



Centre for Program Evaluation & Melbourne Disability Institute

Evaluation of the Lawyers Empowering People Project: Final Report

Prepared for Fitzroy Legal Service by the Centre for Program
Evaluation

20 December 2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The University of Melbourne acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional owners of the unceded land on which we work and learn. We pay respect to the Elders, past and present, and the place of Indigenous knowledge in the academy.

Acknowledgments

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The Centre for Program Evaluation

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Context

The University of Melbourne

The University of Melbourne has over 160-years of history of leadership in research, innovation, teaching and learning. It is the highest-ranked research university in Australia. Our researchers are at the forefront of international scholarship in a diverse range of fields.

Melbourne Disability Institute

The Melbourne Disability Institute (MDI) is an interdisciplinary research institute that was established by the University of Melbourne in 2018 to build a collaborative, interdisciplinary and translational research program to improve the lives of people with disability. Ultimately, the MDI research program aims to capitalise on national reforms and active partnerships with the disability sector to deliver evidence for transformation. The MDI research program is centred around providing much-needed evidence for the disability sector and broader community to address the complex problems facing people with disability, their families and carers.

Centre for Program Evaluation

The Centre for Program Evaluation (CPE) undertakes evaluations and research projects for government departments, non-government organisations and community-based agencies across a wide range of policy and program areas but particularly in the areas of education, health, the arts, social wellbeing and the community. Staff members are skilled in the use of widely known, as well as current, emerging and innovative evaluation theory, techniques, and practice, all of which aim to enhance client and stakeholder collaboration and increase the utilisation of evaluation findings.

Community Based Research Scheme

This project was conducted and funded through a joint funding arrangement with Fitzroy Legal Service and the Melbourne Disability Institute Community-Based Research scheme. The scheme is designed to build the evidence in the disability sector, by linking community organisations to researchers at The University of Melbourne. Projects funded through the scheme include small-medium projects suggested by community-based organisations that build social capital and improve lives of people with disability, their families or carers. The community-based research scheme is intended to support research and evaluation of innovative ideas that build social capital; to share good practice; and to replicate or scale up ideas.

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List of Abbreviations

Table 1: List of abbreviations used.

| Abbreviation | Full text |
|---------------------|---|
| COVID-19 | Coronavirus Disease 2019 |
| CPE | Centre for Program Evaluation |
| FLS | Fitzroy Legal Service |
| MDI | Melbourne Disability Institute |
| MGSE | Melbourne Graduate School of Education |
| LEP / LEPP | Lawyers Empowering People / Lawyers Empowering People Project |
| PWD | People with disability/disabilities |

Plain Language Summary

The Evaluation

Fitzroy Legal Service is developing a service model to improve their support for clients with disability. The Lawyers Empowering People Project (LEPP) involves co-designing and trialling new approaches to legal services to help people feel safe and empowered, make their own decisions and participate more in their legal cases.

The Melbourne Disability Institute (MDI), through its Community-Based Research Scheme, contracted the Centre for Program Evaluation (CPE) at The University of Melbourne to evaluate the LEPP in early 2020. The aim of the Community Based Research Scheme is to help community organisations conduct research or evaluation of programs that are making a difference in the lives of people with disability and their families/carers.

The evaluation has examined how the LEPP project has been developed, including how staff have engaged with the project and the processes of working with people with disability as part of co-designing the service model.

What we did

To evaluate the project, we did a survey of FLS staff, volunteers and board members to establish their attitudes and ideas about the project in June 2021.

In July-September 2022, we interviewed staff members, project staff, and participants in the co-design groups who have lived experience of disability. We asked them about their experiences taking part in the project so far, including what they had learned, what went well, and what could be improved in the next stages of the project.

What we found

FLS staff want to improve their services

The survey and the interviews told us that people working at FLS believe that working with people with disability is very important to improve their services, and that there is strong interest in more training and support for FLS staff who work with people with disability.

FLS know that ongoing engagement will provide better support

FLS staff and project staff viewed improving their services as an ongoing process, which involves changing how they talk to and work with people with disability, as well as changes to their work spaces. They saw training and information-sharing as positive, and thought that having these types of events consistently would help improve their services. Some bigger changes might need more resources like time and funding in the future, but FLS staff know there are still important changes they can make to improve services in the meantime.

Participants felt listened to and respected

People with disability who helped in the co-design process had positive experiences, and felt that their contributions were valued and respected. They felt listened to by FLS and saw the process overall as positive.

Recommendations

There are a few things that FLS can do so the LEPP project continues to be successful:

- Put in place the prototypes (the working versions of the new service model) as soon as possible
- Keep working with people with disabilities to co-design new services
- Keep focusing on hiring staff who have lived experiences of disability
- Review how work is done at FLS to help improve processes for clients and staff
- Make a plan to improve the physical spaces at FLS so that they are more accessible to people with different kinds of disabilities.

Simple English Summary

What is the project?

Fitzroy Legal Service (FLS) has been trying to work out how to make their services better for people with disability. This is called the ‘Lawyers Empowering People’ Project (“the project”).

The project will design and test a new way of doing legal services to help people:

- Make their own decisions
- Participate in their legal cases, and
- Feel more empowered.

What is the evaluation?

FLS have worked with researchers from the University of Melbourne to find out how the project is going. The University of Melbourne has a special program called the Community Based Research Scheme which is run by the Melbourne Disability Institute. They asked researchers at the Centre for Program Evaluation to help FLS find out how the project is going and how to make it better.

What has FLS been doing?

FLS has been running co-design groups with people with disabilities. People in these groups have had experiences with legal services before. They told FLS about what was good or bad about those experiences, so that FLS can learn how to help people with disabilities more. FLS is also working out new training for their staff and are

making a new model for how they work with clients so that they can help people with different kinds of disabilities.

What did the evaluation do?

In June 2021, the researchers did a survey of people who work at FLS to ask them about working with people with disability.

In July-September 2022, the researchers talked to people who work at FLS, and to people with disabilities who were part of the co-design groups.

What did the evaluation find out?

- People who work at FLS want to help people with disability get better services
- They want to keep learning more ways to help, including changing how they talk to clients, and knowing about different support needs
- They know that they have to keep talking to people with disabilities to make sure the services are helpful
- People with disabilities who took part in the co-design groups said that they felt that FLS was listening to what they have to say

Recommendations

The University of Melbourne researchers think that FLS should do these things to make the project even better:

- Start testing the new processes to find out if they are helpful
- Keep working with people with disabilities to find out what they think
- Keep hiring staff who have disabilities so that they can help too

- Keep looking at different parts of FLS services to make them better, for clients and staff
- Plan to make the spaces at FLS more accessible to people with different kinds of disabilities.

Report Structure

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the evaluation of the “Lawyers Empowering People Project” conducted by the Centre for Program Evaluation (CPE). The document is structured as follows:

Section 1: Introduction provides a background to the project, the purpose of the evaluation and the key evaluation questions.

Section 2: Methodology presents the rationale and design of the evaluation, the sampling, data collection, and analytical methods.

Section 3: Results and Discussion provides a discussion of key findings in relation to the evaluation questions.

Section 4: Conclusion is an overview of key findings.

Section 5: Recommendations provides an overview of recommendations based on the analysis and discussion of key findings, and discussion with FLS.

Section 6: Appendices provides reference material for the report.

1. Introduction

Respecting and supporting the ability of people with disability to make decisions in their own lives is essential for promoting their inherent human dignity and meaningful justice outcomes.

Fitzroy Legal Service (FLS) and the Law School at The University of Melbourne have formed a collaboration to develop a new way of working with clients. This model is founded on the principles of universal design. Universal design is a disability justice principle which advocates for objects and systems to be designed with plural and varied access needs in mind, with a goal of supporting access and use for all people. The Lawyers Empowering People Project (LEPP) is in the process of co-designing and trialling new ways of doing legal services to help people feel safe and empowered, make their own decisions and participate more in their legal cases. FLS are working with people with lived experience of cognitive disability and the justice system to co-design these changes, and expect that this new way of working will help all people who use the services at Fitzroy Legal Service. Although the new model is intended to have universal coverage, it is anticipated that it will provide a framework to better assist those with a disability and to increase the agency of these clients. One possible outcome of this project would be to replicate this service model across other community legal centres. The model will be fully implemented from 2023 onwards.

The Melbourne Disability Institute (MDI), through its Community-Based Research Scheme, contracted the Centre for Program Evaluation (CPE) at The University of Melbourne to conduct an evaluation of the LEPP in early 2020. The initial evaluation brief was to examine the impact of the project on staff members and participants who were involved in the LEPP program. However, due to changes in the timeline of implementation of the LEPP, the scope of this evaluation was adapted to capture the process and initial impact of the co-design process underpinning the LEPP. It is expected that the outcomes of this evaluation will allow FLS to capture key learnings and considerations that can be applied to future co-design activities.

1.1. The Evaluation of the Lawyers Empowering People Project

1.1.1. Background: Fitzroy Legal Service

Fitzroy Legal Service (FLS) provides legal services for communities who face systemic barriers to accessing justice due to factors such as poverty, race, sex, sexuality and/or gender diversity, disability and other often intersecting forms of discrimination. FLS is dedicated to assisting members of the community who face marginalisation, discrimination and/or disadvantage, with legal information, advice and representation.

To serve these communities, FLS provides a dedicated statewide phone service for incarcerated peoples in Victoria, and various multidisciplinary outreach programs reaching communities of colour, homeless people, LGBTIQ+ communities, and people who use drugs. FLS has outreach and health justice partnerships with close to 20 community agencies predominantly based in the Cities of Yarra and Darebin in inner north and east Melbourne. These are intended to provide legal services from spaces where people congregate, feel safe, and from where they can or already do access services.

FLS partnerships include specialist LGBTIQ+, mental health and youth services; a state-wide prison advice line; alcohol and other drug services; needle and syringe programs; and a Medically Supervised Injecting Room. Their Drug Outreach Lawyer program, now in its 21st year, works with people who use drugs to provide timely and targeted legal assistance through a harm-reduction model. This program provides outreach and drop-in advice clinics co-located at services which aim to serve this cohort, using a flexible referral model. This program makes legal advice and assistance available to those unlikely to access a lawyer through a traditional appointment model.

FLS works in partnership with Queerspace to provide a safe and inclusive service to LGBTIQ+ people who are seeking legal advice and casework support around family violence matters, by providing legal services onsite at Queerspace. This outreach and co-location of space creates a clear referral process, a consistent touch point, and provides access to clients of Queerspace who might not otherwise seek mainstream legal support due to mistrust of legal systems and/or lawyers. The close relationships formed between lawyers and support workers also enables the services to work together to provide wraparound support to the client, resulting in better social and legal outcomes.

The FLS health justice partnership with St Vincent's Hospital, located in Fitzroy, co-locates a lawyer within the hospital's specialist allied health team. This partnership provides collaborative holistic legal and social-health solutions to high-risk patients attending the hospital through the Emergency Department with complex needs, often including homelessness and experiences of trauma and mentally-ill health.

FLS also runs duty services as part of the Specialist Family Violence Court in Heidelberg, operating within a best-practice trauma-informed care model. Three FLS lawyers are also co-located at the Neighbourhood Justice Centre in Collingwood, providing legal casework assistance and duty lawyer services with a focus on therapeutic justice and problem solving.

This evaluation forms part of FLS' broader commitment to serving marginalised communities, by evaluating the impact of the LEP project and the extent to which it has met its goals.

1.1.2. Purpose of the Evaluation

The aim of this evaluation was to examine the implementation of the prototyping /development phase of the LEP Project, with a focus on capturing and understanding the process as well as the experiences of participants. The evaluation provides recommendations for further improvement and development of a new service model.

1.1.3. Initial Evaluation Aims and Scope

The initial project scope, as developed in 2020, was to evaluate the development of a pilot service model supporting clients with disability, including FLS staff specialist training. At this stage, the focus of the

evaluation encompassed the development of the service model prototypes and their implementation by FLS, initially anticipated to extend to the end of 2021.

1.1.4. Project and evaluation timeline and scope changes

The primary factor impacting this timeline and the scope of the project has been the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Melbourne was in various stages of lockdown for significant portions of 2020 and 2021, and public health measures necessitated shifts to remote working and virtual service delivery where possible. In addition, the proposed service model is intended to support the needs of clients with disabilities, who are at higher risk from COVID-19. Remote and virtual engagement also poses accessibility and technological challenges for this client group.

The cumulative effect of these factors was delay to the development and implementation of the anticipated service model. This has meant that the service model will not be implemented before 2023.

1.1.5. Current Evaluation Focus

In recognition of these complexities and their impact on the project, the current evaluation scope is focused on the development of the service model thus far, in particular FLS staff engagement with lived experience consultation as a basis for service delivery, and the experiences of the codesign groups working with people with lived experience of disability. This adaptation reflects and mirrors the iterative process-oriented model of engagement which has driven the LEPP project overall, and will allow evaluation findings and recommendations to be utilised in the ongoing development and implementation of the service model prototypes.

1.1.6. Key Evaluation Questions

The following evaluation questions guided data collection and analysis:

- To what extent is the project achieving the intended outcomes, in the short term?
- Have the needs of those served by the project been achieved?
- What evidence is there of raised awareness of the need to promote a culture of inclusiveness and respect towards those with a disability across the organisation?
- What factors act as barriers and enablers to the effective implementation of the emerging new model?
- Has the project been delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe, and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices?
- What are the changes which need to be made to individual practice?
- What do stakeholders feel about the outcomes of the project, and expect for the future?

1.1.7. Program Theory

A Theory of Change Workshop was implemented by an external consultant, Clear Horizons, as part of the funding requirements of the early development stage of the project. The workshop produced a Theory of Change model. This model is essentially an outcomes model which has not been evaluated as yet, as it is still to be implemented at FLS. The focus of this evaluation has been on evaluating the co-design process and the development of some of the prototypes as well as some initial outcomes outlined in the program theory.

1.2. Methodology

We employed a mixed-methods approach, whereby the LEPP project was the evaluand for the duration of the project. This approach allowed the evaluation team to analyse and interpret both quantitative (survey data) and qualitative (interview data) findings relating to the project as a whole. To achieve the above objectives, we employed the following evaluation activities:

- A survey to establish baseline attitudes was conducted by Fitzroy Legal Service during June 2021. Participants included staff, Board Members and Volunteers.
- Online interviews were conducted with project staff, FLS staff, and participants in the co-design workshops, during July-September 2022. These focused on participants' experiences of the co-design and prototyping workshops, and reflections on the process as a whole.

