

# Homelessness, Health & Medical-Legal Partnerships

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NATIONAL  
HEALTH CARE  
*for the*  
HOMELESS  
COUNCIL

National Center for Medical  Legal Partnership

AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

# HRSA Acknowledgment

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Providing legal assistance where clients get their healthcare can improve their lives in both worlds. People don't think of legal and medical problems as related, but actually resolving one can help the other.



Jack Tsai, PhD  
DIRECTOR, YALE DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES  
AND TREATMENT OUTCOMES RESEARCH

# Agenda & Learning Objectives

## **1. Review of Collaborative Work between NCMLP & NHCHC**

Describe 3 common social and legal needs that affect health of people who are homeless

## **2. Snapshot of Current MLP Activity in Homeless Sector**

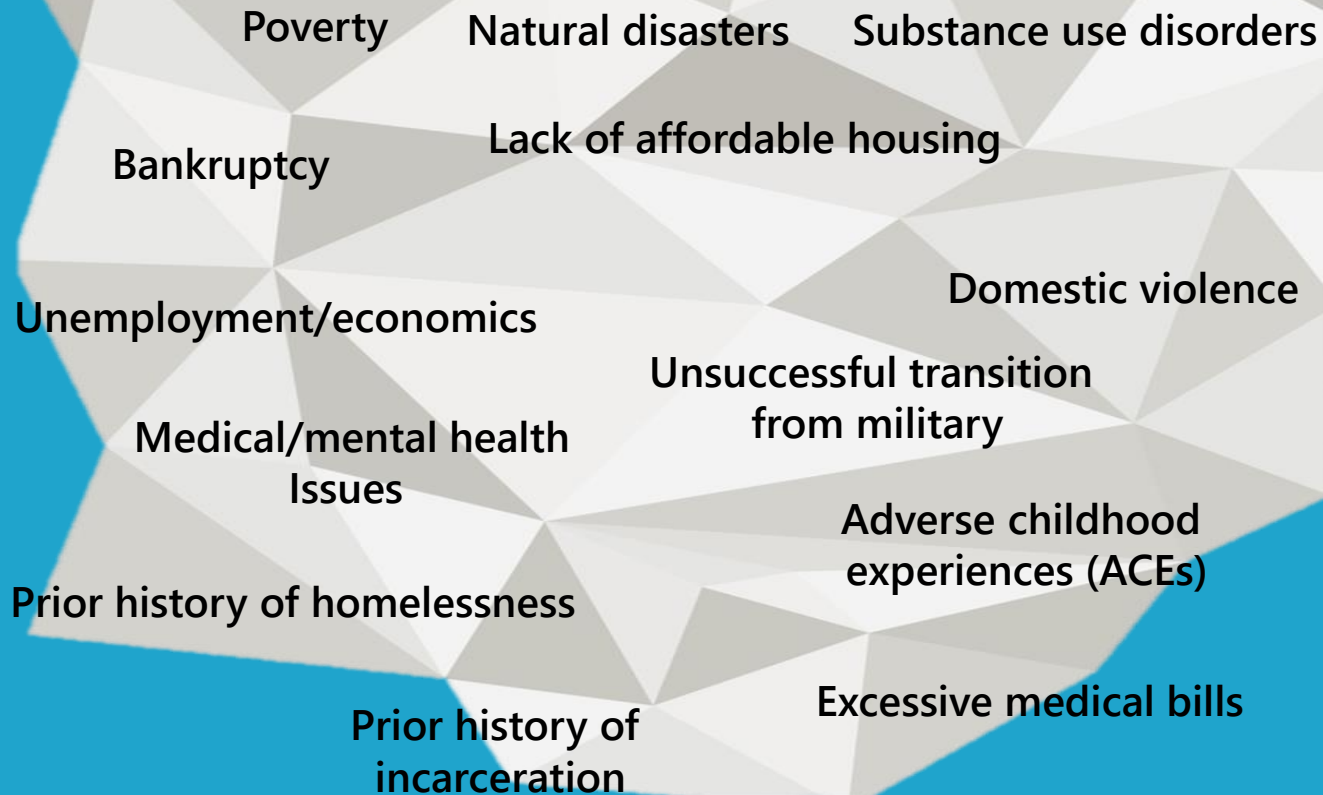
Health Affairs (2017), Homeless Fact Sheet, Santa Clara County Highlight

