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CONNECTING REGION INITIATIVE PHASE 2

INTERIM ACTIVITY REPORT #3

Submitted to the
Law Foundation of Ontario
Access to Justice Fund

On behalf of the
CONNECTING OTTAWA NETWORK

January 2014



Effective communication
Accessible justice



Une communication efficace
Une justice accessible

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INTRODUCTION

This is the third Activity Report describing the implementation and outcomes of the Connecting Ottawa/*Connexion Ottawa* project, funded by the Law Foundation of Ontario under the Connecting Region Initiative of the Access to Justice Fund. The report covers the third six-month period, 1 July to 31 December 2013. Our focus has been the continued implementation of the planned activities, training and assignment of trusted intermediaries, sharing our lessons learned by planning the next conference (scheduled for March 2014) and reaching out to our peers and partners via presentations and workshops, providing a learning environment for three students on practice placements from Carleton University School of Social Work and the University of Ottawa Law School, beginning the work of researching best practices related to the integration of social services with community legal services, and adding interim case management support to our partner organizations.

We remain on track with all of our activities, although we have not been without challenges; please see the activity reports that follow. We have operated well within the approved budget. Please see the attached financial statement; this period has ended with about \$50,000 in excess revenues over expenditures. We are not proposing any changes to the approved budgets for 2013-14. We anticipate January/February expenditures to be about \$45,000 so request that the next instalment of our funding be sent by the end of February 2014.

During this period we have noted a significant shift in how we have allocated our time and other resources; we will need to monitor this closely over the coming months. We remain committed to collaborative and holistic approaches to the resolution of legal problems experienced by our focus populations, but whereas our original intent was to focus on *consultation* as the primary means (that is, providing information and advice to service providers so that social workers would have greater capacity to refer to legal services and legal workers would have greater capacity to refer to social services, health services, housing and other non-legal services but without client contact or direct services), we have now extended our engagement to include *interim* case management activity. Service providers find clients from our priority populations to be particularly challenging because of their communication difficulties and case management resources often do not extend to the point that a holistic response can be even planned, much less executed. We have found it difficult to gain traction with some organizations because consultation services alone do not coincide with their most urgent need, which is support for case management. We have learned that although service providers may welcome our suggestions or advice about how a client would be better served, they may lack the resources and expertise to follow through. Accordingly, while both our lawyer and our social worker continue to provide information, advice and other consulting services these have now been supplemented by case management services, to the point at which there is a case plan in place and successful referral to an ongoing case manager with one of our network partners.

Each one of these Interim Activity Reports offers an opportunity to share what we have learned, *so far*. We can continue to report that *so far, so good*. The issues that most preoccupy us at the mid-point of the project are as follows:

- With program activities now well established, our attention is beginning to shift towards incorporating more external-facing activities into our work. The project set out to do more than to improve access to justice outcomes for our focus populations; we also intended to develop strategies that would build the capacity of the organizations that partnered with us. We have communicated regularly with partners via presentations, the annual conference, newsletters, and the web site to reinforce their continued commitment to the project, to collaboration, and to proven intervention strategies. However, we have lacked a means to evaluate partnership effectiveness, especially in the context of a project that may not be sustained beyond July 2015. Will we be leaving a legacy of continued collaboration?

We would like to evaluate the value of the backbone organization to this collective impact strategy. How and to what extent is Connecting Ottawa an effective catalyst for achieving community-level progress? How and to what extent have we contributed to social outcomes and access to justice? Can we more effectively identify the best practices that can be shared with other *Connecting* projects? Our preferred evaluation process would implement the Hardy model¹ and the [Partnership Assessment Tool](#) developed by the Nuffield Institute for Health: a self-assessment for the Advisory Group (the partnership table that is overseeing the operations of Connecting Ottawa), and focus groups and individual interviews with key informants and stakeholders. Although there is no specific allocation in the budget to cover an evaluation with this scope, we are confident that sufficient resources can be identified within unspent surpluses to support this activity.

- There is a staffing change. Our social worker has left the project in order to explore opportunities elsewhere. We are actively recruiting a replacement: 59 applications have been reviewed and short-listed candidates will be interviewed by the end of January. We regard this recruitment as an opportunity to add experience and expertise that will strengthen the project. However, the best case scenario is that a social worker will join the project only in late February or early March. Employee retention and staffing continuity will be growing concerns as Connecting Ottawa nears its termination date; understandably, staff will be anxious to secure employment elsewhere as the expiration of their contracts approaches.
- We are excited by our work and the contributions that we believe we are making. We would be very interested in sharing our experiences with other *Connecting* projects in Ontario. Presently our liaison with other projects has been welcome but serendipitous. We encourage LFO and its partners to organize a *Connecting* conference or other knowledge exchange opportunity; we will be pleased to participate in the planning of such an event during the next year.
- We have research that is incomplete. During the summer months as a part of practice placement, students developed and administered a survey tool to learn more about ways that community legal services in Ontario work collaboratively with social services. The challenge with student-driven projects is that the drive leaves with the students; although there is a preliminary analysis of the data, many follow-up interviews remain to be done.

Here is a report of our progress so far. We thank the Law Foundation for its continued encouragement, interest and support.

¹ Hudson, B., and Hardy, B. (2002) What is a successful partnership and how can it be measured? In: Glendinning, C. (ed.) *Partnerships, New Labour and the Governance of Welfare*. Policy Press, Bristol, UK

ACTIVITY REPORTS

➤ CENTRALIZED HUB FOR INFORMATION, ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL

OUR CHALLENGE

To ensure that the first point of service for our focus populations becomes a “trusted intermediary” that *always* has the capacity to communicate with the client, assess the problem presented, provide comprehensive information about all facets of the problem presented, and take immediate steps to refer and connect the client to legal and other services that will resolve the problem.

OUR INTENT

- To support and promote *211 Eastern Ontario* (delivered by a partner, the Community Information Centre of Ottawa - CICO) as a centralized hub for information, assessment and referral (IAR) services for all partners
- To reach out to our partners to build awareness of *211* as not just another IAR resource but as the *default* source of information and referral services for issues that have a legal component
- To augment the already very comprehensive *211* database as necessary, to be assured that *all* local legal services have been described using the *211* taxonomy.

PROGRESS

The Community Information Centre of Ottawa continues to be an important resource and valued partner during project implementation. Connecting Ottawa has

- Promoted *211 Eastern Ontario* as the default IAR resource in all project communications, materials and activities.
- Contributed to the media relations activities (interviews and client testimonials) that celebrated the 5th Anniversary of *211 Eastern Ontario* (November 2013).
- Periodically tested the capabilities of CICO’s IAR professionals to assess and refer persons who contact them with an issue that could be addressed by a legal service.
- Continued a training program for CICO staff to strengthen capabilities regarding legal services information, assessment and referral. We provided one training session to two groups of staff during this reporting period.
- Included another 14 entries to the 130 legal services and other local services that directly support access to justice that were previously added the CICO database, expanding their capacity for referrals to local services.
- Maintained a feed of the CICO database to the Connecting Ottawa/*Connexion Ottawa* web sites.

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In 2013 there were 769 calls to the Community Information Centre of Ottawa/211 Eastern Ontario related to legal issues: topics included non-urgent police services, access to Legal Aid clinics, legal advice, law information, questions related to family law and mediation services, court issues, probation issues, human rights, detention issues, and advocacy. There appears to have been no significant change in call traffic related to legal issues/services, 2012-2013.

<i>Issue</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>
Non Urgent Police Services	203	210
Legal Advice	136	140
Legal Aid Clinics	98	101
Law Information	120	121
Family Law	40	40
Mediation Services	4	4
Court issues	110	112
Probation & Parole issues	14	14
Human Rights	12	12
Detention Issues	15	15
TOTAL	752	769

There has been no progress regarding our intent to survey our network of partners in order to assess their current awareness and use of the services provided by 211. Our plan is to develop and administer an appropriate survey tool with a view to reviewing results in September 2014. The objective is to emphasize the importance of timely and accurate information, assessment and referral to legal services.

➤ DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A WEB SITE

OUR CHALLENGE

There are excellent public legal education and information (PLEI) resources available, especially given the leadership of Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO) and their web site initiative, [Your Legal Rights](#). However, the fact remains that navigation of the legal system remains challenging for many front-line service providers in Ottawa.

OUR INTENT

To supplement the on-line information available from *Your Legal Rights* and the Community Information Centre of Ottawa (CICO) by developing a local web site resource that includes comprehensive and current information about local legal services, and by sharing information about the Connecting Ottawa project and the ways in which it can support project partners to ensure access to justice by our focus populations.

PROGRESS

We have established web sites in both English and French: the [English site](#) was launched on 9 January 2013 and the [French site](#) was launched on 19 February 2013. The domains are registered until September 2015.

Google Analytics inform us that traffic to the sites has been modest, as one might expect given the very small intended audience; the site was designed as a resource for front line service providers at the [43 organizations](#) in Ottawa that have signed Partnership Agreements to support the project. Until 1 July, 315 unique visitors had accessed 2,164 page views at [connectingottawa.com](#). Since then we have seen a significant increase in traffic and the use of the website: 1,312 unique visitors accessed 4,075 page views during 1,604 visits, of which 80.3% were new visits. On average, visitors viewed 2.54 pages per visit; but our bounce rate² has increased to 46.8%. Although interpretation of these metrics can be challenging, it appears that more people are accessing the site and finding it useful. Although traffic to [connexionottawa.com](#) has remained relatively low, we remain committed to a French language web resource. Comparison data (January-June 2013 vs. July-December 2013) is displayed in charts below. The topics that appear to have been of greatest interest are elder abuse, eviction, partner abuse, youth diversion and the Public Guardian/Trustee.

We have scheduled a number of improvements to the site; these will be completed by the end of February 2014:

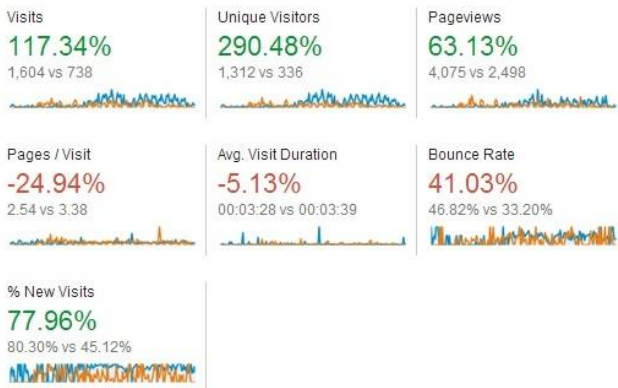
- Security updates
- Changing the menu to the "About" content
- Removal of RSS link
- Adding new and expanded content to "Services"
- Adding capacity for "Comments" on each page via Disqus

² The percentage of visitors to a particular website who navigate away from the site after viewing only one page.

