

Limited Scope Legal Services

Pilot Evaluation Report

March 2026



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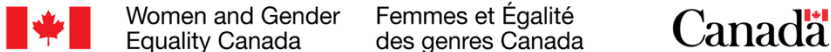


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Executive summary

Access to appropriate legal supports is a critical challenge for women leaving abusive partners.

The Limited Scope Legal Service (LSLS) pilot project was funded by Women and Gender Equality to develop and test a model for addressing gaps in access to justice for women leaving an abusive partner and navigating the family court system.

Luke’s Place LSLS pilot model was designed to serve women who had been subjected to intimate partner violence (IPV), who were leaving abusive partners, and who needed access to family law supports but did not have a lawyer. The pilot particularly focused on improving access and mitigating barriers for women from intersectional underserved groups.

1. The wraparound LSLS model comprises court form drafting support and urgent legal clinic services from an in-house staff lawyer, together with ongoing case management from a legal support worker.
2. The LSLS model provides legal services in ways that fit with clients’ intersectional needs and contexts.

The pilot evaluation covered both implementation and outcomes of Limited Scope Legal Services work. The evaluation used a mixed methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data from service delivery, clients, the LSLS team, and community partners.

Evaluation questions and results summary	
1) What are key aspects of the LSLS model? How are people using them?	<p>The LSLS model is part of the Luke’s Place suite of legal services.</p> <p>The LSLS wrap-around model has a staff lawyer providing court form drafting and urgent legal clinic services while a legal support worker provides ongoing case management through the client’s legal journey (i.e., screening and triage, safety planning, accompaniment with preparation and follow-up, referrals, and closing).</p> <p>Over a 21-month period of evaluation data collection (April 2024 to December 2025), the LSLS pilot served 114 unique clients. LSLS work by staff lawyers comprised 4356 service events (including 320 appointments with clients) and 2637 service hours.</p> <p>The LSLS pilot provided both rapid access to urgent legal clinics and the ongoing service connections required for court form drafting support.</p>

	<p>More unique individuals accessed urgent legal clinic services, but more service hours were devoted to court form drafting support.</p>
<p>2) Did the pilot reach women from the intended audience and underserved communities? What are the demographics of LSLS clients?</p>	<p>Based on intake and demographic data, the LSLS program is reaching its primary intended audience of women who are leaving abusive partners.</p> <p>While most clients lived in urban centres in Durham region, others came from urban and rural regions from across Ontario.</p> <p>The LSLS pilot also reached women from underserved groups. Over half of clients were from racialized backgrounds and about one in ten were Indigenous. About two-thirds had incomes less than \$50k. About one in ten had a disability, required language support, were LGBTQ+, or were immigrants or newcomers.</p>
<p>3) What are the needs of LSLS clients? How is Luke’s Place addressing these needs via LSLS?</p>	<p>LSLS clients were looking for legal advice on both family law and other legal topics and did not have legal representation. Top LSLS client issues at intake related to safety of their children and themselves.</p> <p>The LSLS legal team provided direct and indirect services to meet client needs as part of court form drafting and urgent legal clinic support. Client correspondence, document review, and drafting and preparation of documents were top service events across both court document preparation and urgent legal clinic work.</p> <p>At the same time, while accessing services from the LSLS legal team, clients were provided with wraparound support, including ongoing triage, safety planning, accompaniment to appointments, appointment preparation and note-taking, debrief and follow-up support, internal and external referrals, and emotional support in telling and documenting their stories of violence.</p>
<p>4) What are barriers for LSLS clients? For IPV survivors seeking legal support? How is Luke’s Place mitigating these challenges?</p>	<p>Luke’s Place and the LSLS model focused on mitigating barriers and challenges through client-centred accommodations and foundation of agency values.</p> <p>Typical barriers for IPV survivors seeking legal support relate to appropriate and timely services, and system navigation challenges.</p> <p>The LSLS team actively worked to remove client barriers related to legal navigation and representation, logistics, intersectional individual factors, and IPV factors.</p> <p>Client feedback generally reflects successful barrier mitigation and accommodations. Most barriers reported by clients related to service capacity.</p>

<p>5) To what extent are expected client outcomes happening after LSLS activities?</p>	<p>Key outcome goals for clients were achieved, including improved access, experience, connection, knowledge, capacity, and court system navigation. It was not possible to track long-term court outcomes within this project.</p> <p>Specifically, access and uptake of court form drafting and urgent legal clinics increased over the pilot.</p> <p>Most LSLS clients who completed surveys reported positive outcomes and experiences in rating questions and open-ended feedback. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feeling heard and understood, more hopeful and less overwhelmed; • gaining knowledge and tools to stay safer and referrals to community services and resources; • gaining a better understanding of their legal situation and next steps, and intending to apply what they learned; and • that services were timely and helpful, and they overall felt supported and satisfied with services. <p>Client ratings and open-ended feedback reflected easier court system navigation after engaging with LSLS wraparound supports.</p> <p>Clients spoke to the skill and expertise of staff lawyers and support workers as enabling their positive outcomes and experiences.</p>
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Overall, the LSLS pilot demonstrated an effective model for providing appropriate family law supports to women who have been subjected to IPV. Promising practices and lessons learned for the LSLS model relate to building and maintaining the wraparound LSLS team through balancing demand and capacity.

Next steps for Luke’s Place are to share the pilot results and explore options for continuing LSLS supports.

Introduction

Pilot project background and funding

Luke's Place wraparound limited scope legal services (LSLS) model addresses gaps in access to justice for unrepresented women leaving an abusive partner and navigating the family court system.

Funding from Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) Canada allowed Luke's Place to develop, implement, and evaluate the LSLS model in a pilot study.

Gaps in access to justice for women leaving abusive partners

Access to appropriate legal supports is a critical challenge for women leaving abusive partners.

Many women cannot afford a lawyer but do not qualify for Legal Aid or are unable to engage a lawyer through Legal Aid. These gap in legal access can detrimentally impact not only a woman's case, but her safety, and the safety of her children. Women who are unrepresented in family court are at risk of agreeing to participate in an unsafe process or being pressured to waive rights and concede on legal issues.

Moreover, many women who engage lawyers after having been subjected to IPV do not receive appropriate supports for their situation. There are widespread knowledge gaps among lawyers around understanding the nature and impacts of violence and trauma. This results in legal services that are ineffective and unresponsive to a woman's legal needs.

Women from underserved and equity-denied communities who have been subjected to IPV face additional barriers in accessing appropriate legal services. The justice system and many lawyers are not responsive to women's intersectional needs and barriers, amplifying harm and negative impacts.

Luke's Place limited scope legal services (LSLS) model

Designed for women leaving abusive partners who need family law supports

The LSLS pilot model was designed to serve women who have been subjected to IPV, who are leaving abusive partners, and who need access the family law system but do not have a lawyer. The pilot was designed to primarily reach women in Durham Region, as well as women from underserved communities outside of this Region.

The pilot focused on improving access and mitigating service barriers for women, particularly women from intersectional underserved groups (e.g., Indigenous women, racialized women, women with disabilities, lower income women, and women who are immigrants and newcomers).

Wraparound support via staff lawyer and legal support worker

The LSLS model provides legal access and wraparound support to women with family court needs who otherwise would be unrepresented and navigating the system on their own, with an IPV-informed intersectional lens.

1. The Luke's Place wraparound LSLS model comprises court form drafting support and urgent legal clinic services from an in-house staff lawyer together with ongoing case management from a support worker.
2. The LSLS model provides legal services that are delivered in ways that fit with clients' intersectional needs and contexts. Luke's Place and LSLS supports are designed to be trauma informed, feminist with intersectional lens, culturally safe and appropriate, anti-racist anti-oppressive, and evidence based.

Prior to this pilot, the wraparound model of lawyer and support worker had shown promise in other areas of Luke's Place work, including the pro bono legal clinic with volunteer lawyers providing legal advice to women. The pilot expanded wraparound services to cover services offered in-house at Luke's Place through a staff lawyer.

LSLS operates as part of Luke's Place suite of wraparound legal services

The LSLS model is part of the Luke's Place suite of legal services, which connect women to family law lawyers for free summary legal advice and court form drafting support. See Luke's Place legal services client journey diagram in Appendix A.

The client facing **legal support worker** (LSW) is a key role in Luke's Place wraparound legal services, including the LSLS model. After carrying out screening and triage, needs assessment, and safety planning, the support worker connects clients to the Luke's Place Legal Clinic.

At a Legal Clinic session, a lawyer provides advice and suggestions for next steps. There are two options for Legal Clinic summary advice, depending on the urgency of the client issue:

- The **Urgent Legal Clinic** (part of the LSLS model) has a Luke's Place staff lawyer providing summary advice on time sensitive legal matters. Urgent Legal Clinic appointments are typically booked within 24-48 hours.
- The regular/ non-urgent Legal Clinic has volunteer lawyers providing summary advice, with appointments typically booked 3-4 weeks out. Volunteer lawyer Legal Clinic services are not part of the LSLS model, but are available to women throughout Ontario.

Based on client need and readiness, the support worker may refer the client to **Court Form Drafting** (part of the LSLS model) after a Legal Clinic appointment. Court Form Drafting support helps women with completing legal forms and documents, and is part of the LSLS model.

Evaluation goals and questions

The pilot evaluation covers both process and outcomes of Limited Scope Legal Services work. Key questions guiding the evaluation are outlined below. See LSLS summary logic model in Appendix B.

- 1) What are key aspects of the LSLS model? How are people using them?
- 2) Did the pilot reach women from the intended audience and underserved communities? What are the demographics of LSLS clients?
- 3) What are the needs of LSLS clients? How is Luke's Place addressing these needs via LSLS?
- 4) What are barriers for LSLS clients? For IPV survivors seeking legal support? How is Luke's Place mitigating these challenges?
- 5) To what extent are expected client outcomes happening after LSLS activities?

Methods

Evaluation approach

The LSLS pilot evaluation used a mixed methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data. Results were being triangulated across data sources, including administrative data, client surveys, and team and community partner focus groups.

The pilot evaluation focused on both the implementation quality of the LSLS model (process) and the outcomes of LSLS work with clients.

The evaluation also comprised developmental and utilization focused aspects. Interim results were used to inform model development, and the final report was designed for knowledge mobilization and sharing with sector partners.

The LSLS pilot evaluation was guided by a working group comprised of Luke's Place legal services and legal support services managers and leadership, working collaboratively with an evaluation consultant. Regular meetings helped keep evaluation work on track, troubleshoot challenges, and refine approaches. The working group used interim results to help inform LSLS improvements over the course of the pilot.

