

Hot Topics in Medical- Legal Partnership

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May 2009

National Center for Medical



Legal Partnership

RAISING THE BAR FOR HEALTH



BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER | BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Why Doctors and Lawyers Began Working Together?

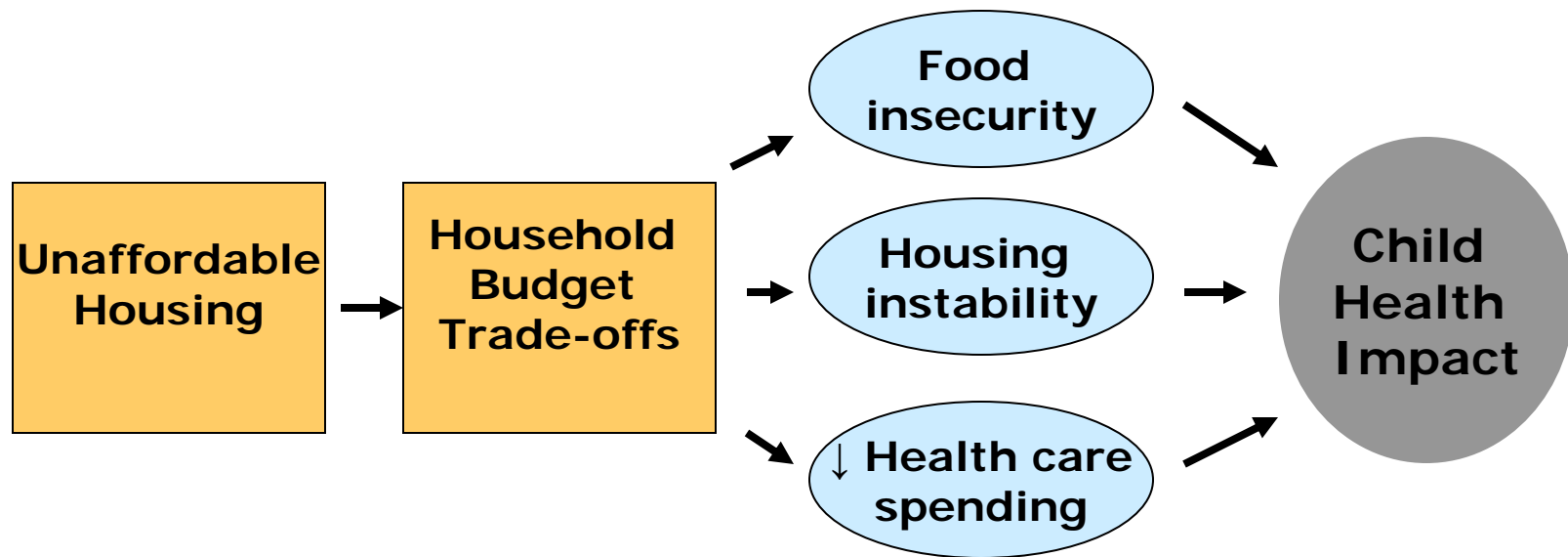


Social Determinants of Health



Making Ends Meet?

- Low-income families paying > 50% of income for rent
- Spend **30% less on food** and **70% less on health care**



Adding a New Specialist to the Health Care Team

- Pediatrician frustrated at seeing patients' illness continue despite medical treatment
- Learned that unhealthy housing is unlawful and that public benefits are often wrongfully denied
- Hired a lawyer to assist patients

Medical-Legal Partnership | Boston and the Origins of MLP

- Founded by Dr. Barry Zuckerman in 1993 at Boston Medical Center
- Founding site of the MLP Network
- Serves > 1,500 patient-families / year at BMC and 6 affiliated community health centers

What is Medical-Legal Partnership?

- Doctors and lawyers partnering
 - to address social determinants of health, and
 - to reduce barriers to health care
 - by integrating legal advocacy into the clinical setting
- Goal: To help vulnerable populations meet their basic needs – for food, housing, education, health care and stability.
- Core activities:
 - Training and education for health care providers
 - Direct assistance to patient-families
 - Systemic advocacy

Why Legal Advocacy in the Clinical Setting?