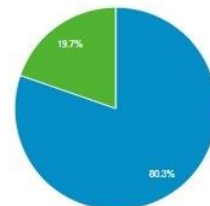
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- Adding our Twitter feed as "News".
- Adding "Events" to share information about workshops, public legal education sessions, conferences, etc.
- Evaluating how the site is being used, via an embedded user survey
- Integrating the *Your Legal Rights* News feed
- Adding resource documents for download and reference
 - Accessing Justice in Ottawa
 - Mental Health Resource List for Refugees and Refugee Claimants in Ottawa
 - Communication Accessibility Resource List

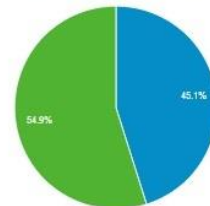
1,312 people visited this site **CONNECTINGOTTAWA.COM**



Jul 1, 2013 - Dec 30, 2013



Jan 1, 2013 - Jun 30, 2013

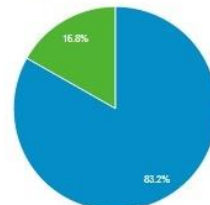


120 people visited this site **CONNEXIONOTTAWA.COM**

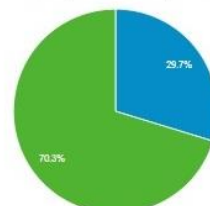


■ New Visitor ■ Returning Visitor

Jul 1, 2013 - Dec 30, 2013



Jan 1, 2013 - Jun 30, 2013



Each of the sites contains links to the project’s presence on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Our intent is to use social media as another vehicle to share news and information related to our focus populations, their access to services, and emerging legal issues, especially concerning immigration, poverty, and accessibility for persons with disabilities. Twitter and Facebook are both “broadcast” media and it has been difficult for us to assess our impact aside from crude measures related to “follows”, “retweets”, “likes”, etc. Although we have been active contributors to the Twitter feed, the only posts to Facebook have been generated from that feed.

Between 1 April and 31 December 2013, Connecting Ottawa composed 705 tweets that triggered 183 interactions (includes retweets) and 62 “mentions”. 226 persons or organizations are following us each day; we are following 286 persons and organizations.

The screenshot shows the Connecting Ottawa website. The header includes the logo 'Connecting Ottawa' with the tagline 'Effective communication Accessible justice' and a 'Français' button. Navigation links for 'Home' and 'About' are visible, along with a search bar and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. A sidebar on the left lists various legal topics, each with a plus sign to expand it. The main content area features a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section with three questions and answers. A right-hand navigation menu contains links for 'Our Services', 'Newsletter Signup', 'Frequently Asked Questions', 'Our Partners', and 'Links'.

TOPICS

- Aboriginal Issues +
- Abuse and Family Violence +
- Consumer Law +
- Criminal Law +
- Education Law +
- Employment and Work +
- Environmental Law +
- Family Law +
- Health and Disability +
- Housing Law +
- Human Rights +
- Immigration and Refugee Law +

Frequently Asked Questions

Can anyone use this web site?
Sure – anyone with the link. But the site is intended primarily to be a resource for assessment, information and referral personnel, intake workers and counsellors at our partner agencies.

Why is this so important?
All people should be aware of their rights, entitlements, responsibilities and obligations under the law. All people should have access to timely, appropriate and affordable legal services, but especially linguistic minorities.

Who are these linguistic minorities?
Ottawa is highly diverse linguistically. Out of 180,000 immigrants, there are over 28,000 recent arrivals. 89,000 residents speak a non-official language at home - there are 69 mother tongues (the most common are Chinese, Arabic, Somali, Spanish, and Farsi). 50,000 residents have a hearing impairment. Over 25,000 have a vision impairment. Over 15,000 have a speech-related disability. When residents have difficulty communicating, they have difficulty accessing justice.

Why focus on linguistic minorities?
In Ottawa, 27% of recent immigrants and 17% of people

Our Services
Newsletter Signup
Frequently Asked Questions
Our Partners
Links

[\[http://connectingottawa.com/frequently-asked-questions\]](http://connectingottawa.com/frequently-asked-questions)

DEVELOP A POOL OF FACILITATORS AS INFORMED AND TRUSTED INTERMEDIARIES TO CONNECT CLIENTS

OUR CHALLENGE

For many clients – and particularly among our focus populations - a gap can exist between the point of referral and the point of legal services delivery; clients never actually connect with the services to which they have been referred. This gap can be bridged by trusted intermediaries who are volunteer facilitators trained and supported to problem solve with the client to systematically overcome the barriers to connection.

OUR INTENT

Although Connecting Ottawa originally planned to contract with [Catholic Centre for Immigrants](#) (CCI) to administer a program that would recruit, train, and pay honoraria to a pool of volunteer facilitators, it transpired that project staff have been directly receiving the referrals from partners and then matching facilitators with clients on the basis of gender, culture, languages spoken, and availability. Connecting Ottawa will implement a strategy to recruit, train, engage and retain volunteers who can be effective trusted intermediaries. CCI remains a committed and valuable partner.

PROGRESS

Connecting Ottawa has continued to promote opportunities for multilingual persons to volunteer their time and experience to facilitate access to needed services by our focus populations. Our initial recruitment campaign netted 36 expressions of interest: 22 women and 14 men, including 14 foreign-trained lawyers and 3 foreign-trained physicians. Our screening and orientation process includes interviews, information sessions, a positive Ottawa Police Service's Record Check appropriate for volunteers working with vulnerable populations in community non-profit agencies, and completion of a full-day of training prior to assignment with a client. Our training offers a shared learning experience re: active listening, problem solving, cultural competencies, privacy and confidentiality, maintaining personal boundaries, roles and responsibilities, etc. However, the training days also create an opportunity for project staff to assess the capacities and capabilities of prospective facilitators in a dynamic setting. Successful volunteers are required to sign a Volunteer Agreement that describes the expected relationship between Facilitators and Connecting Ottawa. We have developed policies and procedures designed to appropriately manage risk associated with this activity; for example, related to the use personally owned vehicles to transport clients, and related to maintaining appropriate personal boundaries with clients.

It has been – and will continue to be – challenging to maintain a pool of motivated and engaged trusted intermediaries. By definition, our Facilitators are a highly diverse group, ethnically, culturally, linguistically and in terms of their “Canadian experience” in the work force. Many have chosen to volunteer as another step in the

process of finding meaningful paid employment where they can use their professional skills. We are always pleased to support the employment aspirations of our Facilitators and we celebrate with them when those aspirations are realized, even though it means that our volunteer pool is depleted. There are a number of Facilitators who have yet to receive their first assignment, either because their cultural and linguistic profile does not match the needs to the client, or because of their limited availability, or because there has been a drop in the number of referrals for Facilitator support. In order to provide continuing opportunities for engagement, Connecting Ottawa has organized and presented networking and training opportunities: a lunch in August, and training sessions on three successive Saturdays in October/November. In addition, we have selected a number of volunteers to explore an expansion of their role to include community outreach. Whereas to date Facilitators have been assigned following a referral for a trusted intermediary, this expanded role will support Facilitators to reach out to the network of contacts within their natural communities - ethnic, cultural, spiritual, linguistic – to share information about public legal education opportunities and to identify early legal issues that may be present or emerging. The Facilitator role is essentially unchanged – connecting people with legal services – but the strategy is more proactive than just reactive. In addition, the ability to communicate in the preferred language of the client is clearly an added value to Facilitator services. We plan to increasingly use CILAT-certified Facilitators as paid interpreters whenever appropriate.

We currently have an active pool of 21 trained volunteer Facilitators available for assignment to assist clients to connect with the services to which they have been referred; 10 women and 11 men. There are an additional 7 Facilitators who are not yet ready for assignment; 5 have yet to submit a police record check and 2 have yet to complete training. Among the active facilitators there is a capacity to speak 26 languages: English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Farsi, Arabic, Russian, Persian, Dari, Pashtu, Azeri, Turkish, Burmese, Japanese, Mandarin, Cantonese, Swahili, Kirundi, Kinyarwanda, Chichewa, Lingala, Tshiluba, Kanyok', Twi, and Tajik. To date, 14 clients have received this support from 10 different facilitators; we have the capacity to support up to 40 clients in 2013-14.

It has become clear that this service is very attractive to our partners and their clients. A flood of referrals immediately followed our presentation at the 2013 Connecting Ottawa Conference on 20 February 2013, the volume of referrals has slowed more recently. From this we have learned that referrals increase with awareness - the Facilitator program will need continuing promotion - and an easy and transparent referral process will be important.

Assignments have varied; for example, facilitators have

- Escorted a functionally blind and hearing impaired woman to a Small Claims Court hearing because of an alleged theft of two rings by her neighbour. The case was dismissed because there was insufficient evidence of a loss of property.
- Supported an Arabic-speaking client to make a transition from ODSP to Old Age Security, via escort to information sessions and assistance with documents.
- Supported an Arabic-speaking refugee claimant couple to obtain necessary medical attention by completing medical history questionnaires and escort to appointments. Clients could not attend to outstanding settlement and legal issues until health care negotiated.

CONNECT LEGAL SERVICES AND SOCIAL SERVICES

OUR CHALLENGE

The challenge was set by Thomson and Kohl:

- Develop a multi-sectoral network of organizations with the potential to build sufficient capacity for legal services to work in closer cooperation with community health and social services, local agencies serving immigrants, and services for disabled persons with a view to ensuring a more integrated service response for clients from the our focus populations, and
- Build the capacity to advocate at a systemic level whenever the system itself has created barriers to accessible legal services.