It was conveyed to the groups of stakeholders that the researchers were the only people having access to these interviews. Survey and interview data were de-identified prior to analysis.

The figure below summarises the evaluation methodology:

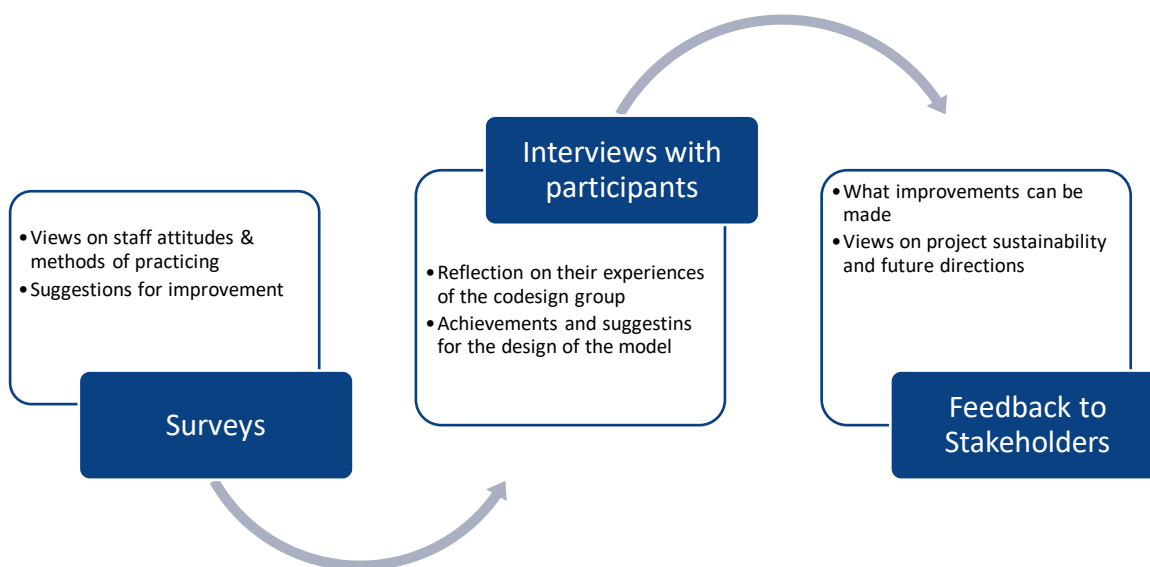


Figure 1. Methodology Overview

1.2.1. Data Collection and Analysis

Baseline Survey

A survey to establish baseline attitudes was administered by FLS to approximately 200 people, including staff, board members and volunteers. This was circulated in June 2021 and generated 50 responses.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with FLS staff, project coordinators, and two lived-experience co-designers. The interviews were conducted between July-September 2022 via Zoom by the evaluation team. All interviews were audio-recorded (with participant consent) and transcribed prior to analysis.

Table 2. Evaluation Participants – Interviews and Surveys

| Stakeholder Group | Type | Number of Participants |
|---|-----------|------------------------|
| FLS staff | Interview | n=6 |
| Lived experience co-designers | Interview | n=2 |
| Baseline: staff, volunteers & board members | Survey | n=50 |

The analysis of qualitative data followed a general inductive approach, where data collected through interviews and focus groups were condensed and thematically analysed using the evaluation questions as focus areas (Thomas, 2006).

2. Results

The results section presents findings from the analysis of the baseline survey data and interview data.

2.1. Analysis of Survey Data

To establish a baseline of FLS staff, volunteer and board member attitudes to lived experience and skills for working with diverse client groups, FLS conducted a survey using an on-line survey platform, Qualtrics. It is our understanding that the survey was circulated in June 2021 amongst approximately 200 staff members, board members, and volunteers. 50 responses were received in total (return rate approximately 25%.) However, the survey allowed respondents to skip questions which did not apply to them, therefore not all survey respondents completed all questions.

2.1.1. Demographics

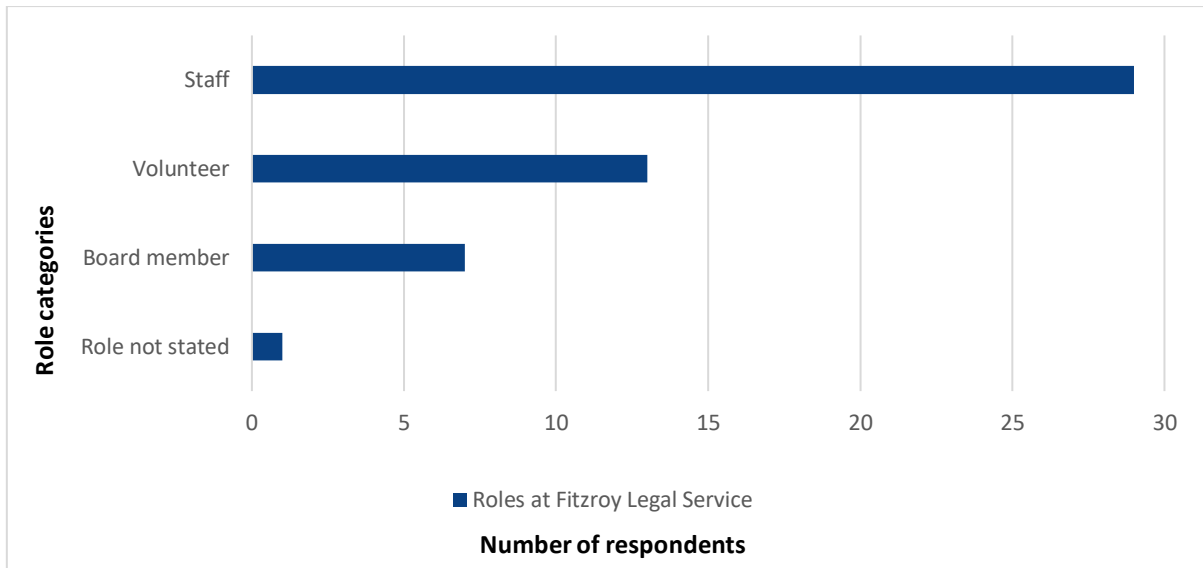


Figure 2: Demographics of baseline survey respondent roles.

Most respondents described their role as staff members (n=29), followed by volunteers (n=17) and board members (n=7).

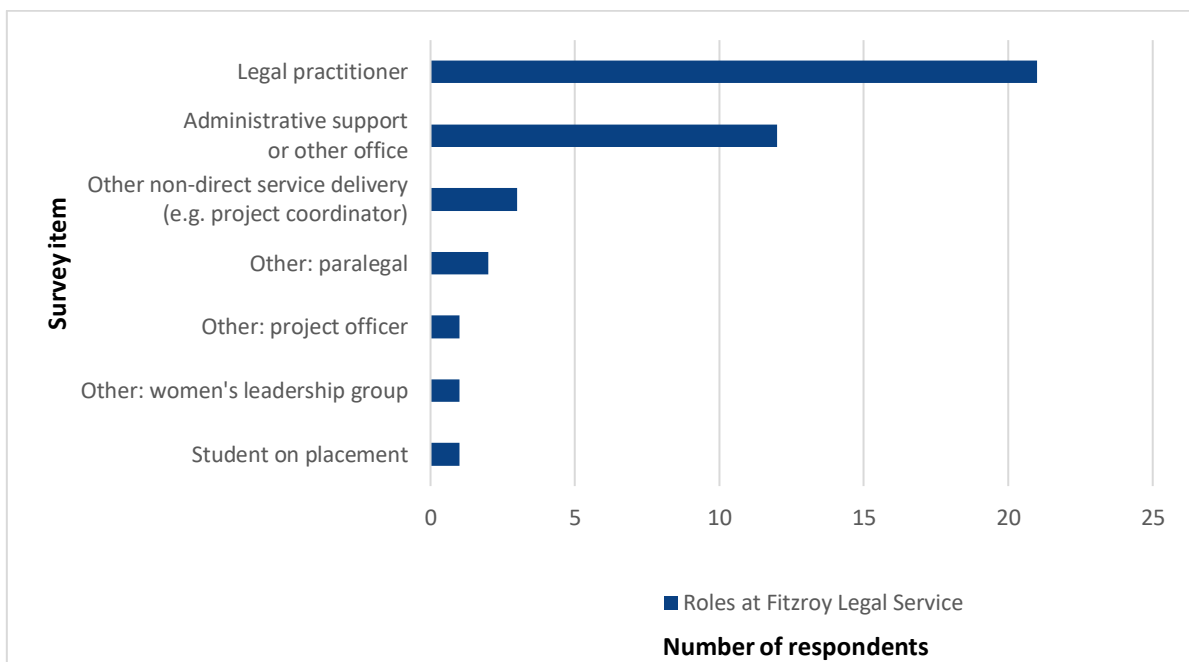


Figure 3: Demographics of baseline survey respondent roles by specialism.

As depicted in Figure 2, most respondents who described their role (n=41) were legal practitioners (n=21), followed by administrative support/other office roles (n=12), other non-direct service delivery (n=3), and paralegals (n=2). The remaining roles were women’s leadership group, project officer, and student on placement (n=1 respectively).

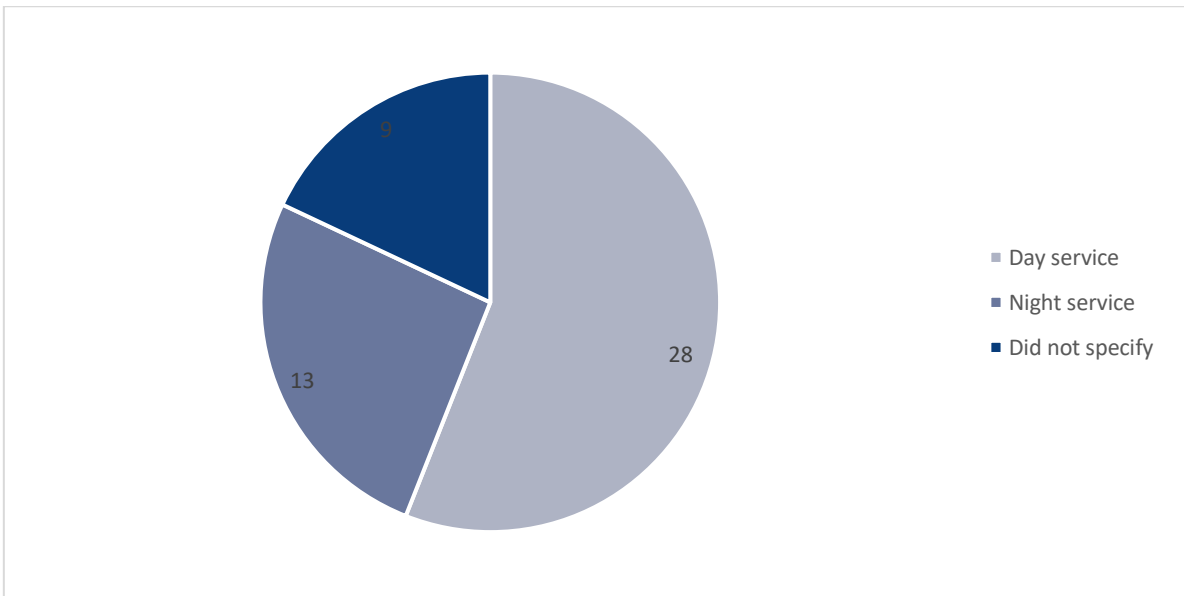


Figure 4: Demographics of day and night service respondents.

A total of 41 respondents identified whether they were part of FLS’s day (n=28) or night service (n=13).

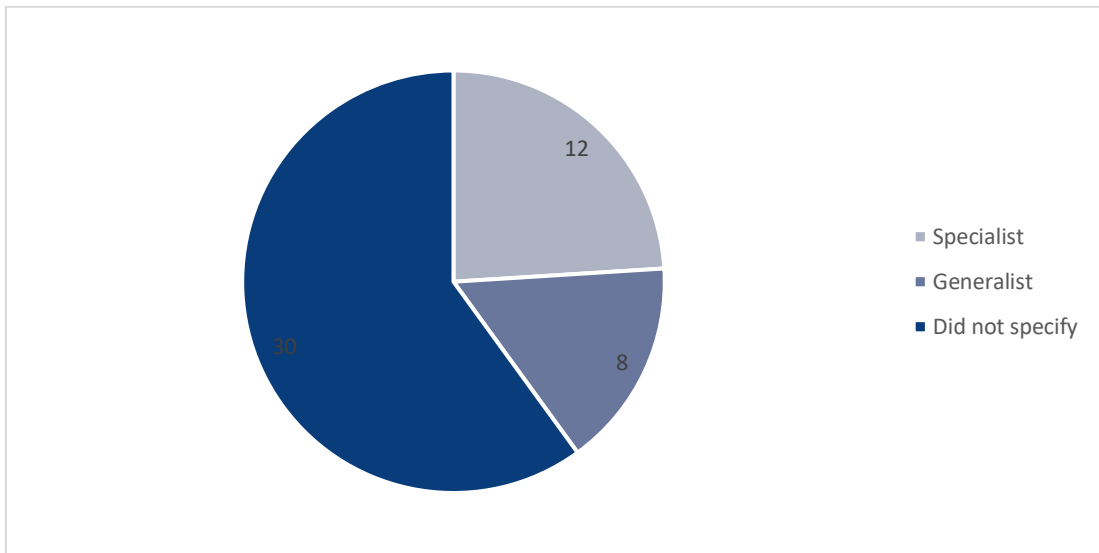


Figure 5: Demographics of generalist and specialist respondents.

As shown above, most respondents who described their practice (n=20) described their roles as specialist (n=12), with remaining responses (n=8) describing their roles as generalist.

