

Health Justice Project

Strategies for Designing or Growing a Thriving Medical-Legal Partnership

November 17, 2016

Allyson E. Gold, JD

Rodin Visiting Clinical Professor of Law
Supervising Attorney, Health Justice Project



Medical-Legal Partnership



Singular Approach to Health

“Medicine, if it is to improve the health of the public, it must attend at one and the same time to its biologic and to its social underpinnings. It is paradoxical that, at the very moment when the scientific progress of medicine has reached unprecedented heights, our neglect of the social roots cripples our effectiveness.”

*Dr. Paul Farmer paraphrasing Dr. Rudolf Virchow,
19th Century German Physician*

Medical-Legal Partnership Overview

- Healthcare delivery model that builds a healthcare team able to identify, treat, and prevent health-harming legal needs for patients, clinics, and populations
- Legal profession becomes part of the health solution
- By partnering, healthcare and legal institutions transform the response to social determinants of health

The Erie Promise

To deliver quality health care with compassion and respect.

To serve our patients in an environment that is warm, welcoming and comfortable.

To promote wellness through health education and preventive care, so that our patients can lead healthier, happier lives.

About Erie

Since 1957, when the Erie Family Health Center was first established as a volunteer clinic by doctors from Northwestern Memorial Hospital, it has been Erie's mission to ensure that all Chicagoans have access to high quality, culturally sensitive, bilingual health care services — regardless of their ability to pay. Today, Erie serves more than 40,000 patients annually at thirteen sites, including five large primary health centers, five school-based health centers, a teen health center and two oral health centers.

Our Mission

At Erie Family Health Center, we believe health care is a right, not a privilege. Our mission is to provide accessible, affordable and high quality health care for those in need.



“Every human being has a right to the best health care that modern medicine can provide.”

Lee Francis, MD. MPH
President and CEO



Erie Fast Facts

About the people we serve

- 79% of Erie's patients are Hispanic
- 54% are best served in Spanish
- 68% are female
- 49% are under the age of 19
- 28% are school-aged children
- 31% are uninsured
- 83% come from households with incomes that fall below the Federal Poverty Line

Health Justice Project Mission

To prevent and remove barriers to long-term health and opportunity for Erie patients and their communities by achieving the following objectives:



- Maintain/Expand the Health Justice Project as a fully integrated MLP
- Identify, treat and prevent health-harming legal needs for patients
- Create a sustainable MLP-model embedded in Erie Family Health Center to provide support to providers and advocacy for patients onsite
- Advocacy for public policy change to improve and protect patient health