OUR INTENT

At an inaugural conference in Ottawa in January 2011, Connecting Ottawa developed a multi-sectoral network of local service organizations committed to finding new ways of working to ensure access to justice for our focus populations. They endorsed a plan that would add staff resources to the network: a social services worker and a legal services worker that would be available to advise and consult with front-line providers of information, assessment and referral services to people with issues that would benefit from legal services. Our original intent was not to relieve the overflow of demand for case management services, but to strengthen the existing capacity for competent case

PROGRESS

- The [network of partners](#) now includes 44 organizations: 17 community service agencies, 10 agencies serving immigrants, 9 organizations providing legal services, 7 agencies serving people with disabilities, and 1 agency providing interpretation and translation services. In addition, the project reaches out to additional organizations that could contribute to successful outcomes. Partners participate according to their capacity and resources.
- Further to the Partnership Agreement that was renewed in September 2013, office accommodations and human resources services continue to be provided by [Centre de services communaires de Vanier](#), a Community Resource Centre that is already home to la [Clinique juridique francophone de l'Est d'Ottawa](#). CSC Vanier is the “employer of record” for project staff, manages payroll and benefits administration, provides the security of mature personnel policies and other human resources infrastructure, and provides office accommodations.
- Connecting Ottawa renewed the employment contracts of Marian Green, BSW, RSW and Natalie Drolet, MA, LLB who are both fluently bilingual in English and French.

- Reached out to our partners to
 - Raise awareness and promote use of project services.
 - Discuss ways in which the project can build local capacity for case management for clients from our focus populations
 - Share best practices when responding to issues raised by these populations
 - Understand partners’ history and experience when referring to legal services
 - Explore ways that the project can improve this experience
 - Explore PLE and shared training opportunities
 - Determine the most effective ways to maintain productive liaison with partners and other stakeholders.

- Provided interim case consultation and advice to network partners. Although staff primarily respond to requests for service, both our lawyer and our social worker are now regularly collocated with partner organizations: Natalie Drolet now acts proactively by scheduling regular consultation hours weekly for one half-day at [Catholic Centre for Immigrants](#) and one half-day at Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization ([OCISO](#)), and Marian Green has office hours scheduled for one half-day at West End Legal Services ([WELS](#)).

Partner organizations consult with us about hard-to-serve clients; we provide information and advice and/or agree to provide casework services on an interim basis, that is we assess the legal issues and communication challenges, connect the client with needed services, and identify an ongoing case manager before terminating our involvement. The daily workload is increasingly consumed by these casework activities. Nevertheless, we understand that consultation and advice alone is insufficient support for overburdened front-line service providers who are often poorly prepared to respond to the additional demands of clients who have difficulties communicating their issues. Not all this activity is logged by us as an “case”; in many instances we are consulted without clients being identified, or our consultation was relatively brief and did not require opening a file per se. Regardless, we track all activities: there were 108 cases opened during this activity period, 157% more than during the previous six month period. A total of 150 clients and their families have benefited (directly or indirectly) from interventions by Connecting Ottawa to date. The value of collaborative practice and a holistic response has been demonstrated by the 21 cases that required a shared response from both the lawyer and the social worker. In 8 cases, Connecting Ottawa included the services of an interpreter, and in 14 cases a Facilitator was assigned.

CASELOAD ANALYSIS						
	# Cases: Jan-June 2013	# Cases: July-Dec 2013	# Cases: Total	# Orgs Referring	# Interpretn Arranged	# Facilitators Assigned
Social Worker	14	28	42	14	2	7
Lawyer	20	67	87	14	5	2
Shared	8	13	21	13	1	5
TOTAL	42	108	150	32	8	14

The cases presented a full range of legal issues: Immigration, family law, child protection, employment, poverty (CPP, ODSP, etc.), criminal law, civil law, housing, tax law, and affidavits/notary services. The predominant social issues related to poverty and access to social benefits, employment, housing, access to health care, gendered violence, mental health, family and marital issues, and disability.

(See Appendix 2 for three [case studies](#) for examples of the services delivered.)

- Added three students to the project: a social work student (BSW) from Carleton University (52 hours practicum, commenced 1 May 2013) and two students from the Faculty of Law at Ottawa University (352 hours placement, commenced 5 June 2013 and 4 September respectively). Each student allocated ⅓ of their placement experience to consultation support to clients and service providers within the Connecting Ottawa network. For the remaining ⅔ of their time the students collaborated on an independent research project related to an access to justice issue; an exploration of the intersection of community legal services and social services and the ways in which collaborative practice can facilitate access to justice. The internships proved to be excellent learning opportunities.

“... From my perspective [this internship] provided me with some great experiences. ... The overall experience allowed me to broaden my interests. I came in to Law School with a very narrow interest in criminal defense law. Last summer I worked in immigration law and having the opportunity to work on more immigration issues during this internship really helped me solidify my interest in that area of law.” (A. Mustafa)

“... I have had many opportunities to build on my ability to identify legal and non-legal issues from client narratives when our team brainstormed in weekly case management meetings... After this internship I would feel much more comfortable working in a Legal Aid-type organization that might expect I be able to use [community services] for referrals. ... The focus interviews I did with community legal clinic lawyers, social service workers and directors were especially helpful; the practice wisdom I gleaned could not be substituted for any literature I read. I will consider interviews a valuable resource in future social justice research in conjunction with a literature review.” (S. Duffey)

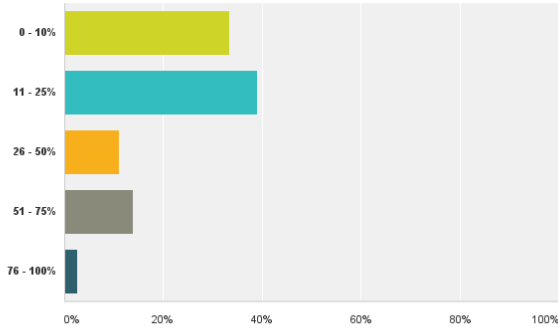
“...The most significant learning experience ... has been a research project. Compiling the literature review has given me a comprehensive overview of the research being done, both in Ontario and internationally, on access to justice. Developing, administering and analyzing the survey and interview questions have taught me about the timelines required to accomplish a real life non-academic project. ... The knowledge and care demonstrated by the staff at Connecting Ottawa, for everyone with whom they are in contact, has been inspirational. Their support and contribution to my learning has far exceeded any of my expectations of this placement. I will follow with interest the evolution of the access to justice project in the future.” (S. Gauthier)

The students enabled Connecting Ottawa to begin research into the extent to which community legal clinics work in collaboration with community social services. We were particularly interested in collocations of social workers with legal workers in community settings. Students conducted a literature review (as described by Gauthier above). All Ontario clinics were invited to respond to an on-line survey; 37 clinics responded. Finally, a number of survey respondents requested an opportunity to discuss our research questions in an interview. These interviews, and the coding of interview responses, is resource intensive and remain incomplete. However, we can share some preliminary results from the surveys:

LAW FOUNDATION OF ONTARIO – CONNECTING REGION INITIATIVE – PHASE 2

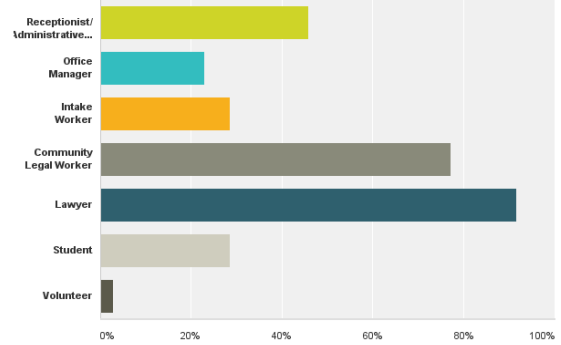
Q3 Please estimate what percentage of your clients are referred by your CLC to a social worker, social service worker or an agency that provides social services.

Answered: 36 Skipped: 1



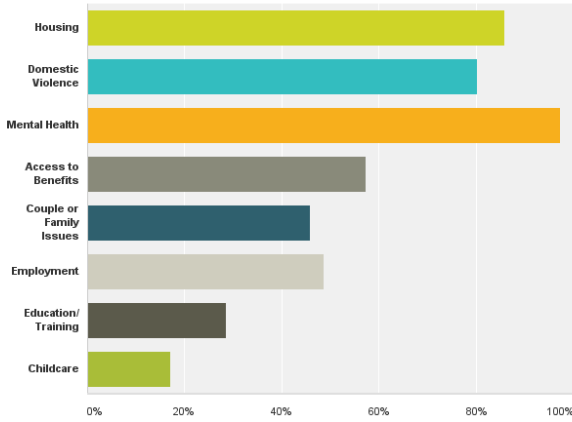
Q4 If your client is assessed as needing a referral to a social worker, social service worker or an agency that provides social services, who makes the referral? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 35 Skipped: 2



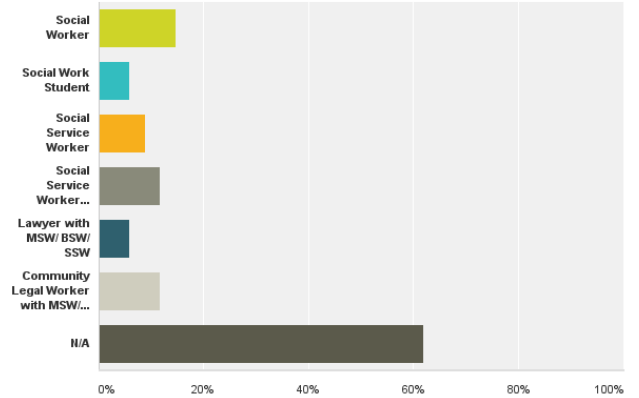
Q5 Which issues lead the clinic to make a referral to a social worker, social service worker or an agency that provides social services? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 35 Skipped: 2



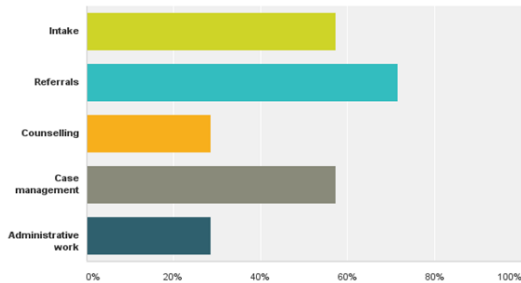
Q6 Does your clinic currently or regularly employ or take on one or more of the following? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 34 Skipped: 3