Data sources

Administrative data

Administrative data used in the evaluation included client information collected at intake and LSLS services activities. Client intake information comprises legal goals and context and demographic details. Services activities were tracked as quarterly roundup of LSLS uptake (i.e., urgent legal clinic, court form drafting, and totals):

- New and unique clients served by quarter and in the overall pilot

- Number of community referrals
- Number, type, and duration of service events
- Number and duration of client appointments
- Wait time averages and total service days

Luke’s Place data tracking did not permit separation of support worker data for LSLS clients. Thus, LSLS activities were monitored through lawyer service events and hours to dedicated LSLS work.

Client post-service surveys

The LSLS evaluation leveraged the existing Luke’s Place legal services surveys that covers client experiences and outcomes after legal supports and legal clinic. The surveys contain both rating and open-ended questions. See Legal Services Satisfaction survey questions and Legal Clinic survey questions in Appendix C.

To facilitate recruitment and uptake, past and closing clients were contacted by phone and email, offered options of verbal or online completion, and provided a gift card incentive for participation.

Focus groups with support workers, lawyers, community partner

The LSLS team shared feedback on the LSLS model and operations at pilot evaluation mid and end points. Separate focus groups were held with Luke’s Place support workers and staff lawyers. Consultations with community partners were held near the pilot evaluation close¹.

Focus group goals were to learn about key aspects of the LSLS model, what is working, and what could be improved. This included client benefits, referral considerations, success factors and challenges, barriers and accommodations, and practices to advance key Luke’s Place principles and values (e.g., trauma- and IPV-informed and culturally safe services).

See focus group questions in Appendix D.

Evaluation approach strengths and limitations

This evaluation makes use of administrative uptake metrics and feedback data from clients, the LSLS team, and community partners. Triangulation of findings across quantitative and qualitative data from multiple sources allows for more robust and nuanced results.

However, findings may not represent all client, team, or community partner perspectives. This is a particular consideration for surveys with relatively small numbers of responses. Turnover in the support worker team means that focus group feedback

¹ Luke’s Place works to expand Legal Clinic access across Ontario via community partnerships. During the LSLS pilot, all community partners could refer to Urgent Legal Clinic services, while Court Form Drafting support referrals were available to a limited cohort of partners.

may not reflect perspectives over the entire pilot. Similarly, not all community partners referring to the LSLS model participated in focus groups.

Outcome tracking

The pilot investigated methods for operationalizing and tracking administrative data about post-service client outcomes (i.e., court or family law outcomes). While results and associated lessons were documented as part of the evaluation, it was not feasible to collect comprehensive outcome data about the downstream impacts of LSLS services. Instead, the pilot evaluation focused on short and mid-term outcomes related to improved access and experience.

Scope of evaluation data

The evaluation covers LSLS pilot service data from April 2024 to December 2025. Team and community partner feedback were collected in from April 2025 through January 2026. Client survey data collection continued from June 2025 into February 2026.

Evaluation Results

1) What are key aspects of the LSLS model? How are people using them?

Key aspects of the LSLS wraparound model come from services provided by Luke’s Place staff lawyers (court form drafting, urgent legal clinic) and by legal support workers (ongoing case management, referrals to other needed services).

Staff lawyers provide access to court form drafting and urgent legal clinic

LSLS work by Luke’s Place staff lawyers comprises court form drafting support and urgent legal clinics. Luke’s Place prioritized offering these two core services to address key challenges faced by women:

- 1) (Court form drafting support) All family court appearances require court documents filed in advance which are complex and difficult to complete. If not completed correctly, women are at a significant disadvantage when coming in front of the Judge.
- 2) (Urgent legal clinic) Situations where there are time constraints for a woman to speak with a lawyer for advice.

During the course of LSLS work, staff lawyers may offer additional services in legal coaching and legal representation, determined on a case-by-case basis.

Staff lawyer appointments may be virtual or in person, depending on client needs and preferences.

Limited Scope Legal Services with Staff Lawyer	Description
Court form drafting support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connect with the client for pre-screening to determine scope of services and ability to support with drafting. - Draft documents and meet with client to review final forms and commission of documents (if needed). - Email the final forms to the client with resources for next steps. - Copy support worker on all client correspondence.
Urgent legal clinic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff lawyer provides summary advice on time sensitive legal matters, including emergency motions. - Appointments typically booked within 24-48 hours.

During the pilot, Luke’s Place had a complement of 3 full time equivalent (FTE) staff lawyers, of which 1.5 FTE were dedicated to LSLS work. That is, Luke’s Place staff

lawyers worked half of the time on LSLs supports (urgent legal clinic, court form drafting), and half time on other Luke’s Place program and initiatives (e.g., knowledge mobilization and training). The staff lawyer team was joined by 1 articling student, via multiple placements in the study period. Of note, WAGE funding covered 1.0 staff lawyer FTE for the pilot project.

Support workers provide individualized case management during client service journey

Support workers assess client context, need, readiness, and eligibility for various services, including LSLs, to help meet family law and other associated goals. The support worker navigates a woman’s legal service journey with her, including screening and triage, safety planning, accompaniment, preparation and follow-up, appropriate referrals for legal and non-legal needs, and closing support. Key considerations of client situation and needs when referring to LSLs include whether the client has a lawyer and/or has had legal advice, and their income, upcoming court dates, case complexity, and safety.

Wraparound support from legal support worker	Description
Screening and triage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine eligibility for Luke’s Place services, including LSLs - Determine urgency and priority of legal needs, and how they could be filled. Assess safety, whether a woman has representation, and non-legal needs and situation.
Safety planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At every client interaction from intake through closing. May be verbal or written.
Accompaniment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accompaniment to family court, legal clinic, and lawyer appointments. - Includes pre-session preparation (e.g., help gather information and evidence, record history of violence) - Includes post-session debrief.
Referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Referrals to internal Luke’s Place legal services including LSLs - External community partner referrals for legal needs (e.g., support connecting to legal aid, private lawyers) and non-legal needs (e.g., counselling, housing support, etc.)
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support workers close active case when women no longer have court matters, if service is declined, or if attempted contacts are not successful. - Women who close with active service can restart without intake if their family court needs change. - Women closing services are advised they can reach back out to the support worker if their family court needs change.

In the pilot period, Luke’s Place support worker staffing varied quarter to quarter due to turnover. The team size ranged from a minimum of 2 FTE with full caseloads to high points of 4 FTE with full caseloads plus one student, and 5 FTE with partial caseloads (due to training and onboarding). WAGE funding covered 1.0 support worker FTE for the pilot project, and work was distributed through the team. WAGE funding increased LSW team and individual capacity to engage in the LSLS process and support clients. Staffing was supplemented through other funding sources.

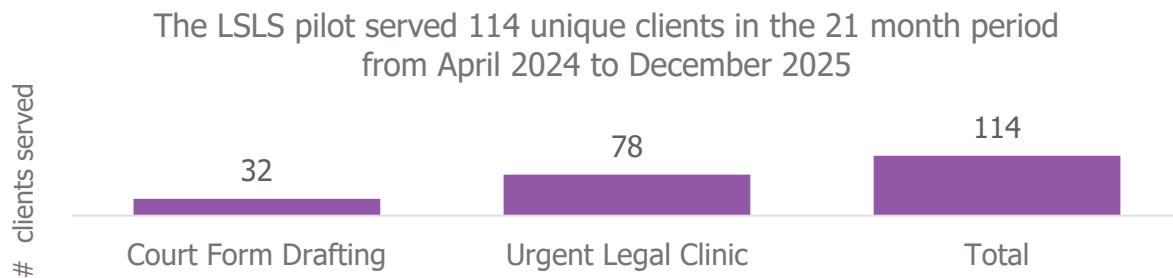
The support worker team provides wraparound services to all Luke’s Place clients, including those accessing LSLS. Luke’s Place aims to maintain a team of 4-5 support workers to serve ~1100 clients per year. Support worker caseloads are not capped, such that workers may have a caseload of 120+ clients, all at different stages of service.

Wraparound support work with clients varies in intensity. During active court proceedings or court form drafting work, support workers may spend several days mainly serving one client. At other times, they may check in monthly about evolving client needs and issues. Support workers are encouraged to balance their time by focusing on role clarity and triaging client needs. The worker focuses on serving women with active family law needs and referring out to services that can be provided by others (e.g., counselling supports).

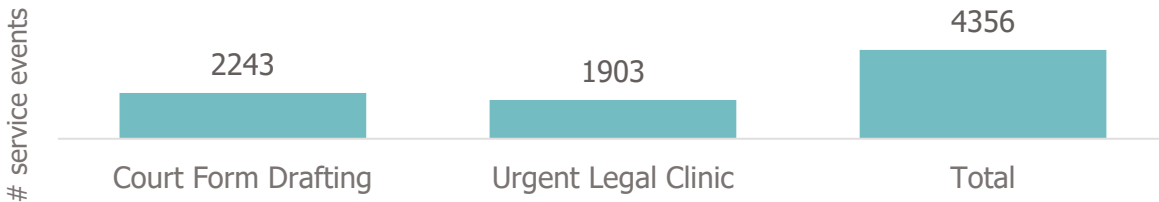
LSLS uptake during the pilot (overall and by type of service)

During the pilot evaluation period from April 2024 through December 2025, the LSLS pilot served 114 unique clients across 4356 service events and 2637 service hours by staff lawyers. Service events included 320 appointments between clients and staff lawyers.

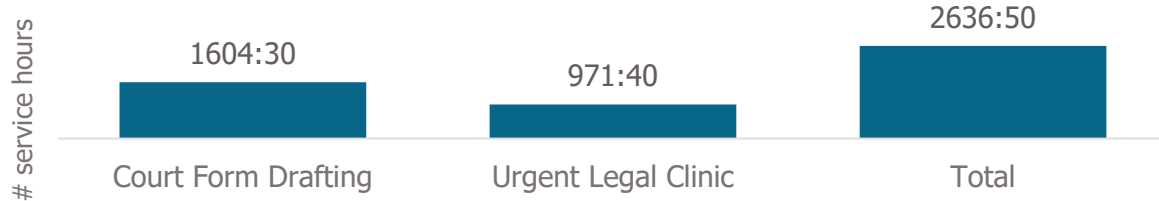
More unique clients were served via urgent legal clinic than court form drafting support. However, court form drafting support comprised more service events, service hours, and appointments, as compared to urgent legal clinics.



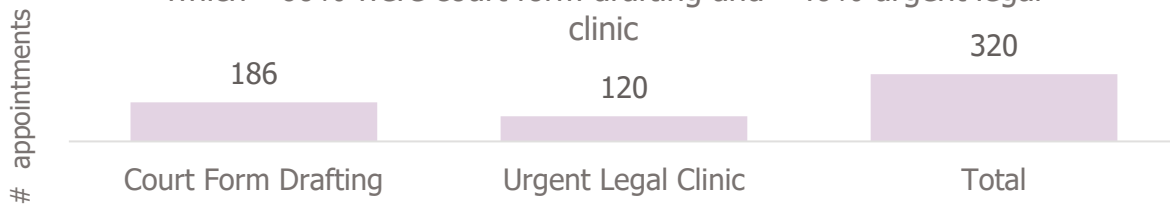
The LSLS pilot provided 4356 LSLS service events, of which ~ 50% were court form drafting support and ~44% urgent legal clinic.