History of Erie's MLP

2008-2010

1.0: Skadden Fellowship

- Elder patients eligible

2010-2015

2.0: Law School Based Clinic

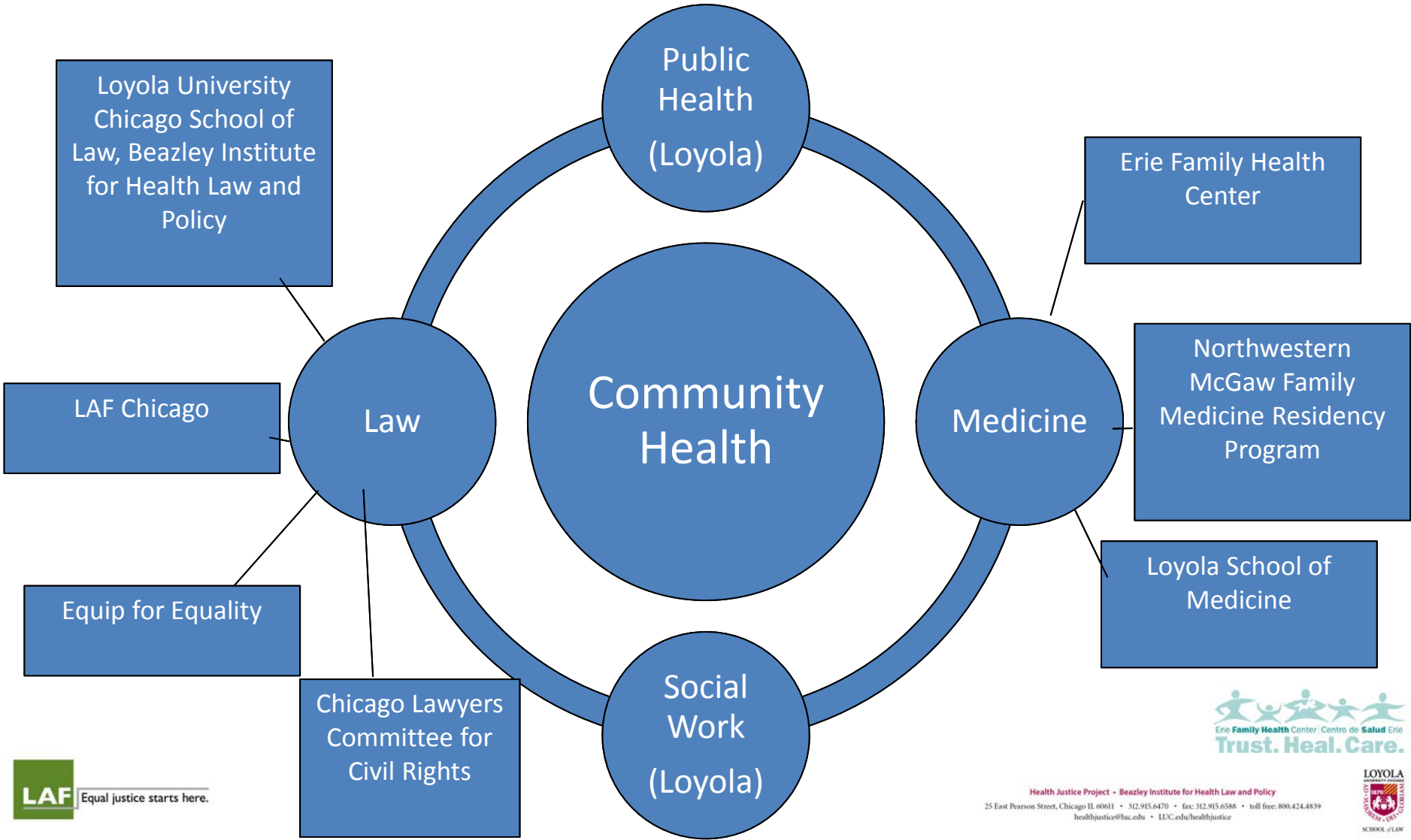
- All patients eligible
- Partnership expansion
- Policy clinic
- Americorps Volunteers
- SDH Specialist (Erie)
- Data Collection