Describe how lawyers can be integrated into primary care

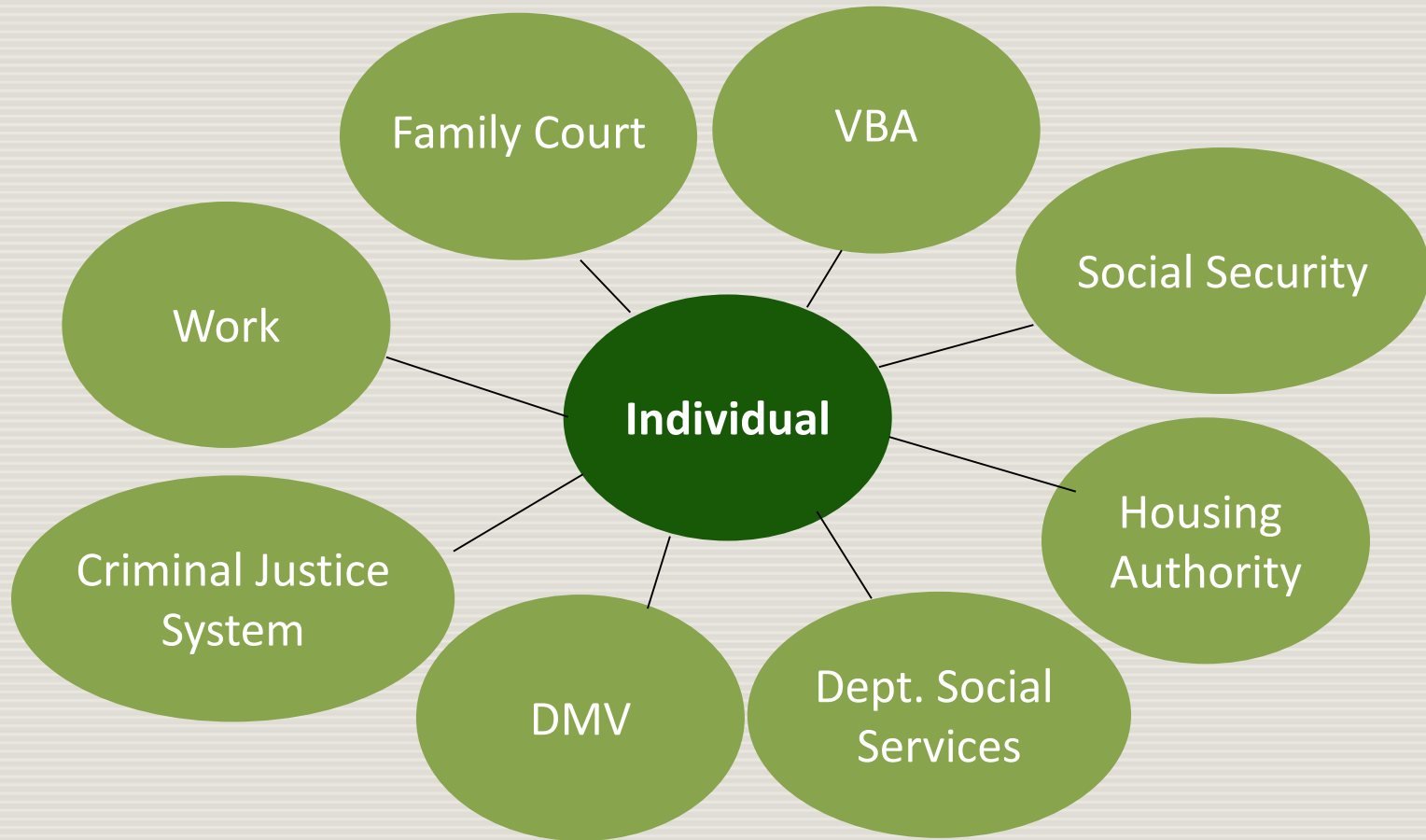
## **3. Learning Collaborative Vision and Activities**

Identify process for applying to MLP Learning Collaborative

# Homelessness



# Complex Legal Systems Drive Social Determinants of Health



# HCH-MLP Survey



## • Objectives

- Identify the highest priority civil legal needs impacting patient health outcomes
- Assess existing relationships between HCH clinics and their legal partner
- Assess training and technical assistance needs to address civil legal issues and develop medical-legal partnerships.