The pilot comprised 2637 LSLS service hours, of which ~ 60% were court form drafting support and ~40% urgent legal clinic.



The LSLS pilot provided 320 appointments with staff lawyers, of which ~60% were court form drafting and ~40% urgent legal clinic



Analysis of service data showed the LSLS pilot provided clients with rapid access to urgent legal clinics and the ongoing service connections required for court form drafting support.

Clients accessed urgent legal clinic services more quickly than court form drafting support, due to the urgency of their situation as assessed at triage. This included a quicker connection to the support worker, quicker completion of triage, and shorter wait from first contact to service.

Clients who accessed court form drafting support received about five times more days of service, as compared the urgent legal clinic. There was also more variability in the number of service days for court form drafting support as compared to service days for urgent legal clinics. Of note, clients who received court form drafting support may also have received urgent legal clinic services.

Service period	Urgent legal clinic	Court form drafting
Wait for connection to support worker and triage	M = 0.3 days (SD = 0.3)	M = 1.0 days (SD = 0.9)
Triage stage	M = 0.5 days (SD = 0.4)	M = 17.2 days (SD = 13.1)
First contact to service	M = 4.5 days (SD = 2.0)	M = 17.2 days (SD = 9.7)
Overall days of service	M = 10.8 days (SD = 1.6)	M = 51.3 days (SD = 60.7)

2) Did the pilot reach women from the intended audience and underserved communities? What are the demographics of LSLS clients?

During the pilot evaluation period, demographic details were collected at Luke’s Place intake for 72 LSLS clients.

The number of responses vary question by question as some women preferred not to specify particular topics. Due to missing data, results may not fully reflect all LSLS clients.

LSLS clients are women with children who are leaving abusive partners

Based on intake data, the LSLS program is reaching its primary intended audience of women who are leaving abusive partners. Almost all LSLS clients are women with children who have been subjected to abuse by their partner or ex-partner. Most LSLS clients were separated or divorced. Of LSLS clients with intake data:

- 100% of LSLS clients identified as women (n=69),
- 93% of LSLS clients had children, 7% did not have children (n=70),
- 98% of LSLS clients had been abused by their partner or ex-partner, 2% were unsure (n=61),
- 66% were separated from their partner, 7% were divorced (n=68).

Most LSLS clients lived in urban centres in Durham

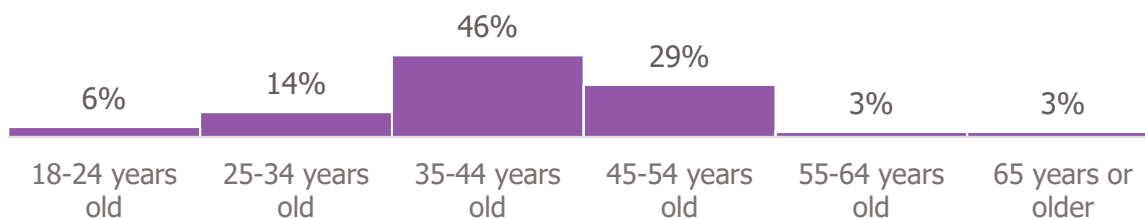
Of LSLS clients with demographic data, 6% lived in rural or remote areas while 94% lived in urban centres (towns or cities). About four in five clients lived in Durham (79%) while about one in five (21%) lived outside Durham. Clients from outside Durham lived in the central, west, east, and Toronto regions of Ontario.

About half of LSLS clients were aged 35-44 years

Of the LSLS clients with demographic data, about one in five (19%) was between 18 and 34 years, about half (46%) were between 35 and 44 years, and about a third

(32%) were 45-64. Overall, about one in ten LSLs clients were part of underserved communities by age, either young adults (6%) or older adults (3%).

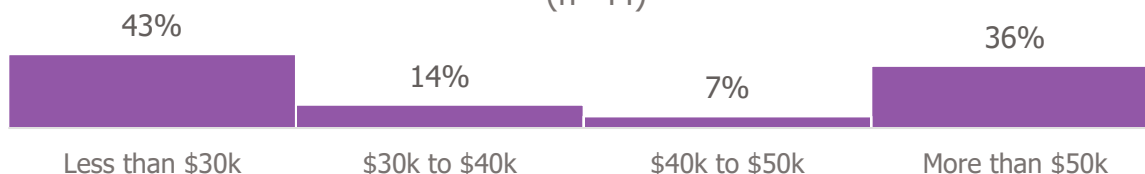
Almost two-thirds of LSLs clients (65%) were aged 18 to 44 years



Almost two thirds of LSLs clients had an income less than \$50k

The LSLs program reached women from underserved low-income populations. LSLs clients who specified income, almost half had an income under \$30,000 (43%), just under a quarter had income between \$30,000 and \$50,000 (21%), and more than a third had income over \$50,000 (36%). The median income in Durham Region for women was \$38,800 in 2021ⁱ.

Over half of LSLs clients (57%) had yearly income below \$40,000 (n=44)



About one in ten LSLs clients were Indigenous

The LSLs program reached Indigenous women. In a standalone question about Indigenous identity, 48 LSLs clients provided a response and 5 clients (10%) reported they were Indigenous, including First Nations, Métis, and multiple Indigenous identities. This is a greater proportion than the Durham populationⁱⁱ (2%) or Ontario populationⁱⁱⁱ (3%).

Over half of LSLs clients are from racialized backgrounds

Based on analysis of demographic data, the LSLs program reached women from underserved racialized communities. Of 53 LSLs clients who provided race and ethnicity demographic data, 60% reported racialized backgrounds. This included:

- 19% South Asian/South Asian descent (e.g. Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)
- 17% Latino/Latina/Latinx (Non-white Latin American descent)
- 13% Black (e.g. African/African descent, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latino/Afro-Latina/Afro-Latinx)
- 11% East Asian/East Asian descent (e.g. Chinese, Japanese, Korean)
- 8% Southeast Asian/ Southeast Asian descent (e.g. Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai)

- 4% Indigenous (e.g., First Nations, Métis, Inuk/ Inuit; First Nations, Métis, Inuit descent)
- 2% West Asian/West Asian descent (e.g. Saudi Arabian, Turkish, Iraqi, Yemeni, Jordanian)

Overall proportions of racialized clients served were greater than Durham region as a whole^{iv}.

More than one in ten LSLS clients require interpretation support and prefer to speak languages other than English or French

The LSLS pilot reached women who required language accommodations. Of the 44 LSLS clients who provided language preference data, 86% preferred to speak English, 2% preferred French, and 14% preferred to speak other languages. Other languages preferred include Farsi, Hindi, Spanish, Tamil, and Urdu. Overall, 7 of 64 clients who provided data required interpretation services (11%).

About a quarter of LSLS clients are people with a disability

The LSLS pilot reached women with disabilities. Of the 43 LSLS clients who provided disability information, 23% reported they identified as a person with a disability, while 77% did not identify as having a disability. This is similar to disability status reported within Durham as a whole (22%)^v.

Reported disabilities from 16 clients with data included mental health (24%), chronic or episodic illness (18%), pain-related (12%), flexibility (6%), hearing (6%), and memory (6%). Almost half of clients who identified as a person with a disability preferred not to provide specifics (7 of 16, 41%).

Almost one in ten LSLS clients are LGBTQ+

The LSLS program reached women from underserved gender and sexual minority communities. Of 52 clients who provided identity data, 8% reported being LGBTQ+, compared to 4% of Canadians^{vi}. A substantial proportion of clients preferred not to answer questions about sexual orientation (18 of 60, 30%) or trans identity (11 of 63, 17%).

LSLS clients are from diverse faith traditions

The LSLS pilot reached women from diverse faiths. There were 31 LSLS clients who specified religious affiliation at intake. Of these, 48% were Christian, 19% Muslim, 9% agnostic, 6% Sikh, 6% no religion, 3% Hindu, 3% Buddhist, and 3% Indigenous tradition. Over a third of clients who provided some demographic information preferred not to provide information on religious affiliation (20 of 52, 38%).

About one in ten LSLS clients are not Canadian citizens

The LSLS pilot reached women who were immigrants and newcomers to Canada. There were 59 LSLS clients who specified citizenship and immigration status at intake. Of these, 90% were Canadian citizens and 10% were non-citizen immigrants (5% work or study permit, 3% permanent resident, 2% refugee). About one in six clients who

provided demographic information preferred not to provide information on immigration status (11 of 70, 16%).

3) What are the needs of LSLS clients? How is Luke’s Place addressing these needs via LSLS?

LSLS clients do not have a lawyer and are seeking legal advice

LSLS served women who did not have lawyers at the time of service. Most LSLS clients did not have their own lawyer at intake and were looking for legal advice. About one in five clients started Luke’s Place service with a lawyer and then lost legal representation, which made them eligible for LSLS. Of LSLS clients with available data:

- 71% did not have their own lawyer at intake, 20% had their own lawyer, and 9% were in transition (n=65).
- 82% were looking for legal advice at intake, 13% were unsure if they were looking for legal advice, 5% were not looking for legal advice.

LSLS clients have family law and other legal needs

LSLS clients had both family law and other legal needs. At intake, over half of LSLS clients were currently involved with family court, had police involvement, and had current or past Children’s Aid or Child Protection involvement. Of LSLS clients who specified their situation at intake:

- 63% were involved with family court, 31% were not involved with family court, and 6% didn’t know if they were involved (n=65)
- 72% had police involvement (34% police called but no charged laid, 36% partner charged), and 28% had not had any police involvement. (n=53)
- 25% had current Children’s Aid or Child Protection involvement and 38% had past involvement, while 36% had not had any involvement (n=68)

Top LSLS client issues at intake related to safety of their children and themselves. At intake, the top issues that LSLS clients wanted to resolve related to safe ways for the child’s other parent to see them (61%), financial support (58%), restraining orders (41%), mobility (35%) and keeping themselves and their children safe from their ex-partner (32%). Other topics related to seeking advice on court documents and processes.

Issues that clients want to resolve at intake (n=72)	Count	Percent
Safe ways for the children's other parent to see them (supervision, exchanges)	44	61%
Financial support (child, spousal, other child-related expenses)	42	58%
Restraining order (Assault, threats, harassment)	30	42%
One parent wants to move or travel with the children (mobility)	25	35%

How I and the children can keep safe from my ex-partner (exclusive possession of the family home, restraining order, assault, threats, harassment)	23	32%
Divorce	21	29%
How do we divide up the property	17	24%
I don't know	9	13%
Where the children live and how decisions are made about them (decision-making, and primary residence, formerly referred to as custody)	7	10%
Other	5	7%

LSLS legal team provides direct and indirect service to meet client needs as part of court form drafting and urgent legal clinic support

Within the activities of court form drafting support and urgent legal clinic, LSLS support involves the staff lawyer team providing clients with multiple types of more granular services. Examining specific service types can help clarify the types of work involved in the LSLS model for staff lawyers.

