

JUSTICE IN HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

Peterborough Community Legal Centre &
Northumberland Community Legal Centre

PETERBOROUGH COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE

150 KING ST W - 4TH FLOOR
CALL US AT: (705) 749-9355

- **Address:** 150 King St, 4th Floor, Peterborough, ON K9J 2R9
- **Phone:** 705 749 9355
- **Walk-in Hours:** Mon-Fri 9 am-11:30 am
Walk-in Housing Clinic: Fri 9 am-11:30 am
Main Office: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 8:30 am-4:30 pm * Wed 8:30 am-12 noon By appointment only



Northumberland Community Legal Centre

- Address: The Fleming Building, 1005 Elgin St. W Cobourg, ON K9A 5J4
- Phone: 905 373 4464
- Walk-in Hours: 9:00am – 5:00pm Mon-Wed, Fri; Thurs: 9:00am-2:00pm

Both clinics, provide free and confidential legal information, advice and representation to vulnerable and/or low income residents. Lawyers and community legal workers provide assistance related to:

Areas of Law



- Housing (*tenants rights, arrears, evictions etc.*)
- Income (*ODSP, Ontario Works, Canada Pension Plan (CPP)*)
- Employment (*Employment Insurance, wrongful dismissal etc.*)
- Seniors Law (Wills, POA'S etc.)
- Consumer (*collection agencies, door to door sales etc.*)
- Abuse/Violence (*CICB, 2 hours family law certificates*)
- Human Rights
- Workers compensation/WSIB
- Referrals

A little about you...

- Your name
- What do you do?
- What you hope to get out of today's presentation?

Who am I?

Not Important.

What is my Role?

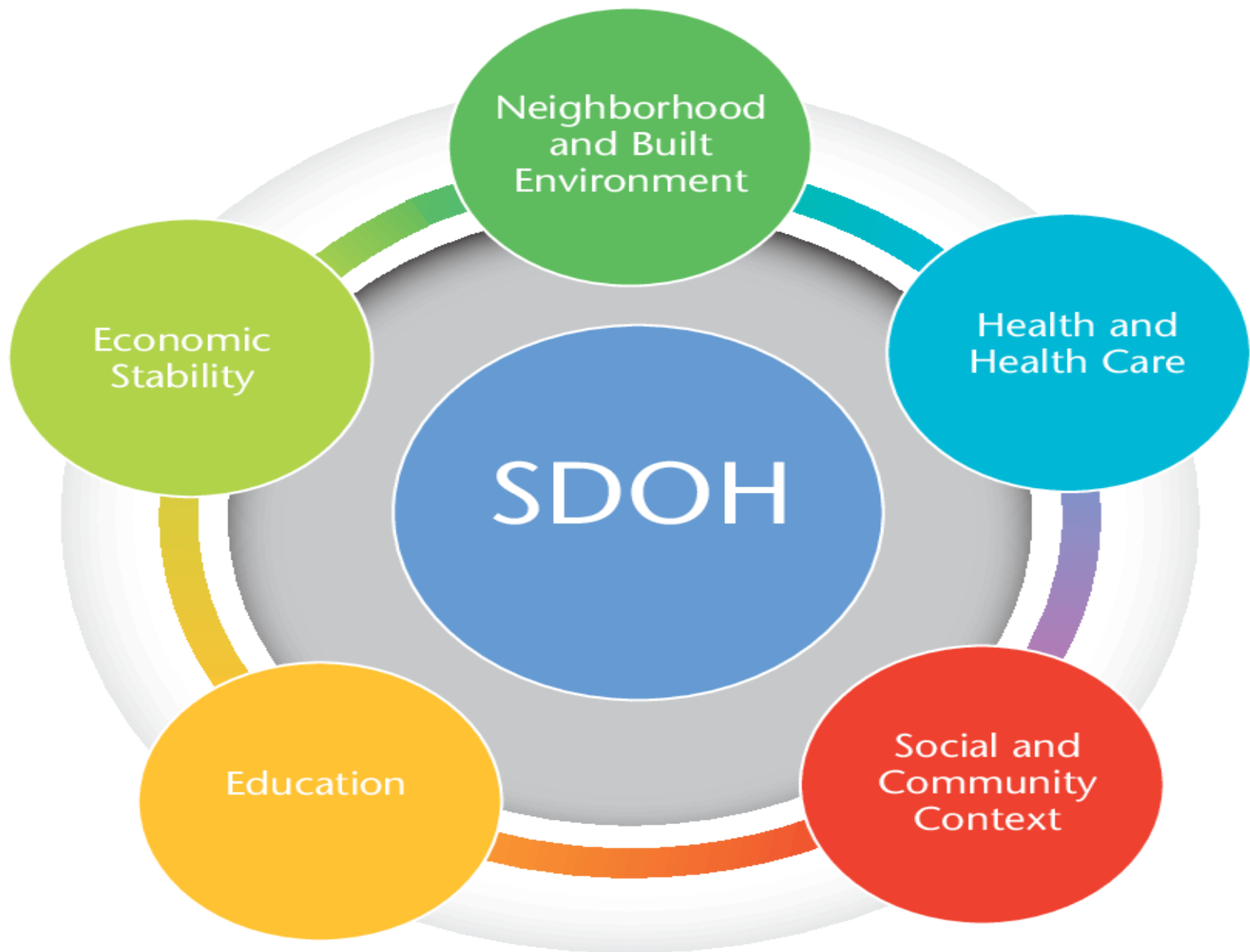
- Justice in Health Project Manager, funded by The Law Foundation of Ontario
- Aim to create unique partnerships with local health care providers
- Facilitate Referrals
- Why?.....



