

# Interdisciplinary Collaboration with Legal Aid Attorneys Improves Public Health Nurses' Self-Reported Job Satisfaction and Client Outcomes

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# ABOUT US

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- ▶ Public Health Law Consultant, Health, Education and Legal assistance Project: A Medical-Legal Partnership at Widener University Delaware Law School (HELP: MLP)



# LEARNING OBJECTIVES



- ▶ Describe three examples of unmet legal needs among low-income families that impact maternal-child health.
- ▶ Explain how a screening tool for legal needs was integrated into a nurse home visiting program.
- ▶ Describe how a training series on legal and policy topics was developed in partnership with public health nursing staff at a home visiting program site.
- ▶ Describe some of the favorable yet cursory client outcomes that were derived via data collected from existing evidence-based home visiting tools.



## Background on Nursing-Legal Partnership

# POPULATION LEVEL MEASURES IN MATERNAL-CHILD HEALTH

- ▶ **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)** [Most Common, Desired]
  - ▶ Number of deaths between birth and one year of age per 1,000 live births.
- ▶ **Proximal:** Preterm Birth Rate, Low Birth Weight, Birth Defects, SIDS
- ▶ **Distal (Diagnostic):** Depression (PHQ-9/EPDS), Domestic Violence (AAS/PVS), Obesity (BMI), STI (Screenings)
- ▶ **Distal (Behavioral):** Alcohol Use, Anxiety/Stress, Breastfeeding Initiation/Duration, Diet, Folic Acid Use, Physical Activity, Smoking/Tobacco Use, Substance Abuse
- ▶ **BUT... there are many other issues that impact these distal and proximal measures as well.**



NFP  
PAT

# EXAMPLES OF HOW UNMET NEEDS IMPACT MATERNAL-CHILD HEALTH

- ▶ **Substandard Housing:** Mold, roaches, inadequate heating, etc. linked to asthma-related ER visits.
- ▶ **Legal Status:** Fear and limited knowledge on how to access public benefits for legally present non-citizens... and so families go without services.
- ▶ **Pregnancy-Related Discrimination:** Unjustifiably forced to reduce hours or even become unemployed due to pregnancy.
- ▶ **These, as well as others, require legal assistance.**



# PHILADELPHIA AND NFP/MM

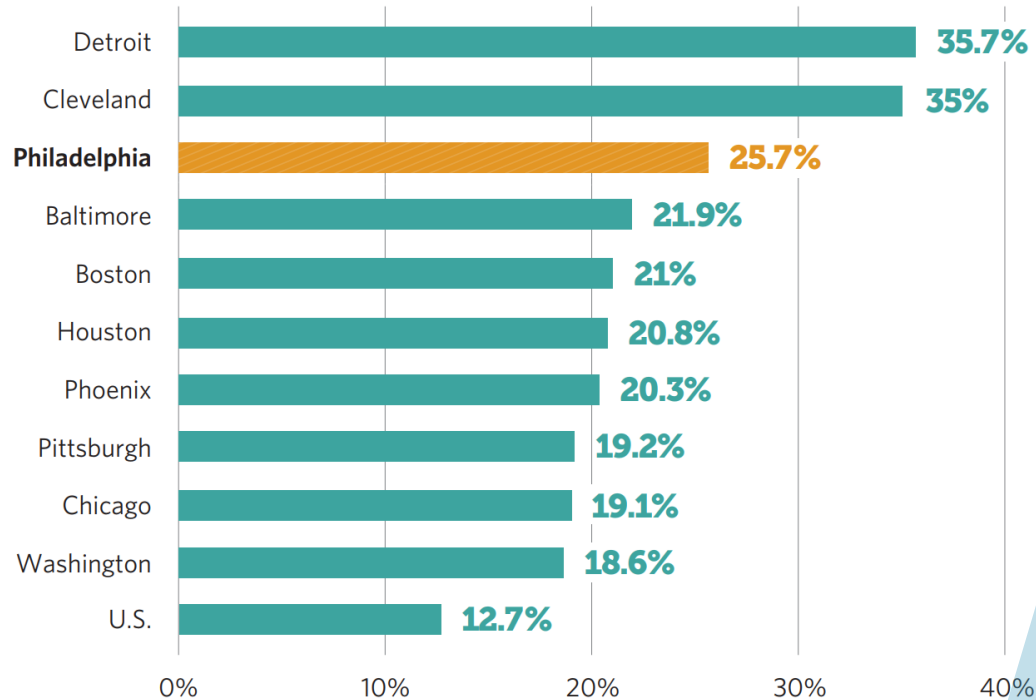
These unmet legal needs are particularly present in Philadelphia:

- ▶ Poorest of the top ten largest cities in the nation.
- ▶ Second poorest congressional district in nation.
- ▶ High rate of “deep poverty”.
- ▶ 26% population income under federal poverty guidelines.

Philadelphia NFP/MM Clients:

- ▶ Live in most distressed neighborhoods.
- ▶ Decaying housing stock.
- ▶ Limited access to healthy foods.
- ▶ Widespread violence/crime.
- ▶ High school dropout rate of 45 to 50 percent.

## Poverty Rate, 2016



(PEW, 2018)



# STEPS TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES

## **Pew Foundation and United Way grants for Social Services Coordinator.**

- ▶ Focus on improving housing conditions for clients and reducing “couch surfing” and shelter placements.
- ▶ Six years of funding.

## **However...**

- ▶ “Clout” missing despite squeaky wheel approach!
- ▶ Need for legal interventions and policy changes.
- ▶ Staff need for skill building to focus on program implementation and reduce time/effort spent on “legal” challenges.



# WHERE THERE IS A NEED, THERE IS A WAY

- ▶ Like minded professionals - Public Health Nurses and Civil Legal Aid Attorneys (“Poverty Lawyers”).
- ▶ History of work w/NFP and Healthy Start in Chester.
- ▶ Rita and Alex Hillman Foundation Proposal (2016-18)
  - ▶ Public Health Nursing-Legal Partnership
  - ▶ Philadelphia NFP/MM of National Nursing Centers Consortium
- ▶ Oak Foundation Housing/Homeless Award (2016-18)



# UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF NLP

- ▶ Disruptive model to current healthcare system.
- ▶ Nurses and attorneys co-lead intervention.
- ▶ Builds on Public Health Nurse scope of practice.
- ▶ Advocacy, policy development, planning.
- ▶ Application of theory, practice, and evidence-based outcomes.



# ANTICIPATED PROJECT OUTCOMES FOR PHILADELPHIA NFP/MM FAMILIES



Improved housing conditions.



Improved access to public benefits and health insurance.



Improved health outcomes among clients.



Increased capacity of staff to address social determinants of health.



Increased staff advocacy capacity.



Evaluation and demonstration of the project's Return on Investment (ROI) Social ROI.