Client correspondence, client document reviewed, drafting and preparation of documents were top service events across both court document preparation and urgent legal clinic.

Triage and support worker correspondence were also top events for the urgent legal clinic, while internal legal strategizing and reviewing and editing documents with client were top events for court form drafting support.

Top Five Service LSLS Events (with % of total events)	
Urgent Legal Clinic (n=1903 events in pilot)	Court Form Drafting (n=2243 events in pilot)
Correspondence with client (13%)	Drafting/Preparation of Documents (30%)
Client Documents Reviewed (11%)	Correspondence with Client (24%)
Drafting/Preparation of Documents (10%)	Client Documents Reviewed (7%)
Triage (9%)	Legal Strategizing (Internal) (6%)
Correspondence with support worker (9%)	Documents Reviewed/Edited with Client (4%)

Looking at the top sources of service hours and events across all LSLS activities, documentation preparation work by staff lawyers was both frequently occurring work and particularly time consuming. Specifically, documentation drafting and preparation comprised 41% of staff lawyer time across 20% of service events. Client correspondence required multiple instances (e.g., back and forth by email), covering 19% of all service events and 7% of overall service time. Client document review was another top service event in terms of frequency and time, with 10% of service time and 9% of service events. Legal strategizing covered 7% of service hours and 7% of service events, while legal note editing covered 7% of service time and 5% of service events.

LSLS Service Events Q1 2024 – Q3 2025	# Events	% Events	Time (h:m)	% Time
Total number service events	4356	100%	2636:50	100%
Drafting/Preparation of Documents	858	20%	1091:00	41%
Correspondence with Client	830	19%	180:25	7%
Client Documents Reviewed	396	9%	258:20	10%
Legal Strategizing (Internal)	286	7%	179:15	7%
Correspondence with support worker	247	6%	40:40	2%
Document/File Organization	235	5%	88:40	3%
Triage	232	5%	93:35	4%
Legal Clinic Notes Edited/Reviewed	222	5%	174:00	7%
Independent Legal Advice (ILA) by Staff Lawyer	192	4%	123:15	5%
File Closure Review	188	4%	82:15	3%
File Opening	138	3%	33:35	1%
Documents Reviewed/Edited with Client	127	3%	110:25	4%
Correspondence with Other Party	81	2%	12:25	0.5%
Service/Filing of Documents	73	2%	31:05	1%
Legal Strategizing with Client	69	2%	26:20	1%
Information Gathering	61	1%	30:10	1%
Legal Information Provided	45	1%	24:30	1%
Pre-Screening	40	1%	39:10	1%
Correspondence with Court	16	0.4%	2:35	0.1%
Reporting Letter Preparation	11	0.3%	5:40	0.2%
No Show	4	0.1%	1:55	0.1%
Independent Legal Representation (ILR) by Staff Lawyer	3	0.1%	2:20	0.1%
Settlement/Negotiation Discussion	2	0.05%	5:15	0.2%

LSLS clients are referred out to community supports

LSLS wraparound support included referrals to both non-legal and legal community services and resources. It was not possible to track specific referrals for LSLS clients. Instead, trends from all Luke’s Place clients and from clients who completed the surveys were examined.

Across all Luke’s Place clients, top referrals for non-legal needs were to counselling and healthcare, community and social services, shelter and housing, income support (OW, ODSP), and sexual assault services. External referrals for legal needs included connections to legal services, court services, victim services, and police.

Looking at LSLS clients who completed the survey after court form drafting support (n=16), more than half reported being referred to and engaging with counselling after accessing Luke’s Place services (56%). Other referrals and community service

engagement included child, and youth supports and legal aid (13%), as well as duty counsel and Family Law Information Centre (6%).

4) What are barriers for LSLS clients? For IPV survivors seeking legal support? How is Luke's Place mitigating these challenges?

Typical barriers for IPV survivors seeking legal support relate to appropriate and timely services, and system navigation challenges

Recent Luke's Place and University of Guelph research by Morton, Tizaa, and Barbosa (2026, forthcoming^{vii}) identifies "layered and intersecting systemic barriers and challenges" for women engaged with the family law system after leaving a relationship in which they were subjected to IPV. Key barriers relate to:

- access to legal professionals who are affordable and have knowledge and expertise in IPV, trauma informed care, and cultural competence for diverse communities
- access to timely legal supports
- challenges navigating complex systems to address legal and non-legal needs

Victim-survivors of IPV report negative experiences within the Ontario family law system. This includes experiences with legal professionals, court processes, legislation, and the system as a whole. Negative experiences for victim-survivors are amplified by intersectional factors. These include communication challenges, systemic bias and discrimination, legal bullying by ex-partners, weaponization of cultural expectations or immigration status, gaps in family law recognition of IPV and appropriate responses, and unsafe and ineffective court orders and outcomes.

Luke's Place and LSLS model focused on mitigating barriers and challenges through client-centred accommodations and foundation of agency values

Luke's Place principles and values provide a foundation for mitigating barriers for LSLS clients. These include providing services that are: trauma informed, feminist with intersectional lens, culturally safe and appropriate, anti-racist and anti-oppressive, evidence based.

The LSLS team offers client-centred accommodations to help ensure services are accessible. Understanding client's unique situation and needs is central to mitigating barriers, as well providing clients with choice in how they connect with services. The team works to deliver accommodations in ways that fit with Luke's Place values and principles. Cultural safety, trauma informed care, and equity and inclusion are core practice competencies for staff lawyers and supports workers.

In focus group feedback, the LSLS team and representatives from community partners discussed how the LSLS model achieves these values in practice, and how this relates

to mitigating barriers and creating service accessibility for clients. Key areas of mitigation include legal navigation challenges, logistics, IPV-related factors, and intersectional individual factors. See the table below for details.

Barrier type	Barrier examples	Mitigations provided
Legal navigation and representation	What forms to file, how to complete documents	LSSL court form drafting support
	Accessing legal advice and representation	LSSL Urgent Legal Clinic Legal aid and non-urgent legal clinic referrals
	Family court processes, understanding of next steps	Staff lawyer advice Support worker navigation support
	Timeliness of support	LSSL Urgent Legal Clinic, including urgent and emergency motions
Logistics	Scheduling around work hours	Early morning, lunchtime, evening sessions
	Childcare	Provide childcare for in person visits
	Travel and transportation	Virtual sessions
Intersectional individual factors	Language	Interpretation and translation
	Culture	Cultural competence and referral to culturally specific supports
	Disability	Service is focused based on client capacity and preferences
	Income	LSSL supports Legal aid referrals
	Technology access and comfort	Luke’s Place resource room, which has computers and printers available as well as in person support In person service Support navigating website, forms, etc. Flexibility in document formats supported (e.g., free software, scan of hardcopy notes)
IPV factors	Safety	Safety planning with support worker Emergency motions
	Trauma impacts	Minimize repeating story Shorter meetings Service is focused based on client capacity and preferences

LSSL client feedback reflects barrier mitigation and accommodations

The majority of clients who completed the feedback surveys (19 of 30, 63%) did not report any barriers to LSSL services. Some clients who completed the survey reported that Luke’s Place LSSL services were accessible due to the team being proactive in removing barriers and challenges.

"At this time, I feel that Luke's Place is already providing excellent support. They have been very responsive and proactive, and their services have effectively addressed the barriers I faced. I don't have any additional suggestions at the moment, but I truly appreciate the ongoing support they provide." (legal support satisfaction survey)

"Nothing I can think of. In my experience, they have enough support services to accommodate everyone" (legal support satisfaction survey)

Clients who provided survey feedback discussed how Luke's Place helped remove service barriers. Key mitigations included addressing legal navigation and representation challenges, logistics, intersectional individual factors, and IPV factors.

"Luke's Place is amazing in helping remove barriers to accessing services. They were consistently supportive, responsive, and understanding, and they always went above and beyond to ensure I could get the help I needed. They made the process easier by providing clear guidance, practical support, and ongoing encouragement, which made a significant difference in my ability to access services." (legal support satisfaction survey)

"Made time for emergencies. Met virtually when needed, due to scheduling, childcare, or convenience. Good with answering emails quickly." (legal support satisfaction survey)

"Due to disabilities, it was difficult to comprehend and remember information in virtual meetings. Luke's Place had someone assigned to take notes that were sent to me afterwards which was helpful." (legal clinic survey)

Most LSLs barriers reported by clients related to service capacity

Despite mitigation efforts, some service barriers remain for women accessing LSLs services. These include service capacity and scope of services.

For clients who completed the feedback surveys, service capacity was a key theme in LSLs service barriers. Specifically, barriers related to service capacity included long wait times for support (4 of 30, 13%), having their support worker change, contact and communication challenges, needing more support than was provided in the session (2 of 30, 7%), and having to attend virtually even though in person was preferred (1 of 30, 3%).

"It was hard to get earlier appointments but was able to get emergency appointments when needed." (legal support satisfaction survey)

"Needed more service after first drafting" (legal support satisfaction survey)

"My legal support worker changed about 4 times. Every time there was a change, it was radio silence afterwards. When I tried to call, I got voicemail. I would have to wait a few weeks before hearing anything. It was the beginning stages of my case so it was fine, but if there was anything urgent would have been an issue. (legal clinic survey)

Process complexity and resource usability barriers for some clients

Additional themes in barriers reported by clients, the LSLS team, and community partners related to process complexity. Some clients find it challenging to understand documentation requirements, the scope available services and service processes, or how to access the online portal. Client may also experience challenges in coordinating between legal support offered by the LSLS team and by legal aid or privately retained lawyers. While support workers help streamline system navigation, the overall complexity of legal services may remain challenging.

Client suggestions include process and communication improvements

Some clients who completed the survey also suggested ways to improve accessibility and support. These included more process reminders, improving worker transitions, direct contact numbers for support workers, and more access to in-the-moment worker support.

"Would like if we can get more reminders about the process. It would be helpful to have someone to call and ask urgent questions in the moment. I got nervous while in court and it would be helpful to have someone to talk to calm down." (legal support satisfaction survey)

"More access to LSW's via phone." (legal support satisfaction survey)

5) To what extent are expected client outcomes happening after LSLS pilot activities?

Outcome goals for the pilot are increased access to limited scope legal services (court form drafting support and urgent legal clinics), positive service experiences, and post-service changes for clients in connections, knowledge and capacity to more easily navigate the family court system.

