

The Public's Health and the Law in the 21st Century
5th Annual Partnership Conference

Concurrent Session

The Private Bar: Partner for Healthy Communities

Wednesday, June 14, 2006

8:45-10:15 am

Moderator: Lori H. Spencer, JD, Smith Moore, LLP, Atlanta, GA; and President, Public Health Law Association

Panel: Sylvia Caley, Supervising Attorney, Health Law Partnership (HeLP), Atlanta, GA

Dale Hetzler, JD, General Counsel, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA

Hal Katz, JD, Brown McCarroll, LLP, and Chair, Public Health & Policy Interest Group, Health Law Section, American Bar Association, Austin, TX

Session Purpose:

This session will explore how community outreach efforts by and to the private bar can advance the public health agenda. Speakers will discuss innovative medical-legal partnerships through which the private bar can have demonstrable impact on community health and well-being. The session also will encourage public health practitioners to look to the private bar as a source of leadership, support and assistance for public health programs.

The session will highlight Atlanta's Health Law Partnership (HeLP), a medical-legal collaboration based at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, the area's premier provider of pediatric health care services. HeLP offers legal services, interdisciplinary education and legal advocacy directed toward mitigating the impact non-medical factors have on children's health. This partnership of doctors and lawyers is one of over 30 such medical-legal collaborations across the country. Programs such as HeLP are important examples of collaborative effort between the private bar and the community at large.

Using HeLP as an example, the session will explore ways to access legal expertise and apply it toward improvement or alleviation of situational factors affecting health through systematic programs.

The goals of this session are to:

- Examine underlying legal principles involved in the design and creation of novel medical-legal partnerships;
- Discuss the development and utility of bar involvement with community health programs, and share lessons learned;

- Explore innovative and non-traditional collaborative efforts between the private bar and health systems; and
- Discuss legal resources needed to provide diligent advocacy in a community health setting.

Learning Objectives:

By the close of this session, conference participants will be able to:

- Outline mechanisms to engage the private bar in public health efforts;
- Identify legal and other barriers to instituting private bar/public health collaborations;
- Suggest practical ways in which legal interventions can be used to enhance the benefit of health care services; and
- Identify tools and resources available to assist public health professionals, private bar attorneys, and community advocates to develop and implement novel programs relating to the use of law to promote healthy communities.

Session Convener:

The Public Health Law Association