2015-Onward

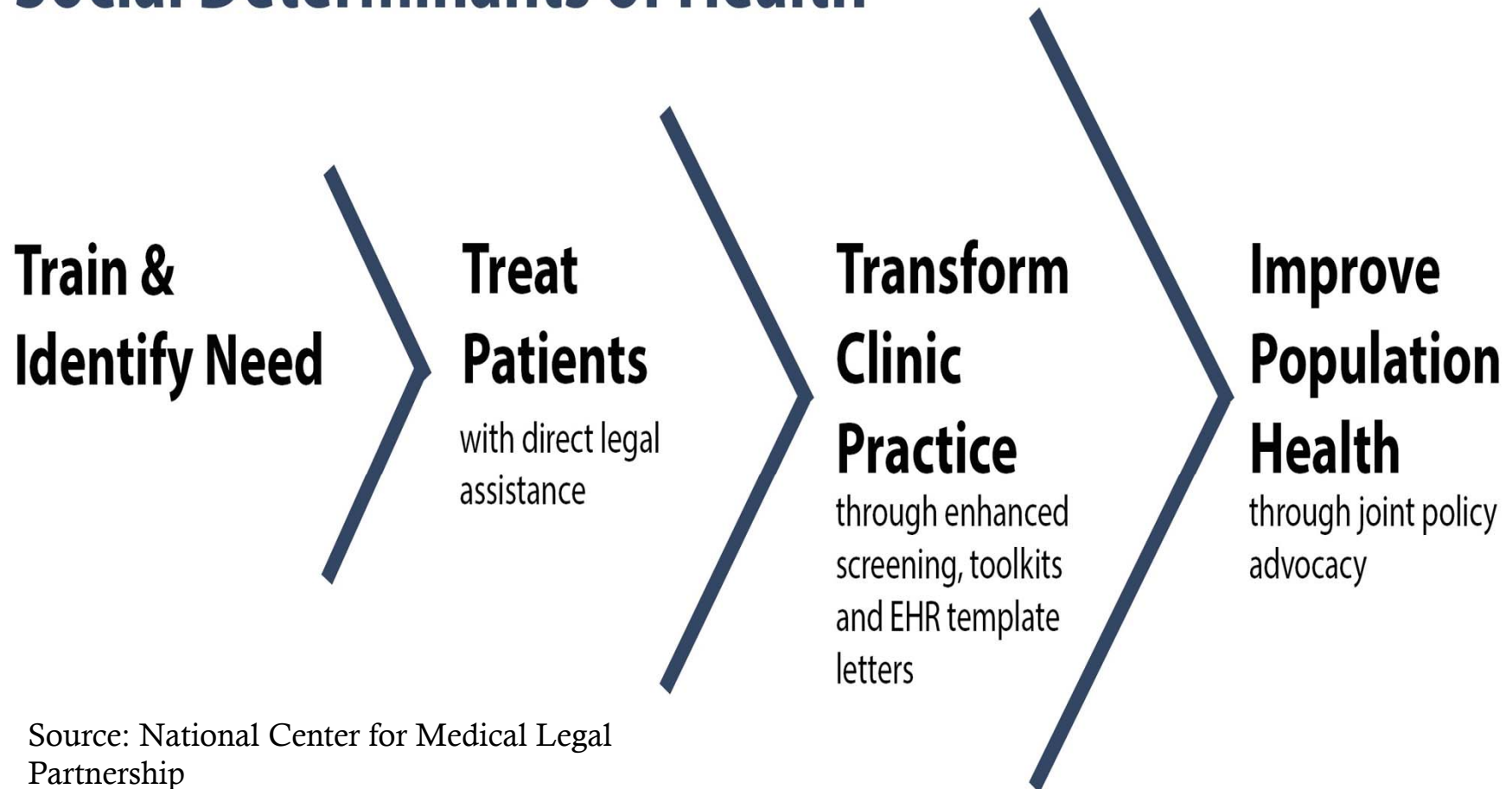
3.0: Fully Integrated MLP

- 2.0+
- MLP Supervising Attorney (Erie)
- LAF Chicago joins partnership
- Local and national policy work
- MLP research study

Health Justice Project: Interprofessional Collaboration to Improve Community Health