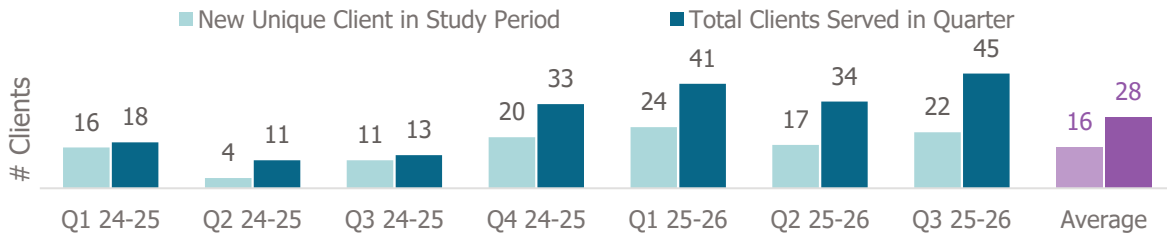
Access to court form drafting and urgent legal clinics increased over the pilot

LSLS access during the pilot was examined as service volume by quarter, across overall clients served, new unique clients, service events, and service hours.

During the pilot period, service volume trended up with full model

implementation. Overall, the LSLS pilot served between 11 and 45 total clients in each quarter, with an average of 28 (SD = 14). There were between 4 and 24 new unique LSLS clients served each quarter, with an average of 16 (SD = 7). There was strong growth in overall clients served after the first quarters of the pilot.

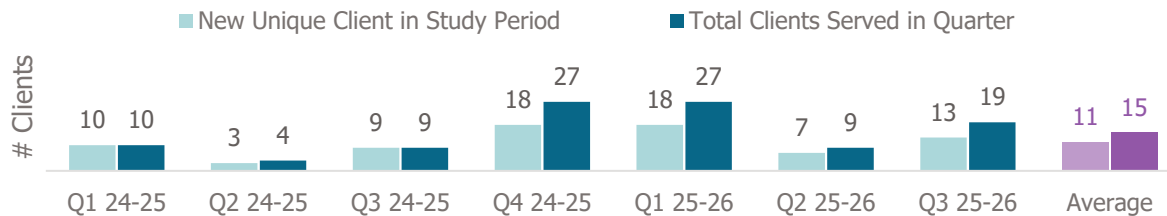
Total LSLS clients served grew strongly after early pilot period



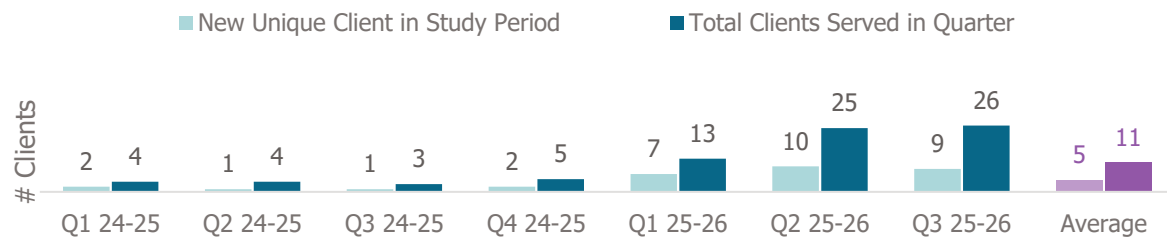
Both urgent legal clinic and court form drafting support volume increased over the pilot period. While more overall individuals accessed the urgent legal clinic overall, court form drafting support was typically accessed multiple times.

Urgent legal clinic services were most often provided to new unique clients (average 11 of 15 quarterly). In contrast, court form drafting supports were typically provided to both new (average 5 of 11 quarterly) and returning (average 6 of 11 quarterly) clients.

Urgent legal clinic uptake access mainly from new unique clients

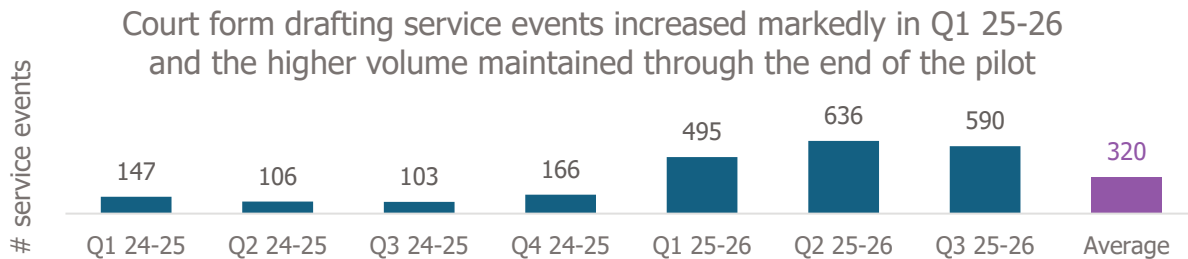
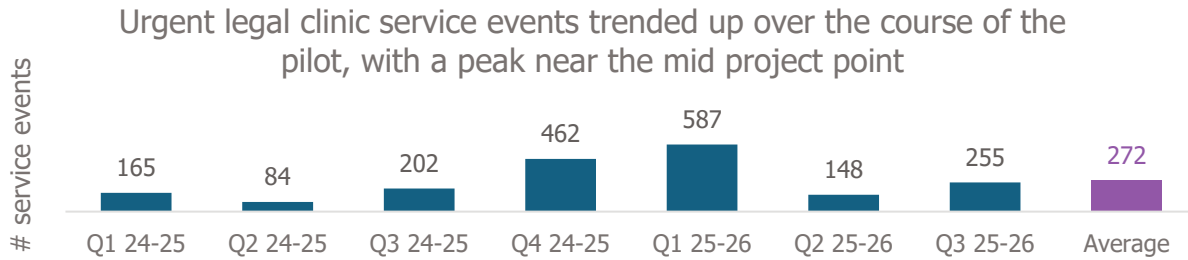


Court form drafting support access from new and returning clients

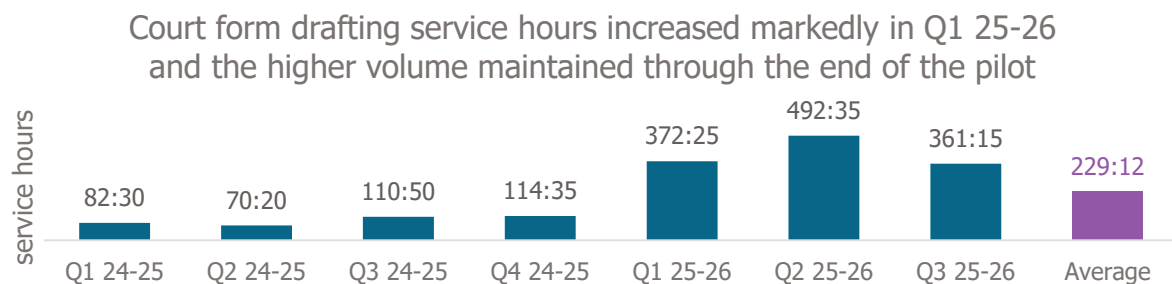
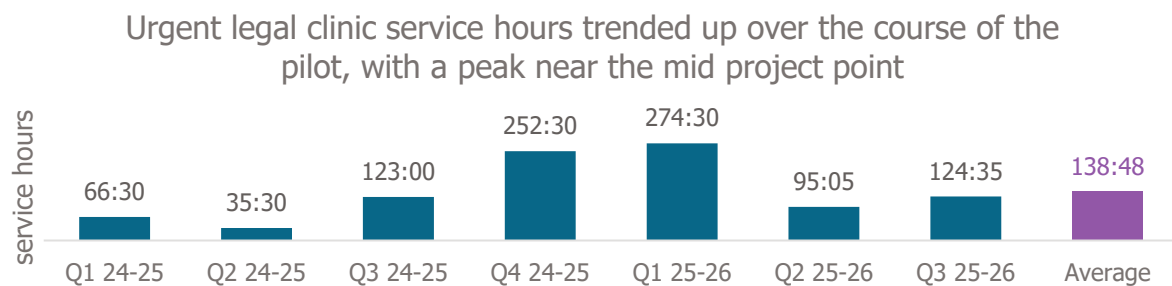


Service events and service time growth in later pilot, particularly for court form drafting. LSLS model volumes were also examined by service event frequency and duration. By quarterly average, 272 urgent legal clinic service events (SD = 184) were provided to 15 clients. Similarly, an average of 320 court form drafting service events (SD = 241) were provided to 11 clients.

Urgent legal clinic service events peaked mid project while court form drafting grew in the second half of the pilot and maintained volume through the end of data collection.



Over the pilot period, LSLs services comprised an average of 376 hours per quarter (SD = 204). This included 138 average quarterly hours on urgent legal clinic (SD = 91) and 229 average quarterly hours on court form drafting (SD = 173).