- Pediatricians and other health care providers are trusted, credible resources for families
- Screening for legal issues in the clinical setting facilitates
PREVENTIVE LAW

Can't Social Workers Handle These Cases?

- Social workers are familiar with programs and services, but are not trained to appeal a denial of services or advise families about complex rights
- Lawyers support and augment work of treatment team
- Lawyers trained to recognize rights violations and have tools to address

The Scope of Unmet Legal Needs

State	Year	Ave. # Legal Needs in Prior Year
OR	2000	3.2
VT	2001	1.1
WA	2003	2.9
MA	2003	2.4
TN	2004	3.3
IL	2005	1.7

- Poor families have significant unmet legal needs
- Most legal needs are going unaddressed
 - Study identified large gaps between legal needs & receipt of help for those needs
- Legal help for poor families is limited
 - 3 out of 5 low-income people needing legal help are turned away due to limited funding

BMC Legal Needs Assessment (2008)

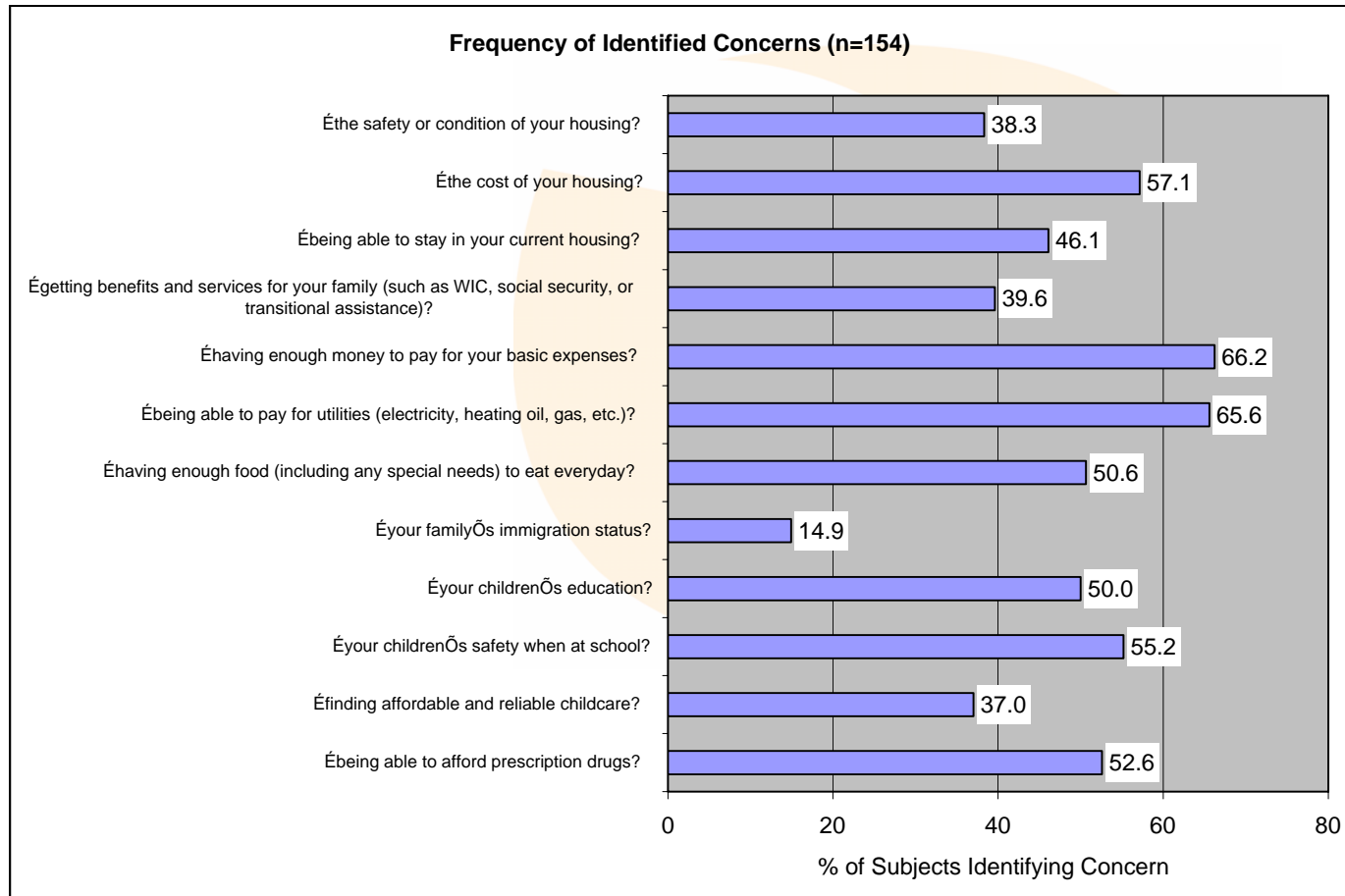
Purpose

- Quantify prevalence and nature of legal needs
- Identify resources or services sought and utilized in response to legal needs
- Characterize possible barriers to the receipt of legal assistance

Design

- Self-administered survey offered to all parent/guardian adults in Pedi ED waiting area; 154 administered.
- Follow-up telephone interview - Subjects asked to respond to questions related to the social and legal concerns identified in the self-administered survey; ~ 40% agreed to participate.

