

Evaluation
of the
LawLINE Enhancement Project:
for
LEGAL SERVICES SOCIETY OF B.C.



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Peggie-Ann Kirk conducted all key respondent interviews, and Raincoast Business Centre word-processed the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the first of two reports of an evaluation of the LawLINE Enhancement Project (LLEP) of the Legal Services Society (LSS). The report contains a description of key aspects of the LLEP service, presents extensive data on client usage patterns, and reports on views of key respondents from community organizations about their and their clients' experiences with LawLINE.

The report is based on a review of LLEP documents and statistical reports, telephone interviews with three LLEP staff, and telephone interviews with 17 key respondents. A second report, to be presented at the end of the summer, will report on a survey of clients who have used the LawLINE service.

Key findings related to caller backgrounds, issues and service results which are described in this report include:

- There were 11,211 calls in the 7.5 month period (Sep 15/03 – Feb 20/04, and Mar 1/04 – May 10/04), or approximately 1,500 calls per month.
- Although family law is the largest single issue type with 38% of calls, there are several categories of calls with significant demand, including consumer rights, criminal law and debt issues. Even small categories such as immigration and refugee-related calls represent approximately one call per day, so require a high degree of knowledge on the part of LLEP staff on diverse matters.
- Although in general terms there is a remarkably close fit between regional sources of calls and regional population in BC, there is a need to consider increasing the advertising focus of LawLINE in selected regions (see Recommendations 4 and 5 below).
- Information callers more frequently use non-personal media to find out about LawLINE than do advice callers, who tend to be referred by workers in intermediary organizations.
- 64% of advice callers and 61% of information callers to LawLINE are female. These figures accord with the high proportion of family matters, but also suggest that a telephone service may be considered especially accessible for women.
- The proportion of aboriginal callers to LawLINE is approximately half the proportion of aboriginal applicants for pre-July 2002 CMS (advice) and poverty law cases.
- Over 90% of LawLINE advice cases are handled in less than an hour.
- Advice calls in the period Mar 1/04 – May 10/04 comprise 45% of overall LawLINE calls.
- Referrals are made in slightly half of all LawLINE cases. Half of information caller referrals are to the Lawyer Referral Service. Advice caller referrals are primarily to family duty counsel, government agents and the court registry.
- The dominant form of PLE material to which LawLINE callers are directed is now web-based (almost 70%) rather than print-based.

Key feedback from the 17 key respondents includes the following:

- Twelve felt they were well-informed about the LLEP, three had reasonable knowledge, and two little or no knowledge. For all but three respondents the level of information they received was sufficient to use LLEP effectively for their clients.
- LLEP is definitely seen as a resource for a wide range of legal content areas. For some organizations LLEP is seen as a means to solve more complicated or difficult problems, for others, it can be seen as a first option, a last minute option, or as a standard “additional resource” routinely mentioned to clients. It is also a “fill-in” resource where no others are available in smaller communities or where access to service is otherwise problematic.
- Only limited feedback was received about referrals to and from the LLEP. Positive comments mentioned the utility and clarity of information or forms received, the ability of the LLEP advisor to narrow issues for the client, and the feeling of being more in control after speaking to the advisor. The few negative comments all related to long waits to reach the advisor.
- The average rating from 16 key respondents on a 7-point scale of LLEP’s effectiveness as a brief service resource for clients was 5.2, where 1 was “not effective at all”, and 7 is “very effective.” The lowest ratings related to the organization’s perceptions that LLEP could not serve non-English speaking clients in their own language.

The recommendations made in the report are:

Recommendation #1: That LLEP publicize the availability of translators for non-English speaking callers to the LawLINE both within intermediary organizations, and in appropriate media serving non-English cultural communities.

Recommendation #2: That a LawLINE message be created for each of the chief language groups that may call LawLINE, to allow callers to identify a translation need while waiting for their connection to an advisor.

Recommendation #3: That LLEP establish referral protocols with referring organizations in cases where a translator will be required.

Recommendation #4: That advertising of the advice component of LawLINE focus especially on communities on Vancouver Island and in the Interior/East Kootenays.

Recommendation #5: That advice calls from the North region be analyzed for gender and Aboriginal ancestry.

Recommendation #6: That a system be developed to enable LawLINE advisors to selectively make follow-up calls to clients to ensure that they have understood and/or been able to carry out the advisor’s instructions.

Recommendation #7: That LLEP explore the possibility of staff using email as a way of communicating and transmitting information as part of follow-up with clients.

1.0 BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

This is the first of two reports of an evaluation of the LawLINE Enhancement Project (LLEP) of the Legal Services Society (LSS). This section provides a brief overview of LLEP and describes the evaluation objectives and methodology.

1.1 Project Overview

This time-limited project has the following objectives:

- To provide telephone information and referral services to the general public;
- To provide telephone summary legal advice to qualifying low income individuals who do not qualify for help under LSS's current coverage guidelines;
- To provide telephone summary legal assistance to community advocates and others who are providing legal assistance to qualifying low income individuals, and
- Wherever, possible, to work in an integrated and cooperative manner with other LSS programs and other justice service providers.

In this report, three terms are frequently used and are defined in the LLEP Policies and Procedures manual as follows:

- *Information and/or referral* – a very brief contact with the caller that results in staff providing brief information, possibly including a suggestion about another more appropriate service (internal or external to LSS);
- *Legal Information* – general information about the law to help the caller identify a legal issue and options to address that issue (through phone conversation, reference to hard copy or web-based PLE resources and referrals to Public Legal Resource Centres in LSS Regional Centres, and other resources);
- *Legal Advice* – applying the law to a particular situation or fact pattern, and providing a legal opinion and specific advice about the best course of action.

While legal information and referral services are provided to the general public, LawLINE staff must determine whether a caller meets LSS's financial eligibility guidelines prior to giving legal advice.

There are two levels of legal advice service. Under Legal Advice level one guidelines, staff may provide up to three hours of service such as letters or phone calls to a third party, document review, a written legal opinion or other brief service. Legal Advice level two can involve service up to five hours if the client is granted a disability type exception.

Administrative issues in the delivery of LawLINE are discussed in Section 3.0.

1.2 Evaluation Objectives and Methodology

The key objectives of the evaluation are:

1. To describe patterns and volume of LawLINE calls;
2. To assess the extent to which the LawLINE is serving the demographic and geographic elements of its target communities;
3. To examine advice caller experiences with the LLEP in terms of such matters as the type of action taken by the client, their satisfaction with the service, and outcomes to date;
4. To describe productivity, supervision and quality control issues in the delivery of the LLEP;
5. To assess aspects of the broader service context in which the LLEP operates, including sources of referral, attitudes and practices of referral agents, referral practices of LLEP staff, and preparation of LLEP clients when referred to other services.

This current report deals with the first, second, fifth and part of the fourth objective.

Methodologies for this report have included:

- Analysis of caller usage patterns from several LLEP databases (objectives 1 and 2);
- Telephone interviews with the LawLINE manager, lawyer advisor, and paralegal advisor (objectives 4 and 5); and
- Telephone interviews with 17 legal and/or social organizations in the province who actually or potentially refer to or receive referrals from LLEP (objective 5).

A client survey to be conducted in June and July will address the third evaluation objective, and data from a WebTime database used by LLEP will address productivity issues in the fourth objective. Both of these objectives will be included in a second report at the end of August.

2.0 CALLER USAGE PATTERNS

This section presents data which describe a range of factors relating to client usage of LawLINE, including issue type, caller geographic region, referral source, client demographics, duration of call, level of service, and service outcomes.

