Measuring the Health Impact of Medical-Legal Interventions on Low-Income Patients

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# Measuring the Health Impact of Medical-Legal Interventions on Low-Income Patients

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## Research Goal
We are reassessing our existing outcomes measurement tools to better measure, evaluate, and share the health impact of medical-legal interventions. Until now, we have not used health outcomes as a measure for effective intervention. Rather, we have relied on the well-established connection between social risks and health outcomes to show that mitigating such risks will improve health. We welcome input from researchers and community organizations about alternative validated measures that may help us measure and demonstrate the connection between access to legal services and improved health.

## Potential Health Outcome Measures
- Reduction in stress levels assessed by 10-item Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) instrument
- Improvement in wellbeing assessed by Measure Yourself Concerns and Wellbeing (MYCaW) instrument
- Self-reported health status
- Positive impact on family or loved ones
- Improvement in financial situation
- Treatment adherence
- Improvement in ability to keep medical appointments
- Prenatal health-related behaviors, pregnancy outcomes, and rates of maternal employment for pregnant/postpartum clients
- For asthmatic clients after an intervention to improve housing conditions: Post-intervention change in peak expiratory flow rate (PEFR), asthma severity class, medications, emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and requirement for systemic steroids for symptom control
- Use of primary care

## Selection of Outcomes Currently Measured

### Financial Security
- Obtain/maintain benefits
- Obtain/maintain earned income
- Obtain/maintain retirement income
- Obtain/maintain support/child support
- Discharge debt
- Plan for future financial security

### Healthcare Access
- Obtain medical equipment
- Obtain medical transportation
- Obtain/maintain health coverage
- Obtain/maintain medical care
- Obtain/maintain nursing/rest home
- Plan for future healthcare needs

### Dignity & Safety

#### Family Law
- Increase physical safety
- Secure divorce from batterer
- Secure/maintain safe visitation
- Plan for future dignity and safety

#### Immigration
- Obtain immigration status
- Obtain lawful permanent residence
- Obtain stay of removal
- Improve benefit eligibility
- Reopen order of removal
- Plan for future immigration needs

### Housing Stability
- Improve living conditions
- Obtain/retain affordable housing
- Obtain reasonable accommodation
- Combat discrimination
- Obtain emergency shelter
- Waive rent arrears
- Plan for future housing stability

## References