

January 2018

# NURSING-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP

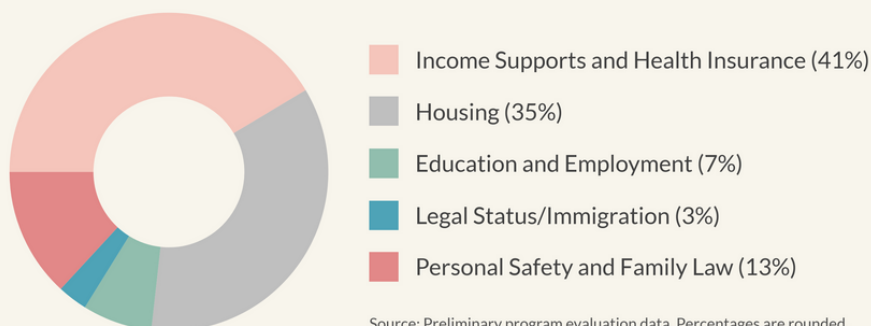
## Progress Report & Preliminary Evaluation Results

Since 2016, public interest lawyers have worked hand-in-hand with public health nurses in Philadelphia who support parents through the evidence-based *Nurse-Family Partnership* and *Parents As Teachers* home visiting programs. This interdisciplinary team works to ensure that pregnant women and new mothers have the opportunity to raise their children in safe, healthy homes, with uninterrupted health coverage and other benefits.

Through the Nursing-Legal Partnership, all clients of the Philadelphia Nurse-Family Partnership and the Mabel Morris Family Home Visit Program are screened proactively for unmet legal needs that harm maternal and child health.

Since 2016, attorneys have opened legal cases addressing 297 different legal matters. Many new mothers have more than one legal issue, and some have as many as eight.

Summary of Mothers' Legal Cases (2016-2017)



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NURSE-LED CARE  
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a PHMC affiliate

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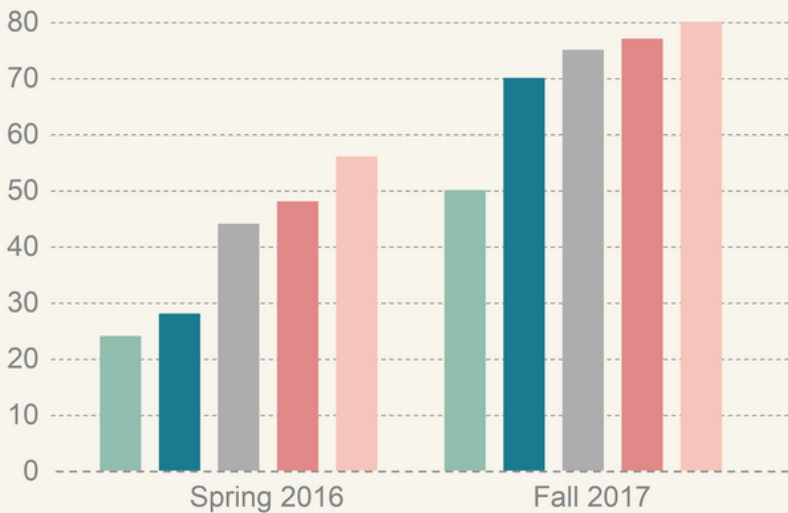
## PROGRESS UPDATE

Since the Nursing-Legal Partnership was launched in 2016:

- Over **1,500** screenings have been completed to identify the legal needs of pregnant women and new mothers
- **212** women have received services to address their legal needs

# NURSES AND LAWYERS FOR MOMS AND BABIES

## Nurses Are More Comfortable Addressing Family Needs



Percentage of home visiting nurses reporting they are "comfortable" or "very comfortable" addressing:

- Employment discrimination issues
- Education needs of children with learning disabilities
- Housing issues
- Domestic violence and family safety issues
- Public benefits, including health insurance

The Nursing-Legal Partnership fully integrates health and legal staff. Lawyers are housed on-site in the same office with public health nurses. Nurse-attorney consultations happen every day at the lunch table and around the water cooler.

More than 20 trainings have prepared nurses to spot potential legal issues impacting family health. Nurses have gained a better understanding of clients' rights and the ways they can advocate for themselves.

As of October 2017, the vast majority of nurses surveyed express comfort addressing client issues related to domestic violence and family safety (80%); educational needs of children with learning disabilities (75%); housing (75%); and public benefits (75%). Nurses say that the Nursing-Legal Partnership has made them more effective at their jobs, and better equipped to address the social needs of families.

## REDUCING TOXIC STRESS

# 93%

of mothers had decreased stress levels after receiving legal services

Source: Preliminary evaluation results collected via Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)

Many pregnant women enter home visiting programs with concerns about their own physical safety, housing, and other basic needs. These crises increase toxic maternal stress and interfere with maternal-child bonds. Preliminary evaluation data indicate that the mothers who use Nursing-Legal Partnership services are at higher risk of negative health consequences than most mothers enrolled in home visiting. By providing concrete support to high-risk mothers, the Nursing-Legal Partnership stabilizes families and prevents crises from escalating.

The Nursing-Legal Partnership is a collaboration between the **National Nurse-Led Care Consortium (NNCC)** and the **Health, Education & Legal assistance Project (HELP:MLP)**. For more information and to sign up for the Nursing-Legal Partnership newsletter, visit: <http://nurseledcare.org>

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