Frequency of Identified Concerns

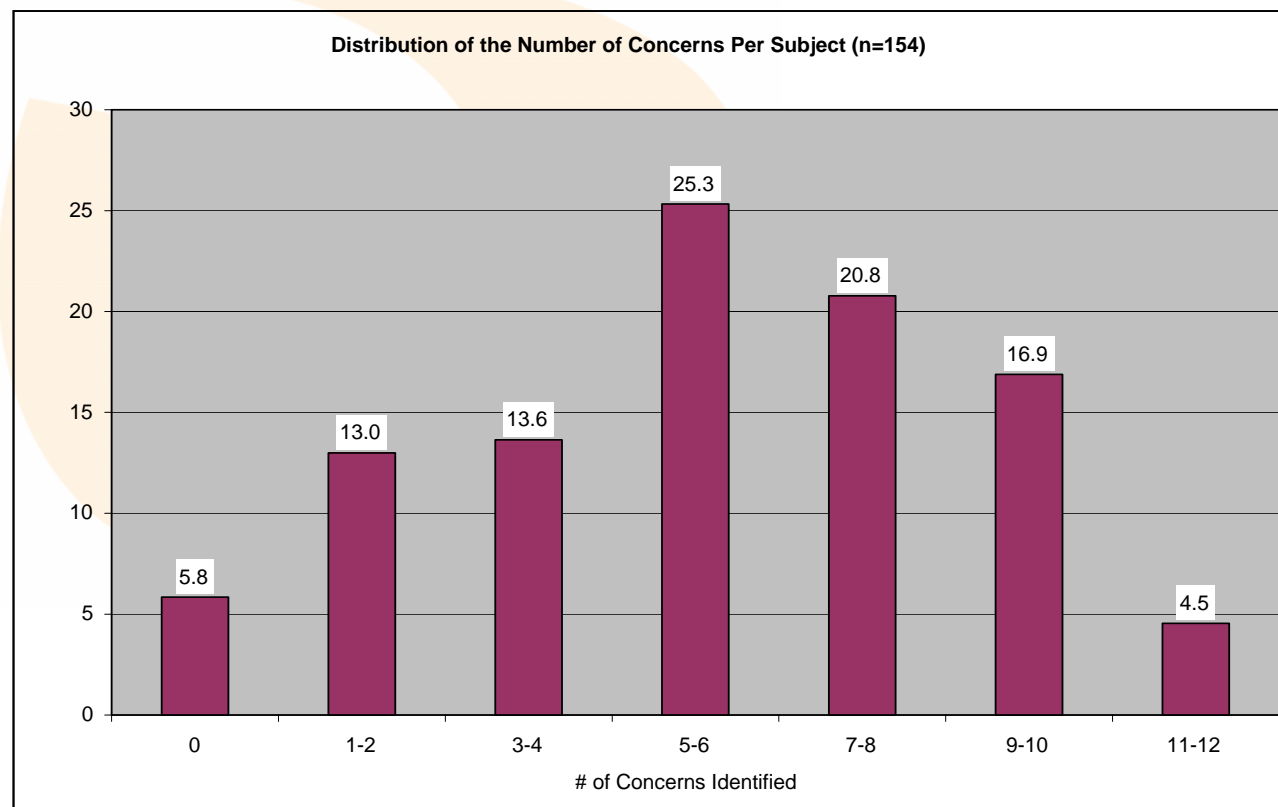


Six of the twelve issues were identified by majority of respondents as having been a concern at least "sometime" during the past 30 days

