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***Leaders in Health and Human Service Integration  
Spotlight Opportunities to Promote Access to  
Social, Economic, and Environmental Supports***

**Boston, MA:** Today at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, MLPB convened leaders in healthcare, human services, public health, and law to examine **barriers to people’s social health and emerging strategies to eliminate those barriers and reduce system costs**. Themed “**Unlocking Access**,” this event brought together cross-sector stakeholders who recognize that the national evolution toward accountable care – a “value over volume” approach well underway in Massachusetts and Rhode Island – creates a new landscape for improving individual and population health.

According to event panelist **Baraka Floyd**, MD, MSc, Clinical Assistant Professor at Stanford School of Medicine and Consulting Lead on MLPB’s *Unlocking Access* Special Initiative, “Care teams can help connect individuals and families to resources that are high-impact for social health – but doing so demands new kinds of learning and effort that transcends typical ‘screen and refer’ paradigms. From communicating in strengths-based ways to facilitating appropriate paperwork required by a state agency in order to release benefits, care teams are operating in a high-stakes new frontier.”

Grounded in [MLPB’s expertise in building workforce capacity to promote people’s social health](#), an expert panel moderated by **Tara Murphy** of **MassHealth** (Deputy Director, DSRIP Statewide Investments) spotlighted key ingredients for an integrated social care ecosystem that harnesses the full power of health workforces to meet people’s needs.

Examples include:

- Making care delivery environments welcoming and inclusive for all

- Improving engagement with people's requests for medical certifications that *unlock access* to critical social health supports, such as disability benefits
- Navigating the tensions inherent in strengths-based communication (and trust-building) with individuals and families, and mandated reporting obligations
- Rebalancing clinic-based care and community-based care through community health workforce integration and leadership

“The Foundation is proud to sponsor MLPB’s Special Initiative on *Unlocking Access*, which is supporting cross-sector colleagues in Massachusetts – including many community health workers – to better partner with families to verify medical eligibility for a range of valuable social supports,” said **Audrey Shelto**, President of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. “Health care goes far beyond the services provided in a clinical setting, and programs such as this rightly focus on social determinants of health and how to integrate them more fully in health care decision-making.”

**About MLPB:** MLPB equips health and human services workforces with upstream problem-solving strategies that meet people’s health-related social needs and improve social determinants of health. Leveraging our public interest law expertise, we advance health equity for individuals, families, and communities. With origins in Boston and the medical-legal partnership movement, *next-generation* MLPB is now scaling, providing training and technical assistance to organizations and systems in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and beyond (CA, FL, and VT through the national DULCE Learning Network) – those that are committed to *social health integration* that keeps individuals and families at the center of their systems alongside critical sustainability goals. <http://www.mlpboston.org>

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