville MLP and CHAMPS in Columbia) to collaborate together (GHS + Palmetto Health + USC Law School + Furman)! (nov 2018)

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Cool MLP... so, what else is new?

5. Now getting MLP referrals electronically in EPIC. (january 2018)
6. Will have 4 full-time MLP staff by end of 2018 with a dozen SCLS attorneys in 3 SCLS offices helping handle MLP cases.... (by early 2019)
7. ...will have 4 'embedded' MLP office locations within GHS. (by spring 2019)

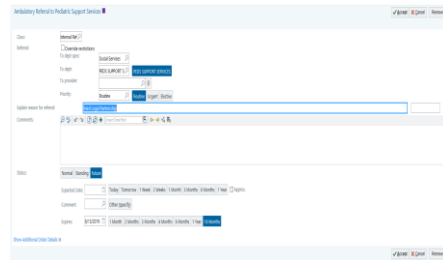
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GHS Pediatric Support Services Model ("the Toolkit").



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GHS's EPIC – direct electronic referrals to the "Toolkit" / MLP – screen shot 1



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GHS's EPIC – direct electronic referrals to the “Toolkit” / MLP – screen shot 2

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Does our MLP partner with pro bono?

1. Greenville Bar's new Pro Bono Board adopted MLP as “priority partner” (2018)
2. Several MLP pro bono cases taken through “Justice Few's software (G-Bar serving as ‘guinea pig’)
3. 1st MLP “impact case” – representing respondent @ S.C. Court of Appeals (“psychological parent” / *de facto* parent case)

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What might our MLP do next?

- **Veterans ?**
Lots of interest in MLP approach from G'ville vet advocacy groups, VA, “veterans court,” etc.
- **Community paramedics ?**
Possible MLP approach partnered with Access Health and outreach / medical ‘home visit’ staff.
- **Pay for Success (PFS) experiment ?**
Focused ‘closed system’ test of MLP Return on Investment (ROI) for ‘safety net’ hospital.

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Exciting MLP opportunities... (and some challenges):

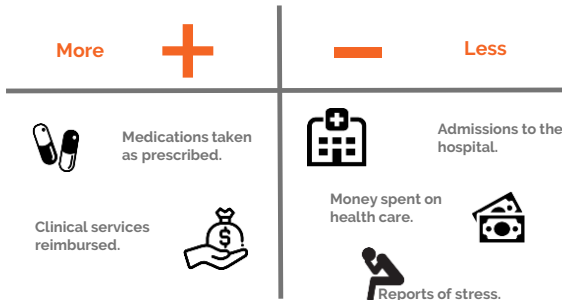
1. Collaboration between GHS + Palmetto-Health (\$ 4 billion company with 28,000 employees, largest in SC)
2. Proposed Medicaid Waiver funding changes in NC – SDOH mandatory screening for 1.2 million Medicaid-eligible patients!
3. Hmm... how to coordinate across South Carolina? (... need a neutral MLP organizer / cheerleader / clearing house?!?)
4. Education of health care professionals on legal screening?

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Is there evidence this works?

What data do we have on MLPs?

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<http://medical-legalpartnership.org/report/>

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Want to learn more about MLPs?

- www.medical-legalpartnership.org – note the 2019 MLP Summit in Washington, D.C. on September 19-20, 2019
- Kirby Mitchell – MLP’s legal director – kirbymitchell@sclegal.org
- Anne Ellefson @ GHS – aellefson@ghs.org
- NY Times article: https://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/07/17/when-poverty-makes-you-sick-a-lawyer-can-be-the-cure/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_php=true&_type=blogs&_r=2&

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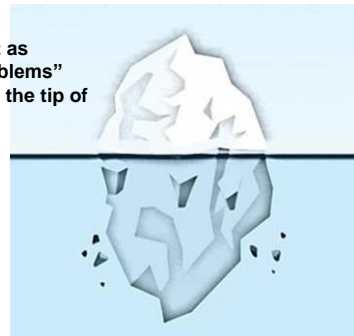


My MLP client Keosha Brown?

(her moldy apt. was not her only civil legal problem...)

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What present as “medical problems” are often just the tip of the iceberg...



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Thanks

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