2.1 Case Issues

Table 1 shows the types of issues involved in information and advice calls received since the launch of the LLEP on Sep 15/03, and up to May 10/04. Data is not available for one week at the end of February, when LLEP was switching to a new data entry system. Although a breakdown of issues by information and advice callers was generated in the earlier period (Sep 15/03 – Feb 20/04) the new system only produces data on issues for both caller types combined. To report data consistently, we chose to report both periods in this way.

Four broad observations can be made about these data:

- There were 11,211 cases in this 7.5 month period, or approximately 1,500 cases per month. In the first 5.25 months, calls averaged 1,560 per month; in the following 2.25 months they have averaged 1,343 per month.
- The proportion of call issue types have remained quite constant over the two periods.
- Although family issues are the largest single issue type with 38% of calls, there are several categories of calls with significant demand, including consumer rights, criminal law and debt issues.
- Even some of the smallest issue categories involve a significant volume of calls. For example, the 178 immigration and refugee-related calls represent approximately one call per day. In a situation where staff must respond to a wide diversity of calls which require the provision not only of useful information, but also of advice, the implications for staff training and quality control are significant. Some of these issues are addressed in Section 3.0.

Table 1: Primary Substantive Issue

Issue Type	Sub-Category	Sep 15/03-Feb 20/04		Mar 1/04-May 10/04		Total	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Short Service		649	7.9%	257	8.5%	906	8.1%
	Civil Procedure	186	2.3%	141	4.7%	327	2.9%
	Legal Aid	150	1.8%	54	1.8%	204	1.8%
	Phone Numbers	80	1.0%	20	0.7%	100	0.9%
	Other	233	2.8%	42	1.4%	275	2.5%
Aboriginal Law		10	0.1%	5	0.2%	15	0.1%

Issue Type	Sub-Category	Sep 15/03-Feb 20/04		Mar 1/04-May 10/04		Total	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Consumer Rights		779	9.5%	284	9.4%	1063	9.5%
	Consumer Contracts	408	5.0%	132	4.4%	540	4.8%
	Other	108	1.3%	46	1.5%	154	1.4%
	ICBC & MVA	184	2.2%	84	2.8%	268	2.4%
	Professional Services	79	1.0%	22	0.7%	101	1.0%
Criminal Law		977	11.9%	321	10.6%	1298	11.6%
	CC, YCJA & Federal Offences	769	9.4%	240	7.9%	1009	9.0%
	Police Complaints	13	0.2%	14	0.5%	27	0.2%
	Prisoners	21	0.3%	20	0.7%	41	0.4%
	Prov. Off & Civic By-laws	116	1.4%	36	1.2%	152	1.4%
	Victim Services & criminal Injury	58	0.7%	11	0.4%	69	0.6%
Debt		764	9.3%	230	7.6%	994	8.9%
	Bankruptcy	53	0.6%	22	0.7%	75	0.7%
	Debt Collection	665	8.1%	185	6.1%	850	7.6%
	Foreclosure	46	0.6%	23	0.8%	69	0.6%
Employment		266	3.2%	129	4.3%	395	3.5%
	Employer and/or Employee	238	2.9%	110	3.6%	348	3.1%
	Employment Insurance	28	0.3%	19	0.6%	47	0.4%
Family		3100	37.9%	1161	38.4%	4261	38.0%
	Adoption	nd	nd	8	0.3%	nd	nd
	Child Protection	nd	nd	53	1.7%	nd	nd
	Custody/Access	nd	nd	391	12.9%	nd	nd
	Divorce	nd	nd	369	12.2%	nd	nd
	Family Violence	nd	nd	37	1.2%	nd	nd
	Maintenance	nd	nd	228	7.5%	nd	nd
	Property Division	nd	nd	75	2.5%	nd	nd
Health & Estates		522	6.4%	182	6.0%	704	6.3%
	Adult Guardianship & Power of Attorney	nd	nd	9	0.3%	nd	nd
	Mental Health & Hospitals	nd	nd	20	0.7%	nd	nd
	Senior	nd	nd	12	0.4%	nd	nd
	Wills & Estates	nd	nd	141	4.7%	nd	nd
Housing		486	5.9%	185	6.1%	671	6.0%
	Other	nd	nd	103	3.4%	nd	nd
	Real Property	nd	nd	35	1.2%	ND	nd
	Residential Tenancy	nd	nd	47	1.6%	ND	nd
Human Rights		32	0.4%	13	0.4%	45	0.4%

Issue Type	Sub-Category	Sep 15/03-Feb 20/04		Mar 1/04-May 10/04		Total	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Immigration & Refugee		141	1.7%	37	1.2%	178	1.6%
Income Security		227	2.8%	106	3.5%	333	3.0%
	CPP & Private Disability	26	0.3%	17	0.6%	43	0.4%
	Income Tax, GST, CTC Benefits	19	0.2%	8	0.3%	27	0.2%
	OAP	3	0.0%	1	0.0%	4	0.0%
	Welfare	129	1.6%	58	1.9%	187	1.7%
	Workers Compensation	50	0.6%	22	0.7%	72	0.6%
Torts		237	2.9%	111	3.7%	348	3.1%
	International Torts	nd	nd	41	1.4%	nd	nd
	Negligence/ Personal Injury	nd	nd	70	2.3%	nd	nd
TOTAL		8190	99.9%	3021	99.9%	11211	100.1%

Notes:

- 1) Issues are for both information & advice calls.
- 2) "Short Service" calls are calls which are opened as advice calls but end up primarily as information calls. (In some cases "civil procedure" involves advice.)
- 3) For the period Sep 15/03-Feb 20/04, data from the LawLINE Enhancement Database (for Legal Information and Referral cases) were added to data from the LawLINE CMS Database (for advice cases).
- 4) In the period Sep 15/03-Feb 20/04, where two items within a sub-category are marked with an asterisk (*) the figures so marked are a distribution of what was a single total in the original database. The distribution was based on the comparable proportions for the period March 1-May 10/04.
- 5) ND = no data. In the period Sep 15/03-Feb 20/04, these issue types were not broken down into sub-categories, so only the aggregate total for that issue is shown.
- 6) A total of 23 cases from the period Sep 15/03-Feb 20/04 were originally in distinct categories, namely incorporation (9 cases), name change (3), notarizing (3), and schools (8). These were reallocated to "Short Service – Other" in this table

2.2 Caller Region

The geographical regions in which LawLINE advice and information callers reside are presented in Table 2. The LawLINE caller statistics exclude 134 calls which were either out-of-province or for which the region was not recorded. The table compares the percentage of LawLINE callers in each region with the overall population in the same regions.

Considering overall callers, there is a remarkably close fit between regional source of call and regional population in BC, with the greatest under-representation of callers from Vancouver Island, and slight over-representation of callers from the North, Northwest, and Surrey/Fraser Valley. However, when one separates the information from advice callers, the patterns of over and under-representation shift. Information callers are not required to pass a financial eligibility test, so can be expected more closely to fit the over-all regional population proportions. By this standard, there is a slight over-representation of callers from Surrey and the North West. Vancouver Island is significantly under-represented.

Advice callers are required to meet a financial eligibility test, which means that their household income is lower than that of the overall population. Unfortunately there is no methodology by which one can establish the proportion of the overall population in each region with household incomes below a stipulated amount (which varies by size of family). In general, however, incomes are higher than the BC average in the Lower Mainland, lower in most of Interior BC except the North, where they are higher for males but lower for females, and lower for both male and females on Vancouver Island.¹

In Table 2 the proportion of advice callers from Vancouver/Sunshine Coast is significantly lower than for the population as a whole, and somewhat lower for Vancouver Island and the Interior/East Kootenays. The proportion of advice callers is higher than the overall population for Surrey/Fraser Valley, Okanagan/West Kootenays, the North and the North West.