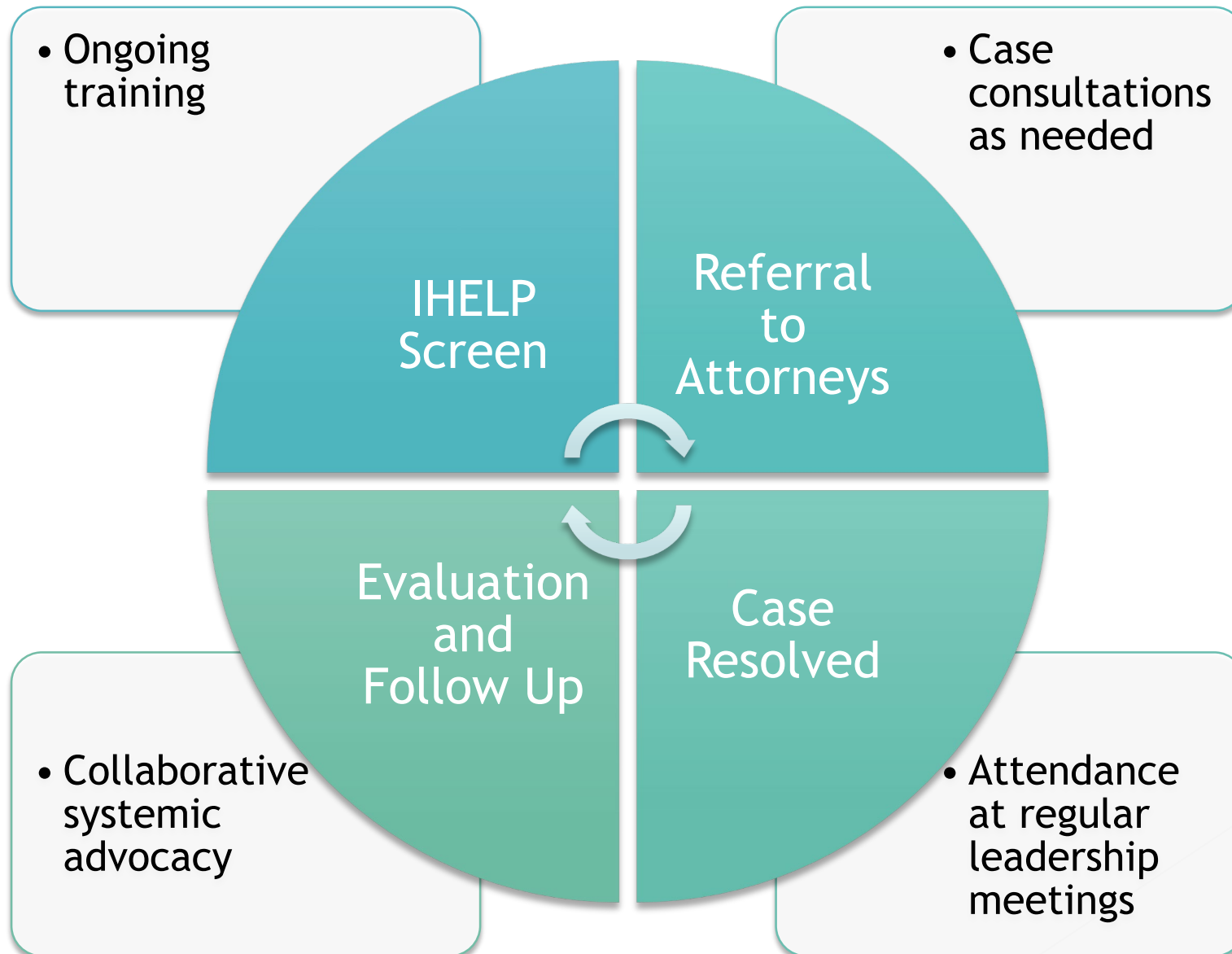
Acquisition of state and/or insurer funding to sustain NLP/LP.





# **THE NURSING-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP (NLP) MODEL**

# NLP Workflow



# NUTS AND BOLTS OF THE PROJECT

- ▶ I-HELP Assessment (Will Discuss).
  - ▶ All NFP participants are screened with I-HELP periodically.
  - ▶ I-HELPS are forwarded to legal team for evaluation.
  - ▶ Client Screening administered by NFP nurse.
  - ▶ Authorizes NFP/PAT to share information with NLP.
- ▶ Legal Screening / Merit Evaluation.
- ▶ Case Conference.
- ▶ I-HELP Acknowledgment.
  - ▶ Offer of representation.
  - ▶ Brief advice and counsel with nurse or client.
  - ▶ Reject case and refer to outside resources.

