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FLORIDA HEALTH JUSTICE PROJECT

**Local Indigent Care Panel**  
*Social Work and Access to  
Care in Florida*

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## Expanding Access

### *Why Collaboration Matters in Indigent Health Access*

- Coordinated efforts break down barriers for the underserved
- Multidisciplinary partnerships help identify and address obstacles and gaps coverage
- Helps ensure clients receive holistic support
- Real-world casework demonstrates the value of collaboration
- Expands reach, empowers clients, and improves outcomes

# Expanded Legal Practitioners

## *Social Workers in Legal Cases*

- Expanded Legal Practitioners:
  - Social workers, paralegals, and community advocates
- Provide crucial support in both legal and health-related cases
- Social workers use a person-centered framework
  - Support & guide clients with access barriers
  - Assist with charity care and financial assistance processes
  - Provide local resources for accessing care
  - Address unmet mental health challenges

# Social Workers at the Front Line

## *Navigating Charity Care*

Hospital Financial Assistance Programs (FAPs) = critical safety net  
Social workers bridge patients to hospital and legal aid support

- Trained to assist vulnerable groups
- Help with complex paperwork and system navigation
- Provide trauma-informed and culturally competent guidance
- Explain paperwork and eligibility
- Help gather required documents
- Strengthen collaboration

# Charity Care and Free Primary Care

## *Miami-Dade County*

- Jackson Health System's FAP (Jackson Prime AKA, the Jackson Card) offers free primary care for people below poverty line
- Helps reduce costly ER visits and improves continuity of care
- Jackson Prime uses “plan codes” based on FPL
- Application is complicated and provides limited guidance
- Established relationship with internal JHS Charity Care Dept helps in client application issues

# Jackson Prime Card

## *Jackson Health System Charity Care Program*

### *Miami-Dade County*

Free or sliding-scale primary care for uninsured adults in Miami-Dade

- Barriers: complex forms, in-person notary needs, limited language access.
- Applications require
  - initial telephone interview, followed by a 30-day window to submit documents and have them reviewed.
  - Documentation includes:
    - Proof of Identification/ Immigration status
    - Proof of Income (or notarized Third-Party letter of support)
    - Proof of Miami-Dade County residency
    - Written statement of need

## Case Example

### *Patrona S.*

- After 2 years of failed attempts at getting the Jackson Card, Patrona found her way to FHJP in 2023.
- Client visited her family from Nicaragua in 2019, and could not return due COVID-19.
- FHJP worked directly with JHS uncompensated care dept
- Letter of support from her granddaughter was the missing link in getting her approved
- We assisted in document collection, notary, and submission and she was approved.

# The Medically Needy Gap

- Medically Needy, a Medicaid program for those ineligible for Full Medicaid (over income/ assets)
  - Imposes a monthly Share of Cost.
  - Coverage limited and unstable; often leads to medical debt
  - Many give up due to confusing share-of-cost bill tracking
  - Offices should train a point person (expanded legal practitioners) to assist with bill tracking and SoC status
- Considered "insured" under some hospital rules → not eligible for charity care

## Referral Partnerships

*Helping applicants find you!*

- FHJP has partnerships with Catalyst Miami and FIU NeighborhoodHELP program
- They reach out to FHJP for legal expertise and application support as needed in complex or repeatedly denied cases.
- FHJP refers to Legal Services of Greater Miami or AIJ (Americans for Immigrant Justice) for issues we cannot help with
- This collaboration helps ensure care coordination.

# Fixing the System Together

## *Integrating Advocacy for Sustainable Impact*

- Expand social worker presence in legal aid programs
- Encourage at least one practice advocate to become notary
- Promote statewide consistency in charity care policies
- Strengthen legal–social work partnerships practices (Partnership Model – Legal Link Legal First Aid)

# Key Resources

## *Indigent Care*

- [DCF Medically Needy Brochure](#)
- [FIU Neighborhood HELP Community Partner Family Referral Form](#)
- [Catalyst Miami–FHJP Medical Debt Flyer](#)
- [Dollar For](#)
- [FHJP’s Miami-Dade County Charity Care Guide](#)
- [Free Clinic Directory](#)
- [HRSA Health Center \(FQHC\) Finder](#)

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