2.1.2. Attitudes and knowledge: lived experience

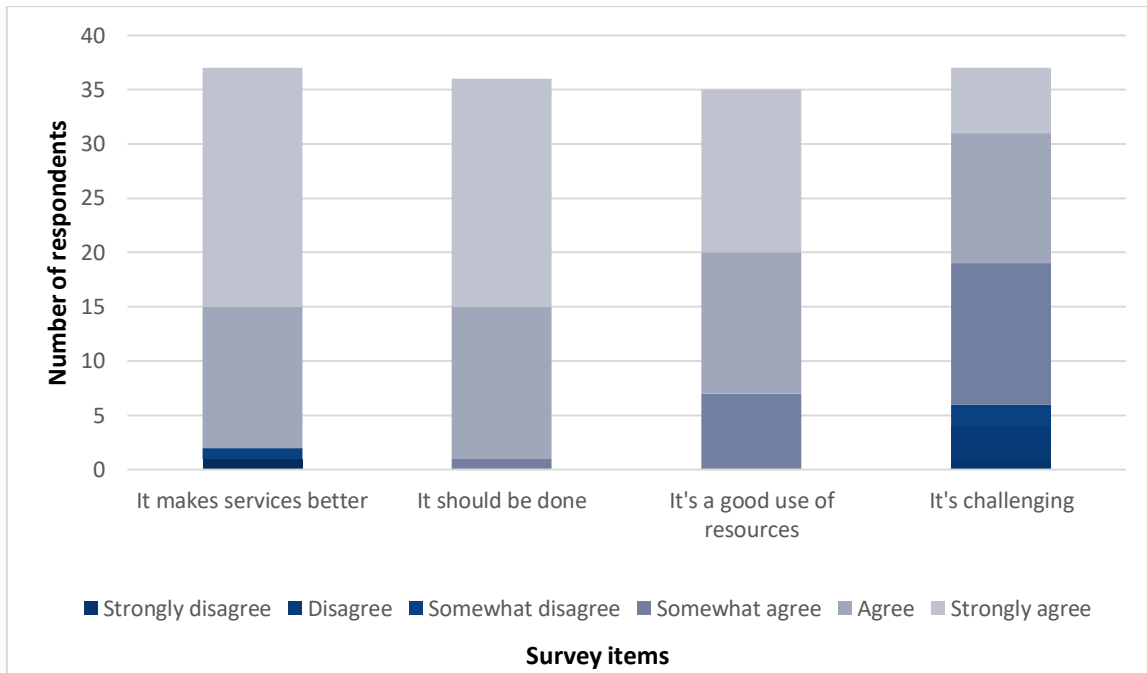


Figure 6: Attitudes to including people with lived experience in the design, evaluation and evaluation of FLS services: Part 1.

As shown in Figure 6, all respondents (n=36) agreed to some extent (n=36) that people with lived experiences should be included in service design, implementation and evaluation. All respondents viewed this as a good use of resources, and a majority (n=36) agreed that this makes services better, though a similar majority also viewed it as challenging (n=31).

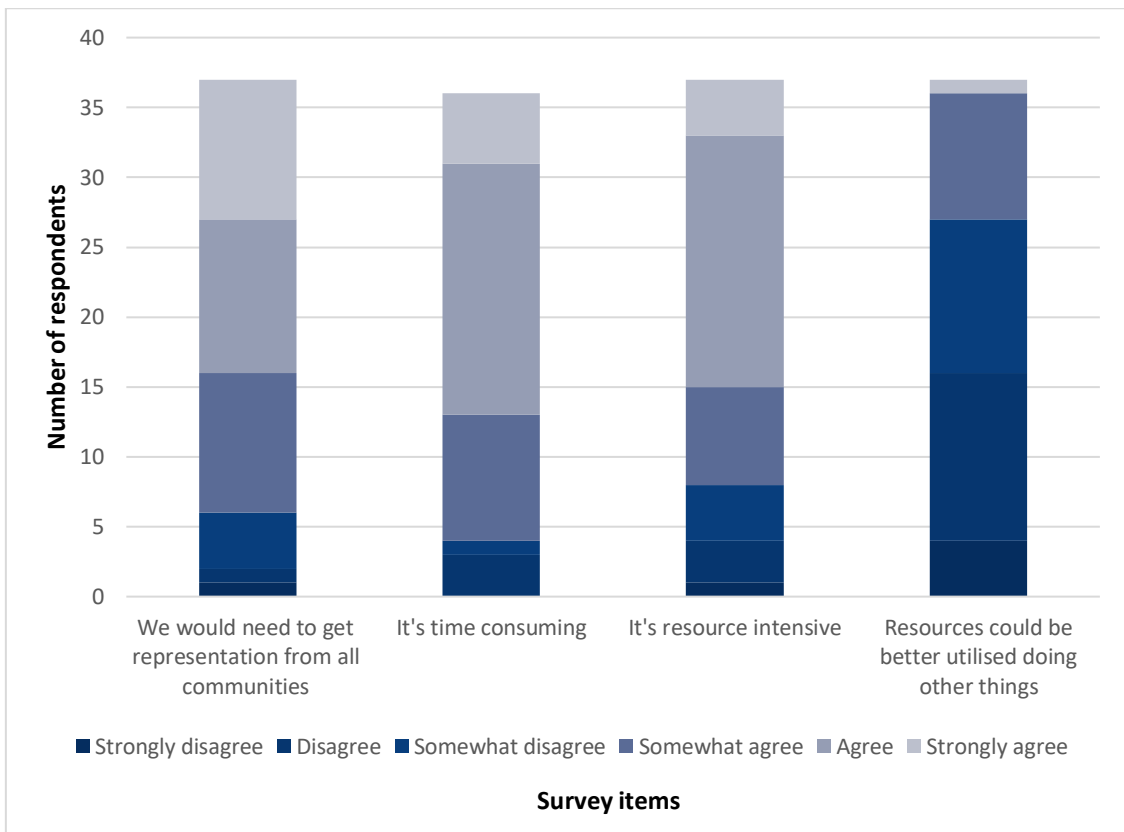


Figure 7: Attitudes to including people with lived experience in the design, evaluation and evaluation of FLS services: Part 2.

As illustrated in Figure 7, over two-thirds (n=27) of all respondents (n=37) disagreed to some extent that “resources could be better utilised doing other things”. Despite this, respondents viewed these processes as time consuming (n=32 at least some agreement) and resource intensive (n= 29 at least some agreement).

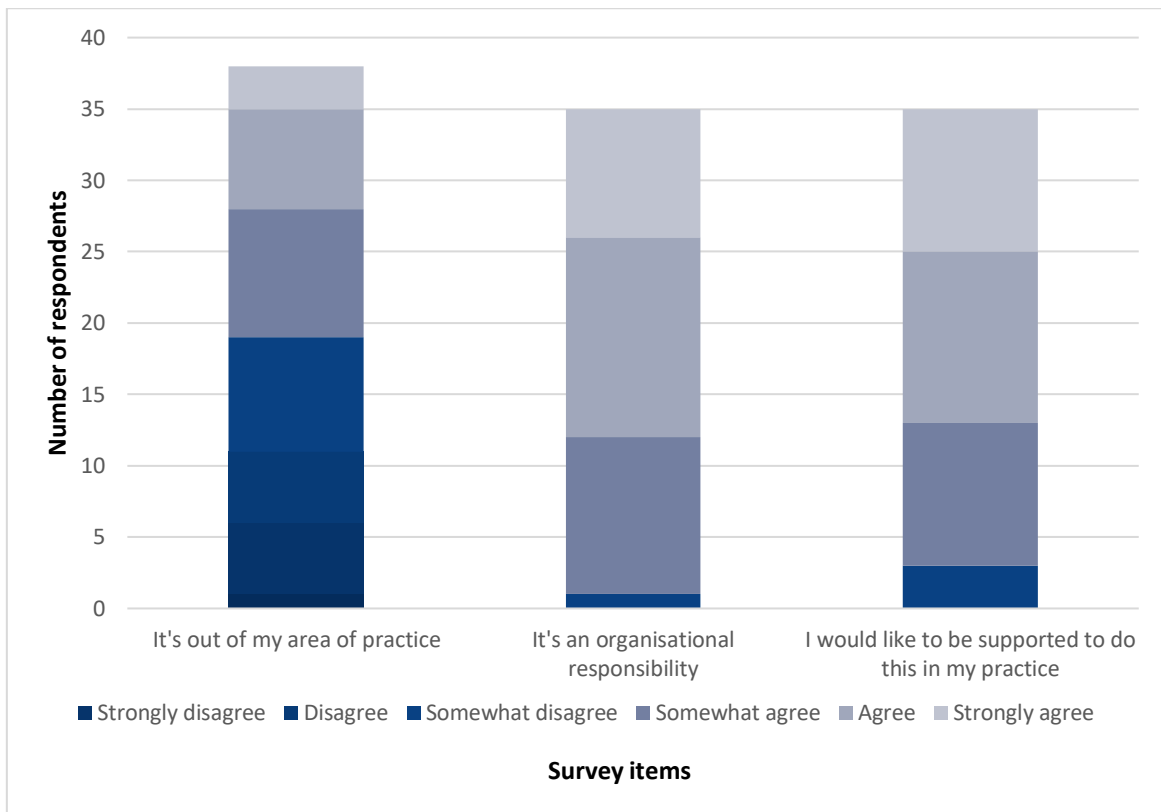


Figure 8: Attitudes to including people with lived experience in the design, evaluation and evaluation of FLS services: Part 3.

As shown above, most respondents viewed lived experience inclusion as an organisational responsibility (n=35; n=34 at least some agreement). While just over half (n=18) of all respondents (n=37) described this as outside their practice area, most would like support to include people with lived experience (n=35; n=32 some agreement).

2.1.3. Attitudes and knowledge: Confidence levels

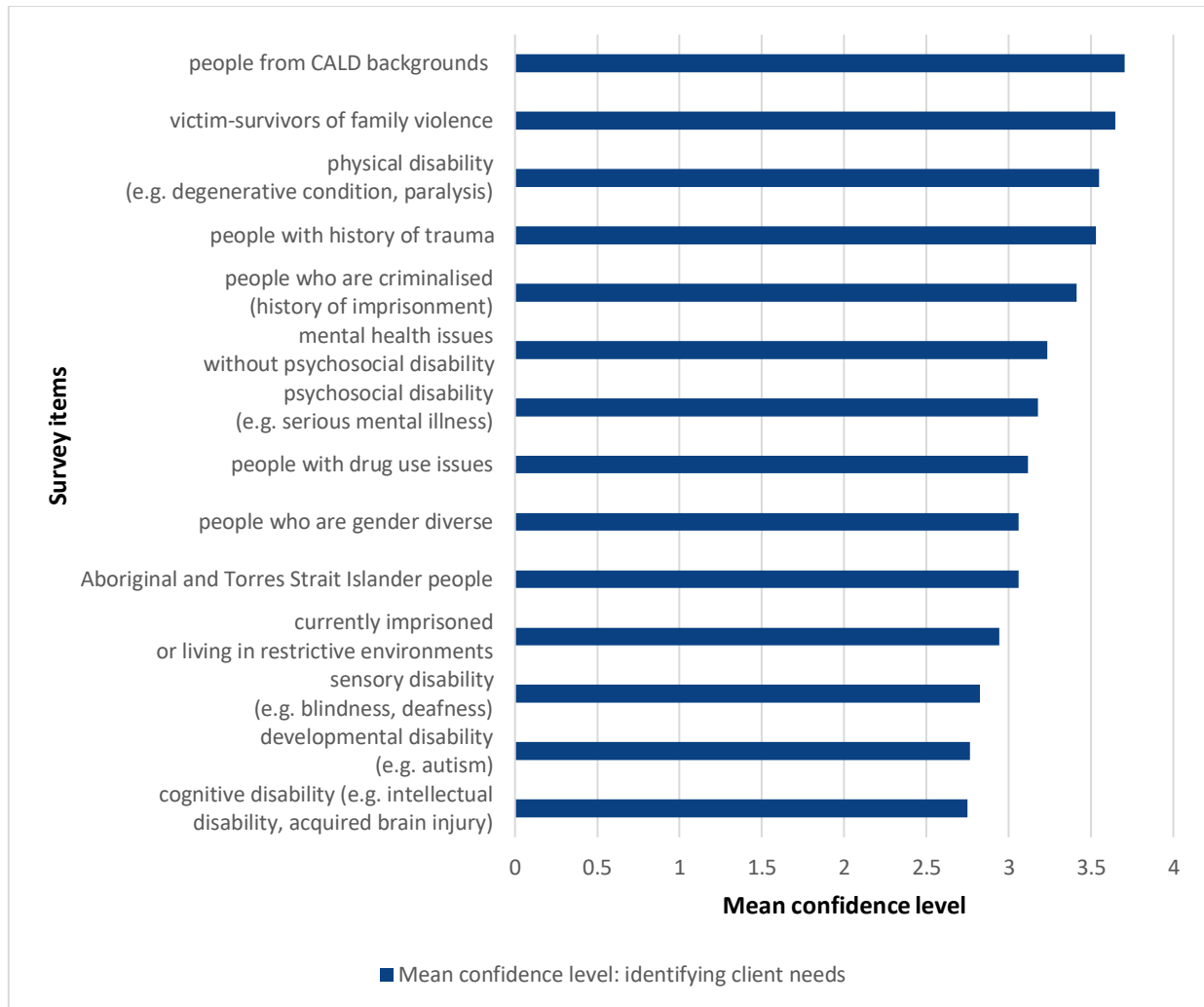


Figure 9: Mean level of confidence in identifying client support needs.

Figure 9 illustrates the mean (average) level of confidence in effectively identifying support needs when working with a list of client groups. Respondents were asked to rank their level of confidence from 1 (low) to 6 (high), and to rank only those which applied to their role. Each group received between 16 and 20 responses. For the statistical data including the standard deviation, please see [Appendix 1.]

The highest mean (average) confidence level was reported by those who worked with people from CALD backgrounds (n=17, M=3.71). The next highest level (M=3.65) was amongst those working with victims-survivors of family violence (n=17), followed by those who worked with people with physical disability. The lowest mean level of confidence (M=2.75) was reported by those who worked with clients with cognitive disability (n=16). The next lowest levels were amongst those who worked with people with developmental disability (n=17, M=2.76) and sensory disability (n=17, M=2.82).