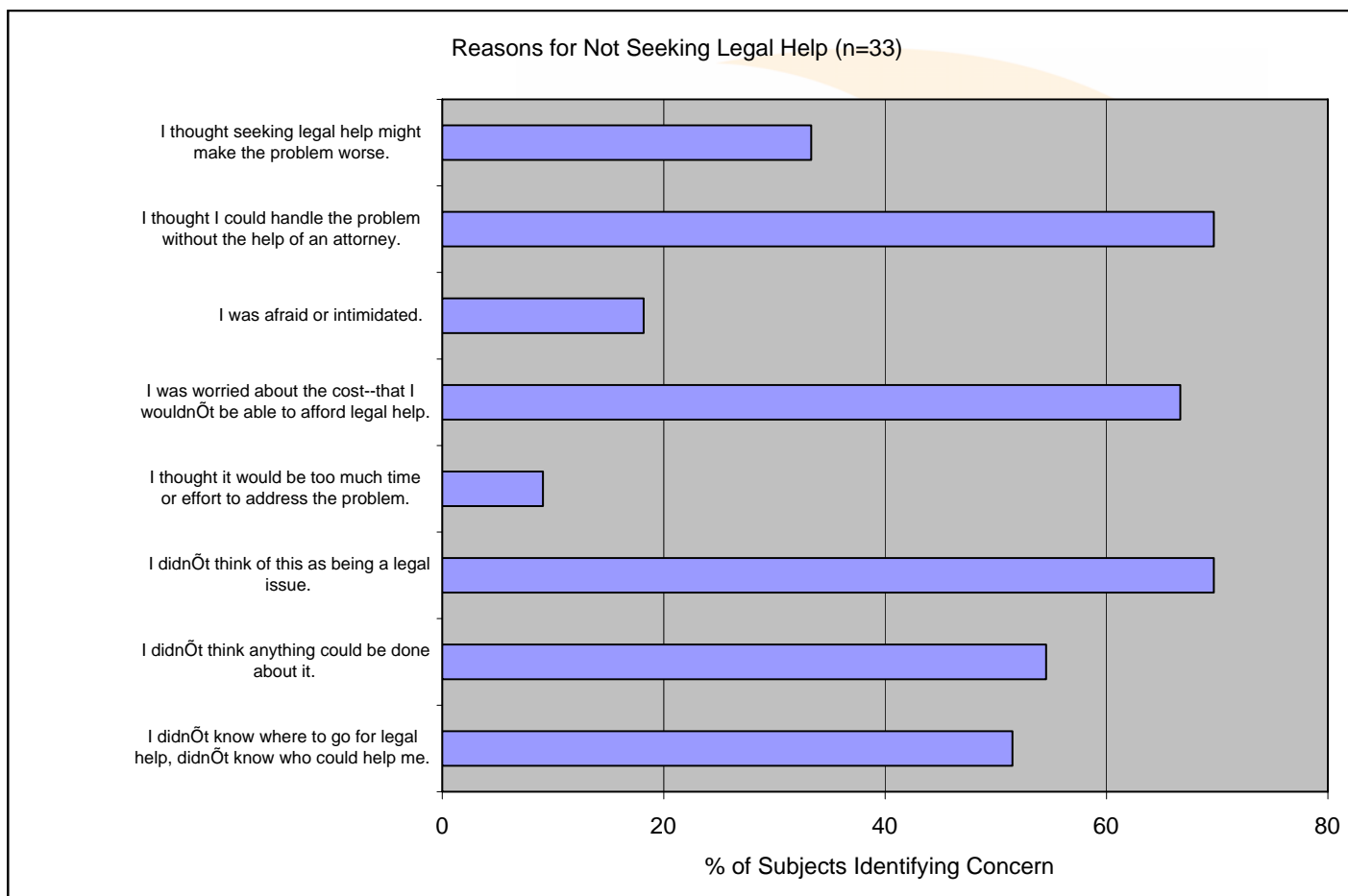
Number of Issues per Household

During last 30 days, average of:

- 1.7 issues concerned about "all of the time"
- 2.8 issues concerned about