

Loretto Hospital has partnered with two community organizations to help protect patients from sick building syndrome, which includes asthma, upper respiratory infections and recurring headaches. The hospital, PCC Community Wellness Center and Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing formed Healthy Housing Chicago, a Medical-Legal Partnership program.

Healthy Housing Chicago aims to bring legal resolution to Loretto patients living in substandard housing conditions. It also works with Loretto patients to help keep them in their homes or to find safe, affordable housing.

Since the program launched in January 2016, approximately 186 patients have received free legal aid services—from legal aid to individuals battling an illness due to poor housing conditions to help understanding the rights under the Fair Housing Rights Act.

According to a recent report by the Environmental Protection Agency, substandard housing or inadequately maintained buildings are breeding grounds for indoor health hazards.

"The patients that we serve in the Austin community are not only underserved from a healthcare perspective, but also from a legal disparity perspective as well," said Loretto's Chief Experience Officer Tanesha Daniels. "Providing legal services is a wonderful opportunity for our patients to gain access to quality benefits and services that would provide them with a safer and healthier environment."

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