Philadelphia Nurse Family Partnership/Mabel Morris and HELP Nursing-Legal Partnership

## I-HELP Assessment

Intake  6 mo  12 mo  18 mo  24mo  MM  PRN

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Client Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Client phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Client Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Any special considerations for contact? \_\_\_\_\_

Pregnant?  Y  N #children: \_\_\_\_\_

Client Label Here

Client ID

Client Name

DOB

Nurse

Enrollment Date/Child's Name

### I - Income Supports

- 1)  Y  N Do you need help getting any public benefits or services for your family? (i.e. WIC, SSI, Cash Assistance, Food Stamps)
- 2)  Y  N Do you and your family have enough food?
- 3)  Y  N Do you and your child(ren) have health insurance or Medical Assistance?
- 4)  Y  N Do you receive a childcare subsidy (i.e., CCIS)?
- 5)  Y  N Do you or your child(ren) have a mental or physical disability or illness?
- 6)  Y  N Do you have any problems with debt (i.e., credit card, car, student loan, medical utility, other)?
- 7)  Y  N Do you have any problems with your employer related to your or your family's health?

# I-HELP: CATEGORIZES UNMET LEGAL NEEDS

Income: Access to benefits, health insurance.

Housing: Landlord issues, housing conditions.

Education: Discrimination based on learning ability.

Legal Status: Immigration status.

Personal and Family Safety: Safety of family.

# TRAININGS ON MLP



- ▶ Trainings on MLP by legal staff to home visitors.
- ▶ Idea is to (1) empower home visitors to help clients with less complex legal issues and (2) reduce time for remediation of unmet legal needs.
- ▶ Training topics have included:
  - ▶ Immigration and Legal Status.
  - ▶ Employment-Based Discrimination.
  - ▶ Personal and Family Safety.
- ▶ Evaluation of trainings on satisfaction and comfort of home visitors in their role and legal needs.



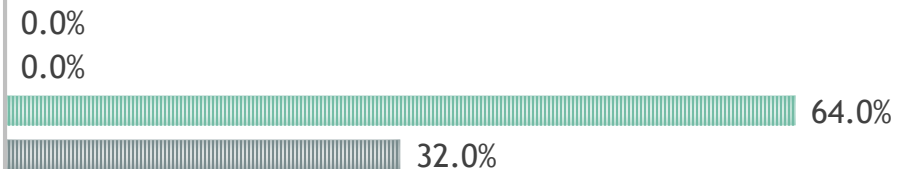
# Satisfaction of Aspects of Job, April 2016

(n = 25)

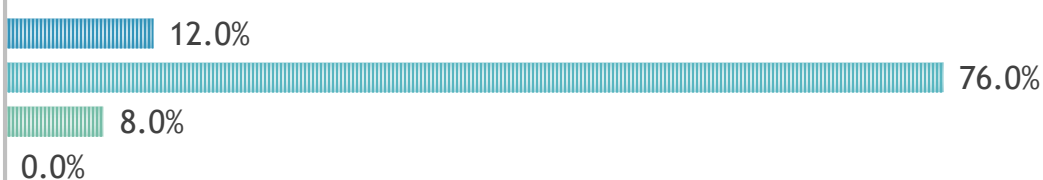
Very Dissatisfied   Dissatisfied   Satisfied   Very Satisfied

0.0%   20.0%   40.0%   60.0%   80.0%

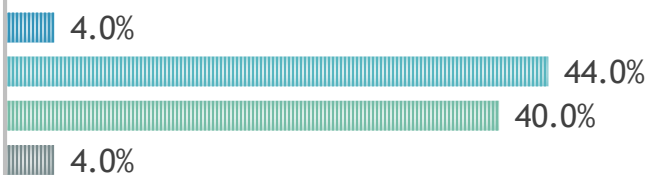
Your overall interactions with your clients.



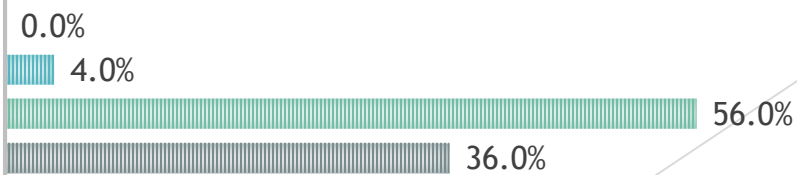
Your own ability to assist clients on addressing any known unmet legal needs (e.g., substandard housing, pregnancy-related discrimination, immigration-related issues, etc.).



