

ACTIVITY REPORT: October – December 2016

Overview

During this period the Panel published the findings of its annual Tracker Survey which showed disparity in the experiences of Black and Ethnic Minorities users of legal services. The key findings were:

- BME users are less satisfied with both the service they receive and the outcome of their matter than White British users.
- BME groups shopped around more and were less likely to use the same lawyer as before, but were less satisfied with the choice on offer and found it more difficult to compare.
- BME groups were less likely to use fixed fees, and more likely to receive a free service; similarly 9% BME used legal aid compared to 2% of White British.
- Levels of trust remain lower among BME users than White British.

The Panel also published a joint piece of research with the legal regulators to help providers of legal services identify principles for improved communication with their clients.

The Panel had its planning meeting in December where it began to discuss the focus of its work plan for 2017/18.

Update on planned projects

Project	Activity
Tracker Survey	The Panel published two briefing papers on the experiences of Welsh, and Black and Ethnic Minority users of legal services.
Consumer vulnerability	The Panel published joint research with the legal regulators on how to improve communication to consumers, including vulnerable consumers.
Open data	A panel member participated in a Panel Session at the SRA's Compliance Officer Conference about the benefits of Open Data.
Consumer Segmentation	In the new year the Panel will publish its policy paper on the importance of segmenting consumers for better understanding of their needs, risk identification, and developing solutions.
Information Remedies	The Panel has been commissioned by the LSB to advice on the effectiveness of information remedies in the legal services sector.

Update on unplanned work

Consultation responses:

- LSB – Panel response to LSB’s consultation on revised guidance for regulators on diversity

Selected external events/meetings: The Chair attended and participated at the Litigant in person support strategy and the Civil Justice Council’s National Forum on Litigants in Person. The Panel co-hosted/participated in a regional event (Manchester) which was tailored towards improved engagement with providers of legal services. The Panel attended the Legal Wales Network Conference.

The Panel had a meeting with the Legal Ombudsman to discuss their KPI’s.

Future activity

The focus over the next few months will be on transition matters as the Panel welcomes and inducts its new Chair Dr Jane Martins. The Panel will also begin to consolidate its three year strategy with a focus on continuation in its 2017/18 work plan.

Presentations: The Panel is scheduled to attend and speak at Modern Law’s Conveyancing Conference 2017.

Consultation responses: the Panel will continue to respond to consultation reports that fit its prioritisation criteria and is within scope.

December 2016