



SLASS CLIENT SERVICE MEASURES RESOURCE PACKAGE APRIL 2005

The Quality Service Office (QSO) at Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) has developed this resource package to assist SLASS with the development and implementation of a set of core client service measures in the areas of access, timeliness, and client feedback. Examples of measures follow below:

Access:

Each SLASS surveys 5 to 10 community partners annually, asking about the quality of service. Survey questions related to access issues and invitations for suggested improvements are included. Results feed into a SLASS's annual planning and reporting to LAO.

Timeliness and response to initial client contact:

Each SLASS will respond to an initial contact with the client within two business days and at that time provide information about the SLASS process. The SLASS tracks this measure twice a year for a one-week sample period. Results feed into a clinic's annual planning and reporting to LAO.

Client Satisfaction Feedback:

Each SLASS surveys a minimum of 5% of clients where there is a case file opened. Results feed into a clinic's annual planning and reporting to LAO. The survey should include the following core questions:

- ✓ Overall how satisfied were you with the service you received?
- ✓ Do you have any suggestions as to how we could improve?
- ✓ Has your situation improved or a crisis been avoided because of the assistance you received?

I. ACCESS

Key Resource

The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
Barriers to Access to Essential Services

<http://www.research.ofmdfnni.gov.uk/barriers/index.htm>

- This provides a good overview of access issues affecting vulnerable populations from Ireland.

Example

Sample Survey for community partners attached: Example A

II. TIMELINESS

Key Resource

Timeliness Of Claims Processing From The Veterans' Viewpoint: What are Their Expectations and Experience and How Does it Relate to Organizational Goals?
Survey and Research Staff
Office of Performance Analysis and Integrity
Veterans Benefits Administration
November 2002

<http://www.vba.va.gov/surveys/cp/time.pdf>

- This is an excellent resource that provides an in-depth exploration of timeliness. It shows the impact of clearly understanding the process and how the estimated time affects overall client satisfaction.

Example

Sample tracking form attached: Example B

III. CLIENT FEEDBACK

Informed consent

In designing your tools to obtain client satisfaction feedback, it's important to take into account issues of informed consent.

It is a best practice to give the following information to clients in plain language when soliciting their feedback:

1. Clearly identify who is undertaking the survey
2. The purpose of the survey
3. What is required of the client
4. That the decision to participate will not affect the service the client may receive in the future
5. That participation is voluntary
6. The right to refuse to answer some of the questions and to quit at anytime

7. Confidentiality and Anonymity

Examples of consent statements

Example #1

At the end of a case closing letter:

We would appreciate if you would take a few minutes to complete and return the enclosed client survey. Client surveys assist us in improving the services we provide. Your decision to complete this survey is entirely voluntary. If you choose not to complete the survey, it will not in anyway affect the service you may receive from us in the future. You do not have to answer all the questions. We will keep your completed survey confidential and, in reporting the results of the survey, no one will be able to identify you.

Example #2

Consent used for in-person interviews for access to justice research:

The Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodations (CERA) is a group that helps tenants and people looking for housing. CERA is undertaking a research project to better understand the problems people have with their housing and how they deal with these problems. Your participation is critical in helping us understand what problems people are having with their housing and what kind of information would help them.

The interview requires about an hour of your time.

Your participation is entirely voluntary.

We will use this information to help us in our work. All the information we gather from people will get mixed together so that no one will know about your personal information. We will not give your name to anyone. You can refuse to answer any questions we ask you and you can stop the questions at any time.

Example #3

Information contained in Area Office Survey:

Please let us know what you think about our service by answering some questions. We are interested in your opinion, whether positive or negative. Your response will not affect your use of this office. The information you provide will be used to improve the service you receive. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Key Resources

Options for the measurement of client satisfaction in homelessness services (Australia)
The Australian Federation of Homelessness Organizations (AFHO)

http://www.afho.org.au/4_publications/archives/CSAT_Consult_Find.pdf

- This is an excellent resource for looking at a range of options to obtain client satisfaction feedback as well as outlining the challenges with specific marginalized communities.