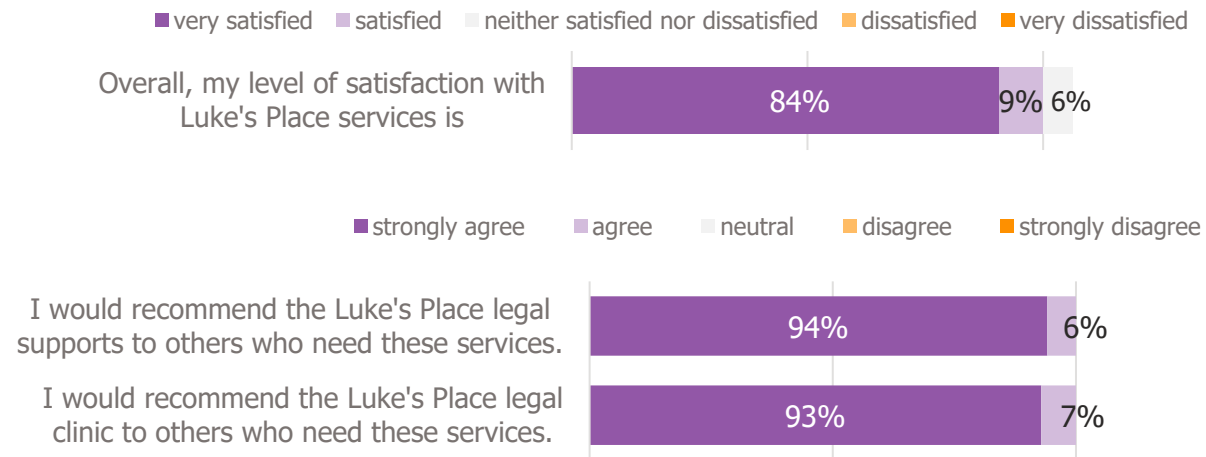


LSLS clients report positive outcomes and experiences after services

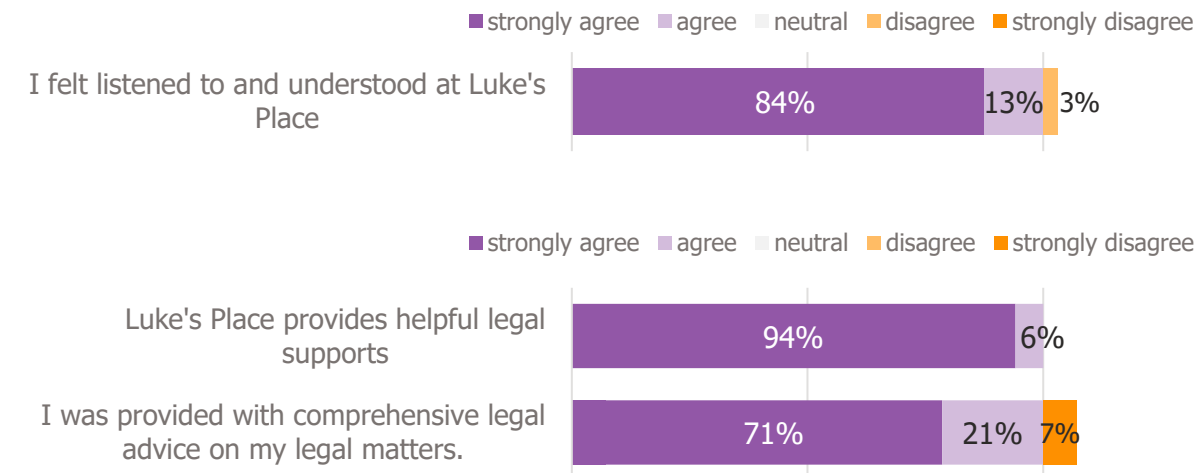
In the pilot period, 32 post-service feedback surveys were collected from LSLs clients. This includes 15 surveys completed after the urgent legal clinic and 17 survey collected after court form drafting support. Note that some clients may have completed both surveys or completed surveys more than once, and results may not reflect all LSLs client perspectives.

Both rating questions and open-ended responses were analyzed to understand client experiences and outcomes after LSLs services. Client feedback was organized based on the framework of the LSLs logic model.

Positive experience. Based on survey feedback, most LSLs clients had positive service experiences. Overall, almost all LSLs clients who completed the surveys (30 of 32, 94%) were very satisfied or satisfied with the services they received. All clients who completed the surveys would recommend Luke’s Place legal support to others (17 of 17, 100%) and recommend legal clinic services to others (14 of 14, 100%).



Almost all LSLs clients who completed the surveys reported feeling listened to and understood at Luke’s Place (31 of 32, 97%), that they were provided with helpful legal support (17 of 17, 100%) and comprehensive legal advice (13 of 14, 93%). All clients who completed the survey strongly agreed they felt supported after accessing Luke’s Place services (17 of 17, 100%).





Open ended feedback showed similar results to rating questions. LSLS clients reported positive experience through accessing services.

"They have consistently supported me over a year when I needed." (legal support satisfaction survey)

"The consultation is very helpful." (legal clinic survey)

"I am incredibly grateful for the support I received from Luke's Place. [Staff lawyer] has been my angel. Her dedication, compassion, and guidance made an immeasurable difference during a very difficult time. The support workers were also exceptional. They always responded quickly with kindness, understanding, and genuine care. I feel truly supported every step of the way. I have no concerns, only deep appreciation for the outstanding work they do and the positive impact they have on the lives of those they support." (legal support satisfaction survey)

LSLS clients also noted the skill and expertise of Luke's Place staff lawyers and discussed how LSLS supports helped them and their children.

"Lawyers are better educated, more knowable and experienced in the court formalities than most lawyers who work for a fee. My case took 5 years, and I worked with 7 different lawyers, but once I got into Luke's place, things moved very quickly." (legal support satisfaction survey)

"I cannot thank the staff at Luke's place enough. You have been my rock during the most difficult time in my life. [Staff lawyer] has been my saviour. She is an asset to Luke's place. At a time when I felt overwhelmed, unheard, and unsure of what to do, she stepped in with not just legal expertise, but genuine care and determination. She took the time to truly understand my situation, guided me through every step with clarity and compassion, and fiercely advocated for my rights." (legal support satisfaction survey)

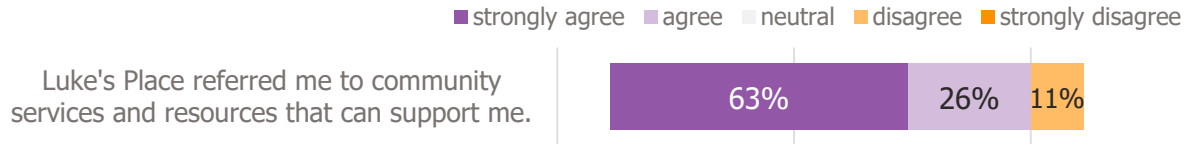
"Everyone's been great. Helped with legal things and the way they talk to you feels nonthreatening and supportive. You didn't feel bad saying anything, it was very safe feeling, supportive." (legal support satisfaction survey)

"Really helpful service helped me a lot. Followed up well." (legal clinic survey)

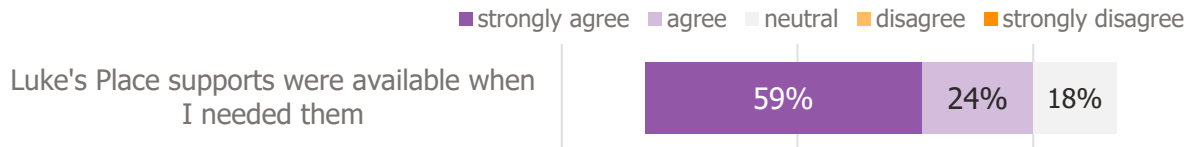
"She was great so helpful and had so much useful information. Highly recommended." (legal clinic survey)

"Very good for me, been my support anytime I'm down, good to me and my kids right from the beginning." (legal support satisfaction survey)

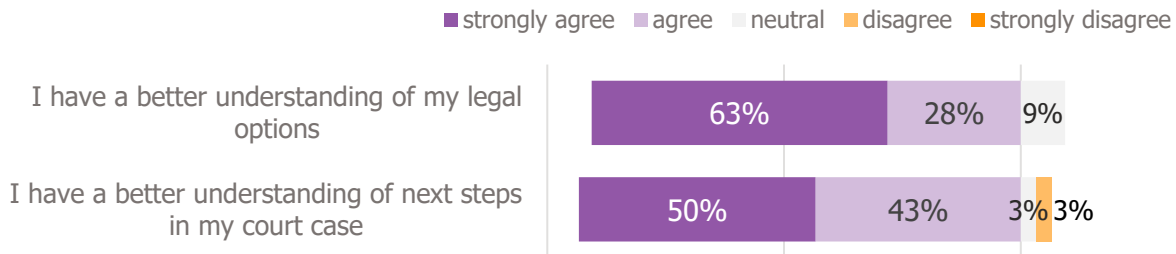
Referrals to community services and resources. Most clients who completed the surveys reported that they were connected to other needed community services (24 of 27, 89%). A minority of clients surveyed (all from the urgent legal clinic) reported they did not receive community referrals (n=3).



Timely supports. Most LSLs clients reported supports were available when they needed them (14 of 17, 82%). However, some clients noted challenges with wait times and capacity. Fluctuations in support worker staffing meant that wait times and scope of available services from support workers varied over the pilot.



Better understanding of next steps. After LSLs service, most clients who completed surveys reported gaining a better understanding of their legal options (29 of 32, 91%) and next steps in their court case (28 of 30, 94%).



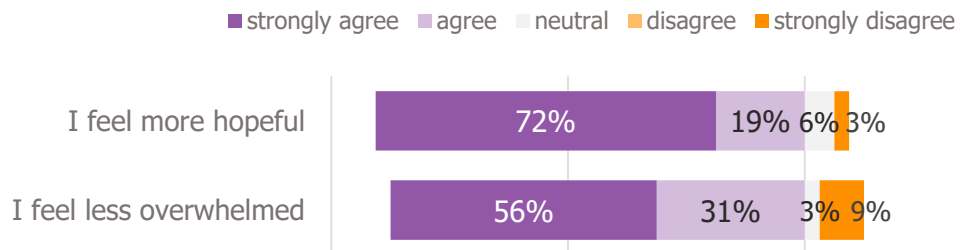
Tools and knowledge for safety. Most LSLs clients who completed survey rating questions reported that they gained tools and knowledge to stay safer (30 of 32, 94%).



Clients who provided open ended feedback also mentioned gaining safety strategies and feeling safe while receiving services.

"Keep up the safety measures and all the support" (legal support satisfaction survey)

Feel more hopeful and less overwhelmed. After services, most LSLS clients who completed the surveys felt better able to cope with their situation, including feeling more hopeful (29 of 32, 91%) and less overwhelmed (29 of 32, 88%).



Plan to apply knowledge. All LSLS clients who completed the survey planned to apply what they learned in the future (15 of 15, 100%).



Clients more easily navigate family court system. In open ended feedback, LSLS clients described how Luke's Place helped them navigate the court system and move forward with their life. This included gaining self-confidence, safety, and capacity to take effective next steps.

"Her dedication gave me the strength to stand up for myself. Whether it was navigating the complexities of the legal system, protecting my safety, or ensuring my voice was heard, she never backed down. Thanks to her support, I was able to move forward with my life in a way that once felt impossible. I will always be grateful for the way she and the team stood by me and helped me find justice and peace. Words cannot express my gratitude!" (legal support satisfaction survey)

"The services provided helped me when I was in a place in my life where I felt defeated. Aside from the services provided that helped me in ways I could have not for myself and my daughters, I also felt seen and heard and I am so very grateful." (legal support satisfaction survey)

"The legal clinic was helpful in providing clarity on rights, how to approach the separation process. The session was really insightful. It let me stay confident; I was really scared. I was new to Canada and the process. I didn't know my rights, what supports were available. The appointment helped get perspective, answered any initial doubts, and guided me to go to courthouse to get suggestions on responding to documents." (legal clinic survey)

Need for ongoing support. Some respondents flagged that they needed more help than was provided in a single clinic appointment or session.

"The consultation is very helpful. It would be nice if client has opportunity to schedule a brief/short follow up appointment in a future date in case clarification is needed." (legal clinic survey)

Conclusions

Summary of key pilot findings

Overall, the LSLS pilot demonstrated an effective model for providing limited scope legal services. The addition of court form drafting support and urgent legal clinic to the Luke's Place suite of legal services increased access to appropriate legal supports for women with family court needs after leaving an abusive partner. In particular, the LSLS model enabled:

- timely access to urgent legal services via Luke's Place staff lawyers
- access to court form drafting support via Luke's Place staff lawyers
- wraparound navigation and case management supports through the Luke's Place legal support worker team

The LSLS pilot reached its target audience of women from Durham Region and across Ontario who had family court needs after leaving an abusive partner, but who lacked legal representation and were not eligible for legal aid. The pilot also reached underserved communities at proportions matching or exceeding population, including Indigenous women, women from racialized backgrounds, women with disabilities, women who are LGBTQ+, and women with lower income.