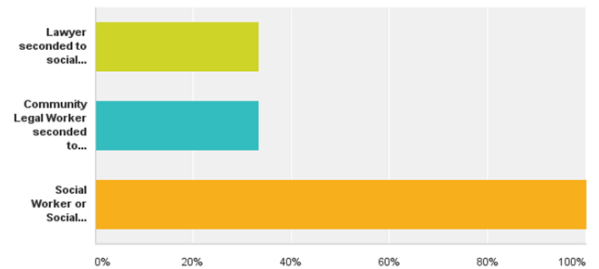
Q7 If your clinic employs a social worker or social service worker, what services do they provide? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 7 Skipped: 38



Q9 Does your clinic work in partnership in any of the following ways? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 3 Skipped: 34



LAW FOUNDATION OF ONTARIO – CONNECTING REGION INITIATIVE – PHASE 2

- Participated in learning opportunities, workshops, conferences and collaborations:
 - Training re: *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*
Connexions communautaires
Addressing Problem Gambling when Working with Multicultural Populations
Alternative Mental Health Therapies for Immigrant Populations
Exploration of Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence in the Refugee Population
 - Meetings with Federation of Metro Tenants Associations (FMTA)
Le Phenix Conference
 - Presentations to OCISO/Community Economic Development Program
Canadian Hearing Society
West End Legal Services
Community Leadership Network for Families Project
Community & Social Services Dept., City of Ottawa
LFO Board of Trustees
Orleans- Cumberland Community Resource Centre
Connecting Communities Advisory Committee
Connecting on Disabilities and Abuse (CODA)
South Ottawa Community Legal Services AGM
- Collaborated with other organizations in support of complementary projects
 - CHI-COP (Collaborative-Holistic-Integrated Community of Practice): A project that began in January 2013 to work collaboratively and share expertise about holistic, integrated and comprehensive approaches to client service. The CHI-COP is exploring not only comprehensive approaches to client service, but the benefits of cross-sectoral collaboration and the impact of integrating bio-socio-political determinants of health into client service approaches. As a first area of focus, CHI-COP is developing an assessment tool that incorporates a holistic and integrated approach to client intake, assessment, and referral to legal services. This tool will also assist trusted intermediaries and service providers to identify the complex, and often interconnected, non-legal barriers facing clients. Connecting Ottawa contributes in partnership with CALC (Belleville), Halton CLS, Northumberland CLC, Guelph & Wellington County CLS, ARCH Disability Law Centre, CELA, HALCO, CLEO, LAO Client Service Centre, and LAO Mental Health Strategy;
 - [Ethno-Racial People with Disabilities Coalition of Ontario](#) (ERPDCO) Round Table
 - Contributions to the work of the [Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women](#) (OCTEVAW) Justice Committee;
 - Contributions to the work of the [Connecting on Disability & Abuse Working Group](#) (CODA);
 - Contributions to the work of the Ontario Works Working Group (City of Ottawa)
 - Via learning exchanges with [Communication Disabilities Access Canada \(CDAC\) A2J Project](#);
 - Via learning exchanges with [Genesis Legal Services Pilot Project](#).

- Developed resources to build the capacity of network partners to serve our priority populations.
 - [Accessing Justice in Ottawa](#)
 - Communication Accessibility Resource List ³
 - Cultural Interpretation and Translation Resource List ³
 - Mental Health Resources for Refugees and Claimants ³

Note that the project is entering a period of transition; our social worker, Marian Green, has left us to explore other opportunities (effective 6 January 2014). We anticipate that a replacement will not be hired and ready to join the project until early March 2014. During this period our capacity to provide social work consultation and support to our partners and clients will be limited. However, we will seize this as an opportunity to reflect on the needs of the project at this mid-point and recruit someone with a mix of skills and expertise that will complement those of our lawyer.

³ This document was appended to Interim Activity Report #2

SUBSIDIZE COSTS OF CONNECTING CLIENTS WITH LEGAL SERVICES

OUR CHALLENGE

Because our focus populations are invariably living with incomes below the poverty level (LICO), their access to justice is limited not only by their relative inability to communicate their issues and navigate the legal service system, but also by the costs of actually accessing affordable legal services and translation/interpretation services, and even public transit fares and child care.

OUR INTENT

To advocate for measures that will ensure the affordability of legal services for all persons accessing justice, and to manage a modest fund that could purchase interpretation and translation services that are not eligible for LAO subsidy; sign language interpretation, assisted and augmentative communication services for people with disabilities, and language translation and interpretation services for allophones that are just beginning their navigation of the system (often via contact with a community health or social service partner organization)

PROGRESS

There has been little activity related to this; given that our resource allocation to this activity is limited and that access to the project fund is intended as an option of “last resort”, this has probably been a good thing. The only expenses to date relate to the purchase of bus tickets to facilitate client transit to appointments. However, in Year 2 we have increased the allocation and will be more proactive in this activity.

BUDGET NOTES

It was our original intent to purchase the services of a network partner, [Community Interpretation Services for Our Community](#) (CISOC) at the preferred rate of \$35/hour. However, we have subsequently learned that the contracted rate will be \$67/hour. Although we will continue to use CISOC when necessary we will also explore other options, including the purchase of service from the Facilitators who are also CILAT certified. The project has strengthened our connection with our network partners that provide services to persons with disability and we now have increased awareness of the high costs of interpreters, interveners and other augmentative communication services required by this population.

COORDINATE ALL ACTIVITIES, MANAGE PROGRAMS, EVALUATE OUTCOMES

OUR CHALLENGE

To manage a project that will move from being “a good idea” to being a demonstration of “good practice” and excellent outcomes.

OUR INTENT

Our purpose is to strengthen the capacity of network partners without creating another organization, by resourcing and coordinating activities, evaluating performance and outcomes, ensuring that all partners understand their contribution and role over time, and communicating regularly and effectively with our network partners and other stakeholders.

PROGRESS

The project coordinator provides progress reports at every meeting of the Advisory Group, consults with project staff each week, approves all project expenditures, works with the bookkeeper (at South Ottawa CLS) to ensure the project’s financial health, and is always available for consultation about the many and varied issues that emerge with almost frightening regularity.

- During this reporting period, the Advisory Group met on 19 September 2013 and again on 12 December 2013 (at which the contents of this Activity Report were received). It will meet again on 20 March 2014.
- Work has continued to develop and improve administrative systems required (role descriptions, program descriptions, eligibility requirements, work flow, invoicing and payments, records management and administration), and to provide the logistical and administrative support services necessary to build the overall capacity of the network.
- All partners have signed a new [Partnership Agreement](#) until 1 October 2015. (Although LFO funding is currently scheduled only until 20 June 2015, we have anticipated the need for a sustainability plan beyond this date, if some activities can continue.)

SHARE LESSONS LEARNED

OUR CHALLENGE

To share our experience – good and not so good - with peers and colleagues so that the system of legal services is strengthened and is more readily accessed by our focus populations.

OUR INTENT

We will not only host an annual conference for network partners and interested stakeholders but also to seek out conferences, symposia and other opportunities to make presentations, participate on panels, offer workshops, and poster lessons learned to audiences of our peers and colleagues in community services, especially legal services. In addition, to further develop and inform our network of partners, the project will produce and electronically distribute a newsletter (the *Communiqué*) periodically.

PROGRESS

- The Connecting Ottawa team has developed a Prezi to support our presentations. This introduces the project and our services in the context of the A2J consultation papers prepared by Thompson and Kohl. [The Prezi can be downloaded [here](#).]
- We are planning our 3rd Annual Conference for 5 March 2014, 08:30-13:00, at Centre Richelieu-Vanier in Ottawa. We anticipate a maximum of 85 participants. There will be no fee to register. The event will be fully accessible to persons with disabilities; we have arranged for ASL interpretation and CART service. Although most of the content will be presented in English, we will ensure that there are opportunities for Francophones to participate in French.

Our purpose will be to:

- Explore the roles and responsibilities of “trusted intermediaries”;
- Discuss access to justice as a determinant of community health and well-being;
- Provide opportunities to reconnect and be accountable to partners.

Our program will be divided into two plenary sessions, with opportunities for participation by attendees.

Session 1 will involve a presentation on the Role of a Trusted Intermediaries by Dierdre McDade (lawyer at CALC Belleville and currently the Acting Executive Director during Michelle Learning's sabbatical) and Ab Currie (Lead Researcher, Canadian Forum on Civil Justice), followed by a panel of three trusted intermediaries who will speak about their experience in the role (Lois McIntyre from the Canadian Hearing Society, Maria-Teresa Garcia from Catholic Centre for Immigrants, and a Connecting Ottawa Facilitator, yet to be named).

Session 2 will include a presentation shared by Patricia Hughes (Executive Director, Law Commission of Ontario), John Sims (Chair of the Canadian Bar Association's Access To Justice Committee that recently released the "Reaching Equal Justice Report"), and David Wiseman (Professor at the Law School, University of Ottawa, and a member of the *Cost of Justice* project, and Director of the *Refugee Assistance Project* funded by LFO). They will speak as an expert panel on the prevailing conversations about changes to the justice system, including increased collaboration between legal services and non-legal services to respond holistically to legal issues. Their panel will be followed by facilitated "table talk" among participants to explore the current barriers to proposed collaborative approaches.

Our guest speakers have all agreed to participate in a special colloquium on the night before the conference (March 4), organized by David Wiseman for students and faculty at the University of Ottawa, although members of the community are able to attend. This will allow Connecting Ottawa to defray some of the costs associated with our speakers travel and accommodations.

- Connecting Ottawa produces and distributes a newsletter (*Communique*) for our partners and project stakeholders/contacts. The following issues can be downloaded: [September 2013](#) and [December 2013](#). All eight issues are available on the [Connecting Ottawa website](#).
- Connecting Ottawa has produced and distributed promotional materials to our partners and other referral sources: rack cards, posters, and sticky notes.

**HAVE A LEGAL ISSUE?
IS COMMUNICATION DIFFICULT?**

**CONNECTING OTTAWA CAN
HELP CONNECT YOU WITH
SERVICES.**

What We Offer

- Case management
- Legal and community information & referrals
- Website directory of legal services in Ottawa
- Public legal education & workshops
- Language & communication support
- A lawyer and social worker available to connect with you directly

**SO YOU UNDERSTAND BETTER.
SO THEY UNDERSTAND YOU BETTER.**

Connect with us:
Marian at (613) 402-9376
Natalie at (613) 402-9437

CONNECTINGOTTAWA.COM

The Connecting Ottawa project aims to improve access to justice for people who are not proficient in English or French or who face communication challenges as the result of a disability, condition or sensory impairment.

