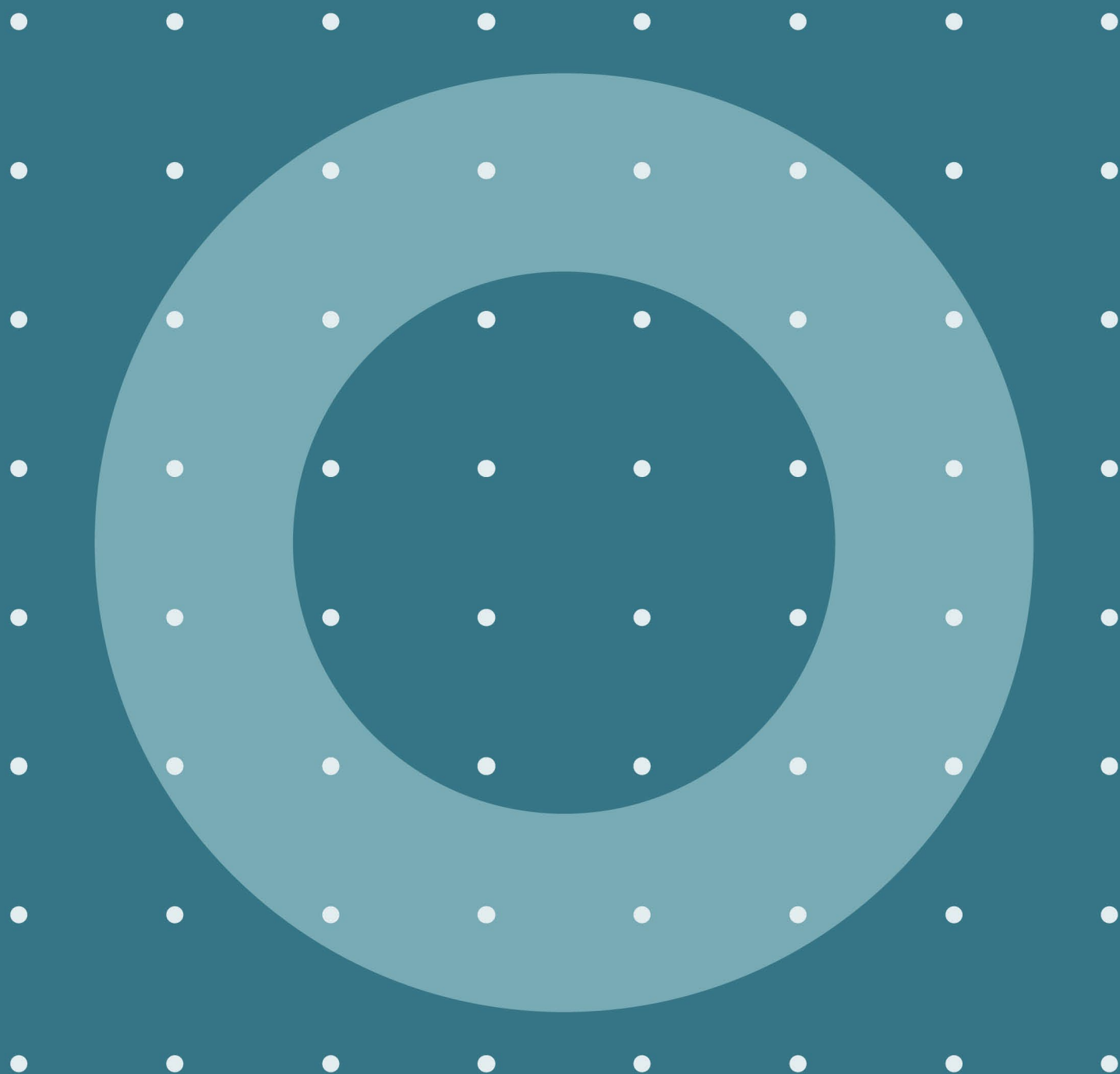


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Legal Aid NSW Client Satisfaction
Condensed Report 2023

Foreword

This study was conducted by Lonergan Research on behalf of Legal Aid New South Wales between August and October 2023.

It covers Lonergan's approach to the collection of information using quantitative surveying online and in a CATI environment.

For more information on this report, or the Legal Aid NSW Satisfaction study, please contact phil@lonergan.team



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Executive Summary

Legal Aid NSW continued to achieve high levels of satisfaction in 2023, consistent with results from 2019 and 2021. These scores were driven by Legal Aid's ability to deal with its clients' issues in a timely manner, coupled with the lawyers' politeness and respectful way of listening to clients and providing helpful advice.

Administration and reception staff also played a key role in keeping clients happy by explaining the services that Legal Aid NSW could offer.

In-house lawyers were seen to provide a more satisfactory service than assigned private lawyers, but a large majority of clients agreed that having ongoing assistance from a lawyer made their legal situation better.

Initial pain points for clients trying to access Legal Aid were; being told that they didn't qualify for legal aid, not being able to get through to the right staff, staff being unhelpful or having to wait too long to speak to someone.

Clients with personal or cultural needs, those with a disability, and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders were less likely to be satisfied than other clients. The aspects of the service that were most likely to drive dissatisfaction were a lack of sensitivity towards them, and an inability to meet their specific needs.