at least "most of the time"
- 5.0 issues concerned about at least "sometimes"



Reason for Not Seeking Legal Help



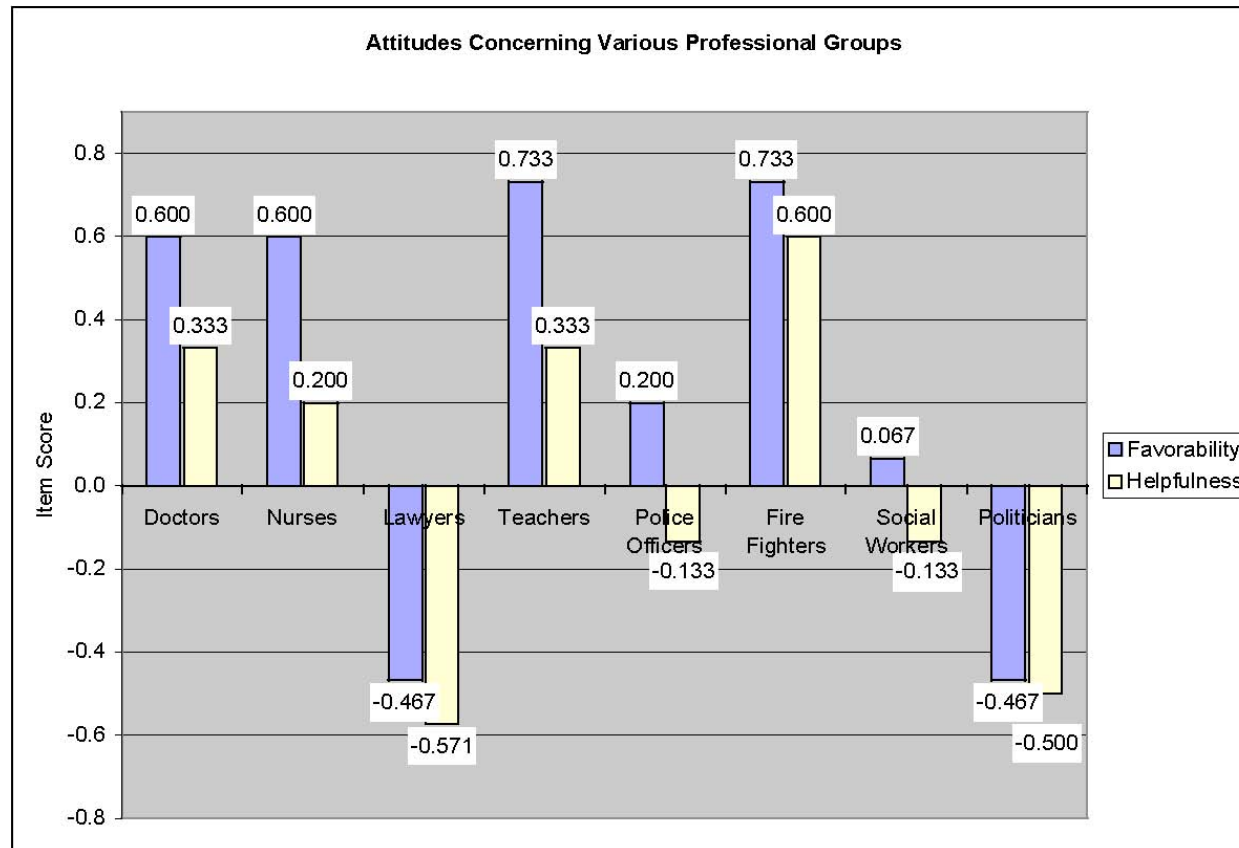
What % sought help?