If you identify an unmet legal need that you yourself cannot address, your ability to ensure that a referral is made and that the need is ultimately addressed.

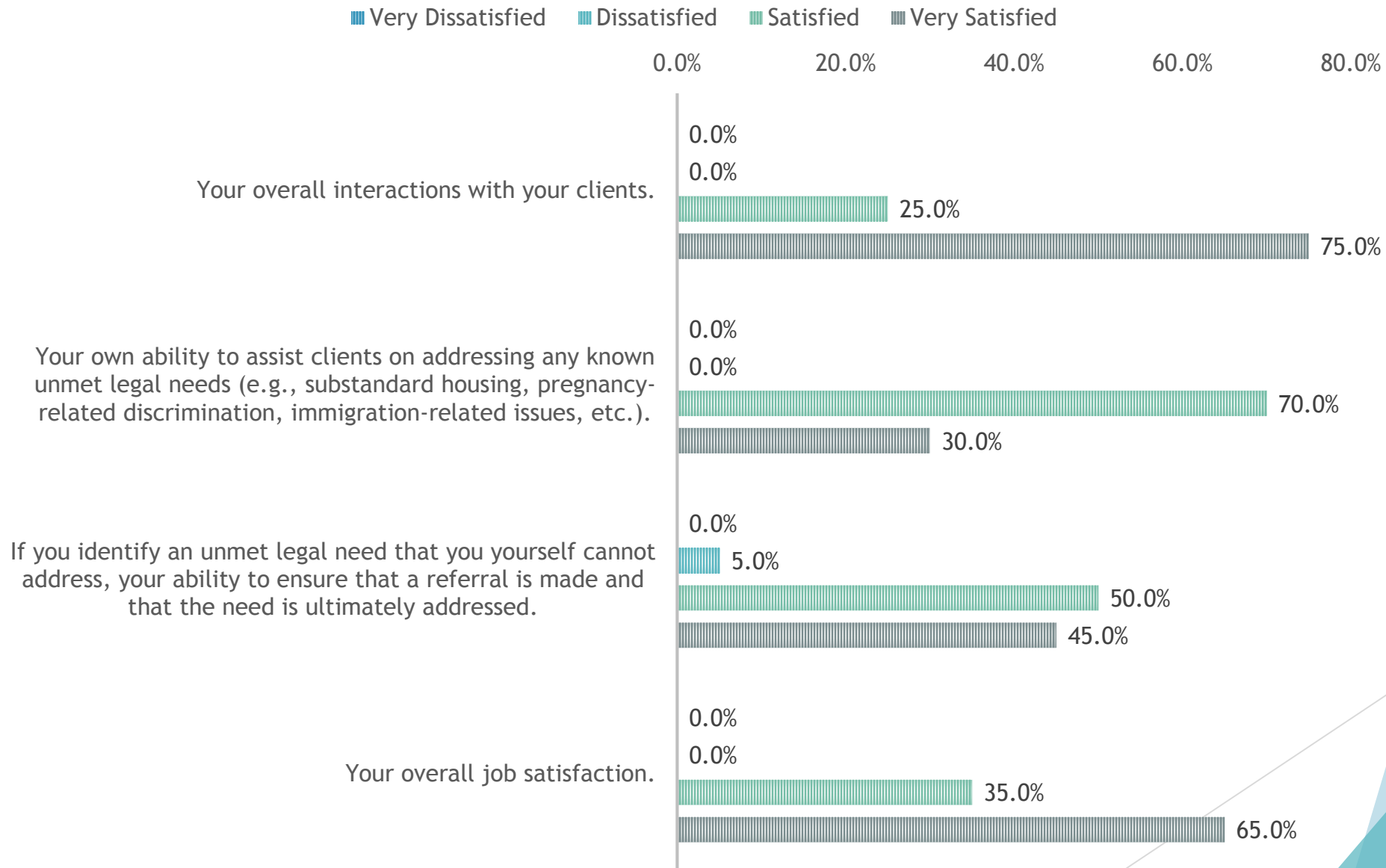


Your overall job satisfaction.



