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## National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership

### What the National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership Is and Does

The National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership (“Center,” or “NCMLP”) “leads education, research, and technical assistance efforts to help every health organization in the United States leverage legal services as a standard part of the way they respond to social needs.”<sup>i</sup>

The Center is a project in the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Milken Institute School of Public Health at the George Washington University (“GWU”).<sup>ii</sup>

The Bob Woodruff Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are the primary financial supporters of the Center, although it receives significant funding from the government as well.<sup>iii</sup> The Center is a Health Resources and Services Administration (“HRSA”)-funded National Training and Technical Assistance Partner.<sup>iv</sup> NCMLP has a number of partners in the medical and legal communities, including the American Bar Association, the American Medical Association, and the U.S. Department

of Veterans Affairs.<sup>v</sup> Bethany Hamilton and Joel Teitelbaum are the co-directors of the NCMLP.<sup>vi</sup> Teitelbaum is also a professor of public health and law at the GWU.<sup>vii</sup> The Center also employs four other staff members.<sup>viii</sup>

The Center primarily publishes numerous free resources, including issue briefs and reports, about different topics in the medical-legal partnership (“MLP”) space for use by health care providers, legal services providers, and policymakers seeking to build and maintain MLPs.<sup>ix</sup> For example, in 2018 the Center published a fact sheet about

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the United States.<sup>xii</sup> More recently, the Center published an issue brief describing the legal needs facing socially vulnerable older adults and the ways that MLPs can help address those needs.<sup>xiii</sup>

The Center, in partnership with other organizations, also operates the Social Determinants of Health (“SDOH”) Academy, which provides free training to health centers and their partners to “develop, implement, and sustain SDOH interventions in their clinics and communities.”<sup>xiv</sup>

Additionally, the Center advocates for the development of MLPs both to the public and to policymakers.<sup>xv</sup>

Finally, the Center performs contract work for health care providers in the public and private sector to build out MLPs. For example, the Center is currently developing performance measures for MLPs associated with Department of Veterans Affairs healthcare so that those providers can evaluate and improve their programs’ efficacy.<sup>xvi</sup>

### **History of the Center**

The Center was founded in 2006 at Boston Medical Center.<sup>xvii</sup> Ellen Lawton served as founding director and co-director of the Center from 2006 to 2020.<sup>xviii</sup> Lawton was one of the first lawyers involved in medical-legal partnership, which was developed as a recognizable concept and coined as a term at Boston Medical Center in the 1990s.<sup>xix</sup> Teitelbaum was involved with the Center since at least before its move to the GWU.<sup>xx</sup>

The Center moved to the GWU in 2012.<sup>xxi</sup> The move was made possible due partly to

funding from the Kresage Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.<sup>xxii</sup>

According to Teitelbaum, this move led the Center to develop new relationships with federal government partners like the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Justice.<sup>xxiii</sup>

In 2017, the Center founded The Social Determinants of Health Academy.<sup>xxiv</sup>

Hamilton became the new co-director of the Center on August 31, 2020.<sup>xxv</sup>

### **Geographic Distribution of the Center**

Because the Center is part of the GWU, it is located in Washington, D.C.<sup>xxvi</sup>

However, the Center does partner with organizations across the country.<sup>xxvii</sup> The Center has aided over 450 hospitals and health centers all over the United States.<sup>xxviii</sup>

For example, the Center recently announced a partnership with Kaiser Permanente, a leading health care provider, through the East Bay Community Foundation in northern California.<sup>xxix</sup> The partnership will seek to connect health systems to legal resources to promote housing stability and prevent evictions.<sup>xxx</sup>

Outside of the Center’s individual work, NCMLP reports that medical-legal partnerships serve individuals in 49 states and the District of Columbia.<sup>xxxi</sup>

## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> *About the National Center*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/about-us/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>ii</sup> *Id.*