- > 75% indicated sought help for at least one concern
- 15% (n=6) specifically sought legal help

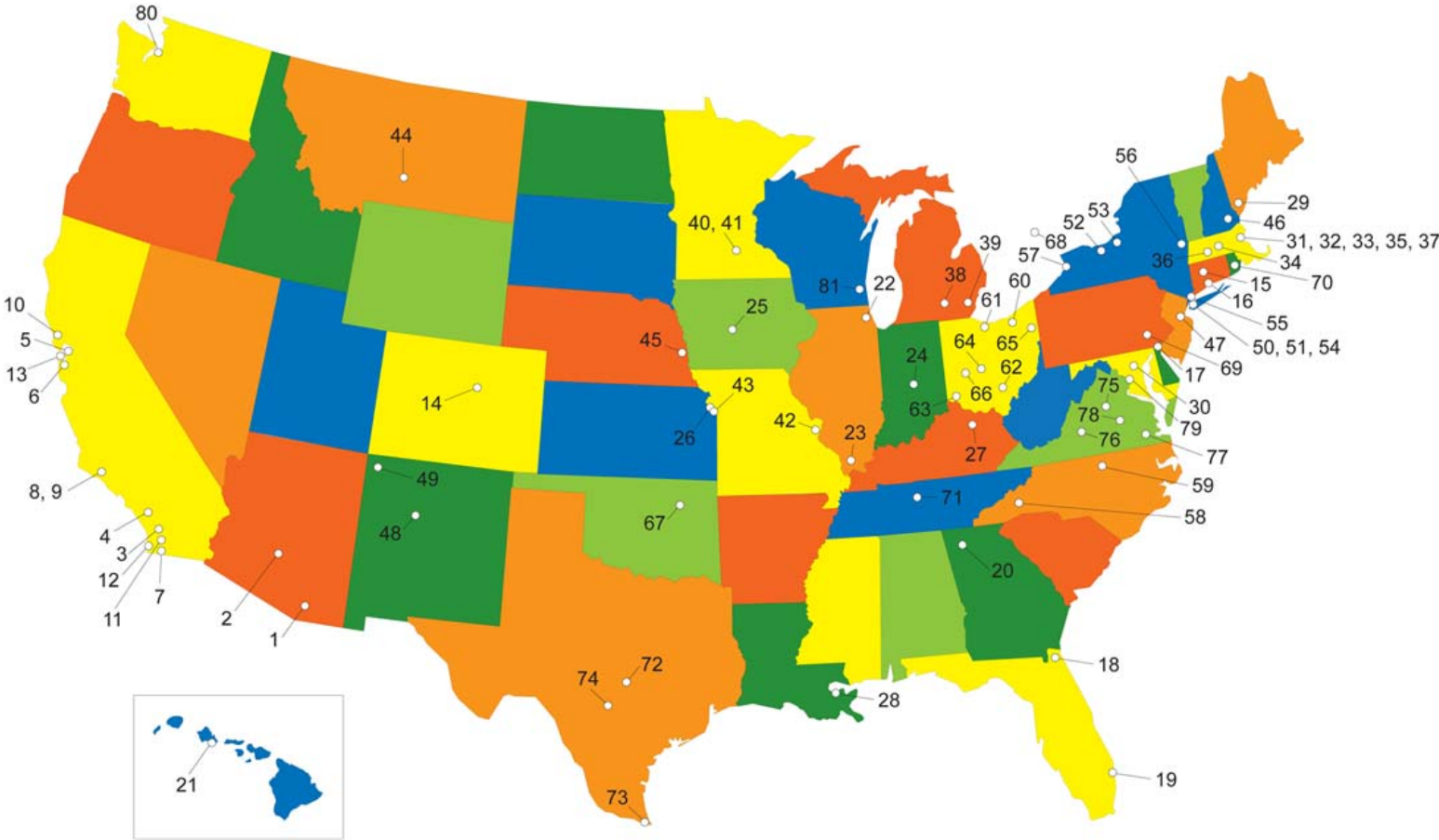
Among those seeking help:

