



Summer 2017 Newsletter

**SUPPORTING INTERDISCIPLINARY CARE IN RHODE ISLAND:  
MLPB Equips a Clinician with Tools to Promote Health and Job Security**



A physician at [Memorial Hospital](#) was treating a patient experiencing acute, debilitating back pain that had triggered multiple emergency department visits. Ms. Rivera\* needed physical therapy only available during standard business hours, and was worried about approaching her employer for schedule adjustments. The clinician consulted with MLPB and learned that — with an accurate and properly prepared medical form — Ms. Riera could leverage a range of legal protections in this situation and request a flexible work schedule over the course of the physical therapy regimen. With real-time guidance from MLPB, the physician prepared an appropriate medical attestation that Ms. Rivera shared with her manager when they met. The request for reasonable accommodation was successful, enabling Ms. Rivera to maintain stable employment while also getting necessary medical care!

*\*facts have been modified to preserve patient confidentiality*

**SAVE THE DATE(S)!**

**Sep.  
19 & 29**

Are you a Community Health Worker or Patient Navigator serving families in a pediatric outpatient clinic? If so, join MLPB and [Health Resources in Action](#) in partnership with [Casey Family Programs](#) for a free, two-part intensive training on **Sep. 19 and Sep. 29**. Learn the [Strengthening Families™](#) approach, implement [Bright Futures 4](#) in line with its new social determinants of health focus, develop specific skills to help families access available concrete supports, and more. [Download the flyer](#) for more information or [register here](#)!

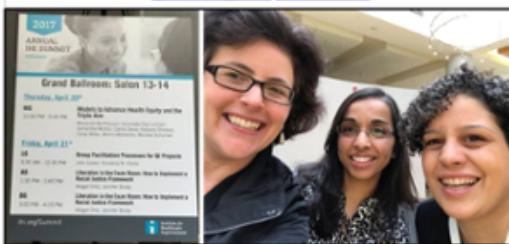
**Oct. 30**

MLPB's annual conference is set for **Monday, October 30, 2017** at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston!

**ON THE MOVE**

- **Spotlighting care team re-design and workforce development as levers for cost reduction, quality improvement, and meaningful health equity advancement:** MLPB presented on a [MA Health Policy Commission](#)-enabled study that evaluates the impact of MLPB-backed Community Health Advocates on total costs of care in an adult Emergency Department setting. Through the lens of this study-in-progress, we connected with inspiring stakeholders at:
  - The [CleanMed 2017 Conference & Exposition](#) in Minneapolis in May (with Kalpana Narayan, MD, MPH)
  - MLPB echoed these themes in May at the annual meeting of the [Disparities Leadership Program \(DLP\)](#) convened in Boston by the [Disparities Solutions Center](#) (DSC), a program of [Massachusetts General Hospital](#). The DLP is a hands-on executive education program focused exclusively on helping health care leaders achieve *equality in quality* in their communities
  - The [Institute for Healthcare Improvement's 18th Annual Summit on Improving Patient Care in the Office Practice & the Community](#) in Orlando in April (with Kalpana Narayan, MD, MPH and Yaminette Diaz-Linhart, LCSW, MPH; *tweet below*)

Total pleasure presenting w/ Kalpana Narayan and Yaminette Diaz-Linhart of @The\_BMC! Thx @TheIHI, @mariannephd + @Boston\_MLP #IHISummit



- **Advocating for a cross-secretariat Office of Health Equity:**

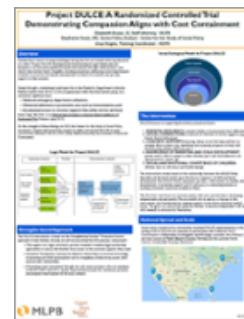
On June 13, MLPB joined organizational allies in [testifying before the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing to endorse Senate Bill 641 / House Bill 622 – An Act to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities in the Commonwealth](#). Massachusetts needs intensive cross-sector coordination to actually make a dent in harmful health disparities that disproportionately impact people of color. Some of these health disparities are described in the recent MLPB-[JSI](#) brief on Risk Adjustment on [p. 8](#).

- **What's good for patients is good for government:**

On June 19, [The Pioneer Institute](#) honored [Aging Right in the Community \(ARC\)](#) with *special recognition* as part of its aging-themed 2017 [Better Government Competition](#). ARC deploys a high dose of case managers from the [Elders Living at Home Program](#) plus a low dose of MLPB resources to prevent housing instability among low-income, medically complex, mentally ill older adults. Over the course of a 3-year quality improvement initiative (2013-16), ARC prevented homelessness at an overall rate of 94% among the 120 people served.

- **Raising visibility for evidence-based interventions that improve access to concrete supports like food, utility service, and healthy housing:** On June 22, MLPB presented a poster (at right) on [DULCE](#) at the inaugural [Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare Compassion in Action Healthcare Conference](#). With leadership from the [Center for the Study of Social Policy](#), DULCE is being refined and scaled in 7 communities in CA, FL, and VT.

That same day, MLPB Legal Director JoHanna Flacks presented on *Healthcare Payment Reform: A Lever to Address Asthma Disparities and Promote Prevention* at the [MA Asthma Action Partnership Summit](#).



### DID YOU KNOW? Supporting Family Preparedness in the Current Immigration Law Climate

Many workforce members wonder how they can support families in the event an immigrant parent/caregiver is detained or deported. MLPB supported [BMC Pediatrics](#) to develop a *publicly-available Family Preparedness Plan (FPP)* tool that shares best practices for anticipating and managing this type of family separation and disruption. Comprised of decisional tools and forms that can document parent/caregiver wishes, an FPP helps assure that parent/caregiver wishes are honored and childrens' medical needs are flagged appropriately during transitions in care. Since no one should have to tackle such a difficult process alone, the companion [Facilitators Guide](#) steers providers and staff on how best to help families complete the FPP.

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### IN THE NEWS

- **Housing Prescriptions as Health Care spotlighted in new [Urban Institute](#) report!**

In [A City Takes Action: Emerging Strategies for Integrating Health and Housing](#), a range of Boston-based innovations are highlighted, including the [Health Starts at Home](#) initiative in which MLPB is a partner. *Housing Prescriptions as Health Care* is funded by [The Boston Foundation](#) and led by [Children's HealthWatch](#).

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### NEW TEAM MEMBERS

This summer, we are pleased to be hosting two undergraduate students as volunteers, one of whom joins MLPB through the [Wellesley College Lumpkin Summer Institute for Service-Learning](#).



**Catherine Hoang:** "I'm a rising junior at Barnard College, Columbia University, studying human rights and political science. I've also interned at the Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts and at the Children's Law Center in the Bronx, New York. I'm deeply passionate about studying health care as a human right and understanding the law as a means to advocate for health equity — and that was how I found MLPB. At MLPB, I'm hoping to gain a deeper understanding of social disparities as affecting one's health — particularly along the lines of race, class and gender — and how we can best connect government agencies and healthcare communities to fully acknowledge those social needs, in turn improving access and quality of healthcare for all. I also can't think of a better time than this particular year, on the state and national level, to be learning so much about health care!"



**Julie Renfroe:** "As a Sociology major and Health and Society minor at Wellesley College, many of my interests lie in how the structures of society intertwine with health. Through my time at MLPB, I aspire to further comprehend how social determinants of health have a ripple effect on each other, intersect with the law, and affect one's health. As a result of my experience at MLPB, I am now considering applying to law school after getting my MPH. It has been a privilege to work and learn alongside such a dedicated group of lawyers and staff who are committed to paving an innovative path to bridge the worlds of health and law."

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MLPB equips the healthcare and human services workforce with upstream problem-solving strategies that address health-related social needs. Leveraging our public interest law expertise, we advance health equity for individuals, families and communities. And we can't do this work without your support. **Please make a contribution to MLPB now!**

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