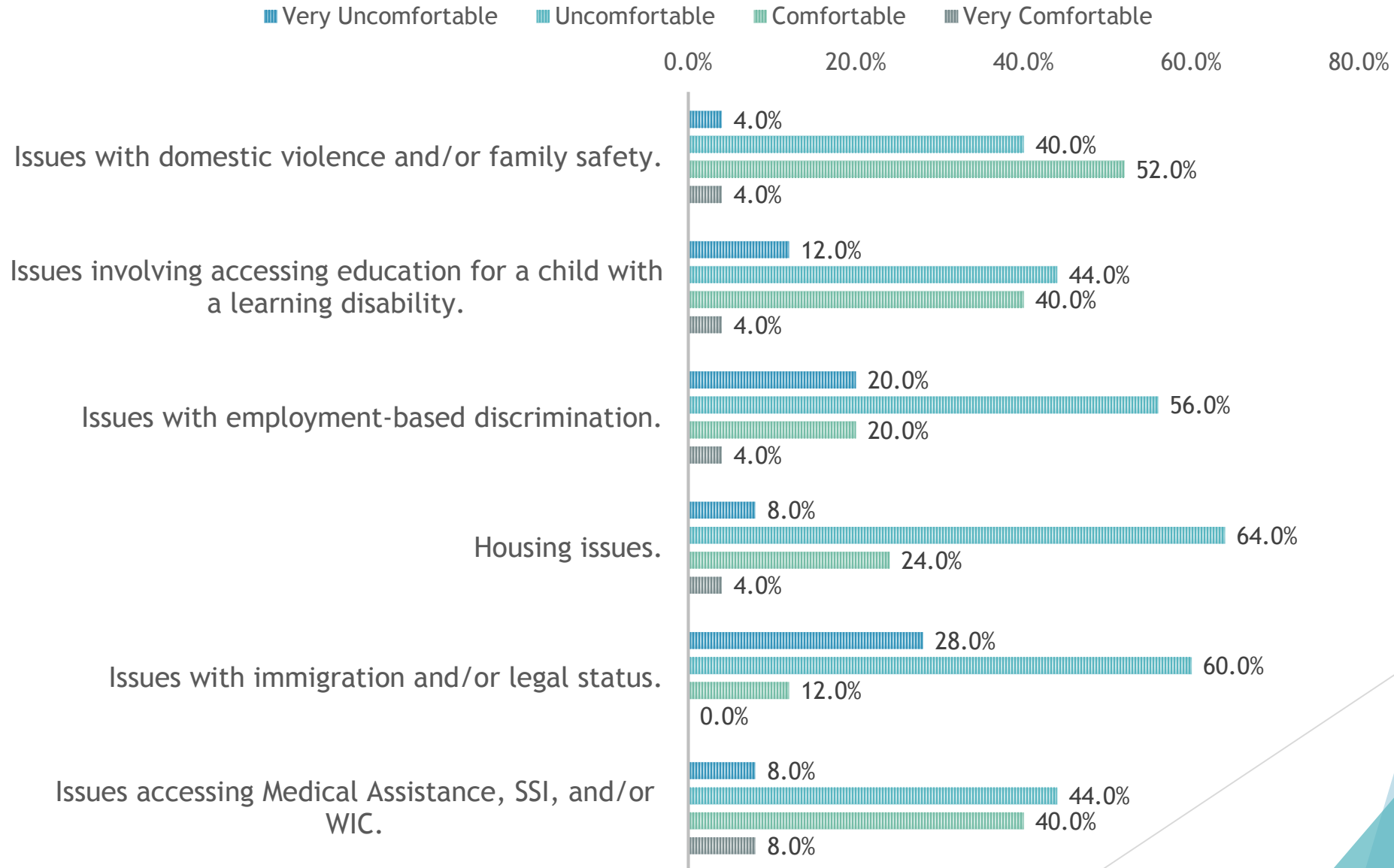
# Satisfaction of Aspects of Job, April 2018

