

CHAMPIONING HEALTH JUSTICE PARTNERSHIPS CONFERENCE

INNOVATE, ELEVATE, COLLABORATE

Funding by



Championing Health Justice Partnerships Conference

September 22 – 23, 2026 | All times EDT (GMT-4)

Osgoode Professional Development Centre, 1 Dundas St W Suite #2602

Detailed Program

Subject to change | (Updated: August 24, 2026)

Day 1: Tuesday, September 22, 2026

8:00 - 9:00 AM – Registration & Check-in

Please plan to arrive between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m. to collect your name tag and take some time to enjoy refreshments and network with colleagues.

9:00 - 9:30 AM – Welcome & Invocation

Invocation

An opening reflection to ground us in our collective commitment to equity, justice, and community, and to set the tone for a day of learning, connection, and action.

Jody Harbour | Grandmother's Voice

Greetings from the Honourable Sean Fraser | Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

Greetings from the Honourable Doug Downey | Attorney General of Ontario

Greetings from Dr. Danielle Martin | Member of Parliament for University–Rosedale

Greetings from Legal Aid Ontario

Setting the Stage: Why Health Justice Partnerships Matter Now

Description

This plenary session will set the stage for the conference by exploring the growing global movement toward Health Justice Partnerships (HJPs) as an integrated approach to addressing the social, legal, and structural determinants of health.

Aidan Johnson & Amy Slotek | Co-chairs, Ontario Health-Justice Community of Practice

9:30 - 10:30 AM – Session 1 (Plenary)

Setting the Stage: Why Health Justice Partnerships Matter Now More than Ever

Description

Plenary speakers will provide a high-level overview of what HJPs are and why they are needed now more than ever. They will examine how HJPs are being implemented across jurisdictions, drawing on examples from countries including Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada. The plenary will consider how collaborative, interdisciplinary responses can reduce systemic barriers experienced by marginalized populations and contribute to better health, social, and justice outcomes for all.

The discussion will also situate HJPs within broader national and international policy frameworks and commitments, including universal health coverage, human rights-based approaches to health, access to justice initiatives, Indigenous rights and reconciliation efforts, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Particular attention will be given to the ways HJPs advance commitments to equity, prevention, early intervention, and person-centred care and justice.

The session will provide participants with a shared understanding of the strategic importance of HJPs and the opportunities for cross-sector collaboration, policy innovation, and systems change. It will also establish a foundation for the conversations and knowledge exchange that will continue throughout the conference.

By grounding the conference in a shared understanding of both the urgency and the opportunity of this work, the plenary will inspire participants to think boldly about collaboration, innovation, and collective impact in advancing health justice.

Moderator

Michele Leering | Visiting Scholar, Queen's University Faculty of Law; CPRA Post-doctoral Research Fellow, University of Ottawa Faculty of Law

Presenters

Bethany Hamilton | Director, National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership, George Washington University's Milken Institute of Public Health

Dame Hazel Genn | Dean of Laws & Co-Director of the UCL Judicial Institute, University College London, United Kingdom

Lottie Turner | Chief Executive Officer, Health Justice Australia

Dr. Sarah Beardon | Senior Research & Policy Fellow (health and justice), University College London Faculty of Laws

10:30 - 11:00 AM – BREAK

11:00 AM - 12:15 PM – Session 2 (Plenary)

Models & the Spectrum of Health Justice Partnerships

Description

This plenary session will introduce the spectrum of HJP models emerging across Ontario and beyond, including hospital-based, primary care, embedded, rural, and academic partnership models. Speakers will highlight lessons learned and opportunities for adaptation across settings.

Moderator

Aidan Johnson | Executive Director, Niagara Community Legal Clinic ; Co-chair, Ontario Health-Justice Community of Practice

Presenters

Amy Slotek | Staff Lawyer, Legal Aid Ontario; Co-chair, Ontario Health-Justice Community of Practice

Emmanuelle Bernheim | Professor, University of Ottawa Faculty of Law; Director, Interdisciplinary Social Rights Clinic

Giulia Reinhardt | Lawyer/Executive Director, Halton Community Legal Services

Jennifer Stone | Executive Director, Neighbourhood Legal Services; Manager, The Health Justice Program

Lisa Turik | Lawyer/Executive Director, Community Advocacy & Legal Centre

Michael Ollier | Director of Legal Services, Hamilton Community Legal Clinic

Tess Sheldon | Associate Professor, University of Windsor Faculty of Law; Director, Mental Health Justice Clinic (CAMH/Legal Empowerment Council)

12:15 - 1:15 PM – Lunch

1:15 - 2:45 PM – Session 3 (Workshop - Practical)

Teaching & Embedding Health Justice in Medical, Healthcare & Legal Education

Description

This session brings together three educators and practitioners who are actively integrating health justice content into medical, healthcare, and legal education. Speakers will share their approach to embedding health justice content in the curriculum, the lessons they've learned along the way, and practical strategies for others looking to include health justice in their own curricula.

