

BACKGROUND

As part of the CLSP funding agreement the Centre is required to survey clients in relation to their satisfaction with our service. A small committee reviewed the current questionnaire and designed a new survey tool that provided more relevant data than the previous one, and gave more opportunity for subjective feedback.

METHODOLOGY

The survey was administered by phone over 4 weeks during May – June 2011. Clients who had received advice, either by phone or face-to-face, between 1 January 2011 and 30 April 2011 were selected at random from client records. Attempts were made to contact 532 clients. Many declined to take part, the most common reason being that they couldn't remember their experience in detail.

A total of 241 surveys were completed.

RESULTS

Part A Statistical information (*as recorded on advice sheet*)

Gender:

	<i>Number</i>	%
male	101	41.9
female	140	58.1
Total	241	100

Age group:

	<i>Number</i>	%
under 25	16	7.1
25-54	129	57.3
55-74	62	27.6
Over 75	18	8
Total	225 *	100

* some details not recorded

Country of birth or cultural identity

	<i>Number</i>
Australia	189
Aboriginal	2
UK	13
European	19
USA	1
Africa	7
Middle East	4
Asia	3
Pacific/NZ	4
South America	2
Total	244

Type of Contact:

telephone	159
face-to-face	82
duty advocacy	0
Total	241

Project/Problem Type

	<i>Number</i>
Generalist **	166
Tenancy	23
Child support/family	18
Credit and debt – general	15
Financial counselling	16
Welfare	4
Total	242

** breakdown of *generalist*:

	<i>Number</i>
Probate/wills	25
Traffic offence/motor vehicle related	30
Employment	19
Consumer	34
AVO/domestic violence	4
Discrimination	10
Injuries/victim's compensation	9
Immigration	2
Other civil	32
Other criminal	1
Total	166

PART B SURVEY RESULTS

1. *How did you first make contact with our centre?*

by phone	211	88%
in person	29	12%

2. Response Time:

How much time went by between making the first contact and receiving advice?

All responses:

	Number	%
Almost straight away	97	39.8
Less than 30 minutes	10	4.1
More than 30 minutes	29	11.9
24 hours	24	9.8
More than a few days	84	34.4
Total	244	100

Response time by project or problem type:

Generalist

		%
Almost straight away	64	38
Less than 30 minutes	5	3
More than 30 minutes	23	13.7
24 hours	21	12.3
More than a few days	55	33
Total	166	100

Tenancy

		%
Almost straight away	14	61
Less than 30 minutes	2	8.7
More than 30 minutes	3	12.9
24 hours	2	8.7
More than a few days	2	8.7
Total	23	100

Child Support/Family

		%
Almost straight away	7	38.9
Less than 30 minutes	3	16.7
More than 30 minutes	0	0
24 hours	0	0
More than a few days	8	44.4
Total	18	100

Credit and Debt/General

		%
Almost straight away	10	66.8
Less than 30 minutes	0	0
More than 30 minutes	1	6.6
24 hours	1	6.6
More than a few days	3	20
Total	15	100

Financial Counselling

		%
Almost straight away	1	6
Less than 30 minutes	0	0
More than 30 minutes	1	6
24 hours	0	0
More than a few days	14	88
Total	16	100

Main reasons given for response time of more than a few days:

- Staff availability
- worker booked up (financial)
- client not available
- client couldn't remember why it took that long

3. Level of understanding of the problem:

On a scale of 1 – 5, how well do you think the person advising you understood your problem?

All responses:

		%
1 <i>not at all</i>	7	2.75
2	13	5.1
3	35	13.73
4	63	24.71
5 <i>understood completely</i>	137	53.73

Adding 4 and 5 together (i.e. high level of satisfaction):

All responses	78 %
Breakdown by project:	
generalist	78 %
Tenancy	95 %
Child support/family	66 %
Credit & debt general	60 %
financial	87 %

Advice Received:

4. ***On a scale of 1 – 5, was the information and advice you received clear and easy to understand?***

All responses:

		%
1 no	7	2.73
2	8	3.13
3	22	8.59
4	59	23.05
5 yes	160	62.5

Adding 4 and 5 together:

All responses	85.5 %
Breakdown by project:	
generalist	83.8%
Tenancy	91.6 %
Child support/family	88.9 %
Credit & debt general	86.7 %
financial	87.4 %

5. On a scale of 1 – 5, was *enough* information or advice given during the session?

All responses:

		%
1 no	22	8.53
2	17	6.59
3	30	11.63
4	58	22.48
5 yes	131	50.78

Adding 4 and 5 together:

All responses	73.3 %
Breakdown by project:	
generalist	68.6%
Tenancy	91.6 %
Child support/family	64.6 %
Credit & debt general	80 %
financial	93.7 %

6. On a scale of 1 – 5, was the advice *useful* in helping you to deal with your legal problem?

All responses:

		%
1 no	28	11.07
2	13	5.14
3	33	13.04
4	43	17.00
5 yes	136	53.75

Adding 4 and 5 together:

All responses	70.7 %
Breakdown by project:	
generalist	68.7 %
Tenancy	87.4 %
Child support/family	61 %
Credit & debt general	59.9 %
financial	87.5 %

Treatment by staff:

7. **a) On a scale of 1 – 5, were you treated in a friendly and respectful manner when you first made contact?**

		%
1 no	3	1.2
2	3	1.2
3	3	1.2
4	20	7.9
5 yes	224	88.5

- b) On a scale of 1 – 5, were you treated in a friendly and respectful manner by the person who advised you?**

		%
1 no	5	1.9
2	7	2.7
3	12	4.7
4	21	8.2
5 yes	212	82.5

8. **On the whole did our service meet your expectations?**

YES 189 (approx.) 78%

Overwhelmingly, clients reported that they were very happy with the service. Frequent comments included:

- *Very satisfied*
- *Perfect – clear advice given*
- *Adviser researched the client’s case and followed up with phone call*
- *Terrific starting point, appreciate the service*
- *Most definitely – worker emailed client re. further information*
- *More than expected*

- *Good referral service*
- *Valuable advice*
- *Yes – although no easy answer to problem*
- *Glad to have made contact*
- *Helpful, understanding compassionate*
- *Walked out of meeting feeling a lot better*
- *Exceeded expectations*
- *Great follow up service*
- *Excellent service*
- *Friendly and helpful and made people feel special*

Of those who said *no*, comments included:

- *Advised to see a private solicitor*
- *Could have been more helpful*
- *Not enough information given*
- *Referred to legal aid and they were not helpful either*
- *Wanted information to be more specific*

9. Was there anything that we could have done differently?

NO 161 (approx.) 67%

Of those who said *yes*, the most common remarks were:

- *Worker could have been available a bit more often*
- *More information required*
- *More specific information needed*
- *Would have liked a more in –depth discussion*
- *felt there was a lack of knowledge about his issue*
- *felt a bit rushed*
- *could have taken more time to understand the issue*
- *felt worker was impatient*
- *having to wait for worker to call back was frustrating*
- *would have liked assistance to write a letter*

DISCUSSION

The survey targeted only those clients who had received phone advice or financial counseling. This was decided because of the ease of randomly selecting client records.

Responses to questions 3 to 6 indicate a high level of satisfaction. That is, a high percentage of respondents rated a “4” or “5” for:

worker understanding their problem;
 advice being clear and easy to understand;
 enough information given; and
 usefulness of advice given.

Please note that the *breakdown by project* for these responses should be regarded as indicative only as they are relatively small sample sizes. Welfare respondents were not shown in these breakdowns because of the very small sample size of 4.

Valuable subjective information was collected in questions 8 and 9 regarding clients' expectations. While the responses were generally very positive, of those who reported that their expectations were NOT met, a common theme was the need for more information, or that the information given was not detailed or specific enough. This was echoed in question 9 where some respondents asked for more information and raised issues about workers being rushed or impatient. Three respondents suggested that they would have liked more help to write a letter.

It is also important to consider the timing of the survey as this influenced the accuracy of the data collected. Many respondents were vague about recalling details of their advice session; therefore the validity of their responses could be questionable. Some clients reported having contacted a number of various services and agencies regarding their problem, either before or after their contact with the ILC.

e.g. "I was going through a difficult time then .. I talked to so many people .. I can't remember all the details ".

For future surveys, the optimum time for seeking feedback would be, say, between one and eight weeks of contact with the service.

Many clients appreciated the chance to give feedback. It should also be noted that the workers who administered the telephone survey displayed great empathy, understanding and objectivity when dealing with clients.

Although a more expensive survey to administer, this client satisfaction survey resulted in a larger sample size than in previous surveys, and provided more meaningful, qualitative information and feedback.