

**Increasing Adolescents' Access to the HIV Continuum of Care:
Development of a Screening Tool for Medical Legal Partnerships**

Anna C. Scalzo¹ and Amy Lewis Gilbert JD, MPH²

¹Indiana University School of Medicine, ²Indiana University School of Medicine
Department of Pediatrics Children's Health Services Research

Background: Research has shown that at-risk youth are not being reached by HIV testing efforts and are encountering barriers at other points along the HIV Continuum of Care (CoC). Legal remedies often exist for youth and their families in addressing barriers to the HIV CoC. The purpose of this study was to develop a targeted screening tool for identifying unmet health-harming legal needs that create barriers to the HIV CoC at the level of individual youth, to be used in clinics with Medical Legal Partnerships (MLPs) designed to address such barriers through legal intervention.

Project Methods: A literature search was completed to investigate if validated screening questions already existed for the 10 areas of adolescent health-harming legal needs previously identified from qualitative interviews with at-risk youth and care providers. A focus group of legal professionals was conducted to better understand the range of legal solutions that exist and identify critical concepts and language for screening questions.

Results: The study team developed a brief survey that can be used in clinic to screen individual adolescents for potential, actionable legal needs. Some questions were adapted from existing resources, while others were newly synthesized.

Conclusion and Potential Impact: The screening tool will be piloted with a representative sample of at-risk youth and eventually implemented in adolescent-focused FQHC sites with active MLPs. This tool will be used to identify actionable legal needs and prompt referrals to legal professionals who can help adolescents resolve health-harming legal needs that may prevent access to the HIV CoC.