



MedStar Georgetown University Hospital

Medical-Legal Partnership Makes Health Inroads for D.C. Children

The city's most vulnerable children face many impediments to a healthy life. But now, when a mix of social factors contributes to the poor health of D.C.'s youngest residents, Georgetown's Health Justice Alliance is there to help.

MedStar Georgetown Community Pediatrics has partnered with the Health Justice Alliance (HJA), a medical-legal collaboration between Georgetown Law Center and the Georgetown University Medical Center to provide health care, social services, and legal advocacy for families and children.

"The program got underway last year and has already made a real difference for dozens of families," explains Joanne Odom, LICSW, Community Pediatrics Program Administrator. "We now conduct a 'legal check-up' for patients at our Kids Mobile Medical Clinic and school-based health center at Anacostia SHS and the HOYA clinic."

At every child's well visit, providers are using a screening tool developed by HJA to identify barriers to health, such as unsafe housing, food insecurity, lack of access to education, and child custody.

"When we identify patients who may have an unmet legal need we refer them to the HJA Law Clinic," says Social Worker Audrey Neff, LICSW. "A law student, supervised by faculty, subsequently makes contact with the family."

In just one year, 100 patients have been referred to the HJA Law Clinic for free assistance, with 25 patient families receiving legal representation on legal issues. The Law Clinic has also

Letter From the President

The Jesuit tradition in which our Hospital was founded is deeply rooted in serving our community.

Our newest partnership, highlighted in this report, uses an innovative model to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for those disproportionately affected by disease, as well as social, environmental, and economic barriers to good health.

We are very proud of this program, which highlights our long-standing tradition of serving the families of the District of Columbia.

Thank you for your support of our Hospital, and for recognizing our commitment to the community we so proudly serve.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Sachtleben

President, MedStar Georgetown University Hospital
Senior Vice President, MedStar Health

connected 60 families to community resources and other free legal providers.

"They have a deeper understanding of the complexities of issues such as D.C. Medicaid, and public benefits," says Neff. "What may take us multiple calls to unravel, they already understand."

Has the HJA made a difference? "One-hundred percent yes," says Odom. "For example, a teen and his grandmother, who has end-stage renal failure, were living
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Medical-Legal Partnership Makes Health Inroads for D.C. Children (continued)

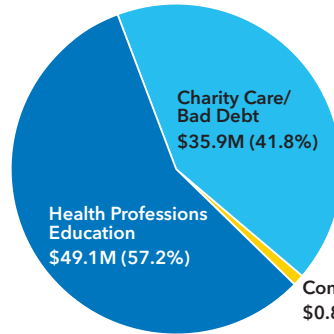
without electricity and heat. The health and legal teams helped the family secure emergency and ongoing utility assistance, public benefits, and debt forgiveness.”

A family of six whose Medicaid had been wrongly denied now has coverage and medications for their child with disabilities. A family who didn't have food for a full week each month obtained Supplemental Security Income and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families to fill the gap.

“This has changed the way we talk to our patients—and has a real impact on the health of families,” says Neff. “It’s been a god-send.”



2018 Community Benefit Contribution: \$85.8M



*Includes subsidies, community health improvement services, community building activities, financial contributions, and community benefit operations.

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