Connecting Ottawa
Effective communication
Accessible justice

The Law Foundation of Ontario
Building a better foundation for justice in Ontario

FINANCIAL
REPORT

[1 JULY 2013 TO 31
DECEMBER 2013]

NOTES

- All expenses are within budget, YTD.
- All activities are expected to stay within budget for the rest of the fiscal year, with the possible exception of the Conference planned for March 5th 2014 (higher than anticipated interpretation/accessibility costs and costs of travel and accommodation for guest speakers).
- The Excess of Revenues over Expenses will support needed cash flow until February 28th 2014 at which point the project will urgently require further financial contribution from LFO.

CONNECTING OTT

CONNECTING OTTAWA		2520
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS FOR THE SIX MONTH PERIOD ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2013		
	Budget	Actuals
	(12 Months)	(6 Month)
REVENUE		
2.0 Law Foundation of Ontario		
414 Received During Year	271,008	121,071.60
414 From Deferred Revenue (Prior Year's Surplus)		34,594.76
414 To Deferred Revenue	-	-
	271,008	155,666.36
EXPENSES		
3.1 Promotion 211/Training		
540 Equipment	-	-
545 Materials and Supplies	500	-
615 Travel	600	-
555 Training/Professional Development	1,000	-
	2,100	-
3.2 Website Hosting, Management and Administration		
535 Database Development	-	-
565 Translation	200	-
625 Website Hosting, Management and Administration	6,000	3,222.89
	6,200	3,222.89
3.3 Facilitators to Connect Clients and Legal Services		
545 Materials and Supplies	-	-
550 Meeting Costs	-	25.33
590 Training	900	287.66
620 Volunteer (IPL) Honoraria	2,700	100.00
615 Travel	1,000	45.00
510 Administration	-	-
	4,600	457.99
3.4 Legal Worker/Social Worker Connection		
515 Allocated Administration	10,000	5,000.00
530 Cloud/Mobile Services	2,000	794.75
540 Equipment Purchases	1,500	527.18
545 Materials and Supplies	1,200	1,450.30
550 Meeting Costs	600	38.28
557 Professional Fees	1,500	-
565 Salaries: Legal Worker	64,500	31,350.02
566 Salaries: Social Worker	61,500	31,350.02
580 Employee Benefits	24,600	7,575.43
585 Staffing Costs	-	-
590 Training/Professional Development	2,500	-
595 Translation/Interpretation	2,000	93.55
615 Travel	5,000	2,034.39
699 Sundry	-	9.49
	176,900	80,223.41
3.5 Overcoming Barriers to Accessibility		
545 Materials and Supplies	-	-
595 Translation/Interpretation	6,000	93.55
610 Transportation/Child Care, Etc	1,000	-
	7,000	93.55
3.6 Secretariat		
545 Materials and Supplies	-	124.73
550 Meeting Costs	250	38.27
560 Purchases Services	50,000	15,591.00
590 Training/Professional Development	-	-
615 Travel	1,000	80.17
	51,250	15,834.17
3.7 Shared Lessons Learned		
520 Annual Conference	4,000	174.72
550 Conferences, etc	1,500	-
615 Travel	2,500	-
	8,000	174.72
3.8 Administration		
542 Lead Agency Stipend	5,000.00	5,000.00
527 Bookkeeping	1,000.00	519.70
525 Bank Charges	50.00	34.50
522 Auditing	800.00	-
699 Sundry	-	126.81
799 Contingency	8,108.00	-
	14,958	5,681.01
	271,008.00	105,687.74
Total Expenses		
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES (EXPENSES OVER REVENUE)	0.00	49,978.62

APPENDIX 1

THE LOGIC MODEL

Connecting Ottawa will demonstrate ways and means that networks of organizations can better support the focus populations to access justice. Our plan requires a clarity of purpose and a clear articulation of the resources available, the assumptions upon which we propose to act, and why we believe that our proposed activities will achieve the desired outcomes. Our logic model is a versatile tool that can support project development, implementation, and evaluation. When combined with a detailed work plan, we have a roadmap for our program, highlighting how it is expected to work, what activities need to come before others, and how desired outcomes can be achieved. It provides a framework that will enable us to reflect upon the impact of our activities and reassess our direction and process.

Many of our activities are innovative; they are based on assumptions and a theory of change that will be tested as the project unfolds over time. As we learn from our experience and share what we have learned with others that may be interested in doing what we have done, we need a model that articulates the plan and can inform future changes to the plan that will improve outcomes.

The logic model that follows has value and relevance for our ...

- Planning - It helps us to think through program strategy and helps clarify where we are and where we want to be;
- Management – It connects the dots between resources, activities, and outcomes to serve as a foundation for creating budgets and work plans and managing results;
- Communication – It shows our partners how activities link to what we want to achieve;
- Consensus Building – It builds common understanding and promotes buy-in by the full network of partners;
- Resource Development – It demonstrates to funders that we have purposefully identified what the CR/O project will do, what it hopes to achieve, and what resources it will need to succeed.
-

An effective demonstration will depend on our evaluation strategy – which begins with this logic model. Further refinement of the model will define outcomes in measureable terms. Our experience to date suggests that there is little by way of “baseline data” against which we can measure the impact of our activities. Accordingly, we will devise an evaluation strategy that will include process measures (number of events associated with an activity, number of clients and trusted intermediaries impacted, etc.), qualitative data collected from clients and front-line staff (anecdotal evidence of impact, collected via surveys and interviews), and case studies. The evaluation plan will be completed by month 6 of Phase 2 implementation.

CONNECTING REGION/OTTAWA Logic Model

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Build capacity within Ottawa's community health and social services sectors to identify legal issues and provide basic legal information and timely referral to legal services for our focus populations; persons who speak neither English nor French and for persons who have a significant communication difficulty as the result of a sensory impairment or a speech or language disorder.

PROGRAM GOALS

1. Provide information that will help the focus populations (and those who act as trusted intermediaries) understand their legal rights, and provide information about the legal services available to help them to exercise those rights.
2. Ensure that "every door is the right door" to legal services by training and supporting assessment/information/referral (AIR) professionals and other front-line service providers to identify when a client from the focus populations requires a legal service and then to connect the client to the appropriate legal service.
3. Ensure that the focus populations have timely and appropriate access to interpretation and translation services and/or augmentative communication devices and services by systematically removing barriers to access.
4. Support legal services organizations to provide services to the focus populations within a framework that acknowledges issue complexity.
5. Demonstrate a collaborative model that is cross-sectoral, interdisciplinary and effective; evaluate; share lessons learned with interested others in Canada.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

- Network of Ottawa community health/social/legal services organizations - 35 partnership agreements.
- Designation as a "Connecting Region" by Law Foundation (Access to Justice Fund). Funding required for plan implementation/sustainability.
- Interim funding support for project coordination & website development (LAO Poverty Law Client Services Coordination Fund).

RATIONALE - Theory of Change	ASSUMPTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus populations are unaware that complex issues may have a legal component that would benefit from a legal service. • Access to interpretation/translation services will enable their communication re: these issues. • Trusted intermediaries can facilitate communication & assist with system navigation when appropriately resourced. • System change is possible when motivated organizations share resources and collaborate using a client-centred approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trusted intermediaries (incl. agency staff) need access to information & resources to assist successful navigation of legal system to justice by focus populations . • Even if focus populations know how to access the desired legal service there are often affordability, language/communication and related accessibility barriers to overcome. • Community health/social/legal service agencies are committed to change processes to improve system navigation & service outcomes for diverse linguistic minority populations.

LAW FOUNDATION OF ONTARIO – CONNECTING REGION INITIATIVE – PHASE 2

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	SHORT TERM OUTCOMES	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	LONG TERM OUTCOMES
[1] Promote 211 as coordinated hub for AIR services	211 is an effective IAR resource for legal services	Increased use of 211 by partners as default referral resource	211 recognized by partners as the centralized hub for referral services for focus populations	<p>A network of diverse community agencies collaborate to demonstrate new & effective ways to improve the experience of accessing justice for our focus populations;</p> <p>Our focus populations have been supported by informed and resourceful "trusted intermediaries" to understand and exercise their legal rights;</p> <p>All barriers to timely, appropriate & affordable access to community legal services have been removed;</p> <p>The CR/O model is widely acknowledged as a successful multi sectoral initiative that will stimulate further innovations in system navigation by marginalized populations..</p>
[2] Promote & sustain CR/O website	Website is a reliable resource to access local legal services	Website is stable, regularly updated, secure, & maintained Website is a source of comprehensive information	Website is used as the portal to Ottawa legal services for our partners & clients from focus populations	
[3] Develop pool of informed "trusted intermediaries" to connect clients	Train & support staff & foreign-trained legal professionals as trusted intermediaries	Staff & volunteers will be skilled & trusted intermediaries for focus population	Referred clients will actually connect to the legal services to which they have been referred	
[4] Connect legal services & social services	Employ 1 legal worker & 1 social worker as team to be collocated at partner site	Legal services & social services work closely together using a holistic response to complex issues	Focus populations with complex social/legal issues appreciate a more comprehensive & coordinated services; Intersectoral collaboration grows	
[5] Manage a fund allocation that can offset costs of connecting client with legal services	Subsidize interpretation, translation, and transportation for low income clients	Low income clients can afford transit; partners can access interpretation to communicate with focus populations	Financial barriers to accessing legal services will be lowered	
[6] Coordinate all CR/O activities; manage programs; evaluate outcomes	A secretariat resource supports all planning & service coordination activities	Partners remain meaningfully engaged; activities proceed; goals achieved	A sustainable CR/O Network performs well and meets its objectives	
[7] Share lessons learned	Annual conference for partners; post web news; CR/O experience is shared at workshops/ conferences locally & provincially	Other legal services and agencies serving focus populations are aware of strengths/ weaknesses of CR/O model	The best features/ functions of CR/O model are replicated in other communities.	

APPENDIX 2

CASE STUDIES

Gerry

REASON FOR REFERRAL

- Gerry needs support navigating the ‘system’, including accompaniment; he has difficulty hearing service providers in crowded and noisy environments. Appointments are either missed altogether or end prematurely because of his high anxiety.
- Gerry has difficulty understanding and retaining information during meetings with service providers. Client is prone to no-shows and to leaving appointments due to anxiety
- Gerry’s wife is functionally illiterate and requires support to understand the documents required by their uncontested divorce proceedings.