Overall satisfaction with Legal Aid NSW

82% of clients were satisfied/highly satisfied with Legal Aid NSW's overall performance in 2023. This was statistically consistent with the results from 2019 and 2021 (cf. 84% in 2019; 81% in 2021). However, there was a slight increase in the average satisfaction score, from 7.9 in 2021 to 8.1 in 2023.

Clients with in-house lawyers were more likely to be more satisfied overall than those assigned private lawyers (87% in-house; cf. 81% assigned). 56% of clients with in-house lawyers gave the maximum 10 out of 10 score for overall satisfaction with Legal Aid, compared to 47% for those with assigned lawyers.

Clients with civil law cases were the most satisfied with Legal Aid's overall performance (89%) followed by criminal (84%) and family (80%).

Overall satisfaction with Legal Aid was lower for clients that had a disability or had other personal or cultural needs (clients with a disability satisfaction 73%; cf. 84% without. 73% with personal or cultural needs; cf. 85% without).

The most important driver of overall satisfaction by far was the timeliness that Legal Aid dealt with the client's legal issue. 77% of clients were satisfied with the timeliness in 2023, with 66% stating they were highly satisfied. There was no significant variation in the satisfaction with timeliness compared to 2021.

Aside from timeliness, the next most important drivers of overall satisfaction relied on the lawyers' performance across a wide range of metrics, and the admin and reception staff's ability to explain the services that Legal Aid NSW could provide.

Lawyer performance

Outside of timeliness, the lawyer's performance is the most important aspect of the overall service provided by Legal Aid NSW. Three quarters (74%) of clients were highly satisfied with their lawyer's overall performance in 2023, and more than half (54%) gave the maximum satisfaction score of 10 out of 10. This was an indicative improvement from 2021 (71% highly satisfied) and 2019 (72%).

Clients were more satisfied with their In-house lawyers compared to lawyers assigned from a private practice (88% satisfied in-house; cf. 81% assigned). The in-house lawyers outperformed the assigned lawyers on most metrics, including the ability to listen and communicate effectively, be helpful, polite, and respectful, and inspiring confidence in the lawyer's ability.

The lawyers performed well with their politeness and respectfulness, their ability to listen to the client's legal problem, the helpfulness of the advice, and instilled confidence with the advice they gave.

There was a relatively high level of dissatisfaction with the sensitivity in responding to clients' personal and cultural needs (23% of people who had personal or cultural needs were dissatisfied in 2023; cf. 27% in 2021; cf. 17% in 2019) and for those who needed adjustments made due to them having a disability (24% of clients with a disability in 2023; cf. 26% in 2021; cf. 19% in 2019).

Three quarters (74%) of clients with personal or cultural needs agreed that their lawyer met their specific needs, up from 69% in 2021 and 71% in 2019.

In-house lawyers were more likely to meet client's personal or cultural needs (83%) compared to assigned lawyers (70%).

Almost three in five (58%) clients received a service from their lawyer that exceeded their expectations, while over one in ten (13%) did not have their service expectations met. This was a significant improvement from 2021 (52% better/much better than expected) and 2019 (53%).

The key ways for lawyers to improve their clients satisfaction were in helping the client understand the type of assistance available, and communication – keeping the client informed throughout the process. These metrics were of above average importance for clients but scored below average satisfaction scores.

Administration and reception staff

80% of clients were satisfied with Legal Aid NSW administrative and reception staff (cf. 83% in 2021; 79% in 2019), and more than two in five (46%) gave the maximum score of 10/10.

Clients were most satisfied with the listening skills of administrative and reception staff (70% highly satisfied in 2023; cf. 72% in 2021), followed by the respect and sensitivity they received from staff (69% in 2023; cf. 73% in 2021) and the quality of explanations from staff on what the client needed to do (68% in 2023; cf. 72% in 2021).

Clients with personal and cultural needs were dissatisfied with not being shown appropriate sensitivity regarding their culture, and sensitivity and awareness of their specific needs (both 19% of those with a personal or cultural need were dissatisfied), while 23% of clients with a

disability expressed dissatisfaction with the staff's responsiveness to making adjustments because of their disability.

Grants division staff

A quarter (25%) of clients spoke to someone from the Grants division, and more than three quarters (78%) were satisfied with the department's overall performance. This was an indicative improvement from 2021 (77%) and 2019 (75%). The proportion of respondents who gave the maximum satisfaction score of 10 increased significantly in 2023 (43%; cf. 2021 34%, 2019 31%).

Most aspects of the grants staff service performed well, but there was a decline in the department's ability to meet personal or cultural needs, which has declined since 2019. The proportion of clients highly satisfied with Grants division staff's sensitivity in responding appropriately to meet their personal or cultural needs dropped from 63% in 2019 to 57% in 2021 and 56% in 2023. There has also been a corresponding increase in dissatisfaction with this aspect of service (2023 25%; cf. 2021 24%, 2019 20%).

Access to Legal Aid NSW

16% of clients experienced at least one barrier when they first sought help from Legal Aid NSW, with the most common issue being that the client was initially told that they did not qualify for aid (31% of those who had a problem).