Justice in Health Partnership: What is the purpose?

- The purpose of this project is to provide strategic and expert advice on the development of innovative partnerships between health care providers and Legal Centres
- this project is designed to build awareness of the effect legal problems have on an individual's Social Determinants of Health. These partnerships will be used in turn to increase access to legal services for low income clients, reduce health disparities and improve health outcomes.





Poverty, Law, and Health: Conducting A Needs Assessment

- Each partnership responds specifically to the unique needs of the population it serves so it is important to gather information about the target population
- What are the Health Harming Legal Needs?

How would this partnership improve health outcomes?.....

STRESS

Impact on Health:

- Poor management of illness
- Poor mental health leading to or worsening mental health conditions (depression, anxiety, phobia etc.)
- Poor performance in the workplace or in an academic setting
- Poor nutrition
- Increases risk of disease(s) ie. Heart disease
- Poor emotional regulation
- And much more



STRESS

Related Social Determinants

- 1) Housing
- 2) Income
- 3) Gender/race
- 4) Social Settings
- 5) Job Security
- 6) Lifestyle

Legal Help Interventions

1. Evictions, repairs, harassment, rent, vital services
2. ODSP, Ontario Works, Shelter Benefit, Discretionary funds, EI issues etc.
3. Human rights
4. Discrimination: in the workplace? CICB?
5. Unpaid wages, reduced hours, Lay offs, unsafe work
6. Domestic abuse, referrals