INTERPRETATION/ ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS

- Profound hearing loss (Gerry uses hearing aids).
- Gerry does not speak ASL/LSQ.
- Gerry cannot use a telephone.
- Mental health challenges.

LEGAL ISSUES

- Consumer law – Gerry arranged to change his cable and internet service provider but was billed by both telecom companies. He has been unable to obtain reimbursement.
- Family law – Gerry and his wife seeking a divorce and are without legal representation or advice. Social Issues

ACTIONS TAKEN

- The social worker accompanied Gerry to obtain services from Law Help Ontario. On three occasions, the lawyer on duty had a conflict and was unable to see Gerry. An offer by Law Help Ontario to connect Gerry by phone with a lawyer in Toronto could not be accepted because Gerry cannot communicate using a telephone.
- The social worker met Gerry and his wife at the Family Law Information Centre (FLIC) to assist them (in consultation with the FLIC clerk) to prepare their documents for divorce.
- Final disposition: Gerry and his wife obtained their divorce. An Ottawa lawyer was assigned to assist Gerry to bring his consumer issues to Small Claims Court, pro bono.

OTHER COMMENTS

Gerry requires an advocate because of his communication challenges. Telephone communication is difficult because of his hearing loss and mental health issues interfere with his ability to understand and retain what is being communicated to him. Without family or friends to act as trusted intermediaries, he is easily frustrated as a dissatisfied consumer. If our service provider partners are unable to offer accompaniment or the intervention of a trusted intermediary (similar to our Facilitators) clients like Gerry be unable to access justice.

Kahlid and Zahra

REASON FOR REFERRAL

A lawyer at a Community Legal Clinic is working on an application for Permanent Resident status based on humanitarian and compassionate grounds humanitarian application for a family of four whose refugee claim has been refused. The parents, Khalid and Zahra, speak Arabic and have a limited understanding of English or French. The lawyer has asked Connecting Ottawa to assess the family's needs for non-legal services since the parents' poor health, unemployment, and social problems are interfering with their capacity to respond to their immigration problems.

ASSESSMENT

- Both parents have complex medical challenges; Zahra needs an emergency hysterectomy, Khalid requires foot care and has vision loss. There is no health coverage available under the IFH program and no family physician to act as case manager.
- The family's only source of income is Ontario Works benefits; there is often insufficient money for food.
- Joining the paid labour force and/or engaging in meaningful volunteer work would strengthen the parents' appeal of their immigration status. Khalid and Zahra are motivated to work but lack language and employable skills.
- Khalid and Zahra have trauma and emotional problems that would benefit from counselling services. Khalid is connected to a settlement agency for support but Zahra would benefit from a female Arabic-speaking counsellor.
- The two school-aged children are bullied at school and are acting out at home. School buses are not available; OC Transpo passes are expensive.
- With limited literacy in English or French and no access to internet resources, Khalid and Zahra are dependent upon their lawyer and the settlement agency for all information about resources. They require assistance with any processes that involve documents.
- The greatest percentage of the family's limited household income is dedicated to housing costs. The family would benefit from affordable housing options.

ACTIONS TAKEN

- Khalid and Zahra are accepted as patients of the local Community Health Centre and are assisted with medical history and other health care documentation by an assigned Facilitator. A family physician begins health care management. Zahra has emergency surgery and fees are waived following advocacy by the lawyer. The children also become patients at the Centre when they require treatment for flu.
- Kahlid is referred for chiropody and orthotics at another Community Health Centre.
- The family receives a medical referral for special dietary supplements from Ontario Works. Zahra participates in a Good Food Box program where she can purchase low cost local produce. The family receives assistance from a halal food bank.
- The settlement services worker intervenes to restore the family's IFH program insured health coverage.
- Zahra receives services from a female counsellor at Lebanese-Arabic Social Services Agency (LASSA).
- Khalid and Zahra both commit to volunteer at an Arabic-speaking seniors activity program at a local Community Resource Centre.

- The children’s schools are alerted to the reports of bullying and exercise their “zero tolerance” practices. The children are introduced to subsidized after school activities at a Community Centre, with transportation costs reimbursed via bus tickets.
- The social worker organized a case conference that included all services involved and the parents to determine which agency would assume primary case management responsibilities after Connecting Ottawa disengages.

OTHER COMMENTS

This case illustrates the importance of a holistic approach to client services and the successful resolution of legal issues. The lawyer is still advocating in support of the family’s immigration case, but the family is now in a better position to focus on the legal information, advice and other legal services that are being provided by the legal clinic. Khalid and Zahra will continue to have communication challenges until their English language skills further develop, but in the interim they have access to community resources and supports in Arabic. The case also demonstrates the strategic importance of case conferences that include all persons involved with a family and determine the roles to be played by the various services.

Svetlana

FACTS

Svetlana was referred to Connecting Ottawa by 211 Eastern Ontario because as a Russian-speaking woman she was having difficulty connecting with the services to which she was directed. She is challenged by immigration issues, an abusive partner, and by the continuing care of an adult daughter with a developmental disability. Svetlana had been sponsored by her Canadian spouse to come to Canada with her daughter in 2010 but then she fled the abusive marriage shortly after her arrival and stayed in a women’s shelter until she was able to secure affordable housing and social benefits. Her divorce proceedings had stalled when she did not have legal representation at a settlement conference. Svetlana was under investigation by the Canadian Border Services Agency following an allegation by her husband that their marriage had been one of convenience for immigration purposes; she has received no legal services. Svetlana’s situation was further compounded by depression due to her social isolation, financial pressures, and the extreme caregiver stress resulting from her daughter’s daily care; she has received no counselling services since she left her spouse. Although she is eligible for respite care and some home support services, Svetlana has difficulty understanding what is being offered, eligibility criteria, and how to actually access the resources.

INTERPRETATION/ ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS

- Svetlana’s first language is Russian; she has limited English. Interpretation services had been available from Immigrant Women’s Services Organization (IWSO) but she lost her eligibility when she left her abusive relationship. ESL classes are available but not accessible because of her caregiving responsibilities. Her daughter’s physician does not speak Russian.

REFERRALS

ACTIONS TAKEN

- Connecting Ottawa connected Svetlana with lawyers that would address the immigration and family law issues. Although a Legal Aid certificate had been issued for the family law issues, Svetlana had dismissed the lawyer, who she thought had failed to represent her adequately. Our application to LAO for a change of lawyer was denied; an appeal for reconsideration from the FLIC supervisor of duty counsel was also denied. Our lawyer then applied for a special duty counsel authorization for a family law lawyer from the Integrated Legal services Office (ILSO) to represent Svetlana at the divorce settlement conference; this was approved. A LAO certificate was still denied for the immigration issue; our lawyer referred Svetlana to a community legal clinic for services, but she did not feel comfortable working with the (male) lawyer or the interpreter provided by the clinic. Our lawyer subsequently connected Svetlana with a second lawyer (female) at the same CLC, whom she retained.
We also advocated for Svetlana to have another interpreter available for a meeting with the second lawyer, even though it was the policy for the clinic not to book interpretation services for the initial meeting with a lawyer.
- Our social worker researched options for day programs and respite programs for Svetlana's daughter, including emergency respite that would give her the time needed to resolve her legal issues.
- We organized three case conferences with the daughter's Service Coordination case manager to ensure that she was either receiving or was on the wait list for eligible services.
- We researched options for a Russian-speaking physician and Russian counselling support for Svetlana.
- Connecting Ottawa is still in the process of advocating for Svetlana to continue to receive subsidized interpretation services through IWSO.
- Our social worker advocated with Svetlana's landlord to repair appliances which were not functioning in Svetlana's home.

OTHER COMMENTS

Once again, this case illustrates the added complexities whenever clients who lack capacity in English or French are burdened by stressful caregiving roles, social isolation, and abusive relationships. Under such circumstances access to justice is frequently a lower priority. It is undeniable that the service system is difficult to navigate at the best of time, but it becomes even more challenging whenever eligibility requirements appear arbitrary or lack transparency. Further, if we are truly committed to client-centered services we must respect Svetlana's choice of lawyers and interpreters, even though some decisions may appear to us as poorly considered or even irrational. Finally, the importance of case conferences cannot be understated.

APPENDIX 3

ACCESSING JUSTICE IN OTTAWA

A Guide to Legal Services in Ottawa



Contents

1. Law Society Referral Service
2. Pro Bono Law Ontario
3. Justice Net
4. Legal Aid Ontario
5. REACH Canada
6. Human Rights Legal Support Center

1. Law Society of Upper Canada – Law Society Referral Service

This service connects individuals with a lawyer or licensed paralegal in the area of practice needed. Members of the public can call the toll-free number and will be provided with the name of a lawyer or licensed paralegal who will provide a free consultation of up to 30 minutes to help individuals determine their rights and options.

Law Society Referral Service

<http://connectingottawa.com/service/law-society-referral-service-0>

Phone: 1-800-268-8326

TTY: 416-644-4886

Hours: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday

Website: <http://lsrs.lsuc.on.ca/lsrs/>

Interpretation available: yes

Financial eligibility criteria: no

2. Pro Bono Law Ontario

This organization matches lawyers with clients for free legal services. Individuals must have limited financial resources in order to qualify.

Pro Bono Law Ontario administers the following projects in Ottawa:

i. Law Help Ontario

Law Help Ontario operates a self-help centre for low income, self-represented litigants appearing before Small Claims Court or Superior Court. Lawyers at Law Help Ontario provide free assistance for limited civil matters (no family or criminal matters).

Law Help Ontario

Address: 161 Elgin Street, room 5027, 5th floor beside court room #52

Website: <http://lawhelpontario.org>

Hours: 9:30 – 4:00 (closed between 12:00 and 1:00)

Interpretation available: no

Financial eligibility criteria: yes (also applicable to the Appeals Assistance Project, below)

Number in family / Annual household income

1. \$36,000 / year
2. \$54,000 / year
3. \$61,992 / year
4. \$73,992 / year

ii. The Appeals Assistance Project

Free legal services are available to eligible unrepresented litigants before the Ontario Court of Appeal, Divisional Court, Federal Court of Appeal and Supreme Court of Canada (no criminal appeals).