Almost three quarters (72%) of clients found their lawyer's office was easily accessible, 14% disagreed and another 14% were unsure. Clients with a private lawyer were significantly more likely to either disagree or strongly disagree that their lawyer's office was easy to get to (16%; cf. in-house 9%).

Only 57% of clients with a disability responded that their lawyer's office was easy to access, significantly less than those without a disability (74%).

Almost nine in ten (88%) clients agreed or strongly agreed that it was easy to contact Legal Aid NSW when first needing help (cf. 86% in 2021; 90% in 2019). Only just under one in ten (8%) did not feel that first contacting Legal Aid NSW was easy, this has remained statistically constant since 2019.

Expected outcomes

More than half (53%) of the clients expected a good or very good outcome from their case, with civil case clients most likely to have their expectations met (61% good/very good) compared to criminal (58%) and family cases (49%). These outcomes correspond with the overall satisfaction levels for these case types. Clients with a disability were also less likely to expect a good outcome (46%) compared to those without a disability (54%).

Impacts of having ongoing support from a Legal Aid NSW lawyer

Four in five (80%) clients believed that having an ongoing lawyer from Legal Aid NSW has improved their legal situation (*somewhat + much better*). This is a significant increase in performance from 2021 (75%), but statistically similar to the 2019 result (79%).

Clients with a disability and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders clients were less likely to see their legal situation improve due to having ongoing support from a Legal Aid lawyer.

73% of clients with a disability said their situation was *somewhat* or *much better* (cf. 82% without a disability), and 76% of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander clients stated the same (cf. 81% non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander clients).

Impacts of receiving help from Legal Aid NSW on specific aspects of a client's life

82% of clients said that the service they had received from Legal Aid had led to an improvement in at least one aspect of their life (based on a fixed list of 7 aspects).

Clients with a disability were less likely to acknowledge that receiving legal aid had helped in any aspects of their life (75%; cf. 84% without a disability), with a similar result for clients who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (77%; cf. 84% non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander).

The most likely impacts on specific aspects of a client's life were an improvement in the understanding of the client's legal problem and situation (70% said it was better), confidence in dealing with their problem (66%), ability to carry on with day-to-day activities, their level of safety and security and levels of stress or anxiety (56%, 54% and 53% respectively).

However, there has been a steady decline in the performance of all the outcomes that were tested since 2019.

Clients with personal or cultural needs

20% of clients said they had a personal or cultural need that Legal Aid NSW needed to consider when providing them assistance.

Of the 20% of clients who indicated a personal or cultural need, 70% agreed that Legal Aid NSW met these specific needs, with 30% strongly agreeing that their personal or cultural needs were met. Just under a quarter (23%) of clients *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that their personal or cultural needs were met by Legal Aid NSW. There has been an indicative decline in the proportion of clients that disagreed or strongly disagreed in previous studies, from 28% in 2019 and 24% in 2021.

The most common personal or cultural need identified by clients was having a disability, including a mental health condition, physical disability, learning disability, neurodiversity, or a sensory disability.

One in five clients with a personal or cultural need responded that they needed an interpreter (20%), were experiencing violence at home, in school or at work (18%) or had carers' responsibilities (18%). Only two thirds (66%) of clients with a disability either agreed or strongly agreed that Legal Aid NSW met their specific needs.

Clients who identified as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander were significantly more likely to have mentioned a personal or cultural need that Legal Aid NSW needed to consider (28%; cf. non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander clients 18%).

Those who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and had personal or cultural needs were significantly less likely to agree that these needs were met by Legal Aid NSW (56%; cf. non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander clients with personal or cultural needs 74%). More than a third (35%) Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander clients with specific needs disagreed or strongly disagreed that Legal Aid NSW met these needs, an increase from 23% in 2021.

Clients with a disability

16% of the clients surveyed identified as having a disability, half (54%) of those clients indicated that they had a mental or psychiatric disability, 31% had a mobility or other physical disability, 20% had a learning or reading disability and 18% had a chronic illness.

76% of clients with a disability stated that Legal Aid NSW staff handled their accessibility needs *very well* or *well enough*, an increase from 24% in 2021, but statistically similar to 62% in 2019. However, one in four (24%) said the staff underperformed, handling their accessibility need very badly, poorly or not quite well enough. This was significantly lower than 2019 (32%) and 2021 (61%).

Clients who felt their accessibility needs were met well were significantly more likely to be satisfied overall with Legal Aid NSW (87%; cf. accessibility needs not met 27%).