This session will explore:

- The approaches speakers have developed, how they came about, and what implementation looked like in practice
- The case for health justice education - why this work matters, why the moment is right, and why their particular approaches were chosen
- Strategies for gaining institutional buy-in and successfully integrating health justice content into existing curricula
- Recommendations and practical takeaways for educators and practitioners ready to take next steps

By the end of this session, attendees will leave with a clearer picture of what health justice education can look like across disciplines, and concrete strategies to advance this work in their own institutions and communities.

Co-moderators

Helen Anderson | Director of CLEO Connect at Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO)

Lisa Turik | Lawyer & Executive Director, Community Advocacy & Legal Centre

Presenters

Melanie Henry | Vice-Chair of Community & Partnerships at the Department of Family & Community Medicine, University of Toronto; Board Vice-Chair & Family Physician, Health for All Family Health Team

Mercedes Perez | Lawyer & Managing Partner, Perez Procope Leinveer LLP; Adjunct Faculty, Osgoode Hall Law School

Robin Nobleman | Staff Lawyer, Income Security Advocacy Centre; Adjunct Professor, University of Toronto Jackman Faculty of Law



*This program contains 1 hour(s) and 0 minutes of
Professionalism Content*

1:15 - 2:45 PM – Session 4 (Workshop - Policy)

Equity, Inclusion, & Priority Populations

Description

This panel will explore the histories of community-led health justice activism that have shaped, and often predated, what are now called “health justice partnerships”. Drawing on the expertise of people with lived experience, elders, activists, and community leaders, the session will examine how marginalized communities have built models of care, legal support, policy change, and resistance in response to systemic inequities across healthcare, legal, social service, and carceral systems.

Rather than treating HJPs as a new innovation, the panel will ask what current practitioners can learn from long-standing movements, including HIV/AIDS activism, harm reduction, MAD organizing, and more. Panelists will share lessons learned, strategies that worked, harms to avoid,

and principles for building partnerships that remain accountable to the communities they aim to serve.

Moderator

Bérangère Desfonds | Lawyer, Justice Pro Bono (formerly Pro Bono Quebec)

Presenters

Alexander McClelland | Associate Professor, Institute of Criminology, Carleton University

Dr. Daisy Rivadeneira | Physician; Migrant Public Legal Education & Outreach Worker, Niagara Community Legal Clinic

Jody Harbour | Co-founder, Grandmother's Voice



*This program contains 1 hour(s) and 0 minutes of
EDI Professionalism Content*

2:45 - 3:15 PM – BREAK

3:15 - 4:45 PM – Session 5 (Workshop - Practical)

Laying the Foundation: Building Health Justice Partnerships That Last

Description

This practical and interactive workshop will equip participants with resources, best practices and strategies to initiate, develop and sustain effective health justice partnerships. Participants will learn from Canadian and international experts who have developed and implemented successful health justice partnerships in hospitals and in community.

This session will explore:

- Approaches to building and sustaining interdisciplinary collaboration
- Methodologies for researching health harming legal needs, gaps, and local capacities

- Risk mitigation strategies, including how to minimize and address conflicts of interests and protect confidentiality through a health justice partnership
- How to integrate and apply common terminology across health and justice sectors to improve communication and streamline collaboration
- Resources to develop health justice partnerships

By the end of the workshop, attendees will leave with actionable tips and a clear framework for advancing health and justice through local partnerships.

Moderator

Amy Slotek | Staff Lawyer, Legal Aid Ontario; Co-chair, Ontario Health-Justice Community of Practice

Presenters

Dr. Gary Bloch | Family Physician, St. Michael's Hospital & Inner City Health Associates

Julien Dion | Lawyer & Mediator, La Maison Bleue

Lisa Turik | Lawyer & Executive Director, Community Advocacy & Legal Centre

Yonit Fuhrmann | Deputy Director, Pro Bono Ontario



*This program contains 1 hour(s) and 0 minutes of
Professionalism Content*

3:15 - 4:45 PM – Session 6 (Workshop - Policy)

Policy & Legislative Enablers of Health Justice

Description

Access to justice and health equity are too often pursued in policy silos. Yet the tools to bridge them already exist. The legislative frameworks underpinning Canada's healthcare system and public health infrastructure already recognize the importance of the social determinants of health.