<sup>iii</sup> *National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership*, IMPACT ANALYSTS, <https://www.impactcatalysts.co/financial-sustainability/ncmlp/> (last visited May 25, 2022); *Funders*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, [HTTPS://MEDICAL-LEGALPARTNERSHIP.ORG/ABOUT-US/FUNDERS/](https://medical-legalpartnership.org/about-us/funders/) (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>iv</sup> *News*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/news/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>v</sup> *Partners*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, [HTTPS://MEDICAL-LEGALPARTNERSHIP.ORG/ABOUT-US/PARTNERS/](https://medical-legalpartnership.org/about-us/partners/) (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>vi</sup> *Staff*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/about-us/staff/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>vii</sup> *Joel Teitelbaum*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/mlp-team/joel-teitelbaum/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>viii</sup> *Staff*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/about-us/staff/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>ix</sup> *National Center Initiatives*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/impact/initiatives/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>x</sup> *National Center Initiatives*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/impact/initiatives/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>xi</sup> *Fact Sheet: Transgender health and medical-legal partnerships*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP (Aug. 9, 2018), <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/mlp-resources/transgender-health/>.

<sup>xii</sup> Marsha Regenstien, Jennifer Trott, & Alanna Williamson, *Report: Findings from the 2016 NCMLP national survey on MLP activities and trends*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP (AUG. 3, 2017), [HTTPS://MEDICAL-LEGALPARTNERSHIP.ORG/MLP-RESOURCES/2016-NCMLP-SURVEY-REPORT/](https://medical-legalpartnership.org/mlp-resources/2016-ncmlp-survey-report/).

<sup>xiii</sup> Liz Tobin Tyler, *Brief: Socially vulnerable older adults & medical-legal partnership*, NAT'L CTR. FOR

MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP (Mar. 12, 2019), <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/mlp-resources/older-adults/>.

<sup>xiv</sup> *National Center Initiatives*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/impact/initiatives/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>xv</sup> *See id.*

<sup>xvi</sup> *Id.*

<sup>xvii</sup> *About the National Center*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/about-us/> (last visited May 25, 2022); *National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership*, IMPACT ANALYSTS,

<https://www.impactcatalysts.co/financial-sustainability/ncmlp/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>xviii</sup> *National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership names Bethany Hamilton as new Director*, GW PUBLIC HEALTH (Sept. 14, 2020), <https://publichealth.gwu.edu/content/national-center-medical-legal-partnership-names-bethany-hamilton-new-director>.

<sup>xix</sup> Gaby Galvin, *An Rx for Lawyers*, US NEWS (Oct. 5, 2018), <https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/articles/2018-10-05/q-a-how-medical-legal-partnerships-promote-health-equity>.

<sup>xx</sup> *National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership moves to its new home at the George Washington University*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP (Jan. 16, 2013), <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/national-center-medical-legal-partnership-moves-new-home-george-washington-university/>.

<sup>xxi</sup> Gaby Galvin, *An Rx for Lawyers*, US NEWS (Oct. 5, 2018), <https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/articles/2018-10-05/q-a-how-medical-legal-partnerships-promote-health-equity>.

<sup>xxii</sup> *National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership moves to its new home at the George Washington University*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP (Jan. 16, 2013), <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/national-center-medical-legal-partnership-moves-new-home-george-washington-university/>.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Gaby Galvin, *An Rx for Lawyers*, US NEWS (Oct. 5, 2018), <https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/articles/2018-10-05/q-a-how-medical-legal-partnerships-promote-health-equity>.

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<sup>xxiv</sup> *National Center Initiatives*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/impact/initiatives/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>xxv</sup> *5 questions with our new Director, Bethany Hamilton*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP (Sept. 22, 2020), <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/5-questions-with-our-new-director-bethany-hamilton/>.

<sup>xxvi</sup> *Contact Us*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/about-us/contact-us/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>xxvii</sup> *National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership (NCMLP)*, HEALTH CTR. RES. CLEARINGHOUSE, <https://www.healthcenterinfo.org/national-center-for-medical-legal-partnership-ncmlp/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>xxviii</sup> *The Response*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/response/> (last visited May 25, 2022).

<sup>xxix</sup> *The National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership at the George Washington University Partners with Leading Health System Kaiser Permanente to Improve Housing Stability, Prevent Homelessness, and Advance Health Equity*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP (July 21, 2021), <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/the-national-center-for-medical-legal-partnership-at-the-george-washington-university-partners-with-leading-health-system-kaiser-permanente-to-improve-housing-stability-prevent-homelessness/>.

<sup>xxx</sup> *Id.*

<sup>xxxi</sup> *Impact*, NAT'L CTR. FOR MED. & LEGAL P'SHIP, <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/impact/> (last visited May 25, 2022).