



62% of lawyers satisfied with LSS services and supports

The third triennial lawyer survey, conducted online between January and March 2010, measured lawyer satisfaction, one of the key indicators used to evaluate LSS' performance. The survey was sent to all private lawyers who took a referral or billed for legal aid work in 2009 and whose e-mail address we had (1019 lawyers in total). We received 292 survey responses (29%), down from the 39% response rate for the previous two surveys. The survey covered topics ranging from the referral process, account processing, and authorizations to LSS' service levels and priorities. An independent research organization conducts the survey every three years.

Results show that the proportion of lawyers who strongly agree that they are satisfied with the support provided by LSS (14%) has remained stable since 2007, but overall lawyer satisfaction has declined to 62%. However, most respondents indicated that they will continue to provide services. Eighty percent of respondents predicted they will take on just as many legal aid referrals, if not more, in 2010/2011.

Respondents indicated numerous changes they felt could increase satisfaction levels. For example, a larger percentage of lawyers would feel valued for their services if the tariff was higher, or if the hours and range of services covered by the tariff better reflected the time required to provide quality service. This echoes the top suggestions lawyers gave when asked what LSS can do to improve its support. Results also indicate that improving the authorization process could positively affect satisfaction levels.

Nearly 50% of lawyers who agreed they felt valued by LSS said it was mainly due to the way LSS staff treats them. Respondents described staff as friendly, helpful, and respectful, and gave LSS employees' courtesy and knowledge high ratings. Positive feedback from lawyers regarding staff responsiveness to phone inquiries and, especially, our staff's courtesy and knowledge, has significantly increased since 2007.

A majority of respondents (71%), supported LSS taking an integrated approach to legal aid (this approach encourages client engagement in resolving their legal issues and provides support for addressing clients' related legal issues, such as housing or debt

problems). However, only 22% of respondents said they were satisfied with LSS' support in helping them address clients' related legal issues, while 32% were unsure. Lawyers would like to see more support from LSS in helping clients resolve their own issues and providing support for addressing related legal issues. In addition, just 38% of lawyers are aware of LSS' steps toward implementing an integrated approach.

Lawyers were divided as to whether LSS does a good job allocating its limited resources to meet clients' needs, with 39% agreeing, 24% disagreeing, and 27% unsure. Top suggestions for how LSS could improve services included expanding poverty law coverage and services and seeking improved funding for services. Respondents mentioned these suggestions considerably more often than in previous years.

We value your feedback and would like to thank all participants. Survey details are below; the complete results are on our website under About us → Our reports. For more information, contact Janice Staryk at 604-601-6148 or Janice.Staryk@lss.bc.ca.

Key survey results

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| Overall LSS support and services <ul style="list-style-type: none">62% satisfied (75% in 2007, 69% in 2004) | LSS staff <ul style="list-style-type: none">88% agreed staff are courteous (94% in 2007; 90% in 2004)76% agreed staff are knowledgeable (85% in 2007; 80% in 2004) |
| Referral process <ul style="list-style-type: none">72% satisfied (79% in 2007; 69% in 2004) | |
| Payment process <ul style="list-style-type: none">71% satisfied with accounts (82% in 2007; 80% in 2004)83% satisfied with payment timelines (87% in 2007; 81% in 2004) | Authorization process <ul style="list-style-type: none">52% satisfied (60% in 2007; 67% in 2004) |
| Resource allocations <ul style="list-style-type: none">39% satisfied with how LSS allocates limited resources (59% in 2007; 42% in 2004) | Services valued <ul style="list-style-type: none">47% feel LSS values their services (58% in 2007; 50% in 2004) |