Given the higher average income and relative concentration of alternative legal resources in the Lower Mainland the under-representation of advice callers in Vancouver is likely appropriate. That Surrey/Fraser Valley is over-represented may simply reflect the volume of need; Surrey Family Court and duty counsel, for example are the busiest in the province. The over-representation of callers in the North and North West is balanced by the lower income in these regions, the relative paucity of resources, and the distances involved in accessing those resources. The primary region that may be of concern is Interior/East Kootenays, where income is significantly lower on average than the rest of BC and which is relatively under-resourced for legal services, but which is under-represented in terms of LawLINE callers.

¹ Based on 2001 census income data presented in The Law Foundation of BC's "Diversity Profile of British Columbia" November 2003, pg 11.

Table 2: Comparison of LawLINE Callers With Overall Population by LSS Region, Sep 15/03-Feb /04

LSS Region of Caller	Number of Advice Callers	Percentage of Advice Callers	Number of Information Callers	Percentage of Information Callers	Total Callers	Percentage of Total Callers	Population of This Region, 2003	Percentage of Population in this Region
Vancouver/Sunshine Coast	703	32.3%	2378	40.6%	3081	38.3%	1,678,035	40.5%
Surrey/Fraser Valley	493	22.7%	1238	21.1%	1731	21.5%	782,836	18.9%
Vancouver Island	312	14.4%	708	12.1%	1020	12.7%	695,951	16.8%
Okanagan/West Kootenays	245	11.3%	545	9.3%	790	9.8%	374,833	9.0%
North	221	10.2%	325	5.5%	546	6.8%	213,125	5.1%
Interior/East Kootenays	127	5.8%	454	7.7%	581	7.2%	314,314	7.6%
North West	73	3.4%	216	3.7%	289	3.6%	87,486	2.1%
Total	2174	100.1%	5864	100%	8038	99.9%	4,146,580	100.1%

Notes:

- 1) Source of LawLINE data: LawLINE CMS Database Statistics (Advice Cases), and LawLINE Encounter Database (Information & Referral cases).
- 2) 134 out of province calls, and calls in which the region was not recorded are excluded from the LSS data.
- 3) Source of BC population data: Adapted from British Columbia Local Health Area Population Estimates, 1996-2003 (Population Section, BC Stats, Ministry of Management Services, Government of BC, February 2004).
- 4) It was necessary to translate Local Health Area (LHA) data into the regional definitions used by LSS. The composition of each LSS region is shown in Appendix 3.
- 5) Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

2.3 Referral Source

The referral source for callers to the LawLINE are shown in Table 3. Although it is difficult to compare advice and information callers because of the number of information callers without a known referral source, some patterns can be noted in this table:

- Information callers more frequently use non-personal media (phone book & website) than do advice callers to find out about LawLINE. All the referral sources that involve a personal medium (family/friend, LSS, government agent, community group, lawyer), were used more frequently (on a percentage basis) by advice callers than by information callers. This latter pattern is likely because the public is less aware of the enhanced (advice) service at this point in time, and so personal intermediaries play a greater role in defining problems and encouraging the advice contact;
- The phone book is the primary medium of referral for both information and advice callers, and should be seen as important for building awareness of the service;
- Supplementary analysis of data not presented in this table show that the use of the phone book as a referral source has fallen as a percentage of total referral sources in the period Dec 17/03 to Feb 20/04 compared to the period of Sep 15/03 to Dec 16/03 for both information and advice callers. A dramatic increase between the earlier and later periods was shown by government agent referrals (from 13.3% to 22.9% for advice callers), and was also evident for information callers. This likely reflects outreach and publicity activity by LSS.

Table 3: Source of Referral of LawLINE Calls, Sep 15/03 – Feb 20/04

Source of Referrals	Advice Callers		Information Callers		Total Callers	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Phone Book	438	19.8%	1846	31.0%	2284	27.9%
Other	222	10.0%	809	13.6%	1031	12.6%
Family/Friend	292	13.2%	591	9.9%	883	10.8%
LSS	422	19.0%	682	11.5%	1104	13.5%
Government Agency	394	17.8%	708	11.9%	1102	13.5%
Community/Advocacy Group	239	10.8%	464	7.8%	703	8.6%
Website	69	3.1%	333	5.6%	402	4.9%
Lawyer	125	5.6%	226	3.8%	351	4.3%
Unknown or Not Applicable	15	0.7%	297	5.0%	312	3.8%
Total	2216	100%	5956	100.1%	8172	99.9%

Notes:

1) Data source is LawLINE Encounter Database (for legal information and referral cases) and LawLINE CMS Database (for advice cases).

2) Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

2.4 Demographics of Caller

Two sets of demographic data of callers are shown in Tables 4 and 5. Table 4 shows that over 60% of LawLINE callers are female, and that this proportion is even higher (64.2%) for advice callers. This statistic accords with the fact that the largest single issue type is family matters. Nonetheless, it is higher than the proportion of female clients using Family Duty counsel services at Robson Street (56%) or in the Provincial Family Duty Counsel Project (59%), and considerably higher than for female users of LIOW services around LawLINK (50%). It can be speculated that the relative ease of access to a telephone service, especially one involving a more substantive advice service, is attractive to female callers who may be single parents.

Table 4: Gender of Callers, Sep 15/03 – Feb 20/04

Caller Gender	Advice Callers		Information Callers		Total Callers	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Male	803	35.9%	2,261	39.3%	3,064	38.3%
Female	1437	64.2%	3,493	60.7%	4,930	61.7%
Totals	2,240	100.1%	5,754	100%	7,994	100%

Notes:

- 1) Data source is LawLINE Encounter Database (for legal information and referral cases) and LawLINE CMS Database (for advice cases).
- 2) 202 cases in which the gender of the caller was not recorded and not included in these cases.
- 3) Percentages do not necessarily total 100% due to rounding.

Table 5 shows the proportion of advice callers of aboriginal ancestry to be 9.8% (or 9.4% if undisclosed cases are included). Although this is more than double the proportion of BC's population that is identified as First Nations in the 2001 census (4%), LawLINE advice callers should meet a financial eligibility test, and this would significantly raise the anticipated proportion of aboriginal callers. Information provided by LSS's Community and Poverty Services manager show that even including undisclosed cases, the proportion of aboriginal applicants for pre-July 2002 CMS (advice) and poverty law cases was 19.7% and 16.5% respectively. Furthermore, 22.1% of all tariff applications between September 2003 and February 2004 were aboriginal applicants (including undisclosed cases). Thus, at 9.4%, LawLINE is likely significantly under-serving aboriginal clientele with needs. Community and Poverty Services is presently in the process of investigating aboriginal needs, barriers and possible approaches through a northern aboriginal needs assessment.

Table 5: Aboriginal Ancestry of Advice Callers, Sep 15/03-Feb 20/04

Caller Ancestry	Frequency	Percentage
Aboriginal	211	9.8%
Non-Aboriginal	1,934	90.2%
Totals	2,145	100%

Notes:

- 1) Source is LawLINE CMS Database.
- 2) Ancestry is available for advice callers only.
- 3) 95 callers declined to answer, and are not included in these totals.

2.5 Duration of Call

Table 6 shows the length of LawLINE cases, for advice callers only during the period Sep 15/03 – Feb 20/04. Although advice service can last up to three hours, and with certain exceptions up to five hours, the table shows that over 90% of cases are handled in less than an hour. The breakdown of case duration remained fairly constant between two reporting periods for which data was captured (Sep 15/03 – Dec 16/03 and Dec 17/03 – Feb 20/04).

