

Case Study for CLC Sector-wide Outcomes Measurement Framework

How IMCL monitors and reports on whether people experiencing disadvantage have increased access to justice

Why IMCL measured the outcomes of the International Students Works Rights Legal Service pilot project

The Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources provided funding to JobWatch and Inner Melbourne Community Legal (**IMCL**) through the International Students welfare Grants Program to run the International Students Work Rights Legal Service (**ISWRLS**) pilot project. The ISWRLS is an integrated service led by JobWatch, in partnership with IMCL and the Student Melbourne Student Centre (**SMSC**). It provides legal support for international students to ensure they are aware of, and are equipped to enforce, their workplace and other legal rights. In addition to delivering generalist and employment community legal education (**CLE**) sessions on-demand to groups of international students, the ISWRLS also provides legal advice consultations with clients, inclusive of casework and representation when required.

In the first instance, eligible clients with workplace legal issues were referred directly to the JobWatch lawyer. In recognition of the multi-faceted and intersecting legal issues that can arise in the workplace, the IMCL generalist lawyer was also present to provide legal advice and support on the secondary legal issues. If, during the course of the primary consultation, the JobWatch lawyer identified other unresolved legal problems outside of the primary work-related problem, the student was then referred to the generalist lawyer for a secondary consultation. IMCL agreed to provide an evaluation report at the end of the six month pilot program that ran from 25th May 2016 to the 25th of November 2016. IMCL developed an evaluation framework to identify to what extent the ISWRLS was reaching its objectives. The evaluation intended to provide information about the experiences of international students who have used the legal service, which will help inform and develop Victoria's capacity to respond to the legal needs of international students.

Indicators IMCL developed to help measure the outcomes of the ISWRLS legal consultations

The indicators that IMCL developed and the related indicators in the Sector-wide Outcomes Measurement Framework are outlined below.

IMCL Indicators	Related indicators in sector framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of students of would not have seen a lawyer if not for ISWRLS service • % of students who sought legal assistance from ISWRLS prior to significant escalation of their legal issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 1.1a Disadvantage profile: Number and % of people accessing legal assistance by type and level of disadvantage • Indicator 1.1b Mode of initial access: Number and % of people accessing legal assistance by mode of initial access • <i>Other possibilities for data collection (under Outcome 1.1):</i> % of service users who sought legal assistance from CLC prior to significant escalation of their legal issue(s).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of students who were satisfied with the assistance received 	<p>See indicators about people’s experience of the service and understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 1.2a Understanding of legal issues: % of service users who report that they better understand their legal issue following legal assistance • Indicator 1.3a Better informed decisions: % of clients who report they were able to make a better informed decision about how to handle their legal issue(s) following legal assistance • Indicator 1.3b Feel heard: % of service users who report feeling heard following legal assistance

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of students who would recommend the service to other international students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 5.3c Likelihood to refer others: % of CLC clients who report they are likely to refer a friend or family member with legal issues to the CLC
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How IMCL measured the identified indicators

Post surveys were completed by both students and lawyers immediately after the legal consultation. The survey contained a mix of quantitative and open ended qualitative questions. Quantitative survey questions involved multiple choice and likert scaling from 1-4 (no; not really; yes, a little; Yes, a lot). This data was entered into excel spreadsheets to be effectively analysed and summarised.

In order to ensure the survey was understood, it was tailored to the target group. The survey was kept brief, using easy to understand English.

Students were asked:

- How did you find out about this service?
- Do you understand the legal issues after talking to your lawyer?
- Do you know what the next steps to deal with the problem?
- Would you have seen the lawyer if they had not been at Study Melbourne?
- Were you satisfied with the assistance you received today?
- Where do you study?
- How long have you been studying in Australia
- Are there any other comments you would like to make?

IMCL and JobWatch also collected basic background and demographic data, such as:

- Number of students attending each CLE session,
- Gender, Country of Birth, Number of years spent in Australia, Current occupation,
- First language and if interpreters were required

What IMCL found out:

A total of 70 Students were provided with legal advice. 67 international student client surveys were completed and 69 lawyer surveys were completed. IMCL found that the ISWRLS had impacts for its clients and service.