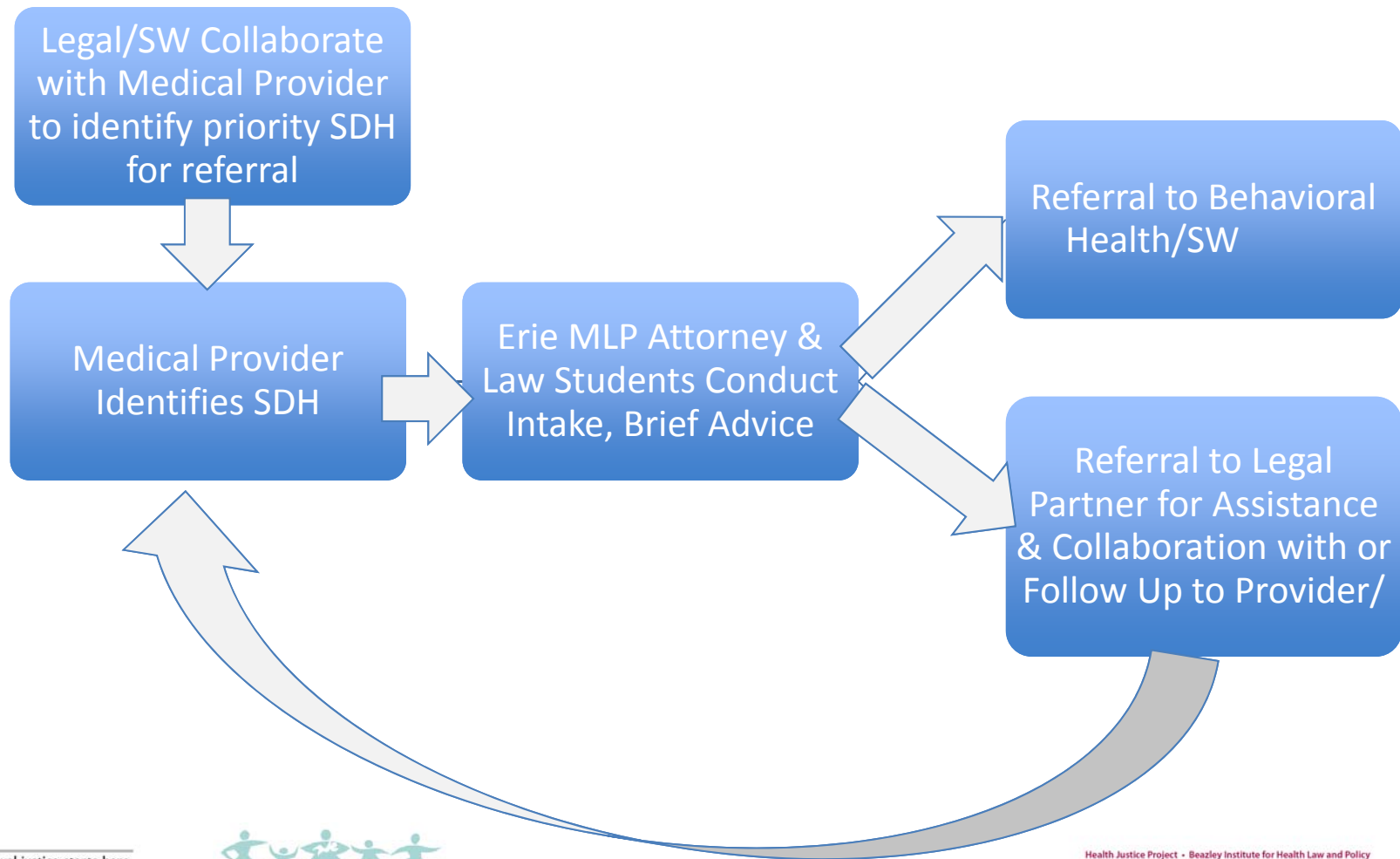


The MLP Approach to the Social Determinants of Health



Source: National Center for Medical Legal Partnership

Partnership Logistics



Legal Assistance – Health Justice Project

Update Orders - Test Angelica 2 Years & 1 Month Old Female, (DOB: 03/16/2012)

Orders: This update Open All Primary Coverage: Family Health Network Medicaid MCO

Date	Description	Status	Diagnosis
05/12/2014	Legal Assistance - Health Justice	Unsigned	

Custom List Categories Search Order Details

Clinical Information

Description: Legal Assistance - Health Justice Project - Erie
Code: 99244
Authorized By: Orellano, Aide
Modifiers:
Instructions: English Spanish Other
Reason for Referral (check all that apply and describe problem below):
Income
Disposition: Admin Hold