Table 6: Duration of Case (Advice Callers Only) Sep 15/03 – Feb 20/04

Duration of Case	Frequency	Percentage
0 – 5 mins	3	0.1%
6 – 10 mins	94	4.2%
11 – 15 mins	304	13.7%
16 – 20 mins	353	15.9%
21 – 25 mins	297	13.4%
26 – 30 mins	305	13.8%
31 – 60 mins	643	29.0%
61 – 120 mins	134	6.1%
121 – 180 mins	27	1.2%
> 180 mins	6	0.3%
Unaccounted for	50	2.3%
Total	2,216	100%

Note: Source is LawLINE CMS Database

2.6 Level of Service

Table 7 shows the level of service provided to all LawLINE callers in the period Mar 1/04 to May 10/04. It clearly shows that although legal information calls are still the majority made, advice calls now comprise 45% of overall calls. Extrapolating from tables presented earlier in this section, during the period Sep 15/03 – Feb 20/04, the percentage of advice calls was under 40% of the total. If the proportion of advice calls continue to increase, there will be obvious implications for both management of waiting times and/or the staffing of the service, because advice calls are generally longer than information calls.

Table 7: Level of LawLINE Service, Mar 1/04 – May 10/04

Level of Service	Frequency	Percentage
Information/Referral	978	33.5%
Legal Information	634	21.7%
Sub-total	1,612	55.2%
Legal Advice (Level 1 (to 3 hrs))	1,297	44.4%
Legal Advice (Level 2 (to 5 hrs))	11	0.4%
Sub-total	1,308	44.8%
Total	2,920	100%

Note: Source of data: Service Summary Reports, all users.

2.7 Service Outcomes

Tables 8 – 12 present various snapshots of LawLINE outcomes. Patterns to note include the following:

- Referrals are made in slightly over half of all cases (Table 8);
- Advice callers are sent materials by the LawLINE more frequently than information callers. On average, materials are sent out in one out of five cases (Table 8);
- The pattern of referrals differ between advice and information calls. Information callers are sent to the Lawyer Referral Service in exactly half of the referrals. The major referral destinations for advice callers are duty counsel, government agents and the court registry, each at between 20 – 30% of overall referrals (Table 9);
- The dominant form (almost 70%) of PLE material to which clients are directed is now web-based, rather than print-based (Table 10);
- At the time these data were collected, less than 10% of LawLINE clients were redirected to the LawLINK service. Comparative data for the period following the outreach activities of LIOWs is not yet available (Table 11);
- The proportion of advice versus information and referral, 47.7% to 52.3%, closely reflects that shown in Table 7 (Table 12).

Table 8: Outcome Activity as a Percentage of Overall Cases, Sep 15/03 – Feb 20/04

Type of Caller	Outcome Activity	Frequency	Total Cases	Percentage of Total Cases Involving This Activity
Advice	Referrals	1,274	2,216	57.5%
Information	Referrals	3,241	5,956	54.4%
Total	Referrals	4,515	8,172	55.2%
Advice	Provision of self-help or PLE materials	636	2,216	28.7%
Information	Provision of self-help or PLE materials	854	5,956	14.3%
Total	Provision of self-help or PLE materials	1,490	8,172	18.2%
Advice	Redirected to other LSS service	183	2,216	8.3%
Information	Redirected to other LSS service	504	5,956	8.4%
Total	Redirected to other LSS service	687	8,172	8.4%

Source: LawLINE Encounter Database (for information and referral), and LawLINE CMS Database (for Advice cases).

Table 9: Types of Referrals, Sep 15/03 – Feb 20/04

Client Referred to:	Advice Callers		Information Callers		Total Callers	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Duty Counsel	343	27.3%	184	5.7%	527	11.7%
Government Agent	277	22.1%	362	11.2%	639	14.2%
Court Registry	257	20.5%	132	4.1%	389	8.7%
Lawyer Referral Service	151	12.1%	1,618	49.9%	1,769	39.4%
Advocacy Group	80	6.4%	159	4.9%	239	5.3%
Pro Bono Clinic	42	3.4%	267	8.2%	309	6.9%
Own Lawyer	42	3.4%	237	7.3%	279	6.2%
Law Students	29	2.3%	154	4.8%	183	4.1%
Community Group	25	2.0%	58	1.8%	83	1.8%
Law Society	6	0.5%	70	2.2%	76	1.7%
Total	1,252	100%	3,241	100.1%	4,493	100%

Notes:

- 1) Source is LawLINE Encounter Database (for information and referral) and LawLINE CMS Database (for advice calls).
- 2) Percentages do not necessarily total 100% due to rounding.
- 3) 22 unaccounted referrals of advice callers are excluded from this table.

Table 10: Types of Self-Help / PLE Materials Provided to Clients, Sep 15/03 – Feb 20/04

Type of Material Provided	Advice Callers		Information Callers		Total Callers	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Web resource (LSS)	275	45.1%	412	48.2%	687	47.0%
Web resource (non-LSS)	204	33.5%	125	14.6%	329	22.5%
Printed materials	81	13.3%	108	12.6%	189	12.9%
Dial-A-Law	45	7.4%	184	21.5%	229	15.7%
Library	4	0.7%	25	2.9%	29	2.0%
Total	609	100%	854	99.8%	1,463	100.1%

Notes:

- 1) Source is LawLINE Encounter Database (for information and referral) and LawLINE CMS Database (for advice calls).
- 2) Percentages do not necessarily total 100% due to rounding.
- 3) 27 unaccounted cases are excluded from this table.

Table 11: Cases redirected to Other LSS Services, Sep 15/03 – Feb 20/04

Where Callers Redirected	Advice Callers		Information Callers		Total Callers	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Regional centre	39	27.7%	111	22.0%	150	23.3%
Call centre	37	26.2%	302	59.9%	339	52.6%
Local agent	31	21.9%	50	9.9%	81	12.6%
LINKS	29	20.6%	23	4.6%	52	8.1%
Provincial support services	5	3.5%	18	3.6%	23	3.6%
Total	141	99.9%	504	100%	645	100.2%

Notes:

- 1) Source is LawLINE Encounter Database (for information and referral) and LawLINE CMS Database (for advice calls).
- 2) Percentages do not necessarily total 100% due to rounding.
- 3) 42 unaccounted cases are excluded from this table.

Table 12: Primary Outcome of Information and Advice Calls, Mar 1/04 – May 10/04

Primary Outcome	Frequency	Percentage
Information	293	7.8%
Legal advice	1,788	47.7%
Legal information	825	22.0%
Non-LSS publication/resource	49	1.3%
LSS publication/resource	102	2.7%
Referral to LSS service	214	5.7%
Referral to non-LSS service	481	12.8%
Total	3,752	100%

Source: Service Summary Report (L004)

3.0 ADMINISTRATION

This section examines several issues related to the service offered by LawLINE. Its intent is primarily to describe these issues, rather than systematically to canvas viewpoints of all staff. Only three staff – the project manager, a lawyer and a paralegal – were interviewed.

3.1 Staffing and Call Intake

In Section 1.1 the basic objectives and framework of the LLEP were described. This section examines staffing and call intake.

At present, the service is provided by five lawyers (in addition to the project manager), three paralegals, two casual lawyers and two to three casual paralegals. Prior to Sep 15/03, the LawLINE was an information only service of LSS's Legal Resource Centre (LRC), and was provided by three paralegals (and prior to LSS cutbacks in September 2002, was provided by LRC librarians). With the initiation of the Enhanced Project on Sep 15/03, the core of five lawyers was gradually added by Jan 1/04 to enable LLEP to assume advice functions.