Service impact findings	Related Sector Outcomes Measurement Framework indicators that could be used to help generate similar findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISWRLS reached its intended target group of international students with students from over 22 different countries, speaking 18 different languages • There was a relatively even split between females (55%) and males (44%) • 44% of international students that sought legal advice at the ISWRLS had been in Australia for less than 1 year and 80% of ISWRLS clients had been living in Australia for less than 2 years. • 70% of ISWRLS clients that sought assistance were working in Hospitality and Cleaning industries • 14.5% of ISWRLS clients required a telephone interpreter for the purposes of obtaining legal advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 1.1a Disadvantage profile: Number and % of people accessing legal assistance by type and level of disadvantage • Indicator 1.1b Mode of initial access: Number and % of people accessing legal assistance by mode of initial access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISWRLS had an extensive reach as it provided free legal assistance to students from over 30 different tertiary institutions. 44% of students found the ISWRLS through word of mouth and 29% through Study Melbourne. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 2.4d: Enquiries following information provision: % of enquiries received by CLC that result from information previously provided by a CLC

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ISWRLS Facebook page was only set up in the last month of the pilot program. Communications analysis indicated that in 32 days, the page received 454 likes, 1085 active page clicks, and had appeared on 258,796 people's Facebook feed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator 4.2a Digital advocacy reach: Number of people directly reached by digital advocacy conducted by CLC, by issue and digital platform
<p>Client impact findings</p>	<p>Related Sector Outcomes Measurement Framework indicators that could be used to help generate similar findings</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The legal clinic was beneficial to students, as 42.2% of clients said they would not have seen a lawyer if not for the onsite clinic at Study Melbourne 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (In the context of reaching priority client group) 1.1b Mode of initial access: Number and % of people accessing legal assistance by mode of initial access. <u>However</u>, further data would need to be captured beyond this indicator to generate similar findings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of legal issues experienced by ISWRLS clients were related to wages and underpayment (76.7%). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A – none of the indicators solely looks at type of legal issue, but type of legal issue is a component of many of the indicators.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lawyers reported that in 81.2% of cases their clients sought legal advice soon after their legal problem arose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Other possibilities for data collection (under Outcome 1.1):</i> % of service users who sought legal assistance from CLC prior to significant escalation of their legal issue(s). See also, Indicator 1.1c Wait time: Average wait time for assistance by service type and type of legal issue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, 97% of clients understood their legal issues better 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator 1.2a Understanding of legal issues: % of service users who report that they better understand their legal issue(s) following legal assistance

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% were knew the next steps to deal with their legal problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator 1.3a Better informed decisions: % of service users who report they were able to make a better informed decision about how to handle their legal issue(s) following legal assistance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 98.5% of clients would recommend the service to other international students of a similar position and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator 5.3c Likelihood to refer others: % of CLC clients who report they are likely to refer a friend or family member with legal issues to the CLC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 97% of clients were satisfied with the assistance received 	<p>See indicators about people’s experience of the service and understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> , e.g: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator 1.3b Feel heard: % of service users who report feeling heard following legal assistance

Project limitations:

- IMCL assisted two clients during the pilot project in relation to complaints against the education providers. The low number of referrals to the generalist lawyer at IMCL suggests that the referral and intake criteria were too restrictive. Furthermore, the feedback received from the CLE sessions indicated that international students wished to know about a range of legal topics outside of employment law, such as personal safety, fines, consumer law, housing and tenancy, public transport and driving.

What IMCL did with the information:

Based on the findings of the project, IMCL made several recommendations to improve the long-term success of the ISWRLS and similar programs.

- Because the target audience were multilingual and 14.5% of ISWLS clients required interpreters, the production of multilingual factsheets, succinct client stories and other online resources focused on avoiding workplace exploitation was recommended.

- As 80% of the ISWLS clients who sought legal help had been living in Australia for less than 2 years, it was recommended to consider more efficient ways of reaching newly arrived international students. For example by targeting English providers for CLE sessions and promoting the ISWRLS on relevant Facebook pages
- Given that there is much potential to promote awareness of the ISWRLS through social media, it was recommended that the communications be managed, developed and distributed by a single source and that Twitter, Wechat and Weibo accounts be created for the ISWRLS.
- Informed by the CLE feedback and due to the low number of referrals to the generalist IMCL lawyer, it was recommended that the referral and intake criteria be expanded so that international students can be referred for generalist law assistance without the prerequisite of an employment law problem.
- To provide ongoing feedback and improvements, it was also recommended to consider regular training and updates to be provided to relevant stakeholders, including staff in educational institutions and international student associations, via governance group meetings and other informal mechanisms.

How IMCL reported on the results:

IMCL submitted an evaluation report to the Department which provided findings, analysis and key recommendations for continued success and improvement of the program. IMCL continues to refer to its evaluation capacity in funding applications to demonstrate the need and impact for the on-site legal clinic for international students. IMCL has recently offered funding by The Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources to further progress its work in protecting the legal rights of international students.

Want to know more about this?: You can contact the Evaluation Project Officer, **Kira Lee** at Inner Melbourne Community Legal on kira.lee@imcl.org.au