

# Medical-Legal Partnership

## Description

The medical-legal partnership (MLP) integrates the expertise of health care, public health and legal professionals and staff to address health-harming civil legal needs for patients, clinics and populations.<sup>1</sup> Pediatric settings may offer this service.

## Evidence

- MLPs helped clients address issues such as public benefits, health care coverage and family law issues.<sup>2</sup>
- A letter from an attorney can often get a response when a doctor's or social worker's letter does not.<sup>2</sup>
- Legal assistance targeted at improving housing conditions improved the health of asthma patients.<sup>2</sup>
- MLPs can save patient health care costs and recover cash benefits.<sup>2</sup>
- MLPs show a positive return on investment, and demonstrate a health-focused program that may be sustained and expanded in underserved communities.<sup>3</sup>

## Implementation

You must have early buy-in and support for your MLP from the front lines and administrations of both the health and legal institutions. Potential partners should understand their roles and responsibilities, such as who can authorize funding and who can help navigate training opportunities from each respective organization. To start a MLP, the partnering organizations should conduct a needs assessment to understand their community's needs, resources and landscape. Additionally, MLPs should fully integrate into the health care system and have secure, private office space. These factors contribute to the MLP's success and sustainability.<sup>4</sup>

## Billing and Reimbursement

There is currently no billing code for a medical-legal partnership.

## Resources

National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership  
Department of Health Policy and Management, Milken Institute School of Public Health  
The George Washington University  
2175 K St. NW, 513A  
Washington, DC 20037  
Website: [medical-legalpartnership.org/](http://medical-legalpartnership.org/)

General inquiries:  
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Potential local partnerships:  
New York Legal Assistance Group – LegalHealth  
7 Hanover Square, 18th Floor  
New York, NY 10004  
212-613-5000  
Website: [legalhealth.org/](http://legalhealth.org/)  
Information for Providers: [legalhealth.org/for-providers/](http://legalhealth.org/for-providers/)

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1. Regenstein M, Teitelbaum J, Sharac J, Phyu E. Medical-Legal Partnership and Health Centers: Addressing Patients' Health-Harming Civil Legal Needs as Part of Primary Care. 2015. Retrieved from: <http://medical-legalpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Medical-Legal-Partnership-and-Health-Centers.pdf>.
  2. O'Sullivan MM, Brandfield J, Hoskote SS, Segal SN, Chug L, Modrykamien A, Eden E. Environmental Improvements Brought by the Legal Interventions in the Homes of Poorly Controlled Inner-city Adult Asthmatic Patients: A Proof-of-Concept Study. *Journal of Asthma*. 2012; 49(9): 911-917.
  3. Teufel J, Brown S, Thorne W, Goffinet D, Clemons L. Process and Impact Evaluation of a Legal Assistance and Health Care Community Partnership. *Health Promotions Practice*. 2009; 10(3): 378-385. <http://medical-legalpartnership.org/process-impact-evaluation-legal-assistance-health-care-community-partnership/>.
  4. National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership, George Washington University. Medical Legal Partnership Toolkit Phase I: Laying the Groundwork. (2014). Retrieved from: <https://kresge.org/sites/default/files/Uploaded%20Docs/Medical-Legal-Partnership-toolkit-phase-1.pdf>.