LawLINE uses a direct call rather than a screening model. This means that "low level calls" are not screened off to paralegals; rather, both paralegals and lawyers accept whatever calls come in. Often the calls are comfortably within the expertise levels of both lawyers and paralegals. All staff are encouraged to go as far as they comfortably can and know their limits. They frequently consult with each other and with the project manager (5 – 10 times per day). If a paralegal determines that he/she needs to refer a case to a lawyer, he/she will select a lawyer with a particular expertise in that area.

The paralegals all have extensive years of experience as paralegals or social workers or librarians within LSS or in related fields, and some have particular substantive expertise that they bring to their work. Some of the lawyers have extensive backgrounds in family and poverty law, others have fewer years of call, but most have a bent towards clinic, public interest and advocacy work. The staff also bring linguistic expertise in Punjabi, Spanish, Italian, French and Portuguese. Linguistic capacity is an important issue both for clients and community organizations who wish to refer clients, as will be discussed in Section 4.5.

The LawLINE is open from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm daily. Staff are assigned various combinations of working hours (e.g. 9:00-3:00, 9:30 -3:30, 10:00-4:00, 9:00-2:00 and 11:00-4:00) to ensure that at all times there are several staff on line, and more staff at peak times.

3.2 Quality Control and Supervision

There are several levels of quality control and supervision, both informal and formal:

- The prior experience of staff described in the previous section;
- Staff's own awareness of their limits in expertise in a particular case;
- Daily informal consultation between staff, and between staff and the project manager (who is felt to be very accessible to staff);

- The use of a Practices and Procedure manual which establishes service, workflow, data entry, time keeping and conflict of interest protocols;
- Training initiatives (e.g. ½ hour weekly in-house sessions or with external resource persons: selected staff may also attend Continuing Legal Education courses three or four times per year;
- Specific supervision tasks undertaken by the staff lawyers:
 - one reviews electronic files for all paralegals,
 - one reviews electronic files for all lawyers,
 - one lawyer specifically reviews family cases;
- The project manager sets parameters for what is reviewed, undertakes periodic checks himself, and reviews 20-30 cases at each phase of the probationary period, and when staff come up for their 8-month probation review.

3.3 Productivity

Although the next report will address the issue of productivity using qualitative data from WebTime reports, the three staff respondents also identified a number of issues related to productivity. An over-arching emphasis is that productivity is best addressed by focusing on the quality of the call, even though quantity benchmarks are considered. In other words, the effort of staff is to ensure that the client understands the information and/or advice, and is able to use it effectively, rather than simply to complete a certain number of calls in a given time period.

Other themes related to the productivity/quality nexus include:

- Determining the level of service required
 - e.g. at times, if the client is having difficulty with an administrative body, LawLINE staff refer the client back to advisors within that body. At other times it may be more appropriate, especially where the client has tried to carry his/her concerns further, for LawLINE staff to take the matter to a director within the agency.
- Assessing the level of client needs effectively
 - if a client simply has a procedural question, it can often be addressed quickly. However, if a client doesn't even fully understand the nature of his/her problem, the LawLINE advisor will engage in sorting out issues, educating the client to understand them, establishing and explaining to clients next steps, asking the client for feedback on what has been said, and determining a possible referral resource for the client;
- Speed and efficiency in checking the appropriate law, ensuring that one's knowledge is up-to-date and having ready access to information;
- Ensuring that data entry procedures are efficient
 - one respondent felt that the data entry system was too slow, and would be enhanced by a more effective scrolling mechanism.

3.4 Publicity and Referral to LawLINE

The LLEP had an initial benefit in the fact that LawLINE was a pre-existing service that was recognized by the public. To expand public awareness, LSS did a mass mailing of announcements and basic materials to several hundred organizations. The LLEP also generated a primary and secondary mailing list of organizational contacts with whom they met. The LSS regional offices held open houses to announce the LLEP, and LIOWs have included LawLINE in all their outreach activities. Except for Yellow Page ads in the phonebook (which, as per Section 2.3 and Table 3 seem to have proven highly effective), publicity efforts have primarily been focused on intermediaries rather than on the general public.

Although all LLEP staff were not formally canvassed, these few staff interviews suggest that for the most part, incoming referrals to the LawLINE have been appropriate. In part, this is a difficult issue to determine, because LawLINE is one of several possible entry points to the legal system. As noted in Table 9 (Section 2.7) the primary agency to which LawLINE information callers are referred is the Lawyer Referral Service. Should other community agencies learn to refer appropriate clients to Lawyer Referral Services directly, or is it acceptable to refer them to LawLINE first? A similar issue has arisen with some referrals to LawLINE that are in some cases more appropriately referred to Family Duty Counsel. The LLEP has now developed an experimental protocol that if their paralegals take an advice call, they will take particulars of the case and then refer it, if appropriate, to the Family Duty Counsel Project, rather than handle it themselves. The arrangement is under short-term evaluation by staff.

3.5 Referrals from LLEP to Other Organizations

LLEP staff have several means of finding an appropriate agency if a referral is considered necessary:

- Their personal experience – both because of their previous work and current work with LLEP, they have developed a strong knowledge of appropriate organizations, especially in the Lower Mainland;
- Practices and Procedures Manual phone number resource list – this was an alphabetized list of resources around the province;
- A database of community groups created by LSS's Publications Department.

Of these, the first two are the most important, especially insofar as the need for a particular resource is often repeated. One respondent said she uses the database in approximately 10% of referrals, especially for remote communities.

LLEP advisors generally will tell a client what the agency to which they are being referred does, and how to prepare for an interview with that organization. They also have a practice of telling the client to call back if they experience any difficulty with the referral. Thus far, the few return calls have only been positive.

3.6 LawLINK Connection with LawLINE

At present, there is very little staff experience with the LawLINK kiosk connections to LawLINE. There have been roughly two to three calls per day, half of which have been for advice, but the other half for coaching on how to use LawLINK. The latter is not the intended purpose for the connection with LawLINE, and is currently being discussed with the Vancouver-based LLOW to work out an arrangement so that LawLINK questions can be fielded by the LLOWs.

3.7 Strengths, Limitations and Recommendations

The three LLEP respondents primarily described LLEP in terms of its strengths, which were seen as:

- An accessible point of entry for potential or actual users of the legal system;
- LLEP's ability to triage callers to other resources;
- The flexibility to respond both to information and to advice needs of callers;
- Callers whose case is being followed up by a LLEP staff advisor can now call an unlisted call-back number in order to leave a message for their advisor. This allows them to avoid the longer wait on the regular 1-800 number. Approximately 80-90 call-back messages per month are placed, all of them appropriately. Another very recent initiative to be implemented is a line for advocates to call and leave messages.

Recommendations for improvement by these staff included the following:

- A system where staff can call back clients in selected cases to ensure that the client was able to understand and follow through on the advice given them;
- The ability to contact clients by email to transmit information. The main concern at present is to avoid giving out the staff person's specific email address. As shown in Table 8(Section 2.2) slightly under 20% of overall cases involve transmission of hard-copy or web-based materials, and email could be an effective means of communication, if procedures can be developed to ensure coverage for e-mail correspondence on a daily basis;
- Hiring more staff to reduce caller waiting periods. (The LawLINE budget contemplates some increase in staffing to respond to volume increases.)

4.0 EXPERIENCE AND VIEWS OF KEY RESPONDENTS

This section presents feedback from interviews with respondents in 17 legal and/or social service organizations in the province who have, in varying degrees, been informed about LawLINE, and who could potentially refer to or receive referrals from LawLINE. Ten of the seventeen organizations are based in Vancouver, but seven of these serve either the entire province or a number of communities besides Vancouver. Four organizations were from the Fraser Valley, one from Vancouver Island, and one from the North. There were no respondents from organizations located in LSS's Northwest, Okanagan, West Kootenay or Interior/East Kootenay regions.