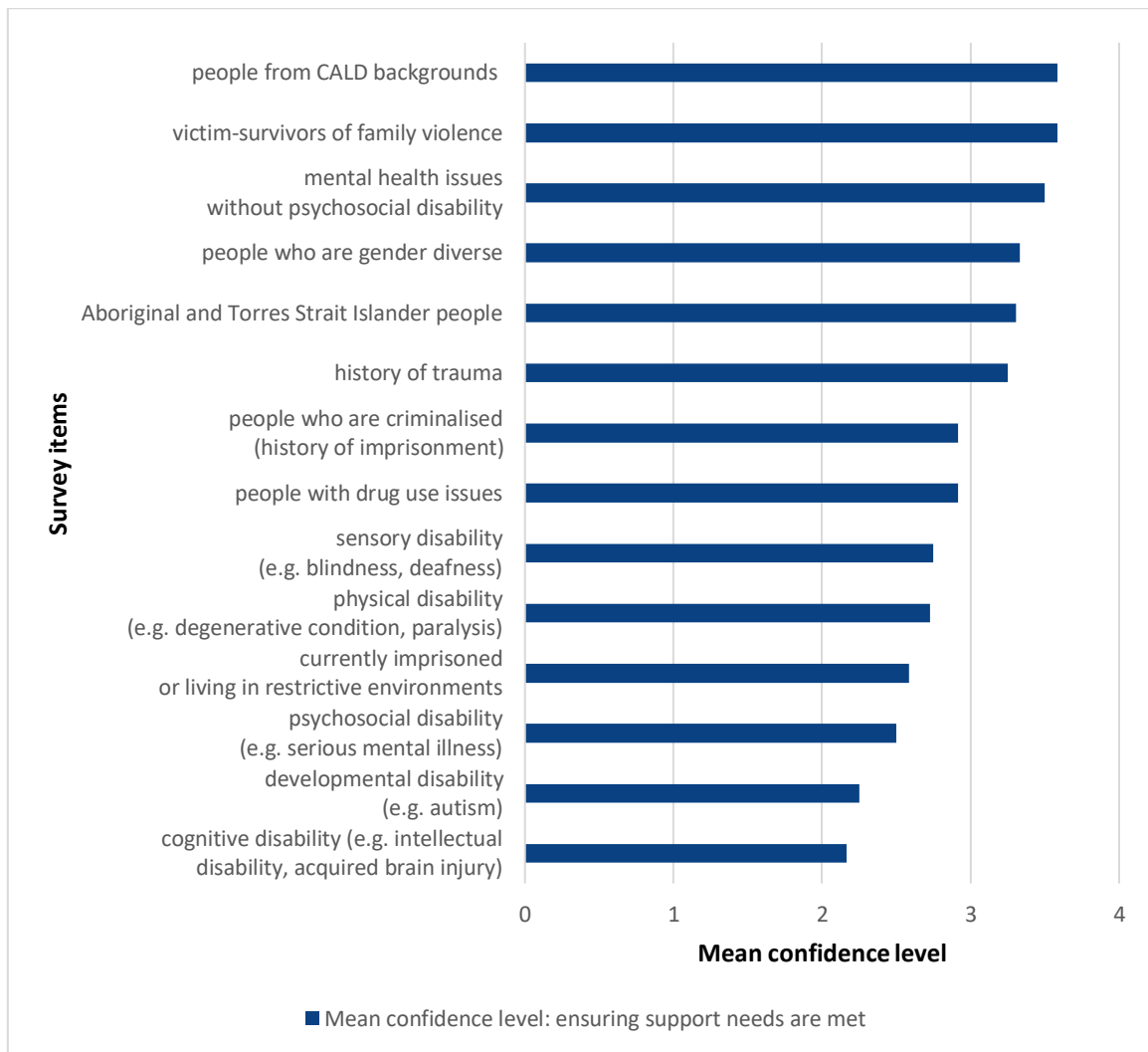


Figure 10: Mean level of confidence in ensuring client support needs are met.

Figure 10 illustrates the mean (average) level of confidence in ensuring that clients from the same groups received adequate support. Respondents were asked to rank their level of confidence from 1 (low) to 6 (high), and to rank only those which applied to their role. Each group received between 11 and 23 responses. For the statistical data including the standard deviation, please see [Appendix 1.]

The lowest mean confidence level in support needs being appropriately met was for people with cognitive disability (M=2.17), followed by people with developmental disability (M=2.25), and with psychosocial disability (M=2.5). The highest mean confidence levels in client groups receiving appropriate support was for people from CALD backgrounds (M=3.58) and victim-survivors of family violence (M=3.58), followed by people with mental health issues without psychosocial disability (M=3.5).

2.1.4. Practice: FLS strengths

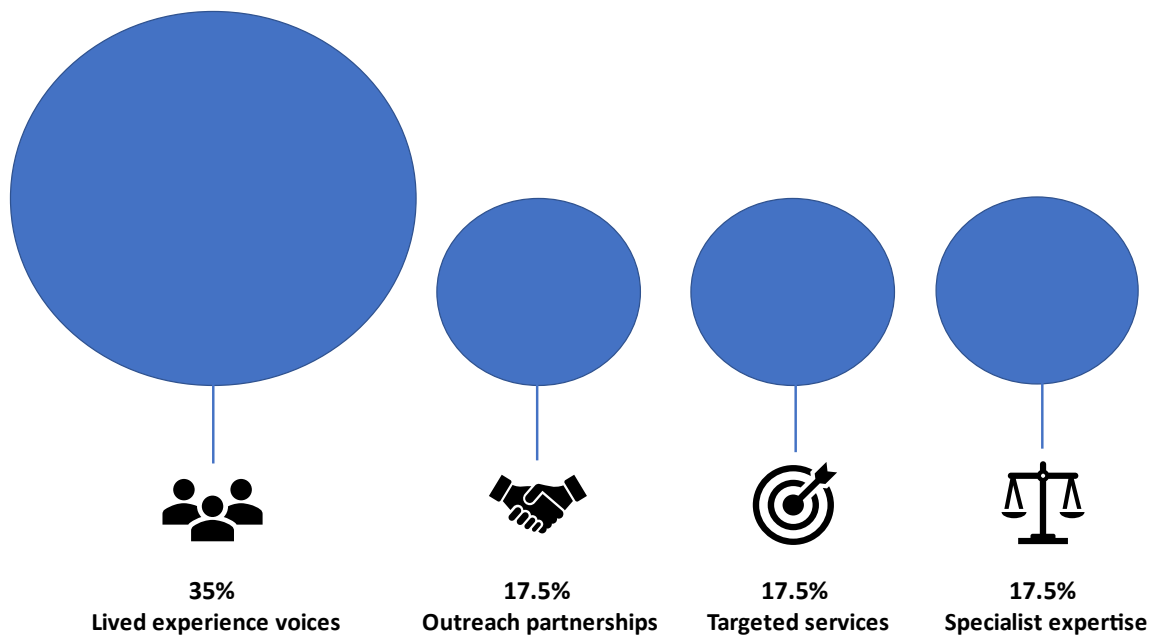


Figure 11: What FLS is doing well to ensure services are accessible and of high quality.

As shown in Figure 11, 35% (n=4) of respondents (n=14) believed that focusing on lived experience voices was a strength at FLS, including hiring staff with lived experience of marginalisation. The next most frequently mentioned areas of strength reported by 17.5% of respondents (n=2 respectively) were outreach work, partner organisation collaboration, targeted services for specific needs, and developing specialist expertise.

2.1.5. Practice: barriers to access

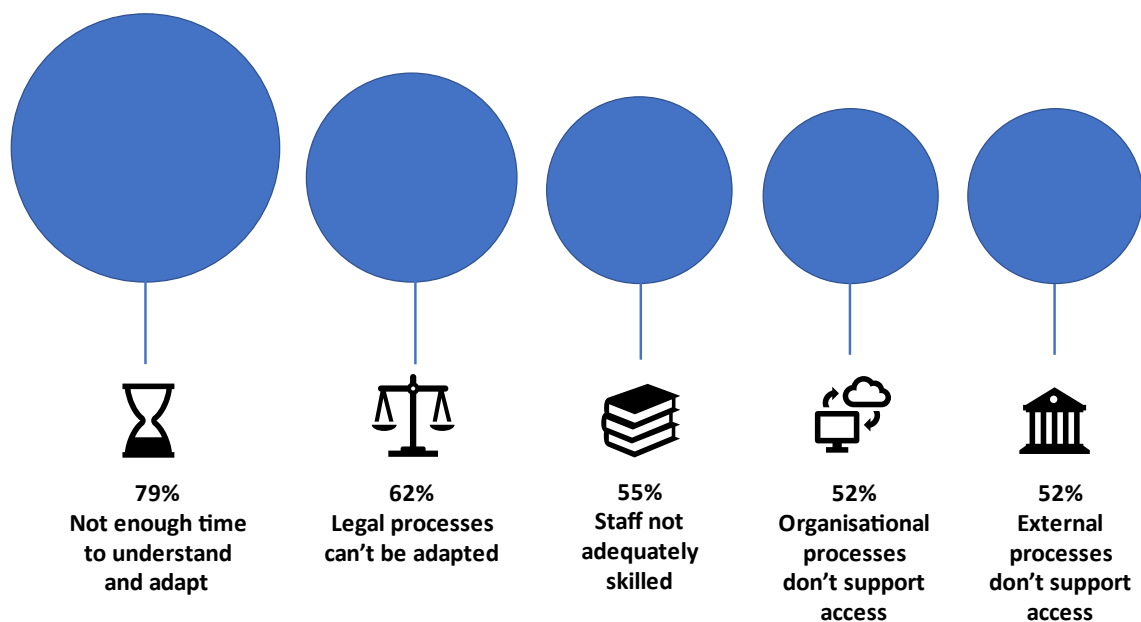


Figure 12: Most significant barriers to people accessing FLS and receiving a quality service, by most frequently selected.

As shown above, the most frequently identified barrier to people accessing and getting quality service at FLS was “there is not enough time to understand and adapt to a client’s needs”. Of respondents to this question (n=29), a majority (n=23) ranked this in their top five most significant barriers, with 11 ranking it most significant. The second-most frequently ranked barrier was that “legal processes can’t be adapted to individual need” (n=18, most significant n=3). The next most frequently selected were “staff are not adequately skilled to accommodate different needs” (n=16); “organisational processes don’t support access to the service” (n=15) and “external process (i.e. court processes) don’t support access to the service.”

2.1.6. Practice: individual practice reflections

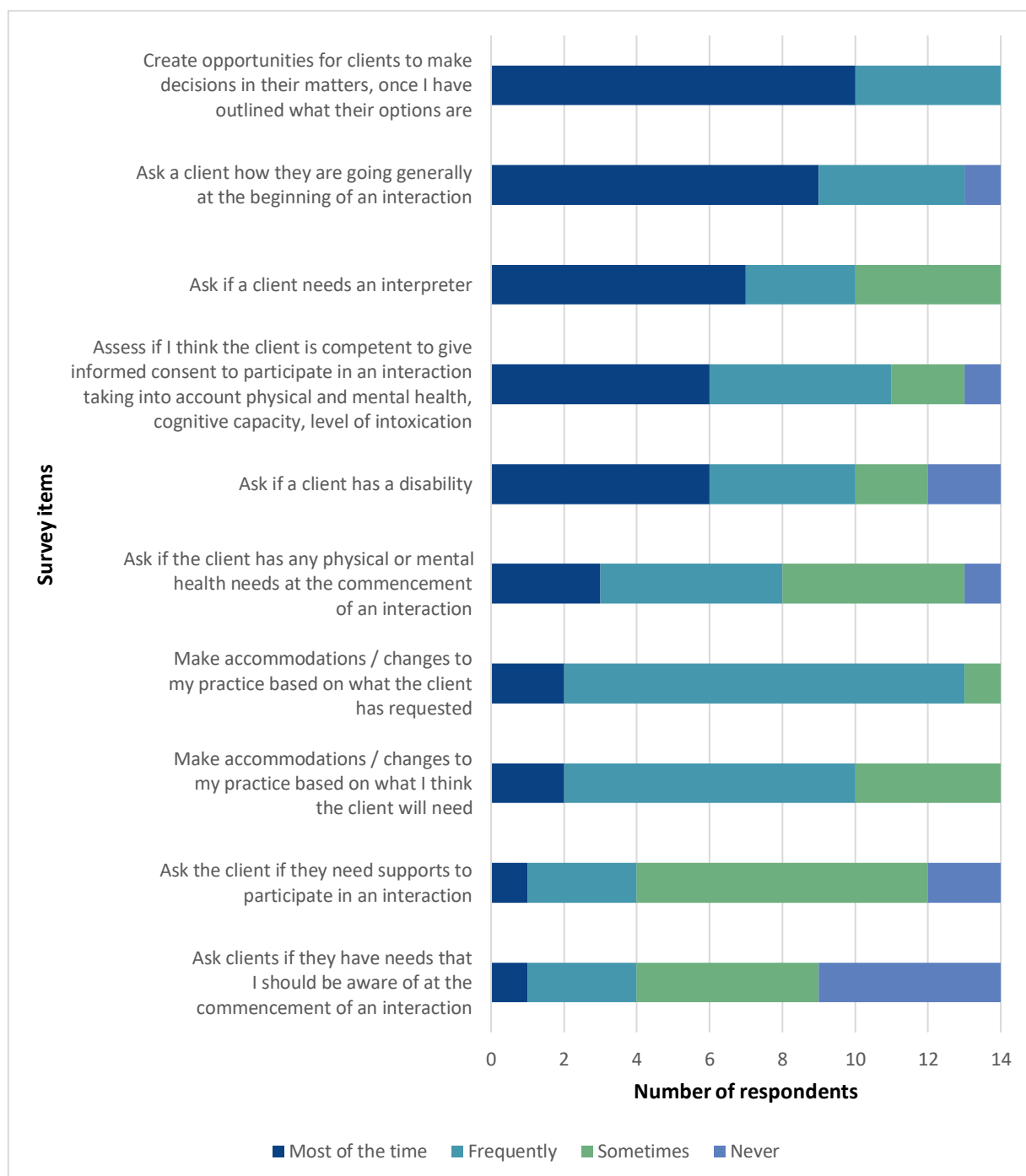


Figure 13: Practice reflections on ensuring an accessible and inclusive service, Part 1.

Figure 13 depicts how frequently respondents (n=14) took actions towards an accessible and inclusive service, from “most of the time” to “never”. The response most frequently performed “most of the time” was “create opportunities for clients to make decisions in their matters, once I have outlined what their options are” (n=10), followed by “ask a client how they are going generally at the beginning of an interaction” (n=9) and “observe and check in during client interactions to see if the client is understanding what is happening” (n=8).