- 33% were "not at all satisfied"
- 42% were "somewhat satisfied"
- 25% "very satisfied"

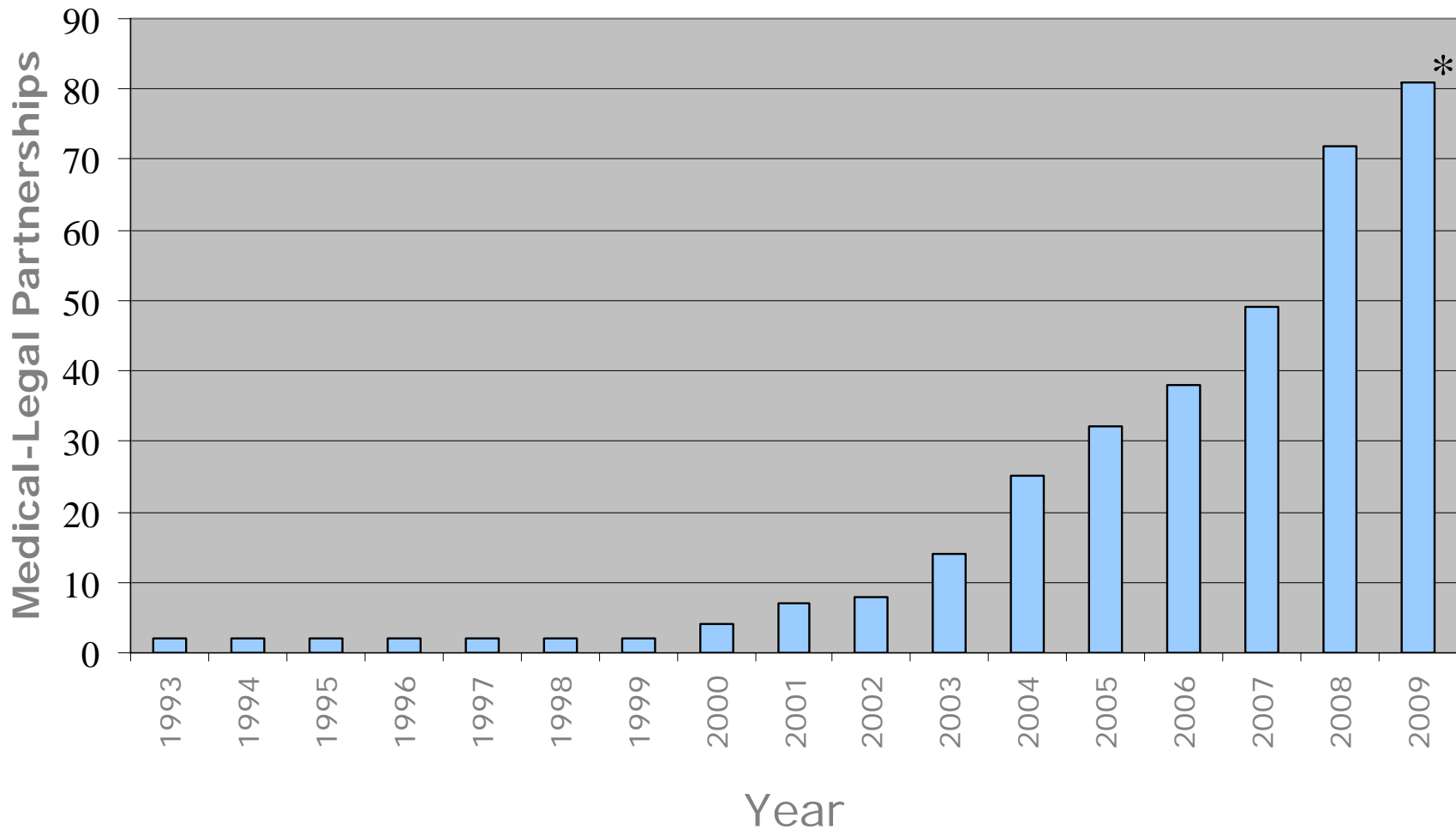
Attitudes Concerning Various Professional Groups