4.1 Information Received by Key Respondents About the LLEP

Of the 17 respondents, 12 felt that they were well-informed about the LLEP. These respondents had been the recipients or collaborators in multiple forms of communication, including letters, e-mails, LSS meetings, bookmarks, handouts, open houses, on-site visits by LLEP staff and contacts or training sessions with a Legal Information Outreach Worker. Three felt they had a reasonable knowledge about LLEP, and had had at least one form of contact. One respondent claimed to have remembered little about LLEP despite the fact that a representative from LSS had met with them, and another stated they had no information at all. For all but three respondents the level of information they had received was sufficient to use the LLEP effectively for their clients.

4.2 How LLEP Fits in Key Respondents' Referral Practices

Key respondents were asked to describe where they refer clients in addition to or as an alternative to their service, and then describe how they refer to the LLEP. The intention of this question was to explore the niche that LawLINE occupies within the overall range of services. The results are shown in Table 13. The services identified in this table were not from a checklist, so it is possible that more organizations may have referred clients to these services, but just forgot to mention it. Several patterns are evident from this table:

- The potential for face-to-face service is important in the referral decisions of these organizations. This presumably relates to the capacity or confidence of their clientele;
- Certain services have a specific area of expertise, and are therefore a preferred choice if the client presents with this issue;
- LawLINE is seen variously as a first option, a last minute option or as a standard "additional resource" routinely mentioned to clients;
- Some key respondents felt that LLEP involves some level of sophistication for their clients to use (i.e. client needs to be literate), while for others it may be considered less intimidating than a face-to-face encounter;
- LLEP is definitely seen as a "fill-in" service where no others are available in smaller communities or where access to other services is problematic;
- LLEP is definitely seen as a resource for a wide range of legal content areas, family services being the most frequently mentioned. For some organizations LLEP is seen as a means to solve more complicated or difficult problems.

Table 13: Referral Patterns of Key Respondents

Services to Which Clients Are Referred by Key Respondents	Total of Key Respondents Who Refer to This Organization (N=7)	Ratings of Frequency of Referral 1=hardly ever 4=mid point 7=very frequently (all responses are shown below; NR means "no response")	Case and/or Client Characteristics for This Type of Referral
Family Justice Counsellors	3	5, 6 (1 NR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Custody, access, guardianship, child support, separation agreements ▪ Client needs face-to-face attention ▪ Client needs assistance with forms ▪ Translator possible
Family Duty Counsel Project	4	3, 4, 5 (1 NR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tell about FDCP, but use LawLINE as "clearing house" ▪ If need face-to-face on family matters but didn't qualify for Legal Aid ▪ If FJC can't deal with matter ▪ If assistance needed in court and client can't afford \$10 for Lawyer Referral
Legal Aid	8	2, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 7 (1 NR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For those who qualify for family and criminal matters, domestic violence
LawLINK	6	1, 5, 6, 7 (2 NR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clients knowledgeable with computers ▪ Family matters, residential tenancy ▪ If clients can manage the self-help packages, but no time to come in ▪ Mention to most clients as additional resource
Advocacy Groups	12	1, 4, 4, 4, 5, 5, 7, 7, 7 (3 NR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where distance an issue, need face-to-face ▪ When needing ongoing service ▪ Welfare, RT, disability, WCB, human rights
Pro Bono	7	2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 7 (1 NR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where need face-to-face ▪ Housing, family, criminal ▪ Complex legal issues ▪ Supreme Court matters
Dial A Law	1	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If can benefit from recorded information on practical matters
Lawyer Referral Service	9	4, 4, 4, 5, 5, 6, 7, 7 (1 NR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can afford \$10 and need face-to-face ▪ If turned down by Legal Aid ▪ Need immediate legal advice ▪ If available in client's geographic area

Services to Which Clients Are Referred by Key Respondents	Total of Key Respondents Who Refer to This Organization (N=7)	Ratings of Frequency of Referral 1=hardly ever 4=mid point 7=very frequently (all responses are shown below; NR means "no response")	Case and/or Client Characteristics for This Type of Referral
Law Students Legal Advice Program	7	3, 4, 4, 5, 7 (2 NR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When UBC in session ▪ Face-to-face needed ▪ Client needs hands-on help ▪ Client in local neighborhood
Workers Compensation Board – Workers Advisers	2	3, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WCB issues
Tenants Rights Action Coalition	2	2 (1 NR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing, tenancy issue
Others	6	1, 5, 5, 5, 7, 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For specific issues
LawLINE	13	1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 6, 6, 6, 7, 7, 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Never use because clients need 1-on-1 service; language culture, technical problems ▪ Clients who are literate; clients who prefer telephone over face-to-face ▪ Increasingly used as a first approach with clients as starting point; ▪ For last minute help before going to court ▪ As additional resource to most clients ▪ Client in small, outlying community; no lawyer referral available; no pro bono; can't access other services because of disability ▪ Family law; criminal; for general info; poverty law; immigration; EI matters; employment issues; complicated legal problems; RT; debt; WCB; ICBC; CPP

Source: Key respondent interviews

Notes: 1) The services identified in column 1 were not from a check list, so there could be more respondents in column 2 who refer to these groups, but did not think to mention them.

2) Because of the low number of respondents, it would not be meaningful to give average responses in column 3. Therefore, all responses are recorded. Repetition of a rating number shows how many respondents gave this rating.

Of the 17 key respondents, four could not estimate how many clients they had referred in the previous six months. Of the remaining 13, four estimate they had referred 1-10 clients, five had referred 20-60 clients, and three estimated referrals of 150-364 clients.

Ten of 17 respondents stated that they felt LLEP was the source of a particular type of expertise. Most frequently mentioned was family matters (5) and poverty law (3), followed by residential tenancy, consumer and EI matters (more than one area could be identified by a respondent). Others identified processes such as “getting application forms”, or “giving clear information about court proceedings.”

4.3 Feedback Received by Key Respondents About Referrals to LLEP

Only five key respondents said they had received feedback concerning their referral of clients to LLEP. This feedback was based on between 3 and 25 clients, depending on the organization. Three said the feedback was predominantly positive and two predominantly negative. Positive comments mentioned the utility and clarity of divorce information and forms, the ability of the LLEP advisor to narrow issues for the client, the high quality of information received, and the feeling of being more in control after speaking to a LLEP lawyer. Negative comments from three respondents (including one whose clients were predominantly satisfied) all focused on the long waits to talk to a lawyer. Two respondents identified clients who claimed to have waited for over an hour, and one of whom gave up and made an appointment with a Family Duty Counsel Project lawyer instead.

Three respondents said the feedback they received affected their referral practices. All said the effect was positive and gave them confidence to use the service regularly. No respondents said they had received feedback from LLEP about inappropriate referrals.

4.4 Appropriateness of Referrals Received From LLEP

Feedback from the key respondents about referrals LLEP had made to their organizations was more sparse than that about referrals they made to LLEP. Only four could estimate how many referrals had been made. They ranged from none to seventy, and were seen as being from mid to low in frequency of referrals compared to other referring organizations. Of respondents who knew they had received referrals from LLEP, all but one felt the referrals had been appropriate and that issues had been screened or clearly identified. One stated that some referees had been expecting representation through their service, which was not a realistic expectation.

4.5 Overall Assessment of the LLEP as a Brief Service Resource for Low Income Litigants

Key respondents were asked to rate the LLEP as a brief service resource for low income litigants, using a 7-point scale (1=not effective at all, 7=very effective). Sixteen respondents replied. Four of them rated the service as not being effective (1 each at rating points 1, 2, 3, and 4), five rated it moderately effective (at 5 on the scale) and seven as very effective (1 at point 6, and 6 at point 7). The average rating was 5.2.