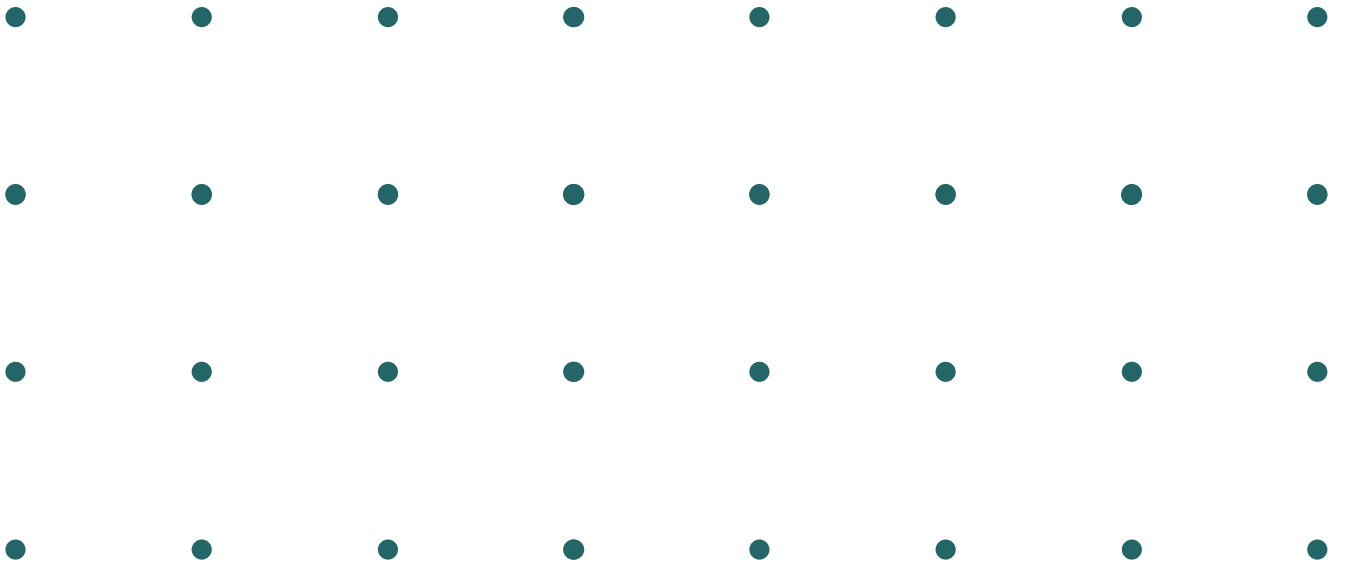
One in five (20%) clients with a disability who did not have their accessibility needs met mentioned that this was due to not being able to understand the information and advice they were given. 17% responded that they were not asked what they needed to be able to access the service, or that Legal Aid NSW staff did not understand their disability.

Future usage

Nearly 9 in 10 (88%) Legal Aid NSW clients reported that they know where to get legal help in the future if they needed it, but this decreased to 80% for clients with a disability.

More than 8 in 10 (86%) clients agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend Legal Aid NSW to other people. 8% of clients disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, with the remainder unsure. The likelihood to recommend among clients with a disability was significantly less at 78%.

This total recommendation score of 86% remained consistent with 2021 but was less than the 92% in 2019.



Section 01

1. Introduction



1.1. Historical comparisons

Legal Aid NSW has conducted client satisfaction surveys biennially since 2005. The survey collects data on client satisfaction, informs on performance and provides insight on how Legal Aid NSW can improve its services. The research measures current satisfaction levels with various aspects of Legal Aid NSW services, including satisfaction with the lawyer, accessibility of the service and accommodation of client needs. This document reports on and analyses all findings from the 2023 survey.

Comparisons of key performance metrics are made with findings of previous surveys, however the nature of clients who are included in the survey has changed over time. From 2005 – 2015, the surveys canvassed clients who received legal advice from Legal Aid NSW.

In 2017 Legal Aid NSW surveyed clients with ongoing legal representation by in-house lawyers under a grant of aid (grants clients), however advice clients were not included. In 2019, the scope was expanded to include grants clients who were serviced by both in-house and private practice lawyers. In 2021, for the first time, the scope of the survey included advice clients, and grants clients serviced by in-house and private practice lawyers.

In 2023, the survey returned to focus purely on clients with ongoing representation serviced by in-house and private lawyers. Therefore, comparisons over time differ depending on the client segment of interest. Generally, the following analyses are made:

- All clients, and targeted subgroups are examined within 2023 data
- Advice clients are excluded from the analysis and comparisons within the 2021 data.
- As this report focuses only on clients with representation (either a grant of aid , Extended Legal Assistance or Early Resolution Assistance, comparisons to results prior to 2019 are not included due to the change in sample composition

Figure 1: Client types surveyed by year

Year	Advice clients	In-house grants clients	Assigned grants clients
2005–2015	✓		
2017		✓	
2019		✓	✓
2021	✓	✓	✓
2023		✓	✓

Please note that the questionnaire has evolved over time, and not all questions were asked in all years. A full list of questions from the online survey are included in **Appendix B**.

