

Legal Aid Ontario Modernization consultation: Summer 2019

Submission from Legal Clinic of Guelph and Wellington County

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Sent: September-06-19 12:02 PM
To: LAO Stakeholder Consultation <consultation@lao.on.ca>
Subject: Anthea Millikin - Submissions regarding the modernization of Legal Aid

Hello,

Here are the submissions from the Legal Clinic of Guelph and Wellington County. Our Clinic suggests the following:

- 1) Client centered services: it is very important to have access points for service located within communities where clients are. In urban centres, this should be in locations that clients are already attending: social service offices, health centres. In rural areas this means being where clients are: grocery stores, post offices, medical offices, libraries. Limited use of services through court houses, services need to be available in community locations where people regularly attend.
- 2) Clients should be able to access a full range of services by contacting an access point: family, criminal, housing, income, immigration, employment. If the services are not available at that location, they should be seamlessly accessible: by skype, by telephone, by instant messaging. What is critical is that clients are talking to a person and the technology is happening behind the scenes. It must be as easy as possible for a client to walk in and tell someone what is going on and the person is trained on how to triage and respond holistically.
- 3) The access centres should be staffed by lawyers and paralegals who are trained to serve clients in a holistic fashion and who are accustomed to working with other resources in the community to serve clients, through partnerships, and mechanisms like secondary consultations.

- 4) Mobile outreach is critical for rural and remote areas to bring services to people in the communities in which they live.
- 5) Use of province wide telephone/computer advice for straightforward advice of a standard nature for clients who are able to access. Seamless connections to this service through the access points as well.

We welcome the opportunity to share our ideas and to provide input and assistance in the modernization process, as required.

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