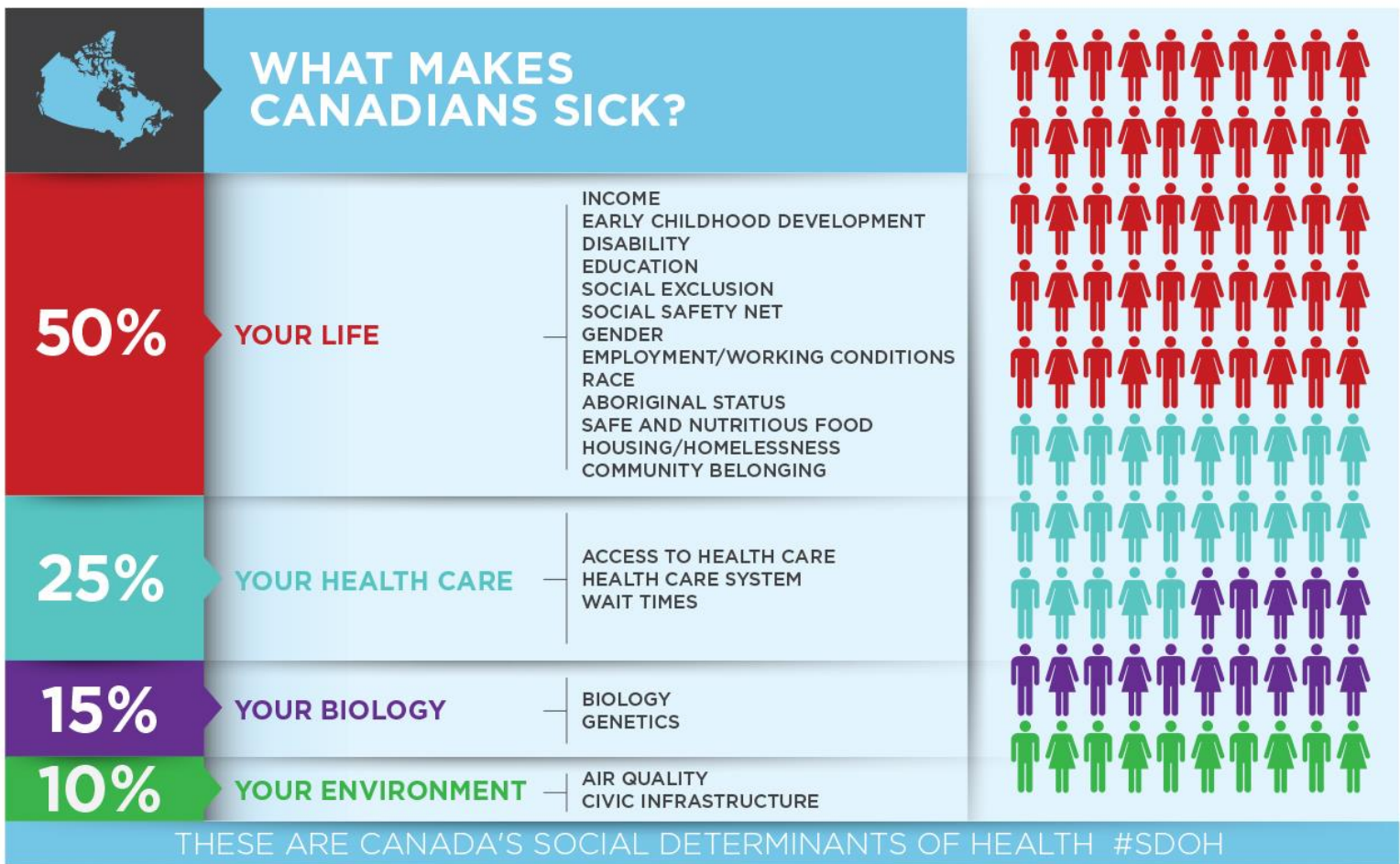
Identifying Health Harming Legal Needs



Diagnosis? Bedbugs.



Which Patients?



Which Patients?

- Social Determinants issues pose a problem for many patients, but particularly so for low-income patients
- Poverty is not always apparent, but is everywhere – in Ontario 20% of families live in poverty
- Poverty increases risk for many health conditions:
 - Cardiovascular disease: 17% ↑
 - Diabetes: 2x
 - Depression: 58% ↑ ; Suicide attempt rate: 18x
 - Cancer: lower 5 year survival rate
 - Also arthritis, COPD, asthma, hypertension, multiple comorbidities...

(From “Poverty: A Clinical Tool for Primary Care” by the OCFP)

Which Patients?

- Poverty also correlates to lower education levels, lower literacy levels, more difficulty accessing services... and higher incidence of legal problems

“Poor people are not just like rich people without money... Poor people do not lead settled lives into which the law seldom intrudes; they are constantly involved with the law in its most intrusive forms. For instance, poor people must go to government officials for many of the things which not-poor people get privately... Poverty creates an abrasive interface with society: poor people are always bumping into sharp legal things.”

Stephen Wexler, “Practicing Law for Poor People” (1970) 79:6 Yale Law Journal 1049 at 1050.

Which Patients?