1.2. Definition of Terminology

These terms will frequently appear throughout the report, and are defined as follows:

Satisfaction

- **Highly satisfied:** Score of 8–10 out of 10
- **Satisfied:** Score of 6–10 out of 10
- **Dissatisfied:** Score of 0–4 out of 10

Statistical relevance

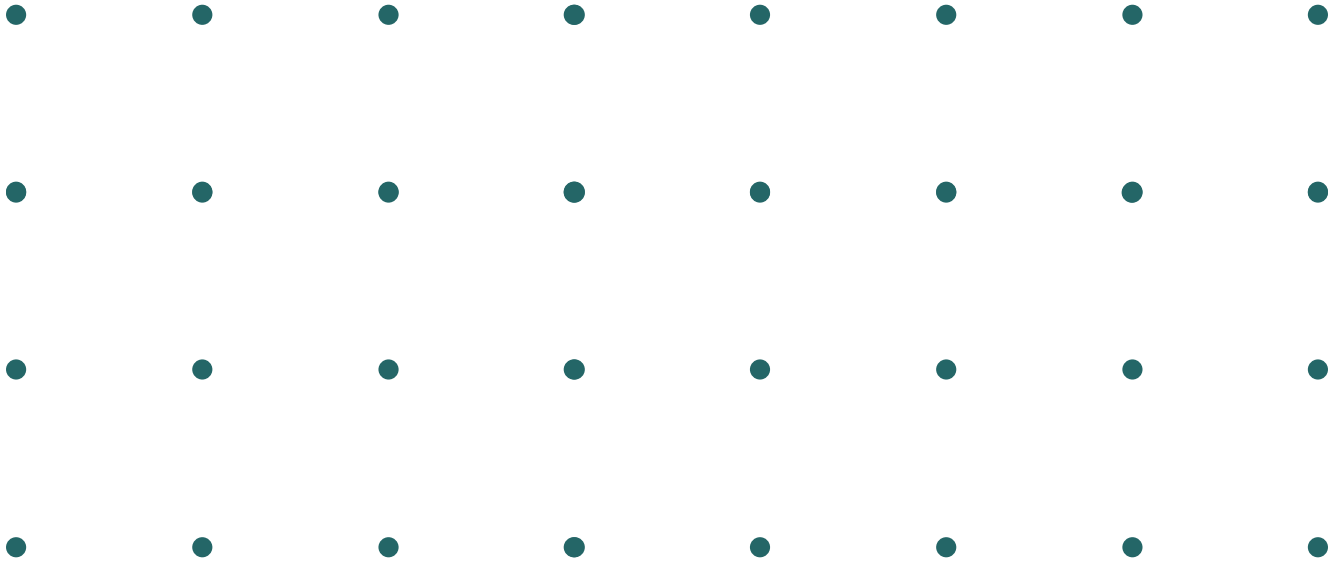
- **Significant:** Denotes that two data points are statistically significant in their variation
- **Indicative:** Denotes that data points do not differ in a statistically significant way, but are likely to indicate a trend have a high likelihood of variation

Sample sizes

- **Client base:** The client database of n=10,976 unique and viable client records derived from n=16,755 case records provided by Legal Aid NSW in 2023
- **Survey sample:** The n=2,014 clients that completed an online survey or CATI interview in 2023
- **CATI sample** (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview): The n=505 clients that completed the survey over the phone with an interviewer in 2023
- **Online sample:** The n=1,509 clients that completed the survey through an online portal, either on a computer or mobile device, in 2023

Legal assistance

- **Advice clients:** Clients who received a one-off legal advice service with a lawyer
- **Grants clients:** Clients who received a grant of aid that enables ongoing legal representation from a lawyer
- **In-house:** A subset of grant clients who were assigned to a lawyer employed by Legal Aid NSW
- **Assigned:** A subset of grant clients who were assigned to private lawyer through a Legal Aid NSW grant of assistance
- **ELA** (Extended Legal Assistance): Additional assistance that can be provided for clients with complex needs or vulnerable clients engaged in civil legal matters with in-house Legal Aid representation that focuses on early resolution.
- **ERA** (Early Resolution Assistance): Legal representation provided to a person participating in an established, independent family law dispute resolution process and is available to applicants who satisfy the eligibility policies.



Section 02

2. Methodology



2.1. Client database

Legal Aid NSW provided a list of n=16,755 records of unique cases that qualified for Lonergan to contact. This list excluded certain specified jurisdictions, client characteristics, inactive and older files, and other criteria¹.

The list was not unique by client, with some clients having multiple concurrent or simultaneous cases within the client base. To prevent a client being asked multiple times to complete a survey, the list was condensed down to a list of n=10,976 unique clients. When clients with multiple cases were approached to complete the survey, they were asked to select which case they would like to answer question on.

Figure 2: Client database composition (n=16,755 case records)

Segment	Count of records	% of client base
Lawyer type		
In-house	n=3,309	20%
Assigned	n=13,446	80%
Case Type		
Civil	n=743	4%
Criminal	n=6,808	41%
Family	n=9,204	55%
Assistance Service Type		
Early resolution assistance	n=3,511	21%
Extended legal assistance	n=475	3%
Grants	n=12,769	76%
Gender		
Male	n=8,544	51%
Female	n=8,193	49%
Not identified	n=18	<1%
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	n=3,406	20%
Interpreter required	n=890	5%

2.2. Fieldwork

In 2023, the survey methodology continued with the 2021 approach, using a mixed methodology of telephone and online surveying. A CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) methodology was used for the telephone components, where human operators administer the survey, however, computers manage the scripts displays, skips, survey flow and validation of survey responses upon data entry.

Our approach was largely online, with n=1,509 of the n=2,014 completed surveys conducted online, and n=505 surveys completed via CATI.

