

Social Work and Law: The Educational Benefits of Collaboration

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Abstract

Low income clients seeking civil legal services are rarely in need of only legal assistance. Instead, the issues that drove them to seek an attorney typically overlap into multiple mental health and social service needs. The poster will explain how a newly piloted clinical partnership between the School of Social Work and the School of Law improved the educational outcomes of students, and also enhanced the services offered to clients. The clinic historically served the legal needs of low income clients in Indianapolis. In 2012, an interdisciplinary collaboration involving law and social work students and faculty from both fields was implemented in order to provide holistic services to clients. The poster will describe the model, including how the clinic is structured and the roles for students and faculty. Preliminary data on the educational benefits for both law and social work students will be provided. The clinic has been found to address both student learning needs and the needs of clients in the local community.