Appeals Assistance Project

Address: 161 Elgin Street, room 5027, 5th floor beside court room #52

Phone: 416-597-0770, ext. 200

Website: <http://lawhelpontario.org/appeals/>

Interpretation available: no

3. Justice Net

Justice Net is a not-for-profit service helping people in need of legal expertise, whose income is too high to access legal aid and too low to afford standard legal fees. This site can help individuals find legal professionals who have agreed to devote a portion of their practice to qualifying individuals at reduced fees.

Justice Net

Phone: 1-877-919-3219

Website: www.justicenet.ca

E-mail: info@justicenet.ca

Interpretation available: no

Financial eligibility criteria: yes

<u>Net Yearly Family Income</u>	<u>Number of Dependants</u>		
	3 +	2	0 – 1
Under \$39,000	\$100 or less	\$100 or less	\$100 or less
\$39,000 - \$45,999	\$100	\$110	\$120
\$46,000 - \$52,999	\$110	\$120	\$140
\$53,000 - \$59,000	\$120	\$140	\$150

4. Legal Aid Ontario

There are five main legal aid programs in Ottawa which are available to clients with limited financial resources.

- a) Certificate Program
- b) Duty Counsel Program
- c) Family Law Information Centre
- d) Integrated Legal Services Office
- e) Community Legal Clinics
- f) Student Legal Aid Societies
- g) Specialty Clinics
- h) Family Violence Authorization Program

a) Certificate Program

Under this program, clients who qualify financially receive full or partial coverage from Legal Aid Ontario. The client applies by telephone to the Client Service Centre and, if approved, can receive legal representation for criminal, family, refugee and Consent and Capacity Board matters. There are considerable restrictions on the types of cases which will be approved for coverage. If approved, the client approaches a lawyer who handles legal aid cases, or the Integrated Legal Services Office in Ottawa for representation.

Phone: 1-800-668-8258





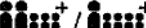
TTY: 1-866-641-8867

Website: <http://www.legalaid.on.ca>

Email: info@lao.on.ca






Interpretation available: yes

Financial eligibility criteria: yes

Family size	Will likely qualify financially for a certificate if annual gross family income falls below:	A contribution agreement might be required if annual gross family income is within these ranges:
	↓ \$10,800	↔ \$10,800 - \$12,500
	↓ \$18,684	↔ \$18,684 - \$22,500
	↓ \$21,299	↔ \$21,299 - \$26,220
	↓ \$24,067	↔ \$24,067 - \$30,120
	↓ \$26,714	↔ \$26,714 - \$33,960
Single boarders (paying and non-paying)	↓ \$7,100	↔ \$7,101 - \$8,200

b) Duty Counsel program

Legal Aid Ontario offers duty counsel programs for criminal, family, and tenant cases. Duty counsel lawyers are available on site at the courthouse and at the Landlord and Tenant Board. They can provide immediate legal assistance to clients who show up in court without a lawyer.

Family size	Will likely qualify for duty counsel/ summary legal advice assistance if gross family income is below:	
	↓ \$18,000	(\$1,500 per month)
	↓ \$27,000	(\$2,250 per month)
	↓ \$31,000	(\$2,583 per month)
	↓ \$37,000	(\$3,083 per month)
	↓ \$43,000	(\$3,583 per month)

Family Duty Counsel

http://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/getting/dutycounsel_family.asp

161 Elgin Street, 2nd Floor

Criminal Duty Counsel

http://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/getting/dutycounsel_criminal.asp

161 Elgin Street, 2nd Floor

Tenant Duty Counsel

http://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/getting/dutycounsel_tenant.asp

255 Albert Street, 4th Floor

c) Family Law Information Centre (FLIC)

Lawyers at the FLIC provide legal information, summary advice, assistance with the completion of forms and referrals to Family Law Duty Counsel or Legal Aid Ontario. Individuals must qualify financially for summary advice. Legal information and referrals are available to everyone.

Family Law Information Centre






161 Elgin Street, 2nd floor

Phone: 613-239-1274

Website: http://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/getting/type_familylawinformationcentre.asp

Interpretation available: no

Financial eligibility criteria: yes

Family size	Will likely qualify for duty counsel/ summary legal advice assistance if gross family income is below:	
	↓ \$18,000	(\$1,500 per month)
	↓ \$27,000	(\$2,250 per month)
	↓ \$31,000	(\$2,583 per month)
	↓ \$37,000	(\$3,083 per month)
	↓ \$43,000	(\$3,583 per month)

d) Integrated Legal Services Office

The Integrated Legal Services Office Staff lawyers represent clients who are eligible for a Legal Aid certificate in family, and immigration and refugee law matters. The Office also offer a General Advice Clinic at 73 Albert and in various locations in Ottawa, as well as an Immigration Clinic at 73 Albert.

Integrated Legal Services Ottawa

Address: 73 Albert Street

Phone: 613-569-7448

Financial eligibility criteria: yes (same as for Legal Aid Certificates and Duty Counsel)

Interpretation available: yes (for clients who are eligible for a Legal Aid certificate)

e) Community Legal Clinics

There are four community legal clinics in Ottawa funded by Legal Aid Ontario. They represent persons of limited financial means with issues related to social benefits, housing, immigration, criminal injuries compensation and human rights. Community legal clinics are also involved in law reform work and offer public legal education. Each community legal clinic has a catchment area. To find your community legal clinic, enter your postal code at <http://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/contact/contact.asp?type=cl>

i. Clinique juridique francophone de l'Est d'Ottawa

<http://connectingottawa.com/service/clinique-juridique-francophone-de-lest-dottawa>

Address : 290 Dupuis Street

Phone : 613-744-2892

Website : www.cscvanier.com

Email : cetoutem@lao.on.ca

Financial eligibility criteria: yes, see below

Interpretation available: yes

ii. **Community Legal Services Ottawa Centre**

<http://connectingottawa.com/service/community-legal-services-ottawa-centre>

Address : 1 Nicholas Street, Suite 422

Phone : 613-241-7008

Website : www.clsoc.ca

Financial eligibility criteria: yes, see below

Interpretation available: yes

iii. **South Ottawa Community Legal Services**

<http://connectingottawa.com/service/south-ottawa-community-legal-services>

Address: 1355 Bank Street, Suite 406

Phone: 613-733-0140

TTY: 613-733-4113

Website: www.socls.ca

Email: steing@lao.on.ca

Financial eligibility criteria: yes, see below

Interpretation available: yes

iv. **West End Legal Services**

<http://connectingottawa.com/service/west-end-legal-services-ottawa>

Address: 1299 Richmond Road

Phone: 613-596-1641

Website: www.westendlegal.ca






Financial eligibility criteria: yes, see below

Interpretation available: yes

For representation

Family Size	Automatic Fin. Elig. Under...	Discretionary** Finr Elig. Under...
<u>One-Adult Family</u>		
1	\$15,800	\$21,650
2	16,300	25,550
3	21,400	29,250
4	23,150	31,600
5	25,550	34,600
6	27,400	37,750
<u>Two-Adult Family</u>		
2	\$21,400	\$28,650
3	23,150	31,100
4	25,550	34,000
5	27,400	37,100
6	29,800	39,600

For brief services

Family size	Will likely qualify for duty counsel/ summary legal advice assistance if gross family income is below:	
	↓ \$18,000	(\$1,500 per month)
	↓ \$27,000	(\$2,250 per month)
	↓ \$31,000	(\$2,583 per month)
	↓ \$37,000	(\$3,083 per month)
	↓ \$43,000	(\$3,583 per month)

f) Student Legal Aid Society (SLAS)

i. University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic

The University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic is a SLAS funded by Legal Aid Ontario. It provides services in the areas of housing law, criminal defense (where the Crown is not seeking incarceration), small claims court for tenant issues, and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board for women. Services are available to individuals who reside in the City of Ottawa who qualify financially, and students of both the University of Ottawa and Carleton University.

University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic

<http://connectingottawa.com/service/university-ottawa-community-legal-clinic>

Address: 17 Copernicus Street

Phone: 613-562-5600

Website: <http://uoclc.uottawa.ca/index.html>

Financial eligibility criteria: yes, same as for community legal clinics

Interpretation available: yes

g) Specialty Clinics

Specialty legal clinics are funded by Legal Aid Ontario and undertake policy development and test case litigation in addition to specialising in an area or with specific types of clients. Many of the specialty clinics have a mandate to serve the province of Ontario. For a complete list of specialty clinics, visit <http://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/contact/contact.asp?type=scl>

h) Family Violence Authorization Program

Under this program, individuals who are experiencing domestic violence and are in need of immediate help can access a certificate for a 2-hour consultation with a lawyer. Certificates are available at women's shelters and at the Victim Witness Assistance Program at the Ottawa Courthouse at 161 Elgin Street on the 4th Floor.

5. REACH Canada

REACH Canada is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to ensuring that persons with disabilities are provided with quality legal representation. The REACH Lawyer Referral Program provides a referral to a lawyer who will provide up to 3 hours of free legal services. Services are available to persons with a disability in any area of the law.

REACH Canada

<http://connectingottawa.com/service/reach-canada>

Address : 400 Coventry Road

Phone : 613-236-6636

TTY : 613-236-9478

Website : www.reach.ca

Email : reach@reach.ca

Financial eligibility criteria: no

Interpretation available: no

6. Human Rights Legal Support Centre

The Human Rights legal Support Centre is an independent, but publicly-funded agency with a mandate to provide quality legal services to those who have experienced discrimination contrary to the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. The Centre has a province-wide mandate.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre

<http://connectingottawa.com/service/human-rights-legal-support-centre>

Address: 180 Dundas Street West, 8th Floor

Phone: 1-866-625-5179

TTY: 1-866-612-8627

Website: www.hrlsc.on.ca

Email: hrlsc@hrlsc.on.ca

Financial eligibility criteria: no

Interpretation available: yes

APPENDIX 4

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Preamble

The Connecting Ottawa initiative has been undertaken to develop and sustain a network of legal agencies and other community service organizations, and is specifically focused on improving the local delivery of legal information, referrals and services to Ottawa residents who speak neither English nor French or who have difficulty accessing justice because of communication impairment. This project has been funded as an initiative of the Law Foundation of Ontario, a grant-making organization that promotes and enhances justice for Ontarians in a multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, fully accessible and inclusive legal services environment.