The LSLS model is creating intended outcomes and experiences for women who access services. Most clients who accessed LSLS supports had positive service experiences and gained connections and capacity to more easily navigate the family court system. Luke's Place and LSLS team are focused on tailoring supports to provide trauma- and IPV-informed services that are accessible and inclusive to women's intersectional needs.

LSLS team capacity could be a barrier for some women accessing appropriate legal services. Balancing LSLS model promotion with team capacity is a key consideration for sustainable services.

Promising practices and lessons learned for the LSLS model

Ramping up LSLS services required careful balance with available team capacity. Both staff lawyer and support worker capacity impact service access and experiences. Other enablers of the LSLS model include support worker role clarity and client understanding of services.

Service volume over the pilot. Service capacity generally expanded over the course of the pilot. This related to initial training and onboarding of internal teams to LSLS activities, restoring a full complement of legal support workers, and streamlining LSLS work within the larger Luke's Places suite of legal services. However, the team noted late pilot capacity growth was a challenge in anticipating the end of funded work. The legal teams were not able to ensure client service after the project funding end date in March 2026, and so could not support clients with court dates after that point.

Integration in existing legal services. The LSLS pilot was able to leverage integration into existing Luke's Place services, including the support worker team, access to the volunteer lawyer (non-urgent) legal clinic, and administrative and managerial capacity. Starting up the LSLS model without these supports in place would require additional human resources and time.

Support worker capacity. Support worker staffing has a direct impact on LSLS service volume and timing. A fuller Luke's Place team enables serving a larger volume of clients, with more responsive screening, intake, and support, and consequently more LSLS referrals. One way of growing LSLS is partnering with support workers from community organizations to provide wraparound care.

Individual support worker skills, knowledge, and capacity impact client experiences and outcomes. The wraparound model relies on support workers identifying issues and context considerations during screening and communicating those with the legal team. If support workers don't have capacity to provide relevant referrals, accompaniments, communicate processes, or engage in follow-up, clients can be negatively impacted.

Having support workers with a robust understanding of family court processes is a key enabler of efficient and effective LSLS services. If support workers are not able to provide an accurate account of client needs and situation through the intake documents, the LSLS legal team will have to take additional time to gather this information, which reduces capacity to serve other clients.

Support worker onboarding and professional development to promote core competencies is a key ongoing consideration in implementing the LSLS model.

Legal team capacity. The internal support worker team noted that they were able to connect clients with LSLS supports in a timely way. From their perspective, the LSLS legal team were able to prompt appointments and responsive guidance. However, the legal team were working at full capacity and were at times challenged to fulfil LSLS demands.

These findings suggest that the LSLS model could benefit from a larger FTE staff lawyer complement or shifts in how staff lawyer roles are allocated. Even if support workers were providing more referrals, there would not necessarily be staff lawyer capacity to serve additional clients.

Building in additional buffer time to staff lawyer schedules could help ensure sustainable operations over time. The legal team requires a certain amount of flexibility in their schedules to be responsive to emerging demands. Through this pilot, the legal team learned a good practice is planning for 80% capacity, because urgent or unexpected issues always come up. Not having sufficient buffer time could be a risk to LSLS model service quality. Similarly, having multiple staff lawyers enables being responsive to the ebb and flow of client demand across both urgent legal clinic and court form drafting activities, as legal team members can spell each other off across LSLS activities and other role demands.

LSLS capacity could also be increased by creating dedicated staff lawyer positions, rather than having to share time with other organizational programs and initiatives. Having legal staff work on multiple areas of responsibility can impede timely response to urgent and ongoing client needs.

Administrative burden and support. Staff lawyers spend a substantial amount of time on administrative and paperwork tasks in coordination with support workers and clients. If volume of LSLS work expanded to cover more staff lawyer FTEs, it could be worthwhile investing in administrative support position for the legal team. In particular, service items like file opening, file closure review, and documentation organization (13% of service events, 8% of total time) could be provided by administrative support. Similarly, a large portion of correspondence with clients relates to scheduling and could be assigned to administrative support.

There is also substantial administrative coordination effort required for support workers. Booking appointments at times that work for the client, support workers, staff lawyers, and other required support roles or infrastructure (e.g., technology access, childcare, interpreter) can be challenging. The support worker team noted the coordination could be a part time role in itself.

Upstream diversion from urgent services. Urgent legal clinic referral depends on the immediacy of court dates or if urgent motion support is needed. A number of clients that utilized urgent legal clinics could have instead used the volunteer lawyer legal clinic, if triaged early enough. By planning in advance, it can be possible to refer clients who need summary advice to the regular Legal Clinic with volunteer lawyers rather than the LSLS staff lawyer led urgent legal clinic.

Overall LSLS client volumes could be increased via timelier use of Luke's Place service options that offset urgent demand on the staff legal team. For example, addressing client legal advice needs earlier, through the volunteer lawyer legal clinic, instead of requiring urgent legal clinic service.

Prioritizing legal coaching. The LSLS model and staff lawyers cannot always have capacity to service a woman's ongoing case. Therefore, the LSLS model needs to incorporate legal coaching so women can more effectively navigate the system alone if needed. Legal coaching promotes client empowerment, knowledge sharing, and confidence to pursue their legal journey after accessing Luke's Place LSLS. Future LSLS development could explore legal coaching as a core service.

Role clarity. While wraparound support comprises many different activities, it is essential for support workers to refer out for non-legal supports and issues rather than trying to cover all needs themselves (e.g., counselling support). At the same time, referring out to services should be balanced with providing support that is attentive to immediate client needs.

Client understanding of services. New clients need to engage with a large amount of information as they learn about options and next steps in their family court journey, as well as services and supports offered by Luke's Place. In addition, services offered by

Luke's Place change over time, depending on available programs and team capacity. There is a need to support both new and ongoing clients in building a comprehensive understanding of available services and options.

Next steps

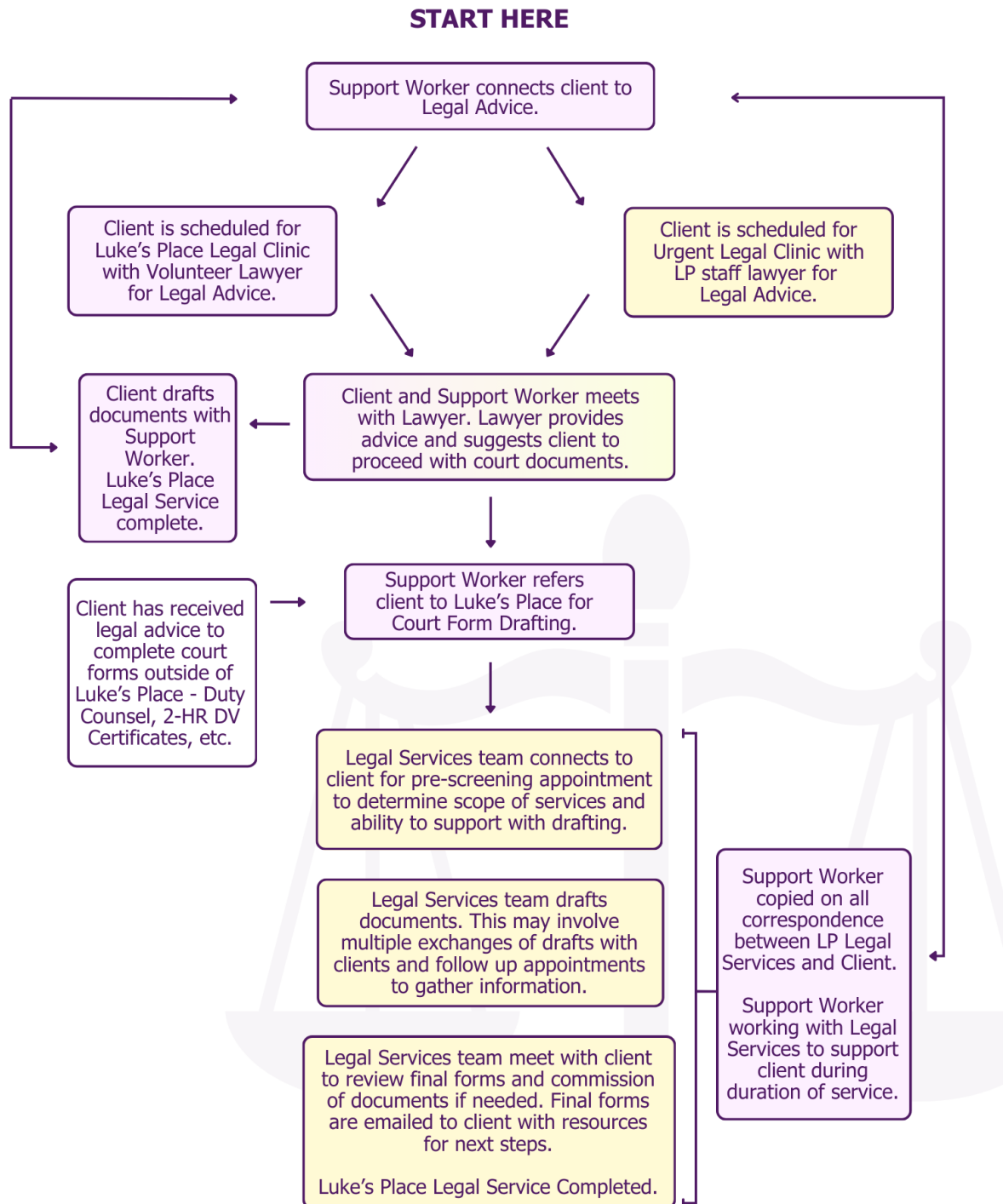
Luke's Place is exploring options for continuing LSLS supports to clients after the pilot project.

Additional next steps include Luke's Place mobilizing findings from the pilot project to community partners and the broader sector to support other organizations who may be interested in creating a similar program.