¹ Clients who were under 18, were in custody or who were flagged as unsafe to contact were removed from the list

The response rate based on the number of unique individuals who received an invite to complete a survey was 18%, with the fieldwork period running from 14th August to 30th October 2023.

2.2.1. Three modal approach to data collection

Lonergan approached Legal Aid NSW clients by email, SMS and telephone, depending on the information available. Our approach and priority is summarised in the figure below.

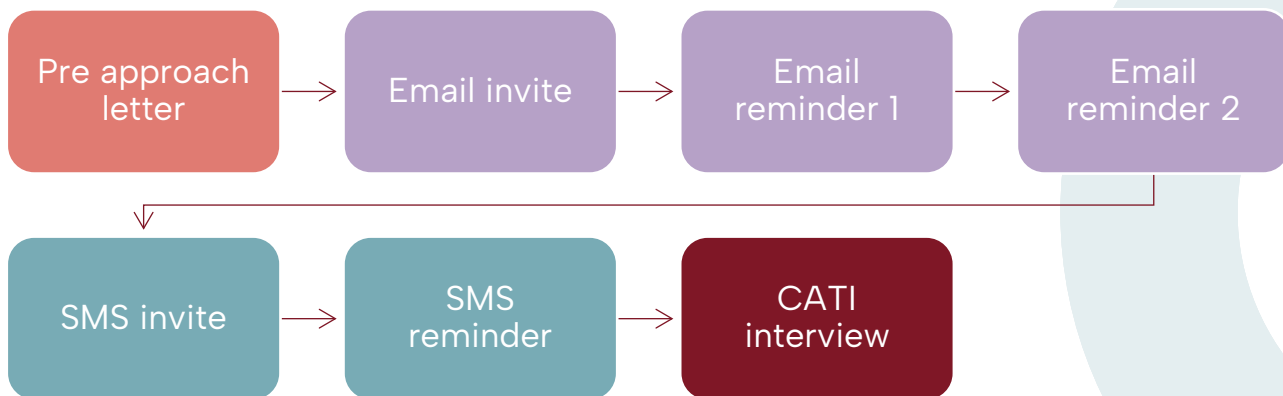
To assist in the management of the fieldwork, the client base was divided into 6 batches of approximately equal size. Batches 2-5 were completely randomised samples of the client base, whereas batch 1 was a random selection that was supplemented with all the records that did not have an email address or an SMS capable phone number. The records without an email or mobile number were prioritised to be interviewed over the phone.

Throughout the fieldwork process, clients would receive a PAL, followed by an email invite one week later with a link to complete the survey. Two email invite reminders were sent out over the following week.

On the third week after the PAL was sent, they would receive an SMS invite with a link to complete the online survey, followed by one SMS reminder 2 days later. Clients that did not complete a survey online after 4 weeks were then called by a telephone interviewer to complete via CATI. At the CATI stage, there was an additional option for the interviewer to send an email or SMS invite to the client should they wish to complete the survey online.

At each stage the client was given the option to opt out of receiving further invites or calls from Lonergan. Any client that either completed the survey, or opted out of communications were not contacted again.

Figure 3: Three modal approach to data collection



2.2.2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Whilst quotas were not set on the proportion of the sample who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, Lonergan monitored this to ensure proportional representation to the Legal Aid NSW client base. Lonergan conducted n=364 interviews with clients who identified as being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, which was 18% of completed surveys.

The use of CATI interviewing enabled Lonergan to achieve high representation of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, who are typically less likely to engage with online surveys. 36% of completed surveys for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders were completed via CATI, compared to 23% of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander clients.

2.3. Weighting

The final dataset was weighted to be representative of the total client base of Legal Aid NSW, to a profile derived from the entire Legal Aid NSW client base provided. The target weights as depicted in Figure 4 were used, and all weighted data throughout the report will be consistent and proportional to the client breakdown in figure 4.

Figure 4: Weighted targets (population)

