In what officials called the first local partnership of its kind, Le Bonheur Children's Hospital will collaborate with Memphis Area Legal Services and the University of Memphis' Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law to address the legal and social issues affecting patient health, representatives of the three institutions announced Tuesday.

Called Memphis CHiLD (Children's Health Law Directive), the partnership will provide legal services, education and advocacy for children and their families. It will feature a variety of training and educational programs and a legal clinic at Le Bonheur where U of M law students have devoted space to work on cases and referrals and meet with patients and medical professionals.

The initial focus of the collaboration will be assisting families with children suffering from severe asthma. Memphis CHiLD will try to get help for the families in dealing with issues such as mold in rental housing.

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