The MLP Network – March 2009



Growth of Medical-Legal Partnerships 1993-2009



MLP Network

- Voluntary affiliation that signals participation in a variety of activities including: MLP Working Groups, Annual Summit and MLP Funding Programs
- 80 partnership sites in over 180 hospital and health settings
- Partnerships serve children, families, pregnant women, cancer patients, seniors, members of the formerly incarcerated reentry community and other vulnerable populations

National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership

- Developed from MLP | Boston
- Launched in 2006 with funding from WK Kellogg and Robert Wood Johnson Foundations
- Mission: Promote the advancement of medical-legal partnership to improve the health and well-being of vulnerable populations by transforming health and legal systems.

National Center: What We Do

- Provide technical assistance and support to medical-legal partnerships
- Award small grants to medical-legal partnerships
- Host annual MLP summit
- Facilitate MLP Network including 4 Working Groups
- Coordinate MLP activities with professional organizations, including ABA

Professional Resolutions in Support of Medical-Legal Partnership

American Bar Association (ABA), August 2007

RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association encourages lawyers, law firms, legal services agencies, law schools and bar associations to develop medical-legal partnerships with hospitals, community-based health care providers, and social service organizations to help identify and resolve diverse legal issues that affect patients' health and well-being.

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), December 2007

RESOLVED, that the Academy encourage closer and more frequent collaboration between legal service and medical professionals, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Academy promote "medical-legal partnerships," in which lawyers work with members to identify and resolve legal issues affecting the health and well being of children.

American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), Pending September 2008

RESOLVED, that the American Academy of Family Physicians educate members about Medical-Legal Partnerships, in which lawyers work with members to identify and resolve legal issues affecting the health and well being of the patients of family physicians.

Scope of Medical-Legal Partnership: Training and Education

- Thirty-seven law schools and 23 medical schools participate in medical-legal partnerships
- Four medical-legal partnerships have joint law school/medical school courses

In 2008, medical-legal partnerships in the Network:

- Conducted 856 training sessions for 17,236 health care providers, residents, volunteer attorneys and students

Training Program

- Partner with medical providers
- Tailor training / message to target audience, venue
- Clarify learning objectives upfront
- Assess instructional methods
- Do not hesitate to further develop advocacy knowledge and capacity of medical partners

Know Your Audience

- Who are you training?
- Where are you training?
- Are you training the same group more than once?
- Have most of your medical partners attended a training?
- What is the menu of subjects you present?
- What are your consult / referral trends?
- Are you evaluating your trainings?

Where Are You Training?

- Noon conferences
- Departmental meetings
- Staff meetings
- Continuity clinic
- Case of the week
- Grand rounds
- Morning report
- Legal aid offices
- Law firms

How Are You Training?

- Instructional methods
 - Lecture
 - Case studies
 - Demonstration / Brainstorming
 - Simulation / Role playing
 - One-on-one
 - Curbside consults
- Instructional tools
 - PowerPoint
 - Flip charts
 - Materials / handouts

Advanced Training

- Greater depth and sophistication with one topic
 - Protecting child victims of school bullying
- Intersection of two different topics
 - Advocating for immigrant survivors of domestic violence
- Connection between different medical subspecialties
 - Advocating for appropriate housing conditions for children with chronic pulmonary issues (primary care, pulmonary, social work)
 - Seeking comprehensive special education services for children with sickle cell disease (developmental/behavioral, primary care, hem/onc)
 - Challenging Medicaid denials; e.g. surgical procedure for gynacomastia (surgery, endocrinology, primary care)
- Integration of MLP into residency program, medical / law school

**For more information on
National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership**

Visit:
www.medical-legalpartnership.org

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