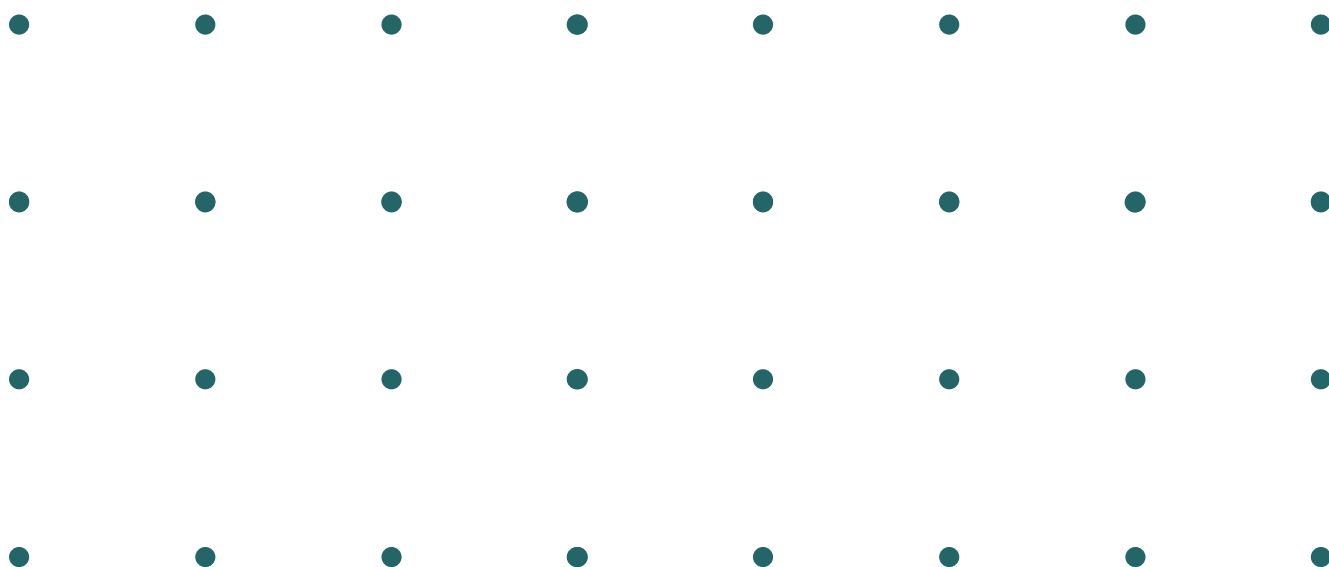
Service type	Assigned	Civil law	Criminal law	Family law
Early resolution assistance	Assigned	-	-	3,183
	In-house	-	-	328
Extended legal assistance	In-house	434	-	41
Grants	Assigned	90	5,066	5,107
	In-house	219	1,742	545

Figure 5: Completed surveys

Service type	Assigned	Civil law	Criminal law	Family law
Early resolution assistance	Assigned	-	-	463
	In-house	-	-	61
Extended legal assistance	In-house	91	-	9
Grants	Assigned	19	352	703
	In-house	54	167	95

Figure 6: Incidence of completed surveys

Service type	Assigned	Civil law	Criminal law	Family law
Early resolution assistance	Assigned	-	-	15%
	In-house	-	-	19%
Extended legal assistance	In-house	21%	-	22%
Grants	Assigned	21%	7%	14%
	In-house	25%	10%	17%



Section 03

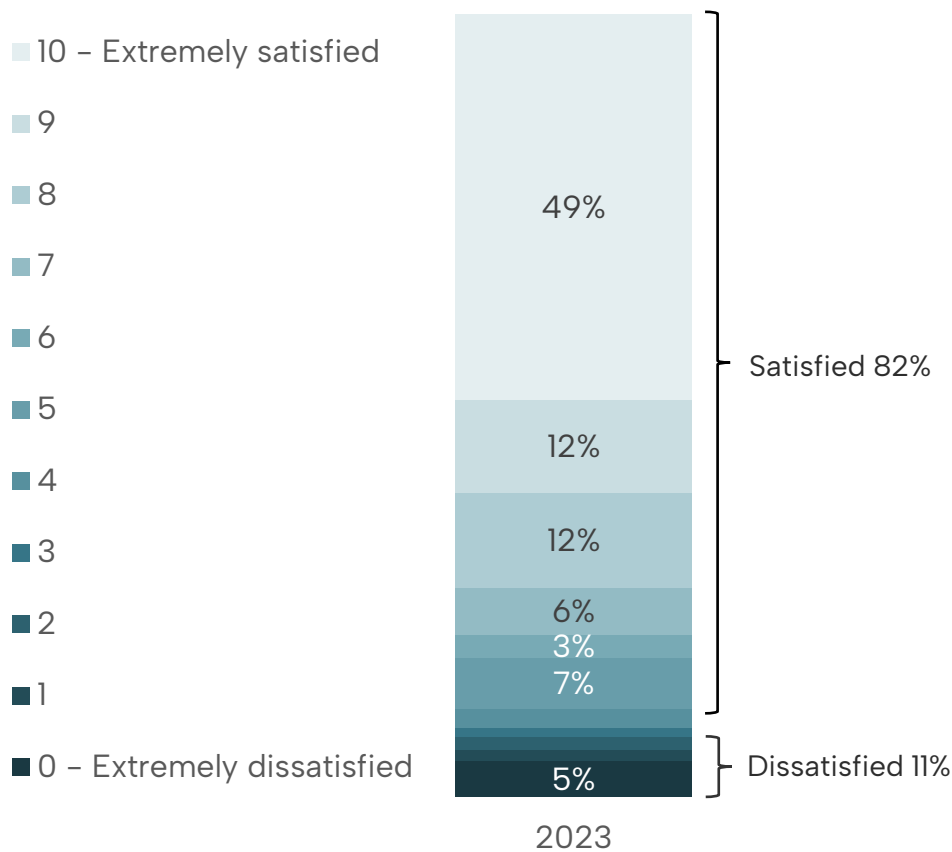
3. Overall Satisfaction with Legal Aid NSW



3.1. Satisfaction with service received

Overall satisfaction with Legal Aid NSW continues to remain high, with over 4 in 5 (82%) of clients *satisfied* (rating 6–10/10) with the service they have received so far. The average satisfaction rating given was 8.1/10, a small increase from 2021 (7.9/10). Nearly three-quarters (73%) of Legal Aid NSW clients were *highly satisfied* (rating 8–10/10) with the service they had received. Only one in ten (11%) of clients were *dissatisfied* (0–4/10), while half (49%) of clients rated the service received from Legal Aid NSW the maximum score of 10/10.