Referral Administration

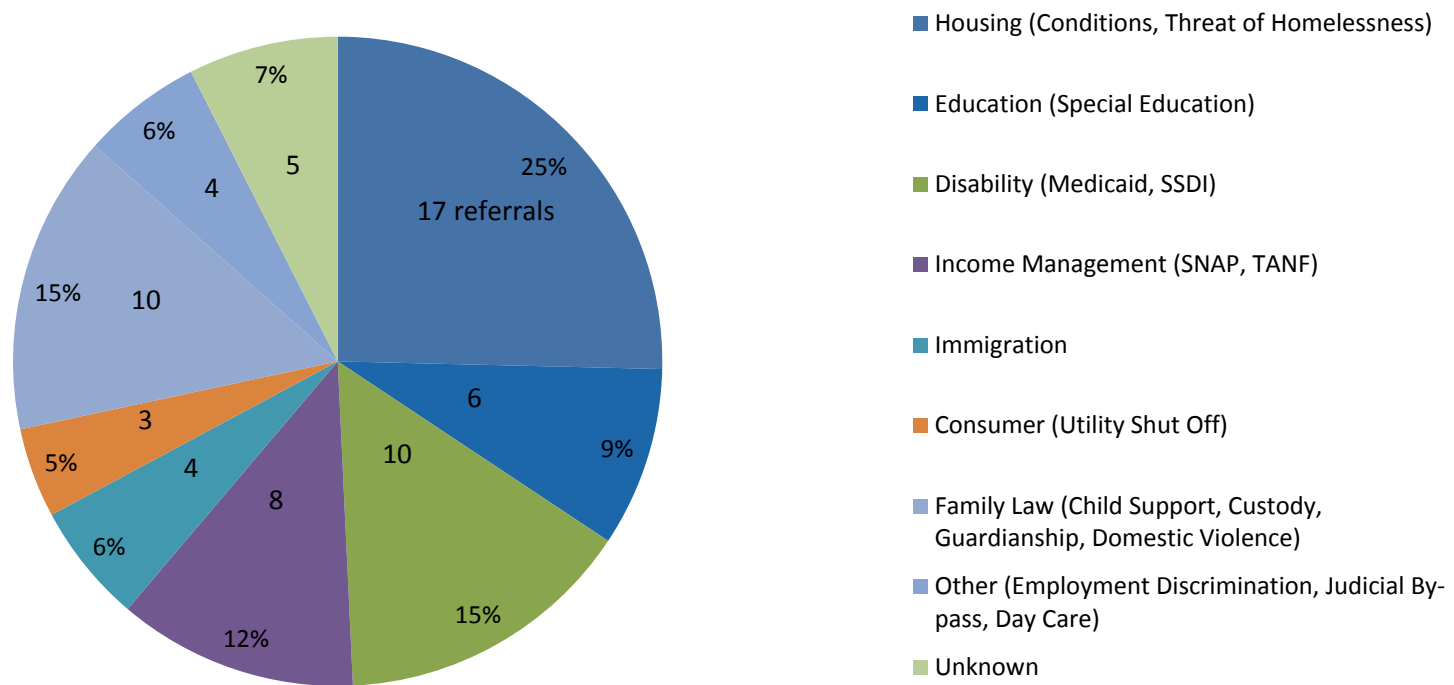
Start Date: 05/12/2014
Duration: 0 Days Weeks Months
Max Visits: 0
Referring To: Erie Family Health Center-All Sites
Insurance Notes:

Identifying Health-Harming Legal Needs

	<i>Legal Area</i>	<i>Sample Social History Questions</i>
I	Income (Income Support, Food Insecurity, Disability Income, Insurance, Medical Debt Forgiveness)	Do you ever have trouble making ends meet? Do you ever have a time when you don't have enough food? Do you have WIC? Food Stamps?
H	Housing (Evictions, Utilities, Poor Conditions, Foreclosures)	Is housing ever a problem for you? Have you noticed signs of infestations or mold? Do you ever have trouble paying the electric or heat bill?
E	Education (Special Education, Bullying in Schools, School Enrollment, Access to Education) and Employment	How is your child doing in school? Is he/she getting the help to learn what he/she needs? Is your child in Head Start, Preschool, or other early childhood program? Are you worried about keeping your job? Do you feel intimidated at work?
L	Legal Status (Immigration)	Do you have questions about your immigration status? Do you need help accessing services or benefits for your family?
P	Personal Status (Powers of Attorney, Guardianship, Living Wills) and Protection (Domestic Violence and Abuse, Orders of Protection)	Do you feel like you have control over your medical decisions? Have you ever taken out a restraining order? Do you feel safe in your relationship?

