

# The Importance of Legal Representation for Healthy Patients: Medical-Legal Partnerships in Support of Community Health

Presented at the UTCLE Health Law Conference  
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## Social Determinants of Health

“Conditions in the **environments** where people are **born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age** that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and **quality-of-life outcomes and risks.**”



Healthy People 2030, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved [date graphic was accessed], from <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/social-determinants-health>

# Social Determinants of Health and Medical Legal Partnerships

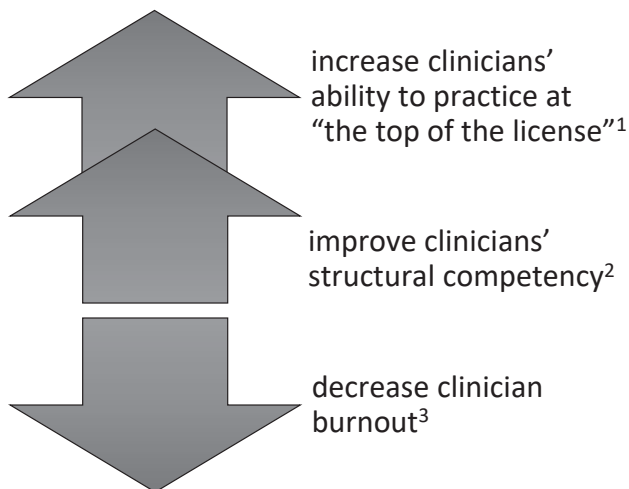
## RESEARCH SHOWS:



<https://medical-legalpartnership.org/>

## Medical-Legal Partnership

### Lawyers as Care Team Members



- [MLP](#) is a healthcare delivery model that integrates legal expertise into patient care by embedding lawyers in the clinical or hospital setting as specialist care team members.
  - In rural areas (and during pandemics), MLP lawyers often work remotely from a law office using telelaw.
- Favorable resolutions and statements from national professional organizations, including the [American Bar Association](#), the [American Medical Association](#), the [American Hospital Association](#), and the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- Formal recommendations from the [National Academy of Medicine](#) to develop the MLP lawyer workforce and to study the contributions of lawyers to health; & from the [American Academy of Arts & Sciences](#) to increase access to justice through MLP

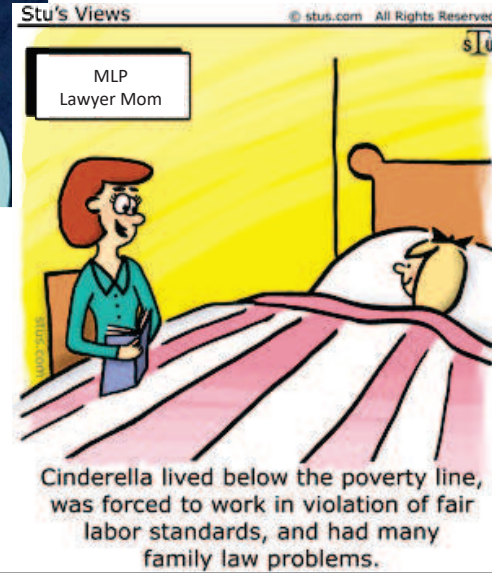
<sup>1</sup>Emilia De Marchis et al, *Physician Burnout and Higher Clinic Capacity to Address Patients' Social Needs*, 32 J. AM. BOARD FAM. MED. 69 (2019), available at <https://doi.org/10.3122/jabfm.2019.01.180104>.

<sup>2</sup>Edward Paul et al, *The Medical-Legal Partnership Approach to Teaching Social Determinants of Health and Structural Competency in Residency Programs*, 92 Acad. Med. 292 (2017).

<sup>3</sup>NATIONAL CENTER FOR MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP, *THE STATE OF THE MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP FIELD* (Aug. 2017), <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/2016-MLP-Survey-Report.pdf>.

# Legal Services Inequities Predict Health Disparities

- Research shows that civil legal aid is positively correlated with health by
  - being available in adequate supply;
  - mitigating poverty and injustice;
  - remediating acute crises; and
  - achieving broader policy gains focused on equity.



James Tuefel et al, Legal Aid Inequities Predict Health Disparities, 38 HAMLINE L. REV. 329 (2015), available at <http://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hlr/vol38/iss2/7>.

## Identify Legal Needs to Address Root Causes



Adapted from Nat'l Ctr. for Med. Leg. P'ship, "How Legal Services Help the Healthcare System Address Social Needs," <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/response/i-help/>.

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## Title search: The Importance of Legal Representation for a Healthy Community: Medical-Legal Partnerships in Support of Community Health

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[2022 Health Law eConference](#)

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33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Health Law Conference session

"The Importance of Legal Representation for a Healthy Community: Medical-Legal Partnerships in Support of Community Health"