Figure 7: Satisfaction with service received so far from Legal Aid NSW



Q34. On a scale from zero to ten, where zero means very dissatisfied and ten means very satisfied, how satisfied are you with the service you have received so far from Legal Aid NSW?
 Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014). Values of less than 3% are not labelled.

Satisfaction higher among clients receiving service from in-house lawyers

Clients who received services from an in-house lawyer were more *satisfied* (6–10/10) (87%) than those who were assigned a private lawyer (81%). The average satisfaction rating among clients with in-house lawyers was significantly higher (8.5) than those with a lawyer assigned from a private practice (8.0).

Figure 8: Overall satisfaction by client type

	Total	Lawyer type	
		Assigned	In-house
Highly satisfied (8-10)	73%	72%	78%
Moderately satisfied (5-7)	16%	16%	14%
Dissatisfied (0-4)	11%	12%	9%
Satisfied (6-10)	82%	81%	87%
Average rating	8.1	8.0	8.5

Q34. On a scale from zero to ten, where zero means very dissatisfied and ten means very satisfied, how satisfied are you with the service you have received so far from Legal Aid NSW?
 Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014); Assigned (n=1,537); In-house (n=477)

Higher satisfaction amongst civil law clients

Clients receiving services from Legal Aid NSW for civil cases had higher satisfaction levels than those receiving services for criminal or family law cases. 9 in 10 (89%) civil law clients were *satisfied* with the service they had received so far, compared to 84% of criminal law clients and 80% of family law clients.

Figure 9: Overall satisfaction by law type

	Total	Law type		
		Civil	Criminal	Family
Highly satisfied (8-10)	72%	78%	75%	71%
Moderately satisfied (5-7)	16%	16%	15%	16%
Dissatisfied (0-4)	11%	7%	10%	13%
Satisfied (6-10)	82%	89%	84%	80%
Average rating	8.1	8.7	8.2	7.9

Q34. On a scale from zero to ten, where zero means very dissatisfied and ten means very satisfied, how satisfied are you with the service you have received so far from Legal Aid NSW?
 Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014); Civil (n=164); Criminal (n=519); Family (n=1,331)

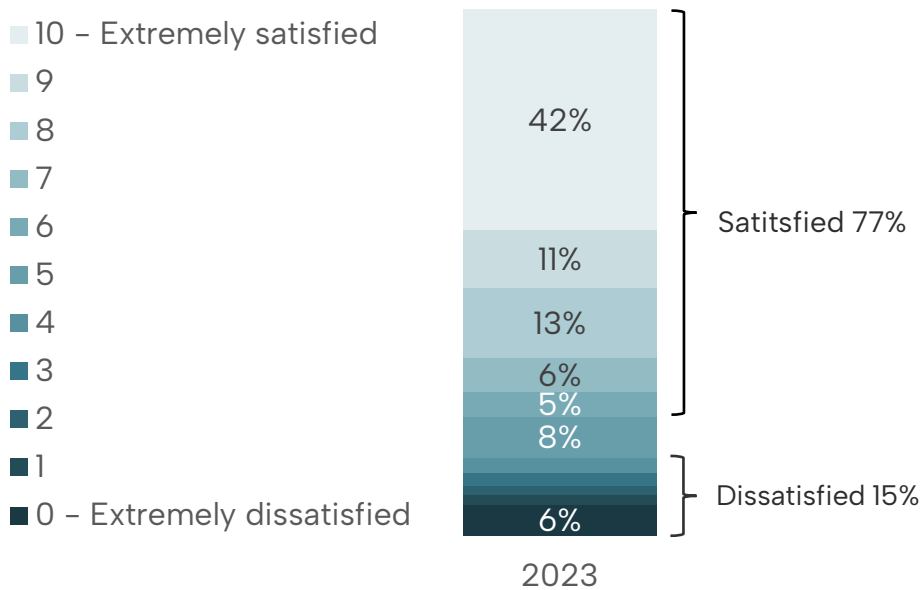
Changes in overall satisfaction over time

Comparing across grants clients from previous two waves of the survey, levels of *satisfaction* (6-10/10) with Legal Aid NSW services have remained consistent since 2019 and 2021. Over 4 in 5 (82%) grants clients were *satisfied* in 2023, compared to 81% in 2021 and 84% in 2019. The proportion of clients who were *dissatisfied* in 2023 was just over 1 in 10 (11%), consistent with 2021 (12%) but still increased from 2019 (8%).

Over three quarters of clients satisfied with the timeliness Legal Aid NSW dealt with their issue

More than three quarters (77%) of clients were *satisfied* with the timeliness with which Legal Aid NSW dealt with their legal issue. Of the total client base, two in three (66%) were *highly satisfied* with how quickly their legal issue was dealt with, and over two in five (42%) gave the maximum satisfaction score of 10. Less than one in six (15%) clients were *dissatisfied* with the time it took for Legal Aid NSW to deal with their legal issue.

Figure 10: Satisfaction with timeliness