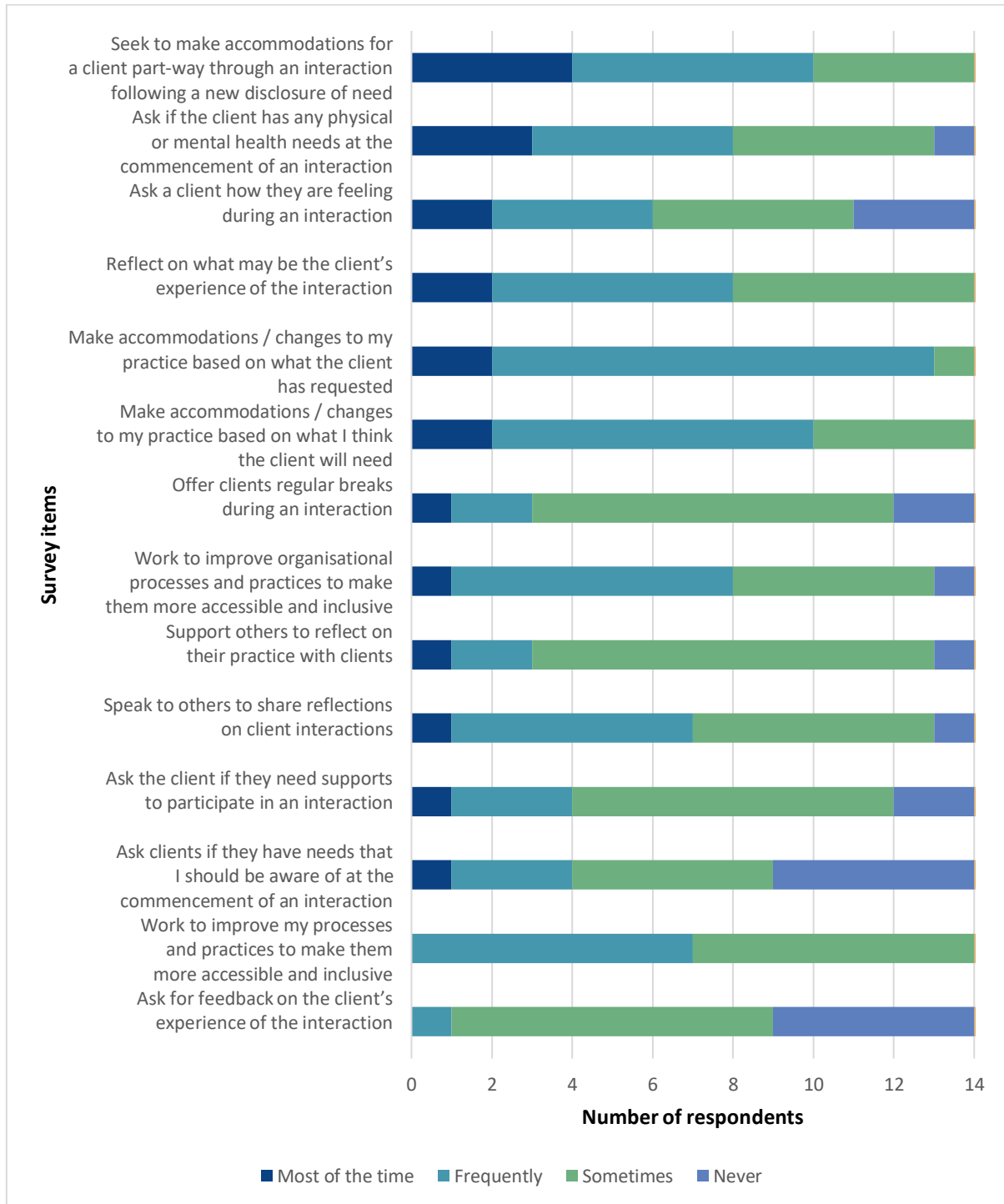


Figure 14: Practice reflections on ensuring an accessible and inclusive service, Part 2.

Figure 14 depicts behaviours ranked as less frequently performed by FLS client-facing staff (n=14). The least frequently performed behaviour was “ask clients if they have needs that I should be aware of at the

commencement of an interaction” (n=5 reporting “never”). However, respondents reported enquiring about more specific needs at higher rates, including “ask[ing] if a client needs an interpreter” (n=7 “most of the time,” n=3 “frequently”) and “ask[ing] if a client has a disability” (n=6 “most of the time”; n=4 “frequently”). Other infrequently performed behaviours included “asking for feedback on the client’s experience of the interaction” (n=5 “never”, no respondents reporting “most of the time”). While no respondents reported “work[ing] to improve my processes and practices to make them more accessible and inclusive” most of the time, responses were evenly spread between doing so “frequently” and “sometimes” (n=7 respectively).

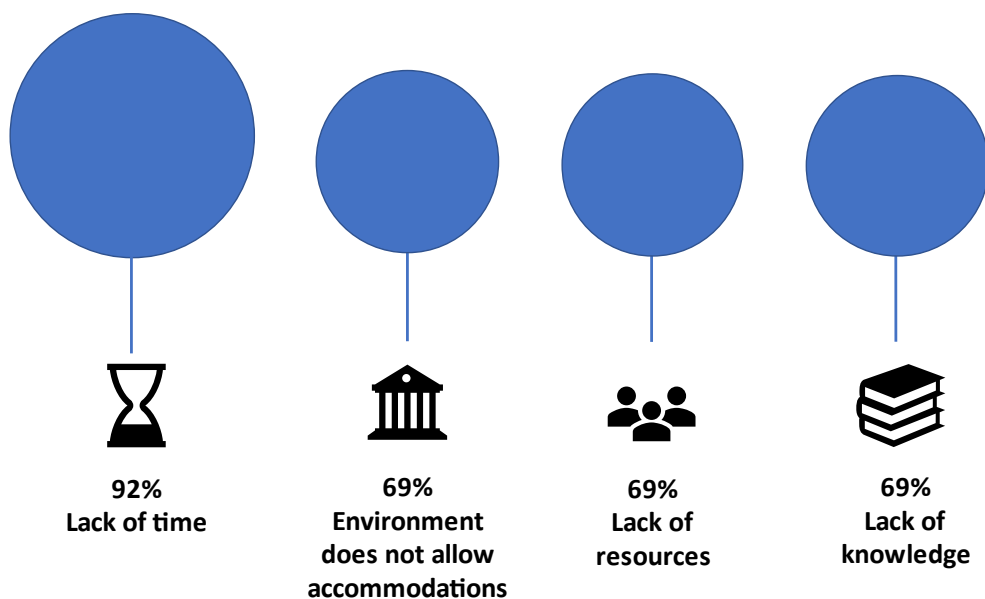


Figure 15: Challenges to implementing measures ensuring an accessible, inclusive practice, by most frequently selected.

Figure 15 illustrates the most frequently ranked challenges to implementing these practice measures. The most frequently ranked challenge (n=14) was “lack of time” (n=12). Three responses were each the next most frequently ranked (n=9 respectively): “Environment does not allow for accommodations to occur (for example if duty lawyer service, no ability to give time for a break if client needs it)”; “Lack of resources to enable these things (e.g. access to interpreters, access to plain language fact sheets)”; and “lack of knowledge.” Of these, “environment does not allow for accommodations to occur” was also the second most-frequently ranked as the main barrier to implementation (n=3).

2.1.7. Training and support

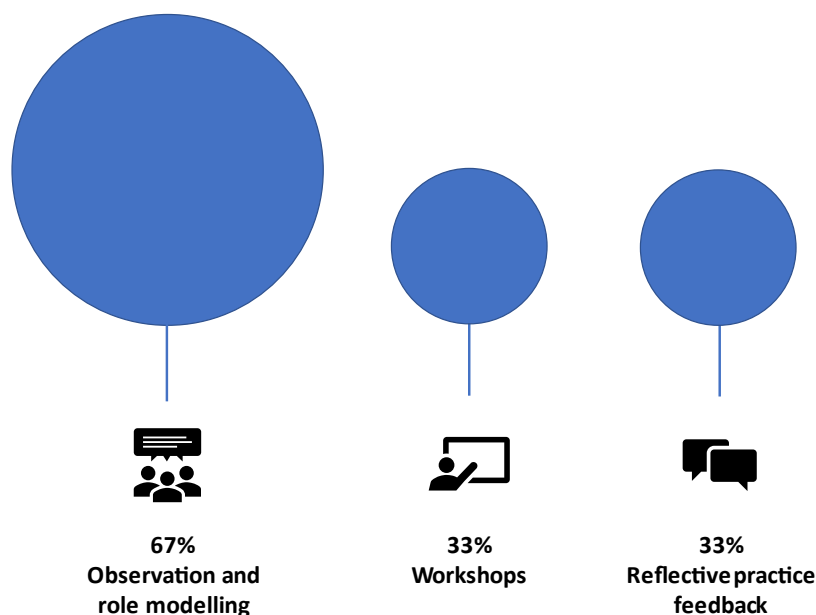


Figure 16: Preferred professional development activities.

Figure 16 illustrates the professional development activities which respondents would find most helpful. Two thirds (n=4) of all respondents (n=6) stated that observation or role modelling would be helpful, followed by workshops and reflective practice feedback sessions (n=2 respectively).

Throughout the survey, respondents were given opportunity to elaborate on their responses through open-field questions, though these were used infrequently. Comments focused on the challenges of applying a question to their role, or broader structural inequities and barriers constraining inclusive practice.

Throughout the survey, respondents consistently described viewing lived experience inclusion and consultation as beneficial processes on an individual and organisational level and viewed investing time and resources in this area positively. Respondents clearly viewed time and resource allocation as significant barriers to inclusion, though responses also indicated that there is scope for improving skills, confidence and approaches to client interaction in order to improve engagement with clients with disability. There was significant interest from respondents in participating in trainings covering these areas, as well as improving awareness of specific support needs and the wider support structures available for clients with disability, to help ensure a fuller context of support for clients. As a reflection of baseline attitudes, the survey results indicate strong awareness of the need and potential benefit of an improved service model, and engagement with the goals of the LEPP project overall.

2.2. Analysis of Interview Data

A number of interviews took place with participants who were part of the Lawyers Empowering People Project (LEPP) which has been implemented at Fitzroy Legal Service over the last two years. The interviews were conducted between July-September 2022.

Two interviews were conducted with people with lived experience of disability who participated in one of the two co-design groups. One interview was conducted with two FLS staff members who were part of the co-design group, one of whom was also a participant in the proto-typing group. Two lawyers who took part in the prototyping group were also interviewed. It is also noted that there are three lived experience program coordinators at FLS (not practicing lawyers). Their role is to make sure there is integration between legal practice and non-lawyer staff.

An interview with the Project Manager of the LEPP project was conducted, as well as an interview with the Practice Manager and Principal Lawyer at FLS. This was conducted to obtain their thoughts on the roll-out of the LEP Project. The Principal Lawyer acknowledged the work done by the Project Manager whose contract is completed, although she has returned as a consultant to assist with the implementation of the project. Expectations are that the model of service will be fully implemented sometime next year.

Aims of the LEPP Project

For the project manager, the LEPP project had two major aims:

“...focus on co-design for people with disability. Also, a focus on universal design, so that the process also makes things easier for people with a range of needs” (Project Manager)

The Principal Lawyer agreed that the project was trying to understand what the barrier are for people with disability and to design a model for legal service delivery. Designing the process with people with cognitive disability, was expected to produce a general model for legal services, hence the term “universal design”.

It was acknowledged by both respondents that the timeframe and the original intent of the project has ended up being radically different to that what was envisaged at the outset of the project. The original project focussed on the implementation of a model of service delivery. The project eventually undertaken has focussed on the co-design process and the resulting tools and prototypes which have yet to be tested. The timeframes were extended because of the difficulties of COVID and the fact that it was impossible to meet with the co-designers online. As was commented:

“It is hard to navigate the dynamics in the room. Easier to build trust in a room with people actually being there” (Principal Lawyer)

Both the Project Manager and the Principal Lawyer expressed the opinion that the tools and resources which have been developed will assist FLS to support people with a disability when they are trying to access services.

Aims of the Co-Design Group

One of the lived experience participants in the co-design group provided a concise explanation of the intention of the Group:

“To be able to have your own say – to make a change for people with disabilities at Fitzroy Legal service to work with people with disabilities. To make things better like feeling confident, not feeling insecure” (Lived Experience Participant)

Both lawyers in the co-design group commented that the experience of being in the group was valuable and practical:

“It’s rare that you have time to sit back and look at the bigger picture of the organisation, and the bigger picture of how it works. From that perspective, I found it useful” (FLS staff: Co-Design Group)

Bringing people together to problem-solve some of the challenges was felt by both lawyers to be extremely useful – there was *“a lot of cross pollination happening, which is often missed”*.

The types of activities undertaken for the co-design group involved scribing the events taking place and also to build up the prototype for future implementation. As was observed by the two lawyers, there are some prototypes which have been developed and now *“it’s up to the organisation to carry that forward”*.

Outcomes of the Co-Design Group

It was also clear from a lived experience participant that one of the outcomes of the process would be to increase agency for people with disabilities:

“...and I think people with disabilities can educate mainstream society – we can teach them how to do things better!” (Lived Experience Participant)

Both lived experience participants felt that the sessions were well organised and that everyone was encouraged to speak about how they felt. One of the participants spoke about he felt able to ask questions of the facilitators, and this increased his confidence to speak out. Both participants reported feeling well supported and feeling that they were able to ask for any additional support or access needs that arose during the process. Both participants felt that their contributions were valued and encouraged FLS to keep on task:

“And make sure Fitzroy Legal Service really fulfils making a better place for people with disabilities” (Lived Experience Participant)

Both of them enjoyed being a part of the co-design process and both of them would be happy to participate in the future in any other similar activity.

Interviewed lawyers agreed that while changes requiring higher resources or financing, such as changes to physical spaces, may take more time, that there were changes to culture which could be implemented with minimal additional funding. This included areas such as ensuring uniformity in explaining certain topics to people and the way in which questions are asked. It was generally agreed that on-going training would be valuable; although the observation was made that this requires both funding and time as well as organisational changes.

“Everyone would then need to have buy-in to change the organisation”. (Lawyer from Prototyping group)

In terms of learnings from undertaking the project, both lawyers expressed similar opinions:

“It was really good to just think about what people need and how we can change the way we work and kind of identify things that might be problematic, that you hadn’t necessarily thought of before”. (Lawyer from Prototyping group)

It was commented by one of the lawyers, that by sharing information between the group, they learnt more about each other’s practices. When asked how confident they felt in supporting people with disability who are attempting to access other services, it was pointed out that the issues are with the disability support system, itself, and the limited access to services generally.

In terms of required training, both lawyers felt that continual training was required, over and above the required legal training. This included areas such as mental health and the service system itself, such as what services are out there and how to connect with them, especially those which are new or outside of the FLS catchment area. It was also suggested that FLS could consider employing a person in a social worker type of role which would have oversight of cases and provide advice on supportive resources. This person could act as a sounding board for the staff, as well as providing a resource to the lawyer group when required, and facilitate connections with other relevant services.

It was commented by one of the lawyers that people with disabilities do not necessarily find written materials like brochures to be helpful or supportive. The important thing for them was about *“listening to what they need, not about what I think they need.... and knowing the difference between writing something down for someone and giving them a pamphlet”*.