(n = 25)



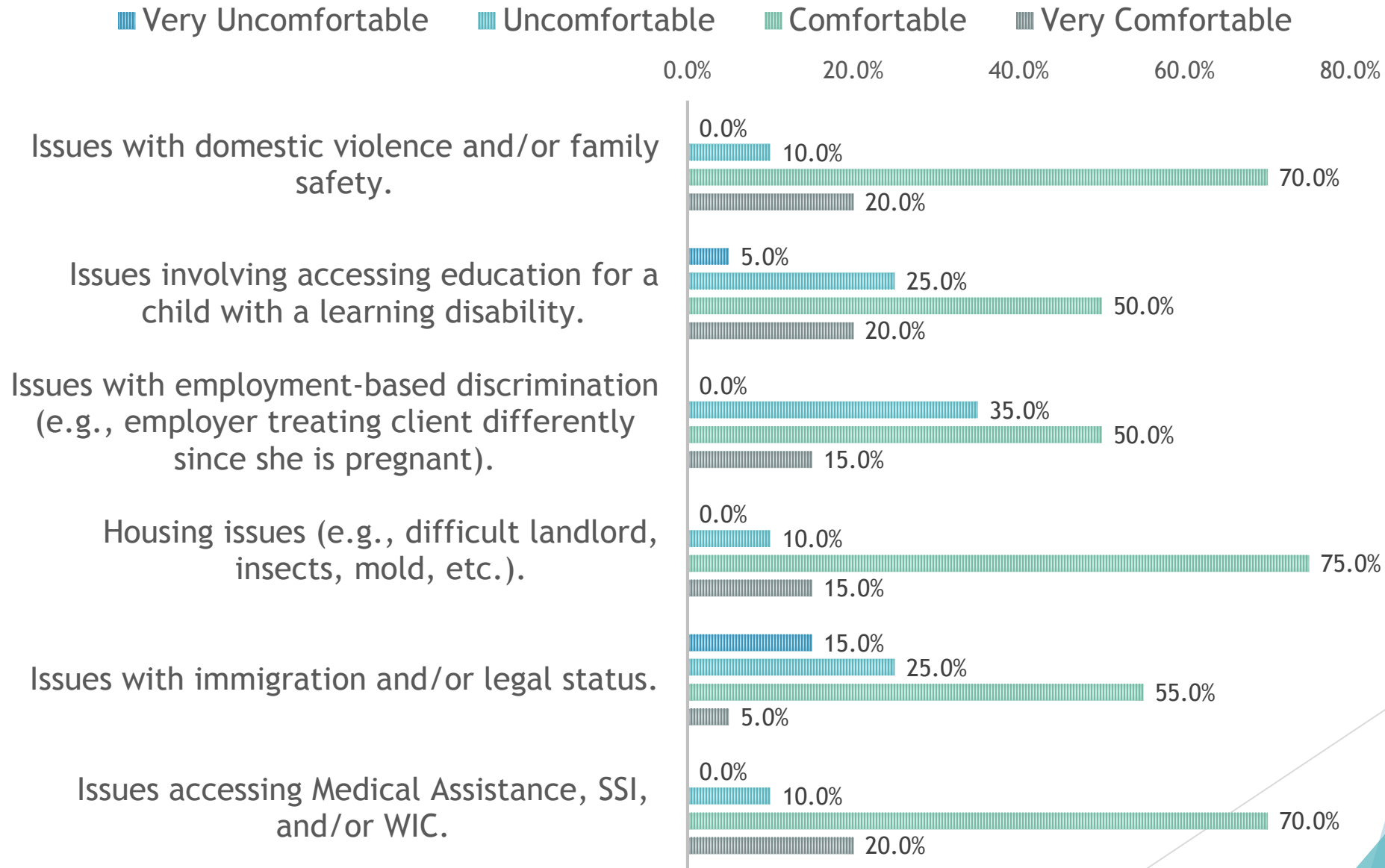
# Comfort Address Legal Need, April 2016

