

It's simple. Many people need legal care to be healthy.

MLP SUCCESS STORY

A Haitian woman, raising her two children as a single mother, recently lost her job due to physical injury at work and had trouble keeping up with the rent. Her landlord started eviction proceedings.

The **HealthLeads** Help Desk at **BMC Pediatrics** consulted with MLP | Boston, and we oriented Mom to the housing court process through our attorney who is fluent in Haitian Creole. Mom got *pro se* support from advocacy teams based at the courthouse, and she was able to successfully complete the paperwork that responds to an eviction action.

This initial success gave us time to find a lawyer to represent the family in the eviction case. We reached out to our *pro bono* panel, and an associate from [Foley Hoag LLP](#), **Melissa Stewart**, stepped up right away. Having spent some time in Haiti, Melissa was especially excited to work with this family. Melissa successfully averted the eviction by representing the family in negotiation of a payment plan. She continues to support the family in its rent recertification process to ensure their rent calculation is accurate. Thank you, Melissa and Foley Hoag!



Melissa Stewart

MLP IN THE NEWS

PROMISING FINDINGS FROM RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL INVOLVING MLP INTERVENTION

There is new evidence that legal advocates have a key role to play in addressing **social determinants of health**, non-biological conditions that increasingly are understood to be key drivers of patients' health and well-being. A new approach to health care for low-income families of newborns **successfully addressed a range of concrete needs** — such as access to food and nutrition programs, utility service, and other key benefits — and also led to **better adherence to recommended well-child checkups and fewer emergency department visits**.

As described in the study, "[Medical-Legal Strategies to Improve Infant Health Care: A Randomized Trial](#)," published in the July 2015 issue of *Pediatrics* (published online June 1, 2015), over a roughly two-year period researchers based at [Boston Medical Center](#) paired families of newborns with a family specialist who supported the family during routine well visits, at one home visit, and through email, text and phone communications. The family specialist was equipped with intensive training, coaching, and back-up from legal advocates at [MLP | Boston](#), as well as with training in the [Healthy Steps for Young Children](#) approach.

At the time of their child's birth, most study participants reported at least one material hardship, such as food insecurity, housing concerns, or trouble paying utility bills, and many families had multiple hardships. Relative to parents in the control group, parents who received services from an MLP-backed family specialist reported better success in securing utility assistance, food support programs and other resources — not merely becoming aware of those supports or attempting to obtain them. In addition, families in the intervention group were found to have improved rates of on-time immunization and preventive care, and decreased emergency department utilization.

MLP ON THE MOVE

- We were honored to present at the June 18 **Research on Care Community Health Equity (ROCChE)** virtual meeting hosted by the [American Association of Medical Colleges \(AAMC\)](#). If you want to learn more about *Moving Electronic Health Records Upstream*, check out the proceedings [here](#) and a helpful AAMC article on that topic [here](#).
- **"In Cancer Care We're Trying to Get to Cure"**: Listen to our collaborator **Naomi Ko, MD, MPH** of [Boston Medical Center](#) and the [Boston University School of Medicine](#) [share her thoughts on MLP](#) during a roundtable of health care providers at the annual national MLP Summit in MacLean, VA last April.

NEW PROJECTS

- We are proud to be part of the [Vital Village Network](#) which in April was named as one of 24 coalitions across the country that will receive funding from the [Institute for Healthcare Improvement \(IHI\)](#) to support promising community-based work on health improvement, as part of the SCALE (Spreading Community Accelerators through Learning and Evaluation) initiative. Made possible by a \$4.8 million grant from the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#), and led by IHI, Community Solutions, Communities Joined in Action, and the Collaborative Health Network, SCALE will help communities further their capability to improve the health of targeted populations and develop way to share and spread community-driven approaches across the country.
- We agree that [Health Starts at Home!](#) Thanks to [The Boston Foundation](#), we'll have a chance to support a planning process led by [Children's HealthWatch](#) aimed at *Designing and Stocking the Housing Pharmacy: Pairing Health Care and Housing Dollars to Improve Stability and Health*. We're excited to cross-pollinate with the many organizations participating in this effort, which span the healthcare, community development, and housing-related human services sectors.

ADVISORY BOARD UPDATES

- We are thrilled to welcome **Geoffrey W. Wilkinson, MSW**, to our Advisory Board. Geoff is a Clinical Associate Professor at the [Boston University School of Social Work](#), specializing in community health promotion. Geoff also teaches health politics and policy at the [Boston University School of Public Health](#). **Geoff Wilkinson**
- **Roberta Rosenberg, M.Ed.**, recently authored an article published by [Third Sector New England](#). Check out her reflections in [The Unique Role of Nonprofits: The Case for Independence and Interdependence](#). **Roberta Rosenberg**



2015 MLP REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Our 6th annual conference will be held on **Tuesday, November 3, 2015** at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. Check out [conference sponsorship opportunities](#) here!

NEW TEAM MEMBER

We are pleased to be hosting and undergraduate fellow, **Kanika Vaish**, through the [Wellesley College Lumpkin Summer Institute for Service Learning](#). This 10-week program is designed for students with a commitment to service, and challenges them to participate in social change in the Greater Boston Area.

Here, in her own words, are Kanika's goals for her fellowship:



As a rising junior at Wellesley studying English and Political Science, I am keen on investigating the intersection between health equity and social policy. Having lived in India for the past eight years, I have been able to observe how lack of access to legal support and poverty/social exclusion go hand-in-hand. I am very excited to witness and be involved in the active pursuit of health equity through legal strategies at MLP this summer, and hope to experience similar opportunities in the future.

Welcome Kanika!

WE'VE MOVED!



Our new address is: **75 Arlington Street, Suite 500, Boston, MA 02116**

Our phone (617) 336-7500 and fax (617) 336-7445 numbers remain the same.

MLP | Boston's mission is to equip healthcare, public health and human services teams with legal problem-solving strategies that promote health equity for vulnerable people. We are a fiscally sponsored program of [Third Sector New England, Inc.](#)

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