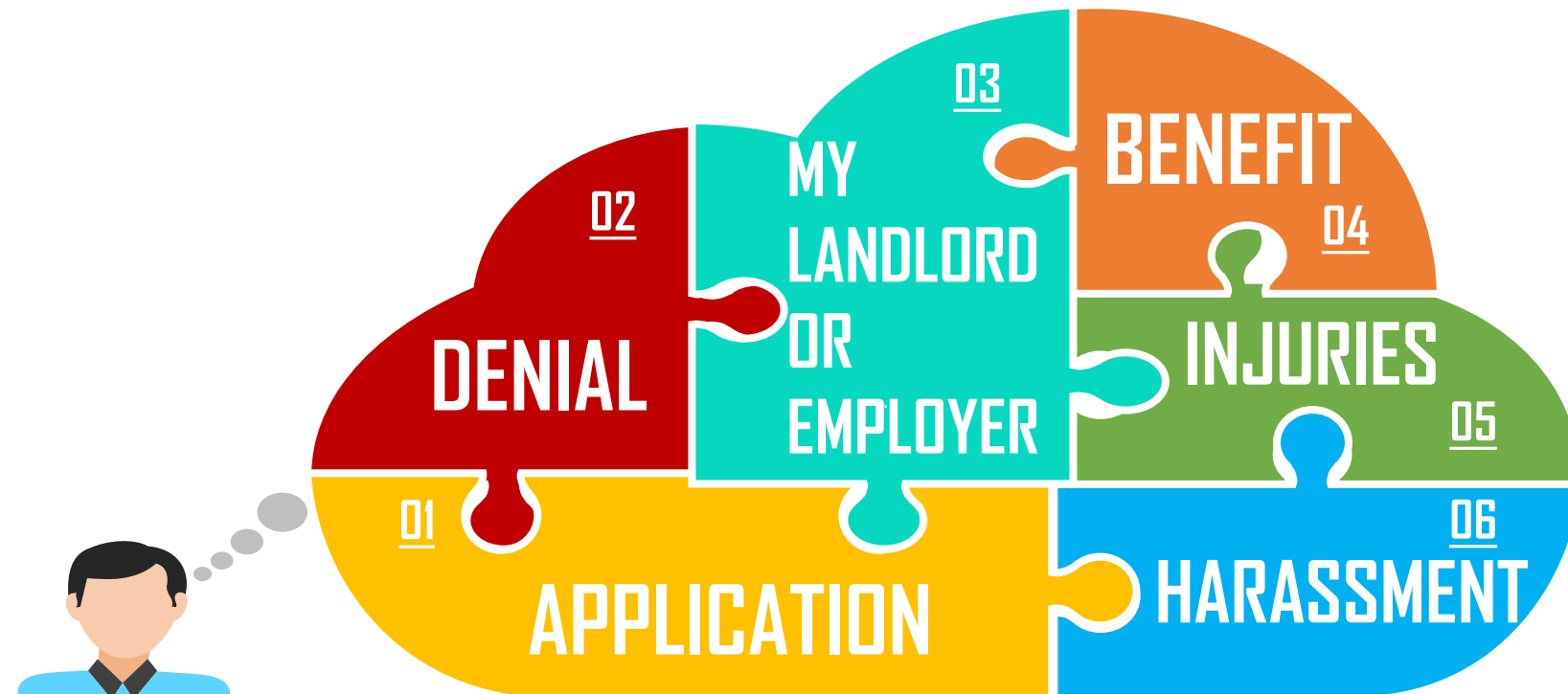
- Best way to determine if someone is living in poverty?

ASK:

“Do you ever have difficulty making ends meet at the end of the month?”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLRTobvazg8>

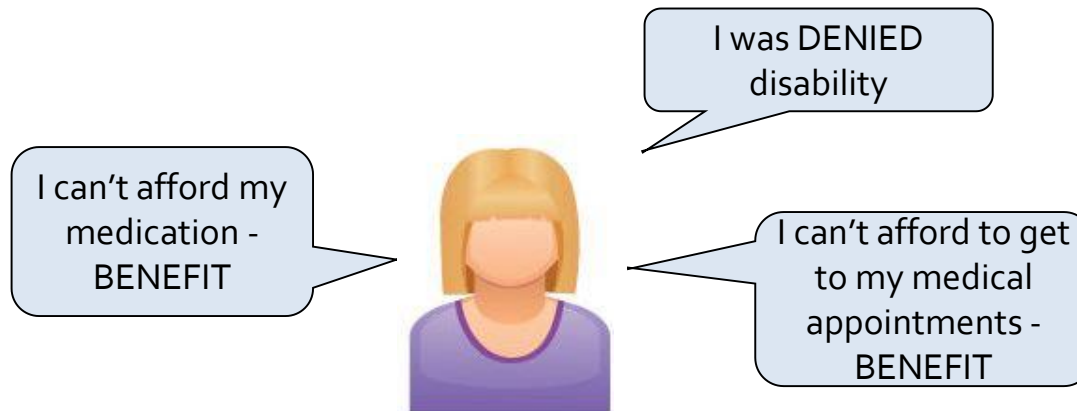
Identifying Legal Issues



EXAMPLES?

Income Security

- Higher income means fewer trade-offs between food, a roof, heat, and healthcare.
- A stable income means less stress, better management of chronic illness, better health outcomes for children
- What you might hear:

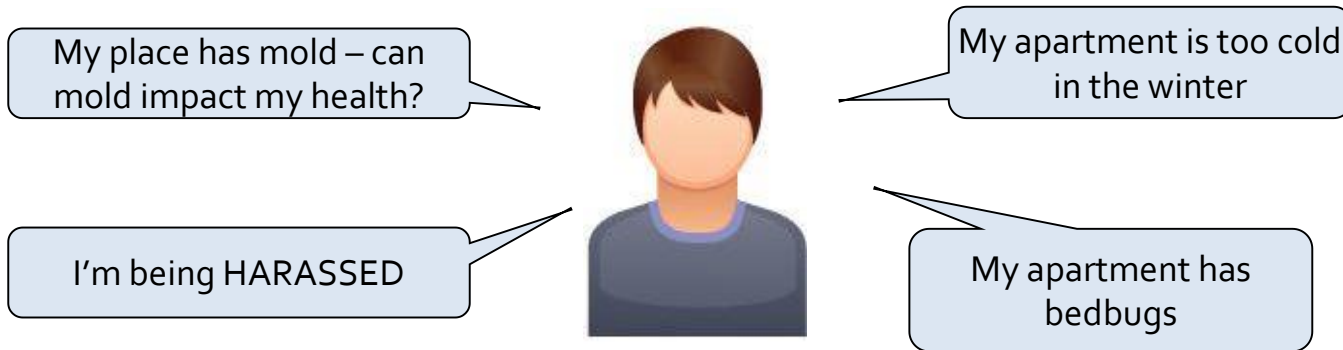


- ⌘ What you might see:
 - ⌘ Missed appointments, especially out of town
 - ⌘ Lack of compliance with treatment plans (ie meds, diet, physio)
 - ⌘ Frequent changes in address

Housing

- Stable housing → less stress → better compliance with treatment
- Healthy, decent housing can reduce impact of chronic illness

∞ What you might hear: MY LANDLORD.... OR:



Employment, Human Rights & Education

- Education is one of the best predictors of adult health
- Health insurance is often linked to employment
- Safe work means fewer injuries

What you might hear:



What you might see:

- Letters from worker's compensation, or workplace injuries
- School assessments
- Lack of compliance with treatment plans

Consumer & Debt

- ☞ Relates to income security – owing money means having less of it
- ☞ What you might hear:



Addressing Legal Issues

To Refer or not to Refer.....

- ∞ ALWAYS refer.
- ∞ Referral form – we will call your patient directly
- ∞ Satellite clinic?



Where Else Can I Go For Help

- CALC's "Where Else to Go For Help" Chart
 - <http://www.communitylegalcentre.ca/referrals/docs/Where-Else-To-Go-For-Help.pdf>
- CALC's tip sheet list:
 - http://www.communitylegalcentre.ca/legal_information/Tip_Sheet_List.htm
- <http://yourlegalrights.on.ca/>
- <http://www.cleo.on.ca/en>

Scenario #1

- Tiffany was just diagnosed with diabetes. She has longstanding chronic shoulder pain. She has a part time job as a waitress. She tells you that she is missing more and more work. Her boss told her yesterday that if she misses one more shift this month, he'll fire her.
- Tiffany also tells you she isn't sure she can afford the diet that's been recommended, and is having a hard time paying for her pain medication.
- Would you refer Tiffany to PCLC? Why or why not? Where else might you refer her?

Scenario #1 - Answers

- **BENEFITS:** Tiffany can also be referred to PCLC to get some information regarding drug coverage – she may be eligible for Ontario Works, ODSP, Trillium
- **EMPLOYER:** Tiffany can be referred to PCLC to discuss her employment issue/human rights: that is, her boss threatening to fire her for missing days due to illness

Scenario #2

- Tom and his 5 year old granddaughter have been in your office frequently over the past 6 months.
- This time, his granddaughter has a rash. You think the rash is from bedbugs, and ask Tom about this. He says yes, the building does have bedbugs and the landlord won't do anything about it.
- You probe this a bit more with Tom – can he just move?
- He tells you that he can't afford to move because he owes money on a credit card, is trying to pay it off, but is being harassed by collections agencies.
- He's turning 65 soon, and wants to retire, but he doesn't know what income he's eligible for or how to apply.
- Would you refer Tom to PCLC? Why or why not? Where else might you refer him?

Scenario #2 - Answers

- **LANDLORD:** Tom can be referred to PCLC for help with his housing issue – bedbugs.
- **HARASSMENT:** Tom can also be referred to PCLC for help with the Collections Agency
- **APPLICATION:** Tom can be referred to PCLC for information about what benefits are available to seniors 65+ and application processes

Scenario #3

- Iris is in your office with an ODSP application. You know Iris has applied for benefits before. Iris does have fairly significant depression and anxiety, but she doesn't follow through with any treatment recommendations.
- You know there is domestic abuse.
- Would you refer Iris to PCLC? Why or why not? Where else might you refer her?

Scenario #3 - Answers

- APPLICATION/BENEFITS: you can contact PCLC for help with Iris's ODSP application. (Note: the fact Iris is not accessing any treatment does not preclude her from accessing ODSP)
- DENIAL: you can tell Iris to contact PCLC if she is denied
- INJURIES: Iris can be referred to PCLC for help with the Victim Quick Response Program

ANY QUESTIONS?