Both lawyers were keen to accommodate the needs of people with disability and to approach them with sensitivity and understanding:

“There needs to be training to understand the kinds of issues surrounding the client, what sort of services can be there, and how do we approach that in the most accessible language, so they understand not only the legal issues, but we understand their underlying issues which lead to the legal problem” (Lawyer from Prototyping group)

Challenges of Adopting Inclusive Practices

It was commented by the participants that at the present time, the lived experience work is siloed in the organisation and what needs to happen is that the work should be integrated into practice, and that *“there needs to be a whole of organisational approach”*.

It was agreed that not only is there a need for capacity building across the organisation, but that the tools and resources which are already established need someone to take carriage of the process moving forward. It was also commented that although inclusive practice should be embedded into lawyers practice, they felt that the organisation was not necessarily ready for it yet. As commented by one of the lawyers, *“people see the idea of social inclusion and inclusive practice, as something extra.”*

Another comment which was echoed several times was that lawyers are incredibly busy, time poor, and have little capacity to take on new things. However, one of the lawyers commented that she had gained in confidence and had used some of the ideas to build on her own practice. There was uncertainty from both lawyers about what has been achieved as a result of the LEPP project as well as *“where to next”*. Both of

them felt that co-design processes should be resourced better and most importantly be integrated into the organisation and be properly supported.

It was agreed that there are some major challenges for FLS, when considering inclusive practices for people with disability:

“We’ve got limited capacity, where it takes buy-in, time and energy and money – funds that we don’t necessarily have to make a lot of those changes”. (Lawyer from Prototyping group)

As was pointed out by one of the lawyers, there are always competing priorities, so it is a challenge to make commitments and carry them through. It was also pointed out that to achieve the required outcomes for people with disability, it would be necessary to change the structure of the organisation as well.

“Time is a major issue as actually performing the function of everyone’s role, we are all keeping to the bare minimum of what they feel that they can achieve as a legal service lawyer”. (Lawyer from Prototyping group)

Outcomes of the Prototyping Group

It was agreed by respondents that the co-design process had achieved all it set out to do. The expectation for the prototyping group was that some of the prototypes would be able to be implemented. Although this has not happened yet, both participants interviewed were confident that the prototypes would be implemented soon. The prototyping group and the co-design group worked together to design the prototypes. However, the lawyers and the co-designers did not work in one room together as the groups were separate. The question was asked of both participants about whether there were elements of the project which should be modified to achieve the intended outcomes:

“Rather than modification (of the project), the prototypes should be actively tested, and then feedback from those staff members who will implement them” (Project Manager)

The concept of universal design was re-iterated, with the general idea being that if you make the process accessible to those who have known barriers, then it is more open for everyone.

The comment was made again that resourcing the implementation will be a challenge, although people are in their hearts very committed to the project:

“Time is always difficult – I think that will be a big challenge, when implementing all of the tools we have created”. (Principal Lawyer)

It was agreed that finding time for training in a busy legal practice is difficult, but opportunities should be provided for staff to develop skills in other ways, using a range of methods such as peer support, debriefing and reflective practice. The Principal Lawyer explained that trauma informed care training is now mandatory for staff as well as mental health first aid.

It was acknowledged that the LEPP project has focused on client needs for those with a disability, but there is also need for a workplace which matches the needs of clients with a disability. To meet this need, there is also a parallel project being implemented at FLS which focuses on the need for an empowering and more empathetic workplace. The general feeling is that the initial goal of the LEPP project has been exceeded and the scope and impact of the project has been broadened by the additional focus on the workplace. The challenge of the LEPP project is now to work out where to focus the next iteration of the project.

One of the prototyping lawyers interviewed was involved from the start of the project (although there was a halt during COVID), and the other has been involved in one or two sessions this year. The goal of the prototyping group was to create a more inclusive environment for people to obtain legal services, not just improvements for physical inclusion, but to provide a more welcoming environment for clients, and to ensure that the lawyers understand people with disabilities and their needs:

*“Looking at what people with disability want.... Rather than saying – well this is how **we** think that it should be more inclusive” (Lawyer from Prototyping group)*

Both respondents acknowledged the challenges of the project, although it was agreed that in general the same principles of engagement apply to all people, with one lawyer summarising this as the need to *“Listen: don’t make assumptions”*. Another reflection made was that *“empowerment is how you are treated rather than outcomes.”*

Barriers Faced by People with Disability in Accessing Legal Services

FLS staff members cited a number of barriers faced by people with disabilities:

“Not knowing how to find a lawyer; complicated life circumstances; dropping in and out of services; legal jargon; atmosphere in the office; physical barriers.”

A number of suggestions were raised when the topic of barriers faced by people with disabilities when they are trying to access legal services. A major barrier for lawyers was being able to give them the actual time that they need. A suggestion was made that the information for clients be provided in a written form so that they have time to think about what they need to talk to the lawyer about, though as noted above, this is not sufficient in itself. It was felt also important that clients can physically access the space easily, and that the space is private and confidential. Most importantly the client with a disability needs to *be able to “tell their story in the way that they need to tell it”*.

A barrier pointed out by one of the lawyers, was that people with disabilities sometimes cannot, or are unwilling to disclose their disability. This could be because of stigma, stress, or other issues. This can be challenging for the lawyer as there are often supports in place which could have been suggested if the client was able to disclose their issue. As was pointed out:

“The high stress associated with legal issues sometimes in itself can be a barrier to access to justice”. (Lawyer from Prototyping group)

Other barriers for people with disabilities were acknowledged: such as treating the support person as the client; not giving the client the opportunity to make decisions and feeling stigmatised (i.e. drug use and criminalisation). Most importantly the client needs to have agency:

“Their story is told through the worker and lawyers talking through the worker when the person requiring legal help needs to be the owner of the process”. (Principal Lawyer)

Another barrier is the content of the legal information being imparted to the client. Where legal information is described using technical or formal language, especially in a time-pressured environment, some clients may feel intimidated or otherwise pressured to say that they understand when they do not or will not feel able to ask for clarification.

3. Table 3. Summary of Key Findings: LEPP Project: Fitzroy Legal Service

The below table summarises the key findings from the survey and interview processes and locates these findings alongside the evaluation questions.

| Evaluation questions | | Survey: lawyers, volunteers, Board (June 2021) | Interview with Lawyers (Jul/Aug 2022) | Interview with Lived Experience participants (Jul/Aug 2022) |
|--|---------------|---|--|---|
| To what extent is the project achieving the intended outcomes, in the short term? | Key Learnings | N/A | Increased awareness of value of client-centred approach, and ongoing information sharing to improve inclusive practice | Participants felt well supported, and felt their contributions were valued and encouraged |
| | Key outcomes | N/A | Belief that FLS is successfully moving towards an integrated model of inclusive practice. Greater recognition of the needs of PWD, and awareness of more ways of working with and engaging with PWD. | Increased feeling of agency and involvement in improving mainstream services for people with disability |
| | Project aims | N/A | Belief that the project had increased awareness of the value of flexible, process-driven inclusion models, and the importance of individual client engagement in increasing accessibility | Felt their contribution had helped to make a change for people with disability |
| Have the needs of those served by the project been achieved? | FLS needs | Needs identified at baseline: more specialised training offerings, including observation and role modelling exercises | Organisational understanding of importance of universal design as a process-driven model, facilitating access for people with a range of needs. | Participants felt their contributions were heard and valued, and they enjoyed the process. |

| Evaluation questions | Survey: lawyers, volunteers, Board (June 2021) | Interview with Lawyers (Jul/Aug 2022) | Interview with Lived Experience participants (Jul/Aug 2022) |
|--|---|---|--|
| Lawyers' needs | Needs identified at baseline: more specialised training in disability access/support needs, disability intersections with other marginalisation's | Acquired a greater understanding of the needs of people with disabilities, including the need to avoid a singular fixed model or mindset in meeting PWD client needs. | N/A |
| Needs of those with lived experience | Needs identified at baseline: lawyers report engaging with specific, known client access needs, but have relatively lower confidence in identifying those needs | | Perception that the sessions were well organised and that they were encouraged to speak out about how they felt. |
| What evidence is there of raised awareness of the need to promote a culture of inclusiveness and respect towards those with a disability across the organisation? | <p>Increased understanding of inclusive practice and respect</p> <p>Clear awareness of lived experience inclusion as organisational responsibility, and as an important aspect of individual practice</p> <p>Perception of FLS interest in lived experience voices as an area of strength or growing strength</p> | Awareness of the need to have a whole of organisation approach | Participants felt that their expertise and perspectives were valued and taken seriously by FLS. |
| Increased engagement and awareness of needs of people with disability | Baseline: low mean confidence in identifying most needs of most clients with disability | Increased understanding of the issues faced by people with disability in navigating legal services. | |
| What factors act as barriers and enablers to the | Understanding of client needs (enabler) | Baseline: Lower overall confidence in identifying PWD's access needs, even lower confidence in ensuring | Perception that the cross-pollination of ideas during the lived experience and prototyping process |

| Evaluation questions | Survey: lawyers, volunteers, Board (June 2021) | Interview with Lawyers (Jul/Aug 2022) | Interview with Lived Experience participants (Jul/Aug 2022) |
|--|--|---|---|
| effective implementation of the emerging new model? | needs are met, but also low reportage that lawyers make open-ended inquiry into needs. More frequent reports of “fixed” accessibility inquiries which tend not to contribute to UD outcomes. | created greater understanding of client needs. | |
| Ongoing processes of information sharing, including lived experience consultation, and formal training (enabler) | Baseline: interest in support to improve inclusivity of practice; interest in specialised training | Understanding of the value of lived experience involvement in prototyping process, and interest in participating in ongoing processes of information sharing. | |
| Limited resources (barrier) | Lack of time as main barrier Physical environment (at FLS, court, etc) Lack of other resources / knowledge, including familiarity with other support systems, lack of integration with relevant further supports for PWD | Awareness of limited capacity in terms of funding Resourcing the implementation of the tools/resources will be challenging FLS have started mandatory training for lawyers on trauma informed care training and mental health first aid; implementation of prototypes will involve further training being provided for staff. | |
| Has the project been delivered within its scope, | Extended timeframe N/A | Although the timeframe was extended due to COVID, the extra | |

| Evaluation questions | Survey: lawyers, volunteers, Board (June 2021) | Interview with Lawyers (Jul/Aug 2022) | Interview with Lived Experience participants (Jul/Aug 2022) |
|--|--|--|--|
| budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices? | | time was useful to focus on the needs of the project | |
| | Project delivered within budget | N/A | Project was delivered within budget |
| What are the changes which need to be made to practice at FLS? | Improved knowledge of disability service system | Lower levels of confidence in client needs being met, beyond those being addressed directly by FLS | Lawyers agree that they need to know more about other services for their clients, including outside the FLS catchment area. Awareness that this needs ongoing refreshing due to the nature of these services. |
| | Adoption of universal design model within their practice | Baseline: Lawyers more frequently reported “closed” inclusion practices in client engagement; “open” flexible inclusion practices less frequent. | Engaging with universal design principles as a model of practice both for individual practitioners and FLS as a whole, to facilitate fuller support and deeper engagement with the needs of clients. Implementation of a universal model of practice should serve all clients |
| | Need to re-orient FLS towards inclusive practice | Clear agreement that this is an important goal for FLS, and that it is | Inclusive practice is an agreed model to work on, as an |

| Evaluation questions | Survey: lawyers, volunteers, Board (June 2021) | Interview with Lawyers (Jul/Aug 2022) | Interview with Lived Experience participants (Jul/Aug 2022) |
|----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|
|----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|

an organisational-level responsibility

organisation and within individual practice

Commitment to ongoing practice improvements and to implementing prototypes emerging from the co-design process.

Changes to internal procedures and staff training are under consideration and ongoing.

Parallel organisational processes focused on improving service delivery, and on empowering staff in the workplace, complement and will further support commitments to client-centred practice.

The need for physical changes to FLS workspaces to improve accessibility is understood, to be prioritised when resources are available

4. Conclusion

Although the LEPP Project has not yet achieved its original intention of creating and implementing a model of practice, there is a widespread belief amongst the staff at FLS that the organisation is moving towards an integrated model of inclusive practice. This movement was found at the point of the baseline survey in June 2021, and interviews conducted in 2022 indicate that this shift is viewed as a positive improvement to the practice overall.

The results of both the survey and the interviews indicates a significant awareness of the value of client-centred approaches to legal service delivery, both as an organisational responsibility and an aspect of individual practice. The value of universal design has also been recognised by the organisation as a necessary step towards an integrated model of practice. The need to have a whole of organisation approach was agreed by almost all survey participants and reinforced in the later interviews. The baseline survey also indicated a high level of interest in staff obtaining more specialised training and engaging in information-sharing sessions with colleagues as part of their engagement with lived-experience expertise. It was reported in interviews that this process of information-sharing was already leading to positive outcomes and some increased confidence in engaging with clients with disabilities. Further opportunities to share experiences, for example through role-playing and observation exercises as suggested by baseline survey respondents, may be useful to pursue as a complement to more formal structured trainings on specific disability needs. This type of specialised training has already commenced, with FLS commencing mandatory training on trauma informed care as well as mental health first aid.

At the time of the baseline survey in June 2021, FLS staff reported relatively lower levels of confidence in being able to identify the needs of clients with disability, particularly with regards to clients with “invisible” disabilities such as developmental and intellectual disabilities. Survey respondents reported even lower levels of confidence that these client needs would then be met, which may in part reflect awareness of the ways in which the larger structural inequities of the legal system may impact clients with higher support needs in disproportionate ways. By the time of the interviews in July-September 2022, several interviewed FLS staff reported specific areas relevant to their practice in which their levels of awareness and confidence had increased through taking part in the co-design process, including areas where their preconceptions about accessibility had been challenged. This interview data indicates that further monitoring of staff confidence levels regarding client needs may provide a useful means of assessing the efficacy of training and ongoing processes of information sharing.

Throughout the survey and interview phases, lack of time in caseloads was raised as a significant barrier to supporting people with disability, and to making adjustments to practice and workflow as part of this practice. Structuring dedicated time for collaborative information-sharing sessions, along with more formal training events, therefore may provide a useful means of ring-fencing time and resources to focus on practice improvements in these areas.

It was clear from the participants in the co-design groups who participated in the interviews that the overall experience of taking part in the groups was positive and affirming. Both participants described feeling that they had been listened to, that their knowledge and contributions had been taken seriously, and that the group process overall was accessible and supportive of their needs. The interviewed participants reported that they were in an ideal position to teach lawyers about inclusive practice and the needs of people with disability and viewed lived experience consultation to be a constructive goal for FLS.

