

Interim report on the Legal Support for Litigants in Person grant published

In April 2020, the Access to Justice Foundation and Ministry of Justice (MOJ) launched the Legal Support for Litigants in Person (LSLIP) Grant, a 2-year programme funding a range of earlier intervention services for litigants in person. LSLIP is funding 11 grant projects across England and Wales that deliver advice on a national, regional and local scale, to litigants in person at different stages of their problem within several areas of civil and family law. Partnership working and earlier intervention is at the core of all these activities, to achieve improved outcomes for clients.

To build up a collective evidence base of the benefits the programme is delivering, each grantee has collected and reported a range of quantitative and qualitative data regarding the advice they have provided, the clients reached and the impact this advice has had on improving client outcomes.

This [interim report](#) draws together the data and evidence collected so far, to report on progress towards the grant objectives. These findings are based on initial analysis and therefore are not necessarily an accurate indicator of performance at this stage or reflective of the positions that will be reached in the final report.

The report's key findings are:

- LSLIP grantees have provided a range of legal advice, practical support and procedural information to thousands of people across England and Wales with civil and family problems. The grants have enabled around 10,000 people to receive one to one personalised support on their civil and family problems, and significantly higher volumes to access public legal information and guidance.
- Most advice provided by local and regional grantees has been initial generalist advice (68% of advice) on family, employment and housing problems (nearly 75% of problems). However substantial volumes of casework and pre-court advice has been provided.
- Broadly speaking, local and regional grantees appear to be reaching a similar cohort of users to other advice services. Most clients are female (62%), between 25 and 55 (65%), and white (91%). At least a quarter of clients have a disability, but there is evidence to suggest this is an underestimation and that a high volume of clients have poor physical and mental health alongside other indicators of vulnerability.
- Partnership working has been key to LSLIP and the enhanced support available for litigants in person. Formalising referral pathways between services and sharing specialist resources have enabled organisations to expand advice across wider geographical areas and areas of law, to provide a more holistic service that can address the entirety of a client's problem.

- Early evidence suggests that the advice and support provided is improving client outcomes, including increasing client understanding of how to resolve their problem and increasing client confidence to take action promptly. This is helping to resolve problems at an earlier stage, before they reach court or tribunal.

Further data will be collected throughout the lifetime of LSLIP and these trends will be reported on in the final evaluation.

Notes:

In February 2019, the MOJ published the [Legal Support Action Plan](#) which outlined the government's commitment to a new vision for legal support, based on earlier intervention. To enable this vision, the Legal Support Action Plan contained several commitments to pilot and evaluate different forms of early legal support, to better understand what interventions work best, when, and for whom. Among these commitments was the pledge to increase the MOJ funding for the Litigants in Person Support Strategy from £1.45 million per year to £3 million for 2 years.

This increased funding, the LSLIP grant, is delivered by the MOJ in partnership with the Access to Justice Foundation. The Access to Justice Foundation is a charitable organisation with a wealth of knowledge and experience in the legal support sphere, and significant experience managing grants across the advice sector.

The Ministry of Justice and Access to Justice Foundation worked closely together to develop the LSLIP grant, which enhances the legal support available across England and Wales by funding new, expanded or scaled-up services that support the earliest possible interventions for litigants in person.