This policy-focused session will bring together thought leaders from academia, government, law, and medicine to investigate how we can use policy and legislative tools to facilitate cooperation and support the expansion of health justice partnerships. We will explore what a whole-of-government approach to health and access to justice could look like.

Moderator

Robin Nobleman | Income Security Advocacy Centre; University of Toronto Jackman Faculty of Law

Presenters

Dr. Naheed Dosani | Founder, Palliative Education and Care for the Homeless (PEACH) Program at the Inner City Health Associates; Medical Director, Kensington Hospice (Kensington Health); Health Equity Expert Advisor, Canadian Partnership Against Cancer; Physician, St. Michael's Hospital (Unity Health Toronto)

Sara Gold | Legal Counsel, Access to Justice Office, Department of Justice (DOJ) Canada

Vanessa Gruben | Professor, University of Ottawa Faculty of Law; Director, Centre for Health Law, Policy, & Ethics



*This program contains 1 hour(s) and 0 minutes of
Professionalism Content*

4:45 - 7:00 PM – Reception

Poster Showcase & Networking Reception

Description

The reception and poster showcase will highlight innovative HJP initiatives, research projects, and interdisciplinary collaborations from across the health, legal, and public health sectors. Passed Hors d'Oeuvres and light refreshments will be served.

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Day 2: Wednesday, September 23, 2026

9:00 - 10:30 AM – Session 7 (Workshop - Practical)

Building Evaluation and Research Capacity for Advancing Health Justice Partnerships

Description

This practical workshop will explore realistic ways to document, evaluate, and research health justice partnerships. Drawing on Canadian and international experience, panelists will distinguish among internal program evaluation, quality improvement, participatory and action research, and more resource-intensive empirical studies. The session will ask: What evidence should HJ partnerships collect? How can small teams get started? What does a meaningful but manageable evaluation framework look like? How can evidence support program improvement, accountability, sustainability, advocacy, and policy change?

The session will emphasize feasible first steps for legal aid-service providers: articulating a theory of change, documenting initiatives as case studies, choosing useful measures, collecting data ethically, and building toward stronger evaluation and research through collaboration with health and academic partners.

Co-moderators

Michele Leering | Visiting Scholar, Queen's University Faculty of Law; CPRA Post-doctoral Research Fellow, University of Ottawa Faculty of Law

Jennifer Stone | Executive Director, Neighbourhood Legal Services; Manager, The Health Justice Program

Presenters

Jennifer Stone | Executive Director, Neighbourhood Legal Services; Manager, The Health Justice Program

Lisa Turik | Lawyer & Executive Director, Community Advocacy & Legal Centre

Dr. Liz Curran | Evaluator & Professor of Justice Reform and Legal Innovation, Nottingham Law School, Nottingham University, and Academic Advisor on Health Justice Partnerships for Central England Law Centre

Michele Leering | Visiting Scholar, Queen's University Faculty of Law; CPRA Post-doctoral Research Fellow, University of Ottawa Faculty of Law

Dr. Navindra Persaud | Director, St. Michael's Hospital's MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions

9:00 - 10:30 AM – Session 8 (Workshop - Practical)

Navigating Referrals in Health Justice Partnerships

Description

Effective referral pathways are at the heart of health justice partnerships. This panel brings together perspectives from both the health and legal clinic sectors to explore what works when navigating referrals across disciplines. Speakers will draw on their direct experience building and managing referral processes to offer practical insights for partnerships at any stage of development.

This session will explore:

- How to collaboratively develop a referral process that works
- Navigating professional and ethical considerations including confidentiality, consent, and conflicts of interest
- How to set clear expectations with referral partners and manage caseloads sustainably over time

- The differences in culture, language, and professional norms between health and justice sectors and how to bridge them effectively

By the end of this session, attendees will be able to:

- Return to their own work with concrete steps to strengthen or establish referral processes
- Anticipate and address common ethical and professional challenges
- Apply practical strategies to set expectations, manage volume, and maintain strong relationships over time

Moderator

Helen Anderson | Director of CLEO Connect at Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO)

Presenters

Giulia Reinhardt | Lawyer & Executive Director, Halton Community Legal Services

Dr. Rami Shoucari | Family Physician, St. Michael's Hospital Academic Family Health Team/Health Justice Program



*This program contains 1 hour(s) and 0 minutes of
Professionalism Content*

10:30 - 11:00 AM – BREAK

11:00 AM - 12:15 PM – Session 9 (Plenary)

Building Evidence, Legitimacy, & Policy Impact

Description

Have you ever wondered about the stories behind the big legal cases that change the game on health issues? Our panelists include healthcare providers and legal advocates who have been involved behind the scenes in major policy and law reform campaigns on the climate crisis, refugee

healthcare, harm reduction and the criminalisation of HIV. Explore how HJPs can produce evidence and advocacy strategies that influence policy reform and systems advocacy.