The reasons for these ratings are revealing. The two services that rated LLEP lowest were cultural services, both of whom felt that language and cultural barriers were too significant to overcome in a telephone based service. One of those services stated that even though LLEP could not be used by their clients, it was nonetheless an excellent resource for the advocate him/herself. A third respondent who rated LLEP as “very effective” explained that it was only helpful “if the client is comfortable with the English language or has a translator.

Since March of this year LawLINE has had the capacity to access translators for approximately 100 languages almost instantly through a contract with Language Line. However, this service has not been advertised, (except in the Guidelines for Legal Aid, which is an English language publication), so key respondents are likely unaware of the potential to serve their clientele. Several LawLINE staff are multilingual.

LawLINE staff also intend to develop a screening message to identify their language of choice from approximately six selections, however this has not yet been accomplished. It will also be important not only for LawLINE to advertise the new translation capacity, but to work with groups serving minority cultures to develop more effective protocols for informing their clientele and helping them place calls to LawLINE.

A third service that rated LLEP at the low end of the scale felt that when women are in crisis they need direct representation. Several others who rated the service more negatively, still stressed that the service was not as effective as face-to-face assistance or direct representation.

Among those who gave ratings between 5 and 7 in the scale, the main positive elements of LLEP were that:

- The LLEP staff are clearly experts in poverty law and understand the issues and idiosyncrasies of individuals requiring poverty services;
- The staff are very approachable;
- The service is especially helpful in sorting out the issues for callers; they are trained and experienced interviewers who knew how to get to the “heart of the matter”;
- For many it is the only real service available.

4.6 Recommendations by Key Respondents for Improving the LawLINE Service

Sixteen respondents made a total of 20 suggestions for improvements to the LawLINE service. These were as follows (number of respondents shown in brackets)

- Decrease waiting time by increasing staff (6);
 - one respondent felt 15 minutes should be the maximum waiting time. Another felt that it was especially difficult for persons with language barriers, those with technological challenges, and those with disabilities generally to need to wait for a long time
- Provide a translation service or have more staff with multiple language abilities (5);
 - see comment in previous section
- Provide more direct face-to-face service (4);
 - this type of comment flows from observations made in the previous section, but obviously is directed at LSS as a whole, rather than suggesting an improvement to the LawLINE
- Distribute more written publicity materials (3);
 - this observation also complements the recommendation for a clearer listing of LawLINE in the phone book
- Provide a regional rather than a Vancouver-based service (1);
- Have a toll free number for advocates that is separate from the regular LawLINE number (1);

An additional recommendation, directed at the evaluation process rather than at LawLINE, was “to make future survey questions simpler.”

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from LLEP staff and from key respondents in community organizations have been noted in Sections 3.6 and 4.6 respectively. The following recommendations draw on these, and in some cases suggest tentative directions pending further research with clients this summer and further analysis of LLEP data.

Recommendation #1: That LLEP publicize the availability of translators for non-English speaking callers to the LawLINE both within intermediary organizations, and in appropriate media serving non-English cultural communities.

This recommendation draws from the discussions in Sections 4.5 and 4.6, where it was stated that the cultural organization respondents tended to refer to LawLINE infrequently because of a perception that LLEP had no capacity to serve non-English speaking clients in their own language.

Recommendation #2: That a LawLINE message be created for each of the chief language groups that may call LawLINE, to allow callers to identify a translation need while waiting for their connection to an advisor.

LLEP has plans to implement such a message, but as of yet, has not done so.

Recommendation #3: That LLEP establish referral protocols with referring organizations in cases where a translator will be required.

This may require, for example, having a call initially placed by the cultural association's advocate, having the advocate clarify to the client that he/she will need to respond to the LLEP's language message, or using a special access number. The primary purpose would be to ensure that the individual feels that a successful contact is possible.

Recommendation #4: That advertising of the advice component of LawLINE focus especially on communities on Vancouver Island and in the Interior/East Kootnays.

This recommendation flows from the call volume and regional income discussion in Section 2.2.

Recommendation #5: That advice calls from the North region be analyzed for gender and Aboriginal ancestry.

Although as shown in Table 2, the proportion of advice callers in the North is almost double the overall population proportion for that region, there is a strong difference between income levels of non-aboriginal males in the North on the one hand, and females and aboriginal individuals on the other. This may mean that the regional proportion of low income individuals may be much higher than the general population proportion. The purpose of this review would be to gauge the extent to which advice calls are reaching these two groups. We have not made a separate recommendation to undertake a needs assessment of the aboriginal population, because as indicated in Section 2.4, this process is already underway. Nonetheless, we support the need for this research in relation to LawLINE.

Recommendation #6: That a system be developed to enable LawLINE advisors to selectively make follow-up calls to clients to ensure that they have understood and/or been able to carry out the advisor's instructions.

We believe this has been done in some instances, but feel the purpose and frequency of such calls should be discussed formally among LLEP staff. The purpose of this call-back process could either serve as an audit function (i.e. random calls to every "xth" caller as a quality and outcome check) or as a means of supporting clients whom advisors consider – by whatever criteria – to be vulnerable and in need of a slightly higher level of support and follow-through.

Recommendation #7: That LLEP explore the possibility of staff using email as a way of communicating and transmitting information as part of follow-up with clients.

This was a staff recommendation noted in Section 3.6 which we feel has merit. The main concern is to use a generic email sender address rather than one specifically for the advisor.

Appendix 1

Law Line Evaluation: Key Respondent Questionnaire

**Law Line Evaluation:
Key Respondent Questionnaire**

FACE SHEET

Background

1. Evaluation # _____ 2. Community: _____
 3. Name of Agency: _____
 4. Key Respondent Name: _____ 5. Telephone: _____

Call Record

	DATE	TIME	RESULT OF CALL
			1. Key respondent not available, call back (date); 2. Refusal; 3. Appt. for (date); 4. No show for interview; 5. Completed interview.
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

Introduction

I am calling on behalf of the Legal Services Society. John Simpson, Manager of Community and Poverty Services at LSS, has given us your name as an agency that has referred clients to the Law Line, and/or received client referrals from the Law Line. We would like to explore situations in which such referrals are made, how the Law Line service fits into the overall assistance your agency gives the client, and any feedback your clients have given you about their Law Line experience.

The interview takes approximately 20 minutes.

INTERVIEW

Knowledge about LLEP

1. What information have you received about the Law Line Enhancement Project, from whom (e.g. Law Line staff, Legal Information Outreach Worker) and by what means (mailed or emailed material; telephone conversation; face-to-face meetings; follow-up or ongoing contacts). (PROBE for awareness of legal information and referral versus brief service; hours of operation; range of legal issues; staff qualifications.)

2. Has this level of contact and information been sufficient for you to make effective use of this service?
- 1. NO
 - 2. YES
 - 3. PARTLY

- 2.1 (IF NO OR PARTLY) What question do you have about the Law Line services that, if answered, would enable you to make more effective use of the services?

Referral to LLEP

3. I'd like to understand the niche that the Law Line fills when you refer clients out from your own service. So, first, can you please describe the various legal services to which you refer your clients, why you would choose to refer to that particular service, and the approximate frequency of referrals. Then describe the types of case characteristics that would cause you to refer someone to the Law Line, and the frequency of referral to the Law Line. If there are a range of legal services to which you very seldom refer clients, you can treat them as a group for purpose of this question.

