

**YALE NEW HAVEN HOSPITAL AWARDED FOR ITS MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP PROJECT**

**CHA and DPH Recognize Yale New Haven Hospital with the 2024 Connecticut's Hospital Community Service Award**



WALLINGFORD – The **Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA)** and the **Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH)** have awarded **Yale New Haven Hospital** the **2024 Connecticut's Hospital Community Service Award** in recognition of their Medical-Legal Partnership Project (MLPP).

The annual award, presented jointly by CHA and DPH, recognizes a Connecticut hospital or healthcare system that has made an outstanding contribution to its community.

Yale New Haven Hospital was presented with the prestigious award by DPH Commissioner Manisha Juthani, MD, at the 2024 CHA Annual Meeting that took place on June 13, 2024 at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville.

“Yale New Haven Hospital is very proud to receive this award that acknowledges and celebrates our commitment to supporting our community,” said **Katherine Heilpern, president, Yale New Haven Hospital**. “Since 2013, our Medical-Legal Partnership Project has successfully addressed legal needs that impact health in housing, educational entitlements, disability rights and public benefits, and in so doing has improved health outcomes of more than 4000 individuals in the communities we are privileged to serve.”

“The State of Connecticut is committed to eliminating health inequities and ensuring that all residents—especially our children—have the opportunity to achieve optimal health,” said **Commissioner Dr. Manisha Juthani**. “When a child is suffering from a medical ailment, it is essential that underlying social determinants of health are addressed. The Yale New Haven Hospital Medical-Legal Partnership Project helps families avoid eviction from their home or ensure home remediation to provide for the optimal living conditions in which a child can thrive. Without stable housing, few medical interventions can be successful. This partnership between physicians and lawyers gives struggling families a fighting chance.”

“CHA is honored to be joined by DPH in presenting this award in recognition of Yale New Haven Hospital’s exceptional work to address social drivers of health and improve health outcomes for children and families,” said **Jennifer Jackson, CEO, CHA**. “We applaud the Yale New Haven Hospital team for working collaboratively with the Center for Children’s Advocacy to ensure care extends beyond the four walls of a hospital or doctor’s office to address the root causes of health disparities and tackle the health-harming legal needs of children and their families.”

Yale New Haven Hospital (YNHH) started the Medical-Legal Partnership Project (MLPP) as an interdisciplinary collaboration between the Center for Children’s Advocacy (CCA) and Yale New Haven Hospital in 2013. Since then, it has expanded to include several other MLPs, done in partnership with Yale School of Medicine and the Yale Law School. The mission of the YNHH-CAA MLPP is to address the health inequities borne by vulnerable children and youth, exacerbated by race and ethnicity, to improve health outcomes through interdisciplinary collaboration in the healthcare setting.

YNHH-CAA MLPP achieves this mission by concentrating its legal advocacy on areas of law related to children’s health. They use their expertise in the areas of housing, educational entitlements, disability rights, Medicaid advocacy, teen legal rights, LGBTQ rights, public benefits, and utility protection to address the health-harming legal needs of children and their families.

The program uses three strategies to meet the goals of the project:

1. Direct consultation and representation: For example, during a well visit to a pediatrician, a doctor may conduct a screening for health-harming legal needs. If the pediatrician finds that the family is in the middle of being evicted from their home, an MLPP attorney could provide assistance, such as helping the family identify a proof of defense against eviction and communicating with a landlord’s attorney. The intervention of the MLPP attorney has resulted in eviction cases being withdrawn.
2. Interdisciplinary education and training: the YNHH-CAA MLPP educates and trains nurses, social workers, attending physicians, residents, medical students, and other clinicians from a multitude of disciplines across the health system and community organizations. The MLPP training curriculum is infused into the core curriculum at the Yale School of Medicine for medical students, residents, and fellows and has become an integral part of both the teaching and delivery of medicine at YNHH.
3. Policy initiatives and systemic advocacy: The YNHH-CAA MLPP has engaged in state-level advocacy regarding Medicaid coverage for all children in Connecticut regardless of immigration status. They also supported lowering the threshold for lead exposure in children across the state. Both bills were signed into law.

By effectively combining consultations, legal representation, education and training, and policy advocacy, the YNHH-CAA MLPP continues to be a thread through and across multiple departments, clinics, and disciplines. To date, there have been over 3,000 referrals to the MLPP. Cases that cannot be handled by the MLPP attorney are referred to other legal aid and community resources. The program is jointly funded by Yale New Haven Health and Wiggin and Dana.

**Learn more about the program by watching the award recognition video [here](#).**

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