Both the participants of the co-design groups and FLS staff raised in interviews that they saw the value of continued engagement with lived experience expertise into the future, with a broad awareness that an ongoing or iterative model of engagement would enrich FLS service delivery.

The benefits of an open, iterative engagement with co-design, in allowing broader ideas to be captured and developed, have also been demonstrated through the development of the targeted client video resource on lawyer-client relationships. [This video, “When you see a lawyer,”](#) was developed from early discussions with the co-designers about what types of tools would assist them to better navigate legal advice. The video was conceived of as a project separate to LEP, as the development of the video did not follow the co-design process specifically set out for LEP. The resource was, however, inspired by discussions with co-designers and incorporated their feedback. The video concept was identified in January 2021, with a formal project commencing in July 2021 after funding had been secured. After an initial script and storyboard were developed in September 2021, co-designers were invited to give feedback in January 2022. The video was completed in July 2022 and launched in September 2022, and is used as an informational resource for new clients to help familiarise them with the process of working with a lawyer. This video highlights how maintaining open co-design relationships with marginalised groups can lead to broader unanticipated benefits and outcomes beyond the scope of any single project, allowing lived experience voices to shape and inform the nature of service delivery more fully.

The risks associated with in-person meetings for clients with disability, and the access and technological limitations of virtual meetings for this group, meant that the experience of COVID-19 has lengthened the timeline for the project. During interviews, however, it was also recognised that the extended time period was an advantage to the organisation, to ensure that the process of developing an integrated model of service delivery was robust and achievable. Given the extent to which COVID-19 has shaped the experiences of people with disability during the project period, accommodating its impact may also be viewed as integral to the lived experience consultation process. The iterative process-driven model of LEPP may itself be viewed in this context as enabling a flexible model of participation and consultation to ensure that people with disability are able to engage with the co-design process.

FLS recognises that a necessary next stage is to implement the prototypes developed during the LEPP process and move towards integrating a model of inclusive practice across the organisation. They also recognise that there is a need to change internal procedures and practices and to focus on empowering staff in the workplace, so there is a parallel process being implemented at the same time as the LEPP project across FLS.

The organisation also recognises that physical changes need to be made to its premises to improve accessibility, including improvements to privacy and to sensory accessibility, and this will be prioritised when resources are available.

5. Recommendations

There are several areas where recommendations can be considered:

- It is recommended that the process of implementing the prototypes which have been developed, be undertaken as soon as possible.
- It is recommended that co-design consultation groups continue to be convened throughout the process, and that group members receive updates on the implementation of the service model.
- It is recommended that FLS continue to focus on hiring staff with lived experience of marginalisation, including disabilities and other intersections of marginalisation, to bring their expertise into the organisation.

- It is recommended that internal processes be reviewed in light of universal design principles, to further support both clients and staff, including newly hired staff with lived experience of marginalisation.
- It is recommended that a plan to improve physical accessibility for clients with a disability be drawn up and implemented when resources are available, with reference to universal design principles to ensure a breadth of access needs are supported.

6. References

Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analysing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237-246.

7. Appendices

7.1. Theory of Change: Outcome of Workshop

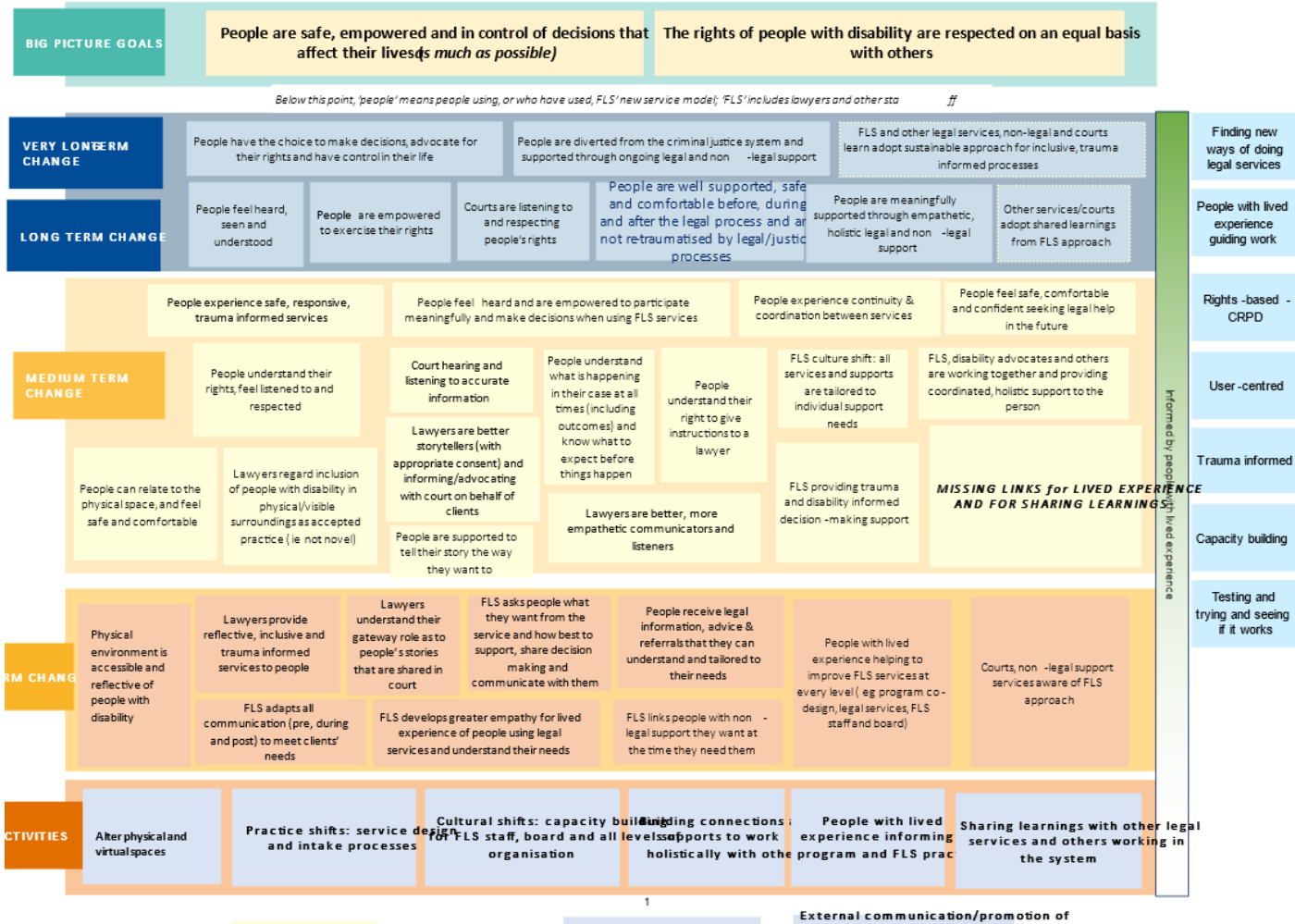


Figure 17: Theory of Change: Outcome of Workshop, February 2020, Clear Horizons Consultants.

7.2. FLS Baseline Survey, June 2021

Start of Block: Introduction and consent

Q1.1 A central component of the FLS strategic plan is amplifying community voice. Some ways we seek to do this are through projects like Women Transforming Justice and the Lawyers Empowering People (LEP) project, supporting the Voices for Change self-advocacy group, and listening to the voices of individual clients and community groups. This survey engages with this aspect of the strategic plan and will help us understand our current attitudes and approaches to service delivery and how we engage with people with lived experience. This is an important opportunity to share your thoughts to help us improve the way we do things, so we appreciate your time in completing the survey.

This survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. If you need to close it and complete it later, please make sure that you open the survey using the same device and browser you used the first time to ensure your responses are saved. The survey is anonymous and any potentially identifying information contained in open ended responses will be removed prior to sharing with FLS leadership, the broader staff group or the external evaluators of the LEP project at the University of Melbourne. We note that some questions are of a sensitive nature and these are optional to complete.

Q1.2 Please indicate your consent to participate in the survey. If you choose to do so, then continue to complete the survey, which will begin on the following page.

- Yes, I consent to participate in the survey (1)
- No, I do not wish to participate in the survey (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Please indicate your consent to participate in the survey. If you choose to do so, then continue... = No, I do not wish to participate in the survey

End of Block: Introduction and consent

Start of Block: Demographic information

Q2.1 Are you a FLS employee, board member or volunteer?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Are you a FLS employee, board member or volunteer? = No

Display This Question:

If Are you a FLS employee, board member or volunteer? = Yes

Q2.2 Are you a legal staff member?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q2.3 Do you see clients regularly?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
-

Q2.4 Are you a volunteer at FLS?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
-

Q2.5 How long have you been working at FLS?

- Less than a year (1)
 - 1-4 years (2)
 - 5-10 years (3)
 - More than 10 years (4)
-

Q2.6 Do you have lived experience relevant to FLS client cohorts? (optional)

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - Prefer not to answer (3)
-

Q2.7 Do you have a disability? (optional)

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - Prefer not to answer (3)
-

Q2.8 Do you have a close family member with disability and/or care for someone with disability? (optional)

End of Block: Demographic information

Start of Block: Attitudes

Q3.1 The following questions ask you about your views on potential barriers to accessing and participating in legal services.

Q3.2 Which cohorts of people do you think experience more discrimination than others?

Q3.3 Which cohorts of people face the greatest barriers to accessing legal services? Why?

Q3.4 Are there cohorts of clients that you feel require specialist expertise to help them participate and make decisions when accessing legal services? If so, which ones and why?

Q3.5 Which cohorts of clients currently get the best service from FLS?

Q3.6 Which cohorts of clients are currently missing out on services from FLS?

Q3.7 What are the barriers to clients being in control while receiving legal services?

Q3.8 Do you want to expand on your answer/s or provide any other comments?

End of Block: Attitudes

Start of Block: Current practices

Q4.1 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about your current practice at FLS:

| | Strongly agree (6) | Agree (5) | Somewhat agree (4) | Somewhat disagree (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly disagree (1) |
|--|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| I consciously seek out and create opportunities for clients to make decisions and be in, or share, control throughout their legal matter (1) | | | | | | |
| While I am engaging with a client, I regularly turn my mind to how they may be experiencing the situation and interaction (2) | | | | | | |
| Before I meet with a client, I consciously turn my mind to how they may be feeling about the situation and interaction (3) | | | | | | |
| I feel awkward asking a person about their disability or | | | | | | |

how it affects
them (4)

I feel
comfortable
providing
legal services
to people
with
cognitive
disability (5)

It is my
responsibility
to provide a
service that is
accessible (6)

I feel
supported to
adapt my
practice to
make it
inclusive and
accessible to
all clients (7)

I feel
encouraged
and
supported to
engage in
frequent self-
review and
reflection
regarding my
interactions
with clients
(8)

I often (at
least 3 times
a week) I
engage in
conscious
reflective
practice
regarding my
interactions
with clients
(9)

Q4.2 It is more important for lawyers to focus on achieving the best outcome for their client than how the client is feeling

- Strongly agree (6)
- Agree (5)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q4.3 How often do you...

| | Most of the time (4) | Frequently (3) | Sometimes (2) | Never (1) |
|--|----------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------|
| Ask a client how they are feeling during a legal service (1) | | | | |
| Seek feedback from a client about their experience of the legal service and how you could improve it (2) | | | | |

Q4.4 What do you do if someone instructs you to seek an outcome which is not in their best interest?

Q4.5 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about FLS services:

Display This Choice:

If Are you a volunteer at FLS? = Yes

Display This Choice:

If Are you a volunteer at FLS? = Yes

| | Strongly agree (6) | Agree (5) | Somewhat agree (4) | Somewhat disagree (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly disagree (1) |
|---|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The services I currently provide are equally accessible to all people (1) | | | | | | |
| The services I currently provide could be improved (2) | | | | | | |
| I think the people who I provide services to feel | | | | | | |

empowered
by my
assistance (3)

Display This
Choice:

If Are you a
volunteer at
FLS? = Yes
FLS physical
spaces (e.g.
buildings,
reception,
meeting
rooms) are
welcoming,
inclusive and
accessible to
all (4)

Display This
Choice:

If Are you a
volunteer at
FLS? = Yes
The current
FLS website is
welcoming,
inclusive and
accessible to
all (5)

Q4.6 Are there any barriers to effectively communicating with clients, supporting their participation, or ensuring accessibility of FLS services?

Q4.7 If I suspect the person I'm assisting may have a disability...

| | Most of the time (4) | Frequently (3) | Sometimes (2) | Never (1) |
|--|----------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------|
| I ask them directly whether they have a disability (1) | | | | |
| I ask them indirect questions that may indicate disability (such as whether they get a Centrelink payment/the DSP) rather than ask them directly (2) | | | | |
| I wait for the person to decide whether or not to disclose their disability to me (3) | | | | |

Q4.8 If I am told or become aware that a person has a disability...

| | Most of the time (4) | Frequently (3) | Sometimes (2) | Never (1) |
|---|----------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------|
| I ask them directly what adjustments I can make to support their participation (1) | | | | |
| I ask them directly about their communication preferences (2) | | | | |
| I ask them directly what supports they need (3) | | | | |
| I leave it to them to let me know whether they need any supports or different treatment (4) | | | | |

Q4.9 When supporting a client with disability, where do you seek additional support or knowledge if needed?

Q4.10 How often do you discuss support strategies with colleagues? And managers?

Q4.11 Do you want to expand on your answer/s or provide any other comments?

End of Block: Current practices

Start of Block: Knowledge

Q5.1 How would you rate your knowledge in the following areas?

| | I have expert knowledge (6) | I am highly knowledgeable (5) | I know a lot (4) | I know a fair amount (3) | I know very little (2) | I have no knowledge (1) |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Of the association between trauma and disability (1) | | | | | | |
| Of the characteristics and support needs of people with different types of disability (2) | | | | | | |

Of the differences between cognitive disabilities and psychosocial disabilities (3)

Of the communication needs of people with cognitive disability (4)

Of strategies I can implement in my practice to support people with cognitive disability (5)

Of how to communicate effectively with people with cognitive disability (6)

Of how the NDIS operates (7)

Of support and services provided by disability advocates (8)

Of services or other supports I can refer people with disability to (9)

Q5.2 Do you have any further comments in relation to the questions above?