Appendices

Appendix A: Luke's Place legal services client journey

CLIENT JOURNEY THROUGH LUKE'S PLACE LEGAL SERVICES



Appendix B: Limited Scope Legal Services summary logic model

Summary of Luke's Place Limited Scope Legal Services Logic Model (v. March 2, 2026)

Legend: *pilot evaluation priority

Audiences	Activities	Outputs	Short-term outcomes	Mid-term outcomes	Impacts
<p>Clients Women who have experienced GBV, in Durham Region and throughout the province.</p> <p>Intersectional groups include: racialized women, Indigenous women, women with disabilities, trans and gender diverse individuals, and immigrant and refugee women</p>	<p>Support women in navigating the family court system through:</p> <p>...providing in house services Limited scope legal services (urgent legal clinic and court form drafting) via staff lawyer</p> <p>Wraparound support via legal support worker (accompaniment community service referrals; support to address intersecting issues; safety planning, technology support)</p>	<p>*Urgent legal clinic and court form drafting support</p> <p>→ Limited scope legal services are one part of the Luke's Place Legal Clinic. The volunteer lawyer legal clinic for summary advice is another part (out of scope for this project).</p>	<p>*Improved experience and connection seen and validated more hopeful and less overwhelmed less isolated (support from staff, peers) more connected to community resources more empowered and in charge of own life more safety</p> <p>*Better understanding of their situation and how to cope what abuse looks like and their own experience of abuse safety plan for their situation where to find resources next steps, legal options, and how family court system works</p>	<p>More easily navigate family court system through:</p> <p>* ...changes in action and practice uptake of community and legal resources mobilization around safety (e.g. restraining order, criminal charges, safety plan)</p> <p>* ...changes in capacity and ability engage with mental health supports engage with the court system identify abuse for the courts recognize and mitigate post separation violence and legal bullying make informed decisions about whether to separate</p>	<p>Women and their children are safer</p> <p>Significantly reduce the harm caused to women and children through the family law and family court system</p> <p>Set women on a more equal footing and achieve more positive outcomes in family court cases</p> <p>Change the family court system so that the safety and well-being of women and children are more effectively protected.</p> <p>LP is a more sustainable an effective organization, set up for long term success.</p>

ASSUMPTIONS about the Luke's Place approach and why it works	EXTERNAL FACTORS that might help or get in the way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Satisfaction with LP and positive experience * Accessible services (barriers removed / accommodations provided) * LP work aligned with principles and values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trauma informed Intersectional needs and gaps identified and addressed Cultural safety and appropriateness *LP able to balance outreach and growth with capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity and need for expanded services to women across the province Referrals are available in the community Serious shortcomings in the family law and family court system continue to undermine women's safety An uncertain and evolving environment

Appendix C: Client surveys

Legal Support Satisfaction survey after court form drafting

1. When did you start receiving services at Luke's Place?
2. How did you receive services at Luke's Place? (Check all that apply)
 - In person (in the office)
 - Virtual or remote service (by phone and/or video conference)
 - Other (please specify)
3. What services did you receive at Luke's Place?
 - Legal clinic (meeting individually with a lawyer)
 - Workshops
 - Court document support
 - Accompaniment and family court support
 - Emergency motions
 - Resources
 - Other (please specify)
4. Please describe any services you needed that Luke's Place did not provide.

Please tell us about any barriers in accessing services

5. Did you experience any barriers while accessing services at Luke's Place?
(Check all that apply)
 - I did not experience any barriers.
 - My wait for support was too long.
 - I had trouble with physical accessibility in the building.
 - I did not have transportation I need to access services.
 - I did not have a private space for virtual meetings.
 - I don't have the technology (phone, laptop, tablet) I need to access services
 - I had trouble with Internet access
 - I had trouble with the video or phone connection (audio/video quality)
 - I had trouble using the website or virtual meeting platform.
 - I am busy when the office is open
 - I prefer in person appointments but had to attend virtually.
 - I prefer virtual appointments but had to attend in person.
 - I did not have childcare.
 - Resources and workshops did not provide useful information.
 - Support was not available in my language.
 - Resources were hard to read and understand.
 - Other (please specify):
6. What did Luke's Place do to help remove your barriers to accessing services?

7. Are there other supports Luke's Place could provide in the future to remove barriers to accessing services?

Please tell us about your comfort with and access to technology

We are asking to learn more about your needs and preferences, to help make sure all clients can access our services. (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, n/a)

8. I am comfortable with technology

9. I have reliable access to the technology I need for services

10. I have safe access to the technology I need for services

What has changed for you after accessing Luke's Place services? (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, n/a)

11. I feel more hopeful

12. I feel less overwhelmed

13. I have more knowledge and tools to stay safer

14. I have a better understanding of my legal options

15. I have a better understanding of next steps in my court case

16. I will use what I learned from Luke's Place in the future

17. Luke's Place referred me to community services and resources that can support me

18. I have engaged with the following services since I was referred to via Luke's Place:

- Child and youth supports
- Counselling and therapy
- Duty counsel
- Family Law Information Centre (FLIC)
- Family Court Support Worker or Organization
- Legal aid
- Ontario Works or ODSP
- Settlement services
- Shelter and housing
- Other

Overall, What was your experience accessing legal Supports at Luke's Place (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, n/a)

19. Luke's place supports were available when I needed them

20. I felt listened to and understood at Luke's place

21. Luke's place provides helpful legal supports

22. Overall, I felt supported after accessing Luke's Place services

23. Overall, My level of satisfaction with Luke's Place services is...

24. I would recommend Luke's Place legal supports to others who need these services.

25. Please share any additional comments and/or concerns

Luke's Place Legal Clinic survey after urgent legal clinic

Please Tell us about your appointment

1. What was the date of your appointment?
 - Date (select from calendar)
2. How did you receive services at Luke's Place? (Check all that apply)
 - In person (in the office)
 - Virtual or remote service (by phone and/or video conference)
 - Other (please specify)
3. What legal issues were discussed with you?
 - Decision making responsibility
 - Parenting time
 - Support
 - Property
 - Child Welfare
 - Safety
 - Other (please specify)

Please Tell us about any barriers in accessing services

4. Did you experience any barriers while accessing services at Luke's Place?
(Check all that apply)
 - I did not experience any barriers.
 - My wait for support was too long.
 - I had trouble with physical accessibility in the building.
 - I did not have transportation I need to access services.
 - I did not have a private space for virtual meetings.
 - I don't have the technology (phone, laptop, tablet) I need to access services
 - I had trouble with Internet access
 - I had trouble with the video or phone connection (audio/video quality)
 - I had trouble using the website or virtual meeting platform.
 - I am busy when the office is open
 - I prefer in person appointments but had to attend virtually.
 - I prefer virtual appointments but had to attend in person.
 - I did not have childcare.
 - Resources and workshops did not provide useful information.
 - Support was not available in my language.
 - Resources were hard to read and understand.
 - Other (please specify):
5. What did Luke's Place do to help remove your barriers to accessing services?
6. Are there other supports Luke's Place could provide in the future to remove barriers to accessing services?

Please Tell us about your comfort with and access to technology (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, n/a)

We are asking to learn more about your needs and preferences, to help make sure all clients can access our services.

7. I am comfortable with technology
8. I have reliable access to the technology I need for services
9. I have safe access to the technology I need for services

What kinds of services did you access during your legal clinic appointment at Luke's Place? (yes, no, not sure, prefer not to say, other)

10. Did you receive help preparing court documents?
11. Did you receive help preparing for a court date?
12. Did you feel supported by the lawyer in the clinic?

What has changed for you after accessing legal clinic services at Luke's Place? (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, n/a)

13. I feel more hopeful
14. I feel less overwhelmed
15. I have more knowledge and tools to stay safer
16. I have a better understanding of my legal options
17. I have a better understanding of next steps in my court case
18. Luke's Place referred me to community services and resources that can support me

Overall, what was your experience accessing legal clinic services at Luke's Place (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, n/a)

19. I felt listened to and understood at Luke's place
20. I was provided with comprehensive legal advice on my legal matters
21. Overall, I felt supported after accessing the Legal Clinic
22. Overall, my level of satisfaction with Luke's Place services is...
22. I would recommend the Luke's Place Legal clinic to others who need these services.
23. Please share any additional comments and/or concerns

Appendix D: Focus group questions

Questions for staff lawyers

From your perspective:

- 1) How has court form drafting with community partner organizations impacted your workload?
 - a. What are challenges in receiving these referrals?
- 2) When women are referred to you....
 - a. Are there ever gaps in their needs that LSLS can cover that weren't flagged by LSWs? If yes, please explain.
 - b. Have referral processes or gaps changed in the past 6 months?
- 3) Has the promotion and training for the LSLS team been effective? What would you improve?
 - a. Any notable changes in the past 6 months?
- 4) Is the current LSLS team (lawyers and LSWs) caseload manageable?
 - a. Has this changed in the past 6 months?
 - b. What would the LSLS team need to increase its capacity to serve clients?
- 5) In the past six months, what are typical barriers/ challenges for clients accessing LSLS?
 - a. What could help address these barriers and challenges?
- 6) LP aims to provides services that are: trauma informed, feminist with intersectional lens, culturally safe and appropriate, anti-racist anti-oppressive, evidence-based practice. Thinking about the LSLS model meeting these principles and values:
 - a. What are areas of strength? What are gaps or challenges?
 - b. Any changes in the past 6 months?
- 7) Can you speak to challenges in measuring "success" or "outcomes" in family court?
- 8) Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Questions for Luke's Place legal support workers

From your perspective:

- 1) What are your overall thoughts on LSLS utilization and outcomes in the past six months, after changes to address team feedback?
 - a. What further feedback do you have on the model as it now exists?
- 2) When do you consider when referring to LSLS?
 - a. What part of LSLS stand out as an important need in your caseload?

- b. What gets in the way of making referrals? (e.g., lack of understanding of service, low need for service, lack of capacity, etc.)
 - c. Have referral processes or considerations changed in the past 6 months?
- 3) Has the promotion and training for the LSLS team been effective? What would you improve?
 - a. Any notable changes in the past 6 months?
- 4) Is the current LSLS team (lawyers and LSWs) caseload manageable?
 - a. Has this changed in the past 6 months?
 - b. What would the LSLS team need to increase its capacity to serve clients?
- 5) In the past six months, what are typical barriers/ challenges for clients accessing LSLS?
 - a. What could help address these barriers and challenges?
- 6) LP aims to provides services that are: trauma informed, feminist with intersectional lens, culturally safe and appropriate, anti-racist anti-oppressive, evidence-based practice. Thinking about the LSLS model meeting these principles and values:
 - a. What are areas of strength? What are gaps or challenges?
 - b. Any changes in the past 6 months?
- 7) Can it be difficult to follow up with clients?
 - a. What are barriers or enablers to following up with clients?
- 8) Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Questions for workers from court form drafting partner organizations

From your perspective:

- 1) How does the Luke's Place court form drafting support model benefit clients?
- 2) When do you consider when referring to Luke's Place court form drafting support?
 - a. How do you identify a client to refer to court form drafting support with Luke's Place?
 - b. What gets in the way of making referrals? (e.g., lack of understanding of service, low need for service, lack of capacity, etc.)
- 3) Are the referral and consent forms easy to use?
 - a. What could be improved or streamlined?
- 4) Does the Luke's Place court form drafting support increase your workload?
 - a. Is there anything Luke's Place can do to help with this?

- 5) What are typical barriers/ challenges for clients accessing LSLS court form drafting supports?
 - a. What could help address these barriers and challenges?
- 6) LP aims to provides services that are: trauma informed, feminist with intersectional lens, culturally safe and appropriate, anti-racist anti-oppressive, evidence-based practice. Thinking about the LSLS model meeting these principles and values:
 - a. What are areas of strength? What are gaps or challenges?
- 7) Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Appendix E: References

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