



Newsletter

“Supporting Quality Legal Service to Clients” – Quality Service Office

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IMPROVING PROCESSES TO ENHANCE EFFICIENCIES: THE IMPORTANCE OF PROCESS MAPPING

Improving Processes to Enhance Efficiencies:

Process mapping is widely used at LAO for identifying the need for process improvements, investigating workflow issues, and modelling options for new process development. Process maps are also used as a training tool during the roll-out of new processes. Since 2007, the QSO has provided process mapping expertise and assistance to 18 separate projects for a number of departments to enable the organization to be more effective in managing existing processes and defining future processes.

Mapping a process creates a common understanding of who does what in any series of activities relating to our business, and how these actions are linked to others in the organization. It also creates a baseline for improvement, including identification of redundancies, “time-waster” activities, frequency of process handovers, and loops, disconnects, and unnecessary steps. It forces us to look at our business in an objective, visual framework.

Some of the current and more recently completed process map activities included the following:

- **Block Fees**
- **Lawyer Payments Decision Trees**
- **Panel Management**
- **Empanelment process**
- **Clinic evaluation process**
- **Discretion process**
- **Mediation Initiative**
- **Modernized client intake processes**

MONITORING OUR PROGRESS

SURVEY FEEDBACK FROM CERTIFICATE LAWYERS, DUTY COUNSEL, CLINIC STAFF AND CLIENTS

CMT 2010/2011

Monitoring our Progress:

Legal Aid Ontario is committed to quality service to clients and service deliverers. It is important to receive feedback from our clients and stakeholders/partners. In February through April this year, we again conducted the annual **Common**

Measurements Tool surveys to monitor our success with modernization and identify where there may be room for improvement. As in the previous 5 years, we asked clients in the field, lawyers, and our clinic partners to provide their input and comments pertaining to our services, access to justice, the benefit of the services received and their experience with the modernization of services which LAO has rolled out over the past year.

One key, ground-breaking component of the surveys is the Survey of In-custody Clients. For the second year the survey has been conducted, we have had the assistance of District Video-remand staff and Superintendents of 17 Federal and Provincial Correctional/Detention Institutions. The survey

gathers feedback from in-custody legal aid clients about their experience with legal aid certificate lawyers, their access to justice, their communications and contact challenges with lawyers, and case delays.

As of mid-May, responses are still coming in, and analysis and summaries of the information are targeted for the end of June. You may review the summary of all of last year's client surveys at http://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/about/downloads/2009_cmt-overview.pdf

For further details or information about the feedback surveys, contact Nick Roller at rollern@lao.on.ca.

NEW LSUC REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: HELPING LAWYERS MEET THE LSUC REQUIREMENTS

January 1, 2011 marked the start of mandatory annual reporting by lawyers and paralegals of 12 hours of [Continuing Professional Development](#) (CPD) to the Law Society.

Since the implementation of panel standards requiring annual continued legal education in the panel area of law, QSO has partnered with experts in panel law areas by providing and filming continuing education programs of high quality that are now available

as archives on the LAOLAW website for nominal charge. Starting with the January program offered by the Family Lawyers Association and the 311 Bar program, LSUC accreditation for Professionalism Content is being sought and received where applicable for programs in all areas of law we film and make available. To lawyers unable to attend any of these programs in person, viewing of these archived programs by 2 or more lawyers (e.g. at a Lunch and Learn) is an accepted method for CPD. You must keep evidence of purchase of the program, and particulars of who viewed it with you. Note: that accredited Professionalism and New Lawyer programs viewed in groups **must be freshly accredited by the LSUC for this purpose**. QSO is currently reviewing the programs in DVD prior to 2011 for their current relevance and significance for purposes of future reporting of viewing CPD of archived materials.

NEWS ABOUT AND FOR CLINICS

The Association of Community Legal Clinics of Ontario (ACLCO) has received funding from LAO's Innovation Fund to create a position for a **Clinic KnowledgeNow Lead**. The application was submitted

by the ACLCO in order to continue the work undertaken by The Provincial Learning Community on Knowledge Management and Transfer (KMT) and has been granted for one year with the possibility of an extension for up to 2 more years.

With the creation of this position, KMT will be wrapping up their work – the current PLAC funding ends August 31. A new group – the KnowledgeNow Steering Committee – will oversee future knowledge-sharing initiatives and provide guidance to the new KnowledgeNow Lead. This position will be responsible for helping to foster knowledge sharing within and amongst clinics.

Information about the knowledge sharing work of this group is on the KnowledgeNOW page on The Source at <http://thesource/Committees/KMT/Pages/Home.aspx> (go to the “Committees” page on The Source and follow the link to the Provincial Learning Community on Knowledge Management and Transfer).

If you have any questions or comments or if you can't access The Source and want copies of documents and reports, please contact Marnie Hayes, The Manager of Clinic Learning and Development at hayesm@lao.on.ca or 416-979-2352 ext. 5392

CLINIC EVALUATION REVIEW PROGRAM UPDATE

Over the past fiscal year, QSO staff lawyers have conducted 11 on-site clinic reviews and 13 file reviews to ensure quality service delivery in poverty law. For on-site clinic reviews and file reviews, QSO reviewed open and closed client files, clinic summary advice files, and clinic outreach files, and all related file and practice related policies. This process involves a file review from the practice management perspective as undertaken by the Law Society's practice management reviews of private practitioners.

Currently QSO is reviewing the framework to streamline the process so that reviews are more efficient and effective, removing overlap and duplication of clinic reporting.

QSO thanks all the clinics who have hosted us this year.

SUPPORTING QUALITY AT LAO

Block Fees:

LAO is committed to the provision of quality service for clients through all of its legal service delivery models. With the current expansion of the [block fees](#) model, the Quality Service Office has played, and will continue to play a key role in designing a quality strategy that will ensure uncompromised quality service under block fees. QSO is currently recruiting a criminal lawyer who will bring expertise to the design of the quality component of block fees. As we move forward, QSO will be monitoring on an ongoing basis some key success indicators that relate to the quality and

effectiveness of legal services provided.

**A NEWSLETTER FROM THE
QUALITY SERVICE OFFICE,
LEGAL AID ONTARIO.**