

Pro Bono Clinics in a Pandemic and Beyond

Legal Pro Bono: Facing the Future
LawWorks Clinics Network Conference
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Clinics**
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**The Disability
Rights
Clinic**

The Bar-Ilan Clinical Program

- ▶ Elderly and Holocaust Survivors Clinic
- ▶ Women in Family Law Clinic
- ▶ The Clinic for the Advancement of Equality
- ▶ ADR Clinic
- ▶ Environmental Regulation Clinic
- ▶ Civil Legal Aid Hebrew Law Clinic
- ▶ Disability Rights Clinic
- ▶ Externships
- ▶ **All 3rd year students are required to participate in one of the clinics/externships**
- ▶ **3 main goals: legal aid, education, research**
- ▶ **Tools: legal advice, litigation, legislation, position papers, lectures, etc.**

The Pandemic's Implications on our Clients

- ▶ Persons with disabilities: physical, mental, intellectual, sensory
- ▶ **1. Failure to provide accommodations**
 - ▶ Inaccessible information relating to the pandemic
 - ▶ failure to accommodate social distancing directives (labour, education, masking, accessible digital services)
- ▶ **2. A decrease in the provision of services**
 - ▶ such as mental-health support, labour supporting services, rehabilitation and recreational services
- ▶ **3. Direct discrimination**
 - ▶ PWD in residential institutions and psychiatric hospitals
 - ▶ discrimination against PWD in situations of scarce medical resources (triage)

The Pandemic's Implications on Clinical Work

▶ **Communication**

- ▶ not being able to meet clients
- ▶ clients who don't have access or accommodation to electronic communication devices

▶ **Dealing with emotional distress**

- ▶ Social worker in the clinic

▶ **An inflation of customers**

- ▶ Clinics' and NGO's collaboration – “who does what”

▶ **Policy Work**

- ▶ Structural barriers
- ▶ Coalitions

The Pandemic's Implications on Pedagogy

- ▶ “Students are not volunteers”
- ▶ **Positive implications:** easier to schedule meetings, easier to conduct meetings with multiple participants, saving time, forced us to be creative in order to engage the students, “get-away” for the students
- ▶ **Negative implications:** “zoom blues”
- ▶ The problem of the “less engaged” students

Facing the Future

- ▶ Efficiency
- ▶ Coalition work for policy and infrastructural changes
- ▶ The use and accessibility of electronic devices
- ▶ Connections with governmental entities
- ▶ Make sure persons with disabilities are not left behind while the world goes back to “normal”