## • Methodology

- Focus Group
- Advisory Committee
- Beta Test
- Administer Online Survey
- 61 PBRN members - Health Care for the Homeless health centers and Medical Respite Care Providers

# HCH-MLP Survey Results



Respondents  
47 sites in 26 different



- Forty-two percent currently screened patients for legal needs.
- 92% - not familiar, very little knowledge or somewhat familiar with civil legal aid programs
- 80% - had not received training on how to screen or assess patients for legal needs



# Highest Priority Civil Legal Needs Impacting Patients Health , Providers

**82%**

Housing, landlord/tenant issues, difficulty placing family, evictions, unsafe housing, housing discrimination (sex offenders, criminal legal issues)

**71%**

Applying for benefits, denial and appeal for benefits, obtaining SSI/SSDI, health insurance, enrollment into entitlement programs

**11%**

Identification issues, stolen identities

**11%**

Immigration/ legal status

# Civil Legal Need Experienced While Homeless, Consumers

**67%**

Employment Needs (inability to find employment, unemployment benefits)

**67%**

Housing, landlord/tenant issues, evictions, unsafe housing, difficulty placing family, housing discrimination (sex offenders, criminal legal issues)






**47%**

Applying for benefits, denial and appeal for benefits, obtaining SSI/SSDI, health insurance, enrollment into entitlement programs

**43%**

Health insurance

# How Lawyers Solve SDOH Problems

SDOH		How Lawyers Can Help
Economic Stability		Denials of public benefits, health insurance, cash benefits, & disability benefits; Evictions; Expunge credit reports
Neighborhood and Built Environment		Substandard conditions & habitability
Equal Access to Work & Education		Employment & education discrimination
Health & Health Care		Emergency access to insurance benefits
Safe Homes & Social Supports		Custody & guardianship for children; Garnishment of wages for child support; Safe housing for returning citizens involved in the justice system

# CT / NY Study of Veterans

- Veterans who received full legal representation showed significant reductions in symptoms of hostility, paranoia, psychosis, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- Veterans who received more medical-legal partnership services showed greater improvements in housing, substance abuse, and mental health, than those who received fewer medical-legal partnership services.

## A Note on the Cost of Medical-Legal Partnership Services Focused on Homeless Veterans

Although the study funded by the Bristol Myers Squibb Foundation did not include an official cost savings analysis, the participating medical-legal partnerships estimated that:

AVG. AMOUNT OF TIME TO  
RESOLVE A LEGAL ISSUE

**5.4**  
HOURS

AVG. COST OF PROVIDING MLP SERVICES  
TO HOMELESS VETERANS

**\$50-\$70**  
AN HOUR

**\$270-\$405**  
PER LEGAL ISSUE ADDRESSED

# Frequent legal needs of individuals who are homeless



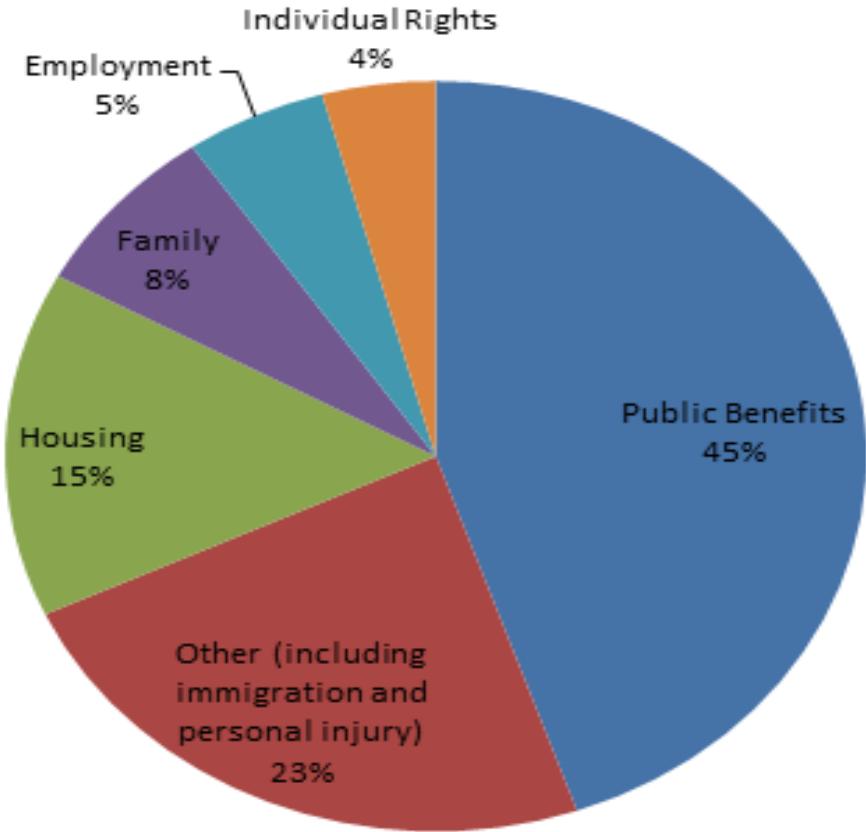
**67%**  
OF CONSUMERS  
experienced at least  
one of the following:



# Silicon Valley MLP at SCVVMC

- 2007: PLANNING began
- 2009: Pediatric services began at VHC Bascom & VHC Gilroy & Adult Services at Valley Specialty Center
- 2012: No longer on-site at Valley Specialty Center but taking referrals
- 2014: Adult services began at Valley Homeless Healthcare Program
- 2016: Pediatric & Adult services began at VHC Downtown
- 2016: Pediatric expansion of age eligibility up to 21 years
- 2017: Winner, National Outstanding MLP Award
- 2018: Expansion of age eligibility for name/gender changes
- 2018: Request from hospital to expand to other departments; including, oncology, palliative care, cardiology and specialty center

# Legal Issues



# HCH-MLP Learning Collaborative

- The goals of this Learning Collaborative project are to:
- Provide an opportunity for peer learning.
- Understand role of MLP within broader SDOH screening and intervention framework.
- Build foundational knowledge required to plan and pilot a medical-legal partnership as part of HCH operations.
- Develop action plans and next steps in Year 1 (December 2018 – May 2019).
- Establish and implement an MLP in Year 2 (July 2019 – June 2020).



# Eligibility Criteria

- 1) Receive 330 funding for special populations or demonstrate that site provides services for homeless or at-risk populations.
- 2) Able to have at least one (1) key staff member commit to participating in all sessions of the Learning Collaborative, and attend the face-to-face meeting.
- 3) Ability to commit to completing all “homework” assignments and self-assessments.

# Participant Expectations

- Get leadership buy in and sign off on participation.
- Participate in three- 90 minutes interactive virtual trainings (December – March), including completion of polls and/ or homework so progress can be monitored and one face to face meeting May 2019.
- Complete MLP Action Plan, which might include submitting progress reports with data, between sessions.
- Share MLP Action Plan and next steps with other Learning Collaborative participants during Virtual Training #3, March 2019.
- Report Progress on Action Plan and next steps at the face-face meeting in May 2019.
- Commit to participating in Learning Collaborative and implementing Action Plan in Year 2.

# HCH-MLP Learning Collaborative

Applications due: December 6, 2018 11:59 EST.

Notifications provided: December 14, 2018.

Self- assessment: Link and homework resources due by January 11, 2019.

Virtual Training 2: Case Study on MLP - January 30, 2019 2:00 pm EST.

Coaching Session: Focus on Action Plan. Provide TA - February 27, 2019 - 2:00 pm EST.

Virtual Training 3: Participants Share Action Plans - March 13, 2019 - 2:00 pm EST

Face-to-Face Training 4: Report Progress on Action Plan –  
HCH National Conference - May 2019

# Application Link

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HCH-MLP>

“ Our legal partner has helped many people get into housing. They have intervened when landlords are not following fair housing protocols, or when landlords put layers of invalid charges on credit reports lowering credit scores to keep people out of housing. An attorney can work to get these charges taken off. MLPs work well for individuals and families who are homeless.

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Charita McCollers, MSW, LCSW,  
LINCOLN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER, NORTH CAROLINA

# Contact Information

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