Health Justice Project Sample Patient Referrals

Patient Referrals September 15, 2015 – October 26, 2015
Total: 67

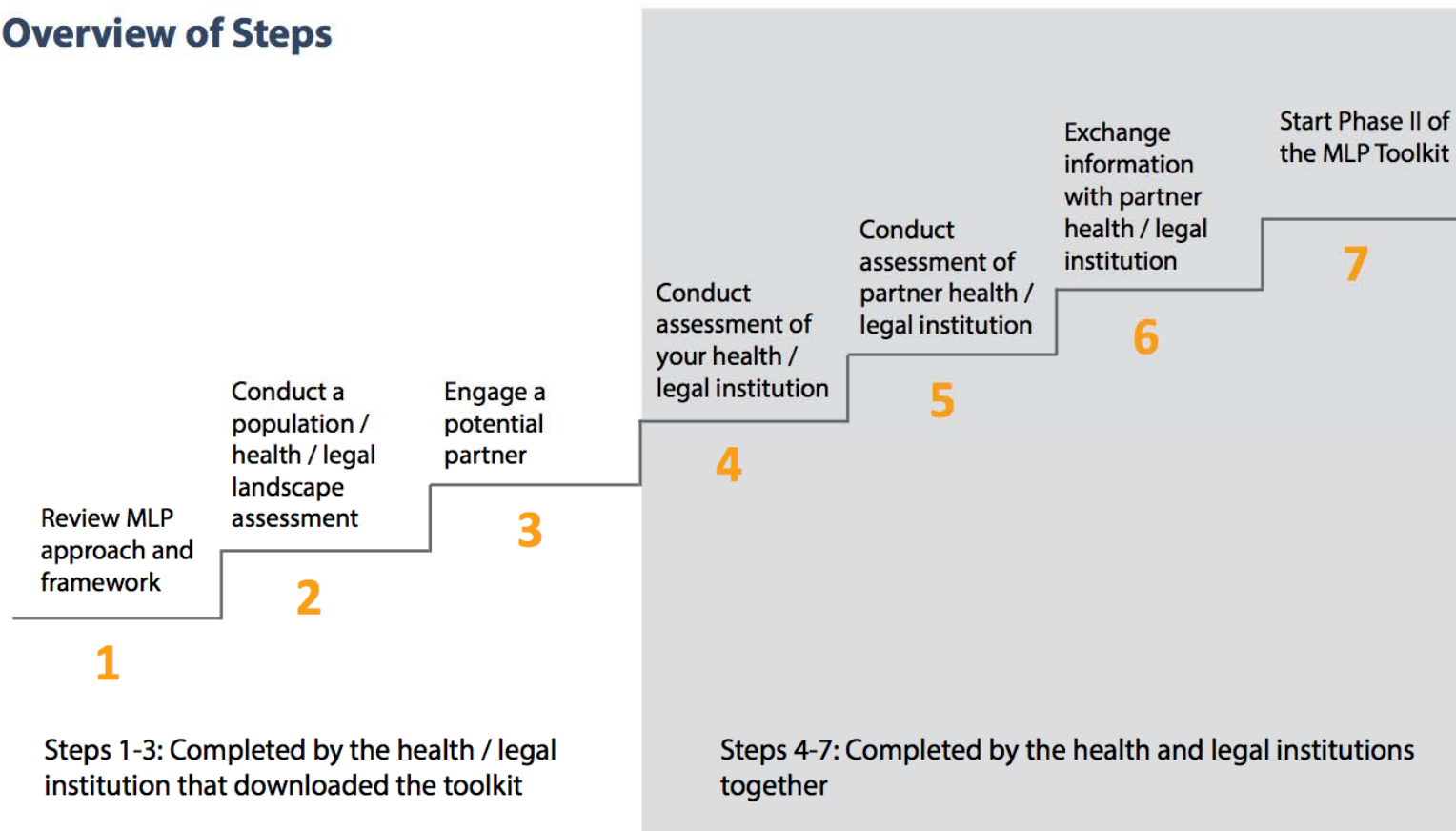


Select Outcomes

- Recognized with the 2015 Outstanding Medical-Legal Partnership Award by the National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership
- Assisted patients and their family members in addressing nearly 3,000 health harming legal issues
- Trained 455 healthcare providers in health justice advocacy
- Contributed equivalent of over \$4 million in attorney's fees
- Over \$560,000 in Medicaid reimbursement
- \$200,000 in Social Security Disability income
- \$60,000 in housing and utility expenses recouped for patient-clients
- 100% success rate in all disability cases with an appealable issue
- Over \$125,000 in outstanding medical debt forgiven in Spring 2015 alone
- Successfully advocated for lead prevention in Chicago's federally assisted housing

Starting Your Medical-Legal Partnership

Overview of Steps



Source: National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership

Addressing Social Determinants of Health



Photo Courtesy of Erie Family Health Center