



October 1, 2024
For Immediate Release

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Community Health Centers Launch Medical Legal Partnership

Madison, WI - The Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association (WPHCA), in collaboration with several organizations across the state, is thrilled to announce a new Medical Legal Partnership (MLP) pilot program serving Community Health Center patients in three Wisconsin communities. Partners include Judicare Inc., Legal Action of Wisconsin, Noble Community Clinics, NorthLakes Community Clinic, and Lakeshore Community Health Care, with program evaluation from the UW-Madison Center for Community and Nonprofit Studies and project management by WPHCA. Through this two-year pilot, patients at Community Health Centers will be screened for legal needs and receive a warm handoff to the appropriate legal partners in their region, which will provide free civil legal services.

Wisconsin's Community Health Center-based MLP aims to address the Social Drivers of Health (SDOH), or health-harming issues beyond the clinical setting. In particular, the pilot will begin by focusing on housing-related issues and public benefit denials. Due to changes following the COVID-19 pandemic (for example, conclusion of an eviction moratorium) and other environmental factors, partners are prioritizing these areas due to the potential to positively impact patients' overall health and financial stability. The two-year pilot hopes to serve 300 patients with civil legal needs annually. Building on existing successes from Community Health Centers in SDOH work, the MLP aligns with their dedication to improve whole-person and community health.

Funding for this project was provided by the UW School of Medicine and Public Health from the Wisconsin Partnership Program. Learn more at <https://www.wphca.org/medical-legal-partnership/>.

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WPHCA is the member association for Wisconsin's 19 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs, or Community Health Centers). Community Health Centers are non-profit, community-directed medical, dental, and behavioral health clinics. Visit wphca.org to find a Community Health Center near you.