Quality Services - Guide II - Measuring Client Satisfaction
Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/Pubs_pol/opepubs/TB_O/2QG_e.asp

- This comprehensive guide gives a good overview of the subject 'measuring client satisfaction'.

Examples

Sample client feedback survey attached: Examples C-1, C-2

Tips

1. Keep the survey short.
When designing your survey make a mental distinction between what is essential to know, what would be useful to know, and what would be unnecessary. Stick to the essentials - the best client satisfaction survey is one or two pages long.
2. Use plain language.¹
3. Use lots of white space.
A crowded survey 'scares' people!
4. Limit your use of open-ended questions.
Your response rate will be higher if clients can just tick-off choices versus having to write an essay for every question. In addition, this survey model will be easier to analyze. At the same time, it is very useful to end with a question that invites suggestions.
5. Put your questions in logical order and consider using headings for different sections.
This assists the client in understanding the questions they are being asked, and again makes the survey less 'scary'.

¹ Be on the Cutting Edge:
Learn These Seven Plain Language Principles Now!
<http://www.islandnet.com/~wwlia/plainlan.htm>

6. Always pre-test your survey with a small number of people to ensure clarity and user-friendliness.

Example A
Survey for Community Partners

Revised April 12, 2005

Name of Organization/
Group: _____

Name of Contact Person: _____

Telephone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Who are your clients/members? _____

What were the most pressing legal issues/problem(s) your clients/members experienced in the past year?

Please check 3 of the most relevant barriers to access to our services experienced by your clients/members:

<input type="checkbox"/> language and cultural issues <input type="checkbox"/> literacy issues <input type="checkbox"/> mental health issues <input type="checkbox"/> disability <input type="checkbox"/> drug and alcohol challenges	<input type="checkbox"/> homeless/ risk of homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> hopeless/ pessimistic about solving issue/problem <input type="checkbox"/> distrust of all services <input type="checkbox"/> past negative experience with the legal system	<input type="checkbox"/> people don't know about services offered by legal clinic <input type="checkbox"/> location difficult to reach/find <input type="checkbox"/> difficult intake system <input type="checkbox"/> hours of operation <input type="checkbox"/> difficult to reach by phone
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Others _____

Taking into consideration we face the same resource constraints as most community agencies, can you suggest steps we could take to address the relevant barriers identified above to improve access for your clients/members?

How satisfied were you overall with access to the services we provide?	<i>Very Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Neither Dissatisfied nor Satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>NA</i>
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Example C-1

Client Feedback Survey

Revised April 12, 2005

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this survey. Client surveys assist us in improving the services we provide. Your decision to complete this survey is entirely voluntary. If you choose not to complete the survey, it will not in anyway affect the service you may receive from us in the future. You do not have to answer all of the questions. We will keep your completed survey confidential and, in reporting the results of the survey, no one will be able to identify you.

1. Did you find it easy to access our services? Yes No

2. Is there something we could do to make our services easier to access?

3. Have you benefited from the assistance you received from us?

Yes No

4. Would you recommend us to someone else if he/she needed legal help or advice?

Yes No

5. Do you have any further comments or suggestions to help us improve our service?

6. How satisfied were you overall with the service you received from us?	<i>Very Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Neither Dissatisfied nor Satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>NA</i>
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CIRCLE ONE NUMBER	1	2	3	4	5	NA
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Example C-2

Client Survey

Your feedback is valuable to us. Please let us know what you think of our service by circling one of the numbers between 1 and 5, or NA (does not apply). Your response is confidential and will not affect your use of this clinic. Your answers will be used to improve the service you receive.

Date: _____

Clinic: _____

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>NA</i>
1. Clinic staff were courteous and pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	NA
2. The service was accessible by phone. (some one answered or I was able to leave a message)	1	2	3	4	5	NA
3. The clinic was conveniently located. (easy to find and to get to)	1	2	3	4	5	NA
4. The hours when the clinic is open are convenient	1	2	3	4	5	NA
5. How satisfied were you overall with the service you received from the clinic?	<i>Very Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Neither Dissatisfied nor Satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>NA</i>
	1	2	3	4	5	NA

6. Are there any areas where you think we could improve?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey

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