This agreement (the “Agreement”) outlines the terms of partnership for the following purposes:

- Building capacity within the community health and social services sectors to identify legal issues and provide basic legal information and timely referral for persons who speak neither English nor French and for persons who have a significant communication difficulty as the result of a sensory impairment or a speech or language disorder.
- Promoting collaboration among legal services and other community health and social service organizations.
- Improving opportunities for sharing and exchange.
- Supporting and fostering strong community-based partnerships.

Partners

Until March 31, 2013, the organizations named in “Table 1” have previously agreed to be a “Partner” (collectively referred to as the “Partners” or “the Partnership”) of Connecting Ottawa. It is acknowledged that Connecting Ottawa will invite additional interested organizations to become Partners on a case by case basis.

Timeframe

This Agreement applies from 1 March 2013 to 1 October 2015. It is acknowledged that any Partner to this Agreement may develop other partnership agreements during or after this time for the purposes of other projects with similar or complementary purposes.

Principles Underlying the Partnership

1. Respect, good will, and openness are the principles on which this Partnership is based. We acknowledge that each Partner is important to the success of Connecting Ottawa. We agree that we will approach the Partnership, and each other, on the understanding that we are each participating in good will, and we are committed to sharing ideas and discussing issues in a respectful and open manner.

TABLE 1

COMMUNITY SERVICES	Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO)
211/Community Information Centre of Ottawa	Ottawa Public Library /Immigrant Settlement Partnership
Action-logement	Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre
Carlington Community Health Centre	Somali Centre for Family Services
Centretown Community Health Centre	Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa / Women & War
Distress Centre Ottawa & Region	INTERPRETATION & TRANSLATION SERVICES
Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre	Cultural Interpretation Services for Our Community (CISOC)
Housing Help	LEGAL SERVICES
Nepean Rideau & Osgoode Community Resource Centre	ARCH Disability Law Centre
Orleans-Cumberland Community Resource Centre	Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation (CERA)
Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre	La Clinique juridique francophone de l'Est d'Ottawa
Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre	Community Legal Services Ottawa Centre
Sandy Hill Community Health Centre	Legal Aid Ontario (Ottawa District Office)
Social Planning Council	Reach Canada
Somerset West Community Health Centre	South Ottawa Community Legal Services
South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre	University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic
Vanier Community Service Centre (CSCV)	West End Legal Services
Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre	SERVICES FOR DISABLED PERSONS
IMMIGRANT SERVICES	Aphasia Centre of Ottawa
Catholic Immigration Centre	Canadian Hearing Society
Conseil Économique et Social d'Ottawa-Carleton (CESOC)	Citizen Advocacy
Immigrant Women Services Ottawa	CMHA (Ottawa)

Jewish Family Services	The In Community
Newcomer Information Centre, YM-YWCA	The Ottawa Hospital Rehabilitation Centre
	Stroke Survivors Association

2. In the event of a disagreement or conflict that arises between Partners regarding the terms of this Agreement, we are each committed to working together to find a solution that is acceptable to us individually and to all of other Partners to this Agreement through open and respectful discussion.
3. It is agreed and understood that **South Ottawa Community Legal Services** is the “Lead Partner” for Connecting Ottawa, as the organization that will be accountable under agreements signed with the Law Foundation of Ontario (for funding). It is further agreed and understood that South Ottawa Community Legal Services has the capacity, expertise and commitment to establish and sustain Connecting Ottawa during the term of this Agreement.
4. Notwithstanding the responsibilities ascribed to the Lead Partner, it is agreed and understood that leadership of Connecting Ottawa will be balanced among all participating Partners through the use of self-organizing action groups that will be supported by a Connecting Ottawa “Secretariat.”
5. It is agreed and understood that the Partners are community non-profit organizations that are committed to public interest goals and provide community health, legal and/or social services to communities in the Ottawa region and that these services require, on occasion and as necessary, the timely provision of legal information and referral to legal services for people who are challenged for reasons of language or communication disorder.
6. As Partners, we agree to bring the resources of our respective organizations and commit the time necessary to meet the requirements of Connecting Ottawa, as agreed by all parties, and to be available and responsive to communications from our other Partners. It is expected that it will be necessary for the Partners to meet periodically to discuss progress of Connecting Ottawa and next steps.

Management and Administration of Funds received from the Law Foundation of Ontario

1. South Ottawa Community Legal Services is authorized to sign any required letter of agreement to enter into contractual relationships with the Law Foundation of Ontario (LFO) and will receive and administer the funds for Connecting Ottawa, in accordance with budgets submitted to and approved by the LFO (the “Budget”).
2. South Ottawa Community Legal Services will assume responsibility for financial reporting and administration and all other reporting to the LFO with respect to Connecting Ottawa.
3. South Ottawa Community Legal Services will be responsible for contracting for any services required for Connecting Ottawa, including Secretariat services.
4. All expenses committed to or incurred will be in accordance with the Budget. Partners will not incur expenses for which they expect reimbursement from Connecting Ottawa funds, without approval in advance of the Lead Partner. Invoices for Connecting Ottawa expenses will be submitted to South Ottawa Community Legal Services for payment.

5. South Ottawa Community Legal Services will hold the funds in a general account but maintain separate accounting records for Connecting Ottawa, in which revenues and expenditures will be duly recorded.
6. To reflect the administrative services provided, South Ottawa Community Legal Services will receive a project administration fee that will not exceed 5% of the operating budget.

Roles and Responsibilities of Partners

1. We agree that these aspects of Connecting Ottawa will be conducted in consultation with all Partners:
 - Determining the strategic directions and priorities of Connecting Ottawa.
 - Determining the scope of Connecting Ottawa activities and the timelines for implementing the activities.
 - Setting the goals to be achieved by Connecting Ottawa and approving the indicators for successful goal achievement.
 - Determining the membership of the “Advisory Group”.
 - Determining the resources required for successful goal achievement.
 - Periodically reviewing the progress of Connecting Ottawa implementation and outcomes.
 - Participating in the periodic evaluation of Connecting Ottawa and providing data and feedback as required for this evaluation.
2. Partners may pursue self-interests by taking the initiative to lead and/or participate in self-organizing action groups to further develop Connecting Ottawa implementation strategies. Action group activities will be supported by the Connecting Ottawa Secretariat.
3. Generally, Partners from the Legal Services sector are responsible for providing and presenting the legal information content for Connecting Ottawa.
4. Generally, Partners from the Community Services and Immigration Services sectors are responsible for determining when a person who speaks neither English nor French has an issue with a legal component and referring to a legal service.
5. Generally, Partners from Services to the Disabled Community are responsible for determining when a person who has a significant communication difficulty as the result of a sensory impairment or a speech or language disorder has an issue with a legal component and referring to a legal service. Generally, these same Partners are responsible for supporting access to augmentative devices, interpreters and other communication supports for such persons.
6. Generally, Partners from the Interpretation and Translation sector are responsible for cultural translation and interpretation for persons who speak neither English nor French.

Advisory Group

1. Connecting Ottawa will be supported by an Advisory Group, the primary responsibility of which is stewardship. The Advisory Group members will act as stewards of the public interest and the work that is being undertaken by the Partnership and will not be expected to act as representatives of their organization's interests. The Advisory Group is accountable to the Connecting Ottawa Partners.
2. The composition of the Advisory Group may change over time, as members join or depart according to Connecting Ottawa's cycle and with the expertise required by each stage of Connecting Ottawa. However,
 - a. The Advisory Group will be composed of no fewer than seven (7) persons who will be representative of Partner organizations and of the sectors that provide community services, legal services, immigrant services, interpretation and translation services, and services to disabled persons.
 - b. Partner organizations can propose persons for membership at any time; they may be appointed to the Advisory Group at any time by the Chair. Members would normally be expected to commit to the Advisory Group for at least two years; the Advisory Group shall poll its members at least every two years to confirm their intent to renew their commitment to continued service.
 - c. Membership shall be endorsed annually by Partners, by poll.
3. The Advisory Group will play a key role in overseeing all aspects of Connecting Ottawa implementation, monitoring the progress of projects undertaken, and ensuring that all Partner organizations are appropriately informed about matters that require their active involvement or consultation. Generally, the Connecting Ottawa Advisory Group is responsible for:
 - a. Ensuring that Connecting Ottawa remains focused on its primary purpose and meets the criteria as approved by the funder, the Law Foundation of Ontario.
 - b. Ensuring that Connecting Ottawa makes the best use of its limited assets.
 - c. Assisting with the resolution of issues as they arise.
 - d. Approving or rejecting any changes to Connecting Ottawa that will have a high impact on timelines and budget.
 - e. Assessing Connecting Ottawa progress against the work plan and approved milestones.
 - f. Providing timely advice and guidance to the Connecting Ottawa Secretariat.
 - g. Generally implementing and assisting Connecting Ottawa to achieve its outcomes.

Connecting Ottawa Secretariat

Connecting Ottawa will be coordinated and supported by a Secretariat, a third party intermediary staffed by a person or persons who are familiar with the collaborative work required to achieve the Connecting Ottawa goals but who is not a "Partner". The responsibility of the Secretariat is to support the process of collaboration by guiding planning processes, facilitating meetings, supporting the development of new action groups, seeking funds for joint initiatives, mediating conflict, helping information to flow, and providing administrative support services necessary to build upon the overall capacity of the Partners to work towards successful goal attainment. It is

understood that the Partners will focus on contributing content to Connecting Ottawa and the Secretariat will focus on the collaborative processes that will drive Connecting Ottawa forward.

Conflict Resolution

In the event that any dispute arises in connection with Connecting Ottawa,

- We, as Partners, agree in the first instance to work together in good faith to attempt to negotiate a resolution to the dispute.
- If we are unable to negotiate a resolution, a meeting of the Advisory Group will be convened to determine a process to resolve the dispute.
- The ultimate accountability for the resolution of the disagreement resides with the Lead Partner in consultation with the Connecting Ottawa Secretariat.

Termination

Any Partner is entitled to terminate this Agreement at any time and for any reason by providing notice to the Lead Partner.

Signature

By signing below, we agree to become a Partner in Connecting Ottawa.

Name of Signatory

Name of Partnering Organization

Position

Date

*Gary Stein, Chair, Advisory Group
South Ottawa CLS*

Date