End of Block: Knowledge

Start of Block: Self-efficacy

Q6.1 I feel confident that I can...

| | Completely confident (6) | Very confident (5) | Confident (4) | Somewhat confident (3) | Not very confident (2) | Not at all confident (1) |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Support my clients to feel | | | | | | |

more empowered (1)

Identify my clients' individual support needs (2)

Engage in communication practices that are responsive and tailored to the needs and experiences of my clients (3)

Support people with cognitive disability to make decisions and participate to the same degree as other clients (4)

Support people with cognitive disability to ensure they understand their rights and options (5)

Q6.2 Do you have any further comments in relation to the questions above?

End of Block: Self-efficacy

Start of Block: Organisational readiness for change

Q7.1 The following questions ask you about your views on how FLS engages with people with lived experience. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

| | Strongly agree (6) | Agree (5) | Somewhat agree (4) | Somewhat disagree (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly disagree (1) |
|--|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| FLS is committed to working with and listening to people with lived experience (1) | | | | | | |
| FLS creates a safe environment for staff with | | | | | | |

lived
experience
(2)

FLS creates a
safe
environment
for people
with lived
experience to
contribute
and
participate
(3)

FLS provides
opportunities
for people
with lived
experience to
be engaged
in
meaningful,
well
supported,
paid and
resourced
pieces of
work (4)

FLS acts on
feedback
provided and
complaints
made by
clients to
improve
services (5)

Q7.2 FLS regularly works with people with lived experience (whether as employees, board members, advisers, co-designers and/or volunteers) to contribute to:

| | Strongly agree (6) | Agree (5) | Somewhat agree (4) | Somewhat disagree (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly disagree (1) |
|---|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Service design (1) | | | | | | |
| Strategic litigation (2) | | | | | | |
| Advocacy, law reform and policy (3) | | | | | | |
| The strategic direction of the organisation (4) | | | | | | |

Q7.3 Incorporating lived experience perspectives has influenced or changed the way we:

| | Strongly agree (6) | Agree (5) | Somewhat agree (4) | Somewhat disagree (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly disagree (1) |
|---|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Design and deliver our services (1) | | | | | | |
| Do strategic litigation (2) | | | | | | |
| Do advocacy, law reform and policy (3) | | | | | | |
| Set the strategic direction of the organisation (4) | | | | | | |

Q7.4 Involving people with lived experience in service design, delivery and evaluation will...

Display This Choice:

If Do you see clients regularly? = Yes

| | Strongly agree (6) | Agree (5) | Somewhat agree (4) | Somewhat disagree (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly disagree (1) |
|--|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Benefit all clients (1) | | | | | | |
| Display This Choice: If Do you see clients regularly? = Yes | | | | | | |
| Improve the quality of my practice (2) | | | | | | |
| Be hard work (3) | | | | | | |
| Be time consuming (4) | | | | | | |
| Have a positive impact on FLS practices (5) | | | | | | |

Q7.5 Lived experienced should be valued:

| | Strongly agree (6) | Agree (5) | Somewhat agree (4) | Somewhat disagree (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly disagree (1) |
|---|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| In candidates when conducting recruitment (1) | | | | | | |
| In board appointments (2) | | | | | | |

Q7.6 Are there any barriers to involving and supporting people with lived experience?

Q7.7 In your opinion, what aspects of the organisation support, or can support, the engagement of people with lived experience?

Q7.8 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about FLS services

Display This Choice:
If Do you see clients regularly? = No

Display This Choice:
If Do you see clients regularly? = No

Display This Choice:
If Do you see clients regularly? = No

Display This Choice:
If Do you see clients regularly? = Yes

| | Strongly agree (6) | Agree (5) | Somewhat agree (4) | Somewhat disagree (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly disagree (1) |
|--|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Display This Choice: If Do you see clients regularly? = No FLS services are equally accessible to all people (1) | | | | | | |
| Display This Choice: If Do you see clients regularly? = No The accessibility of FLS services could be improved (2) | | | | | | |

Display This
Choice:
If Do you see
clients
regularly? =
No
I think the
people
receiving FLS
services feel
empowered
(3)

FLS physical
spaces (e.g.
buildings,
reception,
meeting
rooms) are
welcoming,
inclusive and
accessible to
all (4)

The current
FLS website is
welcoming,
inclusive and
accessible to
all (5)

Display This
Choice:
If Do you see
clients
regularly? =
Yes
FLS processes
and services
are flexible
and
adaptable
enough to be
able to meet
any client's
specific needs
(6)

Q7.9 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about FLS services

Display This Choice:
 If Do you see clients regularly? = No

Display This Choice:
 If Do you see clients regularly? = No

Display This Choice:
 If Do you see clients regularly? = No

Display This Choice:
 If Do you see clients regularly? = Yes

| | Strongly agree (6) | Agree (5) | Somewhat agree (4) | Somewhat disagree (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly disagree (1) |
|---|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Display This Choice: If Do you see clients regularly? = No FLS services are equally accessible to all people (1) | | | | | | |
| Display This Choice: If Do you see clients regularly? = No The accessibility of FLS services could be improved (2) | | | | | | |
| Display This Choice: If Do you see clients regularly? = No I think the people receiving FLS services feel empowered (3) | | | | | | |
| FLS physical spaces (e.g. buildings, reception, meeting rooms) are welcoming, inclusive and | | | | | | |

accessible to all (4)

The current FLS website is welcoming, inclusive and accessible to all (5)

Display This Choice:
If Do you see clients regularly? = Yes
FLS processes and services are flexible and adaptable enough to be able to meet any client's specific needs (6)

Q7.10 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about FLS services

Display This Choice:
If Do you see clients regularly? = No
Display This Choice:
If Do you see clients regularly? = No
Display This Choice:
If Do you see clients regularly? = No
Display This Choice:
If Do you see clients regularly? = Yes

| | Strongly agree (6) | Agree (5) | Somewhat agree (4) | Somewhat disagree (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly disagree (1) |
|--|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Display This Choice: If Do you see clients regularly? = No FLS services are equally accessible to all people (1) | | | | | | |
| Display This Choice: If Do you see clients regularly? = No The accessibility | | | | | | |

of FLS
services could
be improved
(2)

Display This
Choice:

If Do you see
clients
regularly? =
No

I think the
people
receiving FLS
services feel
empowered
(3)

FLS physical
spaces (e.g.
buildings,
reception,
meeting
rooms) are
welcoming,
inclusive and
accessible to
all (4)

The current
FLS website is
welcoming,
inclusive and
accessible to
all (5)

Display This
Choice:

If Do you see
clients
regularly? =
Yes

FLS processes
and services
are flexible
and
adaptable
enough to be
able to meet
any client's
specific needs
(6)

Q7.11 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about FLS services

Display This Choice:
 If Do you see clients regularly? = No

Display This Choice:
 If Do you see clients regularly? = No

Display This Choice:
 If Do you see clients regularly? = No

Display This Choice:
 If Do you see clients regularly? = Yes

| | Strongly agree (6) | Agree (5) | Somewhat agree (4) | Somewhat disagree (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly disagree (1) |
|---|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Display This Choice: If Do you see clients regularly? = No FLS services are equally accessible to all people (1) | | | | | | |
| Display This Choice: If Do you see clients regularly? = No The accessibility of FLS services could be improved (2) | | | | | | |
| Display This Choice: If Do you see clients regularly? = No I think the people receiving FLS services feel empowered (3) | | | | | | |
| FLS physical spaces (e.g. buildings, reception, meeting) | | | | | | |

rooms) are welcoming, inclusive and accessible to all (4)

The current FLS website is welcoming, inclusive and accessible to all (5)

Display This Choice:
If Do you see clients regularly? = Yes
FLS processes and services are flexible and adaptable enough to be able to meet any client's specific needs (6)

Q7.12 What could be improved in relation to FLS providing inclusive and accessible services to all?

Q7.13 Do you want to expand on your answer/s or provide any other comments?

End of Block: Organisational readiness for change

Start of Block: Training and professional development needs

Q8.1 Have you done any training that is relevant to working with people with disabilities? If so, what type of training?

Q8.2 Do you have previous experience working with people with disability? (e.g. volunteering or work experience). If so, briefly describe your past experience

Q8.3 Thinking about your strategies to support clients with disability, are there any areas you would like to further develop?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Maybe (3)

Display This Question:

*If Thinking about your strategies to support clients with disability, are there any areas you would... = Yes
And Thinking about your strategies to support clients with disability, are there any areas you would... = Maybe*

Q8.4 What areas would you like to further develop?

Display This Question:

*If Thinking about your strategies to support clients with disability, are there any areas you would... = Yes
And Thinking about your strategies to support clients with disability, are there any areas you would... = Maybe*

Q8.5 What professional activities would be most helpful to you? (e.g. workshops, observation/role-modelling, feedback conversations, self-paced learning,...)

Q8.6 Would you like to provide any other comments?

End of Block: Training and professional development needs

Start of Block: End of survey

Q9.1 Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Do you have any feedback about this survey?

End of Block: End of survey

7.3. Baseline survey results, June 2021: confidence in identifying or ensuring support needs

| Client groups | Q10: How would you rate your level of confidence in effectively identifying clients' support needs when working with the following client groups? (with 6 indicating highest level and 1 being the lowest). | | | Q12: How would you rate your level of confidence in ensuring that clients are appropriately supported when working with the following client groups? (with 6 indicating highest level and 1 being the lowest). | | |
|--|---|----------------|-------------------------|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| | <i>n</i> | Confidence (M) | Standard deviation (SD) | <i>n</i> | Confidence (M) | Standard deviation (SD) |
| cognitive disability (e.g. intellectual disability, acquired brain injury) | 16 | 2.75 | 1.125463 | 12 | 2.166667 | 0.937437 |
| psychosocial disability (e.g. serious mental illness) | 17 | 3.176470588 | 1.236694 | 12 | 2.5 | 0.6742 |
| physical disability (e.g. degenerative condition, paralysis) | 20 | 3.55 | 1.605091 | 11 | 2.727273 | 1.190874 |
| sensory disability (e.g. blindness, deafness) | 17 | 2.823529412 | 1.467791 | 12 | 2.75 | 1.288057 |
| developmental disability (e.g. autism) | 17 | 2.764705882 | 1.25147 | 12 | 2.25 | 0.753778 |
| people with drug use issues | 17 | 3.117647 | 1.363926 | 12 | 2.916667 | 1.311372 |
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people | 17 | 3.058823529 | 1.248529 | 13 | 3.307692 | 1.1094 |
| people from CALD backgrounds | 17 | 3.70588235 | 1.358524 | 12 | 3.583333 | 1.621354 |
| people with a history of trauma | 17 | 3.52941176 | 1.66274 | 12 | 3.25 | 1.422226 |
| victim-survivors of family violence | 17 | 3.647058824 | 1.868863 | 12 | 3.583333 | 1.676486 |
| mental health issues without psychosocial disability | 17 | 3.235294118 | 1.521899 | 12 | 3.5 | 1.445998 |
| people who are criminalised (history of imprisonment) | 17 | 3.411764706 | 1.460258 | 12 | 2.916667 | 1.564279 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|----|-------------|----------|----|----------|----------|
| people who are gender diverse | 17 | 3.058823529 | 1.248529 | 12 | 3.333333 | 1.497473 |
| currently imprisoned or living in restrictive environments | 17 | 2.941176471 | 1.39062 | 12 | 2.583333 | 1.083625 |

Table 4: Statistical data analysing Questions 10 and 12 of Baseline Survey, June 2021.

7.4. Qualitative interview protocols

Interviews conducted July-September 2022.

Interviews/Focus Groups: Semi-Structured Questions (updated 20th August 21)

Semi-structured questions will be used for the interviews/focus groups. It is expected that participants can choose whether to have an individual interview or to be part of a Focus Group. The questions listed below will be refined in collaboration with Fitzroy Legal Service prior to data collection commencement and will act as a guide to the conversation with stakeholders.

Interview and focus group introduction script (suggestion)

Hello, my name is _____ and I work at Melbourne Uni. Thank you for being a part of this project We are working with Fitzroy Legal Service. We want to talk to you about what you like and do not like about your participation in the project about making legal services better for clients. We are talking to people about their experience with Fitzroy Legal Service, so we will ask you some questions. But we will not use your name when we talk to FLS.

We expect the interview [OR focus group] to take around 45 minutes. We will be asking you about your experiences and engagement with the project.

Confidentiality:

- The interview will be recorded, and the transcript kept confidential by the UoM
- Anonymised key stakeholder interviews will be written up as part of the Evaluation reporting by UoM to Fitzroy Legal Service.
- We will use pseudonyms (change)when referring to participants, however it may not be possible to remove all identifying data (e.g. readers might speculate as to your identity based on your role).
- You can choose not to participate and to withdraw any identifiable unprocessed data.
- **If the participants have not provided their signed consent form, remind them of this and ask that they send it through immediately to Ins-eval@unimelb.edu.au , reminding them that what they say in the interview/focus group will not be included in the research unless this consent form is received.**

Co-Designers: interview questions

1. Demographic questions:
 - a. How long have you been involved in the co-design group?
2. Tell me about why you joined the co-design group?
3. Tell me about your experience in the co-design group.
 - a. Prompt: What do you think went well?
 - b. What things do you think could be improved?
 - c. Any comments on what you were asked to do?
 - d. Tell me about how activities were organised?
 - e. Was it easy to participate?
 - f. What did you get out of being in the group?

4. Did you receive any support to participate in the project– if so tell me about it?
5. Tell me about your experiences in working with the project?
6. Tell me about what you hope the project will achieve?
7. Is there anything else which you would like to tell me?

Steering Committee, Staff Members, Board Members, Prototyping Group: interview questions

- 1) Demographics:
 - a) Are you a staff member/volunteer/Board Member/Prototyping Group?
 - b) What is your role at FLS?
 - c) Do you work in the day or night service?
 - d) How long have you been involved with FLS?
- 2) Tell me about your involvement in the project (i.e. are you involved in prototyping, the design and implementation of the model?)
- 3) What do you think that the project is aiming to achieve?
- 4) In general, do you think the project is on track to achieve its aims?
- 5) Are there elements of the project which you think should be modified to achieve the intended outcomes?
- 6) What do you think was the underlying rationale for this project?
- 7) What do you think are the biggest challenges for FLS when considering inclusive practices for clients with disability?
- 8) What have you learnt from this project?
- 9) To your knowledge, Has the project been delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe, and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices?
- 10) How confident are you with supporting people with disability, when they are trying to access services? Are there any issues which concern you?
- 11) Are there additional training needs which would enable you to assist people with disability better?
- 12) Tell me about some of the barriers which people with a disability face when trying to access legal services?
- 13) Is there anything else which you would like to tell me?



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