(n = 25)



# Comfort Address Legal Need, April 2018

(n = 20)



# HOW THE NLP IS ASSESSED

- ▶ Remember: I-HELP integrated into evidence-based home visiting.
  - ▶ Philadelphia NFP: Screen on life course (TC Age, Start Date).
  - ▶ PAT/MM: Screen every 4 months (April, August, December)
- ▶ NFP and PAT continue to use their program tools:
  - ▶ Philadelphia NFP: Strengths and Risks (STAR)
  - ▶ PAT/MM: Life Skills Progression (LSP)
- ▶ Why this design?
  - ▶ Allows tracking of measures over time for all clients.
  - ▶ Tracks the reported unmet legal needs.
  - ▶ Balances data burden with project needs.



# EVALUATION METHODS

- ▶ Ongoing process based on how the data collected has evolved over time.
- ▶ Propensity score matching.
  - ▶ Match NLP+ and NLP- clients on their propensity to be enrolled in the NLP based on age, race/ethnicity, and zip code of residence.
  - ▶ Run NFP and PAT/MM separately.
  - ▶ Only include NLP+ clients who had their legal case or consultation closed between two assessments.



# CURRENT RESULTS: NFP STAR DOMAINS

Average Treatment Effect on Treated (ATET) Significant In NLP+ Clients to NLP- ( $n = 15$ ).

LSP	Domain Description	ATET $p < 0.10$
1	Relationships with Family/Extended Family	X
2	Relationships with Boyfriend, FOB, or Spouse	
3	Relationships with Friends/Peers	Y
4	Attitudes to Pregnancy	
5	Nurturing of Children	X
6	Discipline of Children	Y
7	Support of Development of Children	
8	Safety of Children	X
9	Relationship with Home Visitor	X
10	Use of Information	X
11	Use of Resources	X
12	Language (Non-English Speakers)	
13	Less Than 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade Education	
14	Education	
15	Employment	
16	Immigration	
17	Prenatal Care	
18	Parent Sick Care	
19	Family Planning	
20	Child Well Care	X
21	Child Sick Care	
22	Child Dental Care	
23	Child Immunizations	
24	Substance Use/Abuse (Drugs and Alcohol)	
25	Tobacco Use	
26	Depression/Suicide	
27	Mental Illness	
28	Self-Esteem	
29	Cognitive Ability	
30	Housing	
31	Food/Nutrition	
32	Transportation	
33	Medical/Health Insurance	
34	Income	
35	Child Care	

# CURRENT RESULTS: PAT LSP DOMAINS

Average Treatment Effect on Treated (ATET) Significant In NLP+ Clients to NLP- ( $n = 11$ ).

STAR	Domain Description	ATET $p < 0.10$
1	Substance Use and Abuse	X
2	Pregnancy Complication or Chronic Illness	
3	Developmental and Intellectual Disability	
4	Depression, Anxiety, and Other Mental Health	X
5	Caregiver Attitudes and Behaviors	
6	Child Health and Development	X
7	Child Care	
8	Maternal Education and Work	X
9	Pregnancy Planning	
10	English Literacy Limitations	
11	Criminal Justice/Legal Issues	X
12	Loneliness and Social Isolation	X
13	Intimate Partner Violence	
14	Unsafe Family or Friend Network	
15	Economic Adversity	X
16	Homelessness and Residential Instability	X
17	Environmental Health	X
18	Home Safety	X
19	Health Services Utilization	
20	Well-Child Care	
21	Use of Community Resources	X



# NEXT STEPS



- ▶ Continue Our Work!
  - ▶ Increase our n for evaluation.
  - ▶ More trainings.
- ▶ Sustainability.
- ▶ Scalability.
  - ▶ Can what we are doing be applied to NFP NSO and/or PAT?

# Thank you!