<p>Services to which clients are referred:</p>	<p>Case and/or client characteristics</p>	<p>Frequency of referral 1=do refer, but hardly ever 4=mid-point 7=very frequently</p>

3.1 Approximately how many clients have you referred to the Law Line in the past 6 months, and for what types of issue?

Approximate number of clients referred: _____

Types of Issues: _____

3.2 Do you consider the Law Line as the source of a particular type of expertise for clients? (i.e that deals with areas of law not covered by other services)

- 1. NO
- 2. YES

IF YES, describe: _____

4. Have you had any feedback from clients that you have referred to the Law Line?

- 1. NO
- 2. YES (Clarify roughly how many people: _____)

4.1 (IF YES) What has been the nature of the feedback?

- 1. PREDOMINANTLY NEGATIVE
- 2. MIXED OR NON-COMMITTAL
- 3. PREDOMINANTLY POSITIVE

4.2 What specific positive or negative comments have been made?

Positive: _____

Negative: _____

4.3 Has this feedback affected your referral practices or pattern?

1. NO

2. YES (Specify: _____

4.4 Have you received any feedback from the Law Line about the appropriateness of a referral?

1. NO

2. YES

4.5 (IF YES) Has this affected your referral patterns or practices and, if so, how?

Referrals from LLEP

5. Approximately how many referrals of clients have you received from the Law Line since the beginning of the year (January – April 30, 2004)?

6. Compared to other legal or social services, would you say this represents a low or high volume of referrals to your service (on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 = very low; 7 = very high)?

7. On a scale of 1 to 7, how appropriate would you say these referrals have been in terms of matching the legal or social issue faced by the client with the service that you provide? (1 = very inappropriate, 7 = very appropriate)

7.1 Please describe ways in which these referrals have been appropriate or inappropriate. Any comparisons with referrals made by other organizations would be helpful. (E.g. legal and/or social issues carefully screened or identified; understanding of your organization; follow-up.)

- 7.2 Do the Law Line advisors ever actually book an appointment for a client with your service?
 - 1. NO
 - 2. YES

7.3 (IF YES) How frequently, and under what circumstances?

7.4 Are there any (other) ways in which the Law Line service prepares clients they are referring that you find helpful? (If so, describe.)

7.5 Is there any preparation of clients that you would like to see the Law Line undertake prior to referral, but which is not happening at present? (If so, describe.)

Overall Assessment and Recommendation

8. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 7, how would you describe the Law Line as a brief service resource for low income litigants? (1 = not effective at all; 7 = very effective)

8.1 Please explain your rating: _____

9. Are there any recommendations you would like to make to improve the Law Line service? (PROBE not only service itself, but ways in which it networks with other services.)

Appendix 2

LawLINE Enhancement Project (LLEP): Questions for LLEP Staff

LawLINE Enhancement Project (LLEP)

Questions for LLEP Staff

Note

As agreed, I will be interviewing Allan, Roxana and Alison. Some of the questions you will likely all want to answer. Others may need to be answered only once, and you may wish to decide who does that. I can also work that out as I go along with each of you, if I feel I've got what I need on particular questions.

Staffing; Activities; Supervision and Quality Control; Productivity

6. Describe staff and their roles, including specific expertise
7. Take me through a typical case that involves brief service and more than one contact with the client. Clarify how the roles of the lawyers and paralegals. E.g. is it always the paralegal that answers the phone?
3. Are cases ever assigned to particular staff for reasons of expertise, specialty area, or is it just whomever is available?
4. How is supervision and quality control handled?
5. How would you define productivity in this type of service? In what ways can staff make their handling of calls efficient in terms of time expenditure, while at the same time ensuring that the service is effective for clients?

Dissemination of Information about LLEP; Referrals from Other Organizations to LLEP

6. What publicity has been undertaken about the LLEP? What staff have been involved? Has publicity been primarily oriented towards the general public, or to intermediaries (service or law-related organizations) who might refer clients to the LawLINE?
7. How has the LLEP conducted outreach with intermediaries to build an effective referral system to LLEP?
8. Are referrals to the LLEP generally appropriate? (i.e. the referring organization understands the parameters of your service, and the niche you are trying to serve). Do you contact organizations to give them feedback about inappropriate referrals?

Referrals from LLEP to other organizations

9. What information base or database has been established about organizations to which LLEP might refer clients (e.g. for a particular type of issue, for extra legal or non-legal help, and/or for resources in particular communities or regions)?
10. What are the main organizations to which LLEP refers clients?

11. What mechanisms are there to assess the appropriateness of your referrals? How satisfied are you with your own understanding of the organizations to which you refer clients?

LawLink

12. Describe how the hook-up to LawLink kiosks works. Is the connection with a cam recorder automatic in the sites that have one? What difference, if any, does it make to have the visual as well as the audio connection with a client? What types of calls have you received thus far? What have been the strengths and weaknesses of this type of connection with a client?

General

13. Describe any key changes that have been made since the LLEP has been established, i.e. when you decided to do things in a significantly different way. This can relate to the way calls are handled, how staff are assigned, how the Link calls are handled, the nature or extent of service provided, how referrals are made, etc
14. How would you describe the strengths and limitations of the LLEP thus far as a service for self-represented litigants? Are there particular recommendations you would like to make to improve the service?

Appendix 3
LSS Region By Local Health Area

Appendix 3

Below is the composition of each LSS Region in Table 2 by Local Health Area.

LSS Region	Local Health Area Number	Local Health Area Name
Vancouver/Sunshine Coast	37	Delta
	38	Richmond
	39	Vancouver Aggregate
	40	New Westminster
	41	Burnaby
	42	Maple Ridge
	43	Coquitlam
	44	North Vancouver
	45	West Vancouver – Bowen Island
	46	Sunshine Coast
	47	Powell River
	48	Howe Sound
Surrey/Fraser Valley	32	Hope
	33	Chilliwack
	34	Abbotsford
	35	Langley
	36	Surrey Aggregate
	75	Mission
	76	Agassiz-Harrison
Vancouver Island	61	Greater Victoria
	62	Sooke
	63	Saanich
	64	Gulf Islands
	65	Cowichan
	66	Lake Cowichan
	67	Ladysmith
	68	Nanaimo
	69	Qualicum
	70	Alberni
	71	Courtenay
	72	Campbell River
	84	Vancouver Island West
85	Vancouver Island North	

LSS Region	Local Health Area Number	Local Health Area Name
Okanagan/West Kootenays	7	Nelson
	9	Castlegar
	10	Arrow Lakes
	11	Trail
	12	Grand Forks
	13	Kettle Valley
	14	Southern Okanagan
	15	Penticton
	16	Keremeos
	17	Princeton
	22	Vernon
	23	Central Okanagan
	77	Summerland
North	28	Quesnel
	55	Burns Lake
	56	Nechako
	57	Prince George
	59	Peace River South
	60	Peace River North
	81	Fort Nelson
Interior/East Kootenay	1	Fernie
	2	Cranbrook
	3	Kimberley
	4	Windermere
	5	Creston
	6	Kootenay Lake
	18	Golden
	19	Revelstoke
	20	Salmon Arm
	21	Armstrong-Spallumcheen
	24	Kamloops
	25	100 Mile House
	26	North Thompson
	27	Cariboo-Chilcotin
	29	Lillooet
	30	South Cariboo
	31	Merritt
78	Enderby	
North West	49	Bella Coola Valley
	50	Queen Charlotte
	51	Snow Country
	52	Prince Rupert
	53	Upper Skeena
	54	Smithers
	80	Kitimat

LSS Region	Local Health Area Number	Local Health Area Name
	83	Central Coast
	87	Stikine
	88	Terrace
	92	Nisga'a
	94	Telegraph Creek