

Hot Topics in Medical-Legal Partnership

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Brief Description:

Lawyers and front-line health care providers – doctors, nurses and social workers - are now partnered at over 160 hospitals and health centers nationwide, serving children, the elderly, patients with cancer, pregnant women and other vulnerable populations. With the evolution and growth in MLP's, increasing numbers of lawyers are seeking to adapt their legal training and practice to advocate effectively in these new environments. This session will share the practice, training and ethical challenges lawyers encounter as they partner with and train health care providers in advocacy. The session is appropriate for lawyers from developing and established sites.

Topical Outline:

- I. Overview of Medical-Legal Partnership
 - a. Why Doctors and Lawyers Began Working Together
 - b. The MLP National Network: A Rapidly Developing Movement
 - c. MLP Takes a Variety of Forms

- II. Cross-Cultural Relations of Doctors and Lawyers
 - a. Learning about the other
 - b. Finding common goals
 - c. Recognizing and overcoming differences

- III. Ethical issues -- Opportunities Not Barriers
 - a. How to anticipate ethical issues before the collaboration begins
 - b. Drafting your memo of understanding to address potential ethical concerns
 - c. Common ethical issues that arise within a medical-legal partnership

- IV. Working with Varied Patient Populations and the Professionals Who Care For Them
 - a. Potential patient populations (pediatrics, geriatrics, oncology, etc.)
 - b. How to navigate the different specialties
 - c. How to address the legal and professional training needs for the different patient populations

- V. Training and Education
 - a. Defining your message
 - b. Identifying and understand the audience
 - c. Discussing objectives upfront
 - d. Educating the next generation

Bibliography & Website Links:

1. www.medical-legalpartnership.org
2. www.law.syr.edu/academics/centers/flsp/FamilyAdvocacyProgram.aspx
3. www.legalhealth.org