Moderator

Robin Nobleman | Income Security Advocacy Centre; University of Toronto Jackman Faculty of Law

Presenters

Dr. Mona Loutfy | Senior Scientist & Director, Women & HIV Research Program, Women's College Hospital Research & Innovation Institute; Innovation Fellow, Women's College Hospital Institute for Health System Solutions & Virtual Care; Staff Physician, Women's College Hospital; Professor, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto

Dr. Samantha Green | Family Physician, St. Michael's Hospital Academic Family Health Team; Assistant Professor, University of Toronto; President, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment

Sandra Ka Hon Chu | Lawyer & Co-Executive Director, HIV Legal Network

Dr. Vanessa Redditt | Family Physician, Crossroads Refugee Clinic (Women's College Hospital); Lecturer, University of Toronto's Department of Community & Family Medicine and Dalla Lana School of Public Health

12:15 - 1:15 PM – Lunch

1:15 - 2:45 PM – Session 10 (Workshop - Practical)

Building Academic Health Justice/Medical-Legal Partnerships: Collaborative Models for Interprofessional Education, Advocacy, & Systems Change

Description

This practical roundtable explores how academic medical-legal partnerships can strengthen interdisciplinary education, advance health justice, and support systems change. Speakers will share their Canadian and US experiences developing academic HJPs between university-based legal, health, and/or community partners. Through presentations, facilitated discussion and audience engagement, participants will explore the spectrum of possibilities, practical strategies for building and sustaining academic partnerships that address health-harming legal needs and promote equity-centered care, and possibilities for learning from one another.

Co-moderators

Michele Leering | Visiting Scholar, Queen's University Faculty of Law; CPRA Post-doctoral Research Fellow, University of Ottawa Faculty of Law

Vanessa Gruben | University of Ottawa Faculty of Law

Presenters

Emmanuelle Bernheim | Professor, University of Ottawa Faculty of Law; Director, Interdisciplinary Social Rights Clinic

Dr. Katie Dorman | Family Physician, St. Michael's Hospital Academic Family Health Team; Clinical Lead, Health Justice Program

Dr. Rami Shoucra | Family Physician, St. Michael's Hospital Academic Family Health Team

Tess Sheldon | Associate Professor, University of Windsor Faculty of Law; Director, Mental Health Justice Clinic (CAMH/Legal Empowerment Council)

Yael Cannon | Professor of Law & Director, Health Justice Alliance Law Clinic, Georgetown Law, USA



*This program contains 1 hour(s) and 0 minutes of
Professionalism Content*

1:15 - 2:45 PM – Session 11 (Workshop - Policy)

Ensuring Funding, Sustainability, & a Centre of Excellence

Description

This policy-focused session will explore funding streams, sustainability planning, and opportunities for developing centralized supports or centres of excellence for HJPs in Canada.

Moderator

Aidan Johnson | Executive Director, Niagara Community Legal Clinic ; Co-chair, Ontario Health-Justice Community of Practice

Presenters

Kirsti McHenry | Executive Director, Pro Bono Ontario

Nye Thomas | Executive Director, Law Commission of Ontario

Dr. Zayna Khayat | Health Futurist, Teladoc Health Canada; Adjunct Professor & Executive-in-Residence, Health Sector Strategy, University of Toronto Rotman School of Business

2:45 - 3:15 PM – BREAK

3:15 - 4:15 PM – Session 12 (Workshop - Practical)

Future Visioning & Next Steps - Frontline Providers

Description

This facilitated discussion will bring together frontline providers to reflect on key conference themes, identify future priorities, and discuss opportunities for collaboration and systems change.

Facilitator

MASS LBP, Toronto-based democracy shop and policy impact consultancy

3:15 - 4:15 PM – Session 13 (Workshop - Policy)

Future Visioning & Next Steps - Policy, Research, & Funding

Description

This session will convene policymakers, researchers, and funders to identify strategic next steps for advancing HJPs across Ontario and Canada.

Facilitator

MASS LBP, Toronto-based democracy shop and policy impact consultancy

4:15 - 5:00 PM – Session 14 (Plenary)

Where Health Justice Partnerships Go Next in Ontario and Closing Remarks

Description

This closing plenary will synthesize key conference themes and identify future directions for HJPs in Ontario, with input from the visioning sessions.

Presenters

Aidan Johnson & Amy Slotek | Co-chairs, Ontario Health-Justice Community of Practice