



Montana Health Justice Partnership

WHAT WORKS PROJECT 21 IN MONTANA

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

The Montana Health Justice Partnership (MHJP) improves patient health by addressing health-harming legal needs of patients whose health solutions lay outside the boundaries of medicine. The Partnership integrates legal staff into health teams for matters such as moldy housing, family violence, and medical debt – which all negatively impact patient health.

Activities include: Train health and legal teams to work collaboratively to screen and refer patients for health-harming legal needs; provide legal advice and representation; and improve policies that impact community health.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Patients who visit participating health centers in Havre, Libby, and Great Falls and migrant farm worker clinics in Billings, Dillion, Fairview and Lolo.

MAJOR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

Montana Legal Services Association, Montana Primary Care Association, Bullhook Community Health Center, Northwest Community Health Center, Community Health Care Center, Montana Ag Worker Health and Services, Montana Healthcare Foundation, Montana Justice Foundation, and Legal Services Corporation

MAJOR OUTCOMES

The partnership steering committee developed a formal evaluation plan to evaluate project in its first year. Year 1 resulted in 366 patient referrals, 228 legal intakes, and 155 case referrals. Those assisted received an average of \$859 in economic benefits and 94 percent reported improved health.

INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS

The MHJP consists of partners from different sectors who share the same mission and vision for their work. This makes collaborating easier since the partnership has communal goals. All partners invest money, staff, and office resources. The common goals have attracted support from foundations focusing on justice and health improvement.

The MHJP has also used technology to manage the project, collect data, and enable medical and legal partners to communicate more easily.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

“Success requires buy-in from all levels of partner staff; their feedback is important in order to develop an effective and sustainable partnership. Technology solutions can be worth the investment— collecting outcomes data is critical for evaluating impact and demonstrating value to partners and patients. A good data system can also help to reduce administrative burden.”

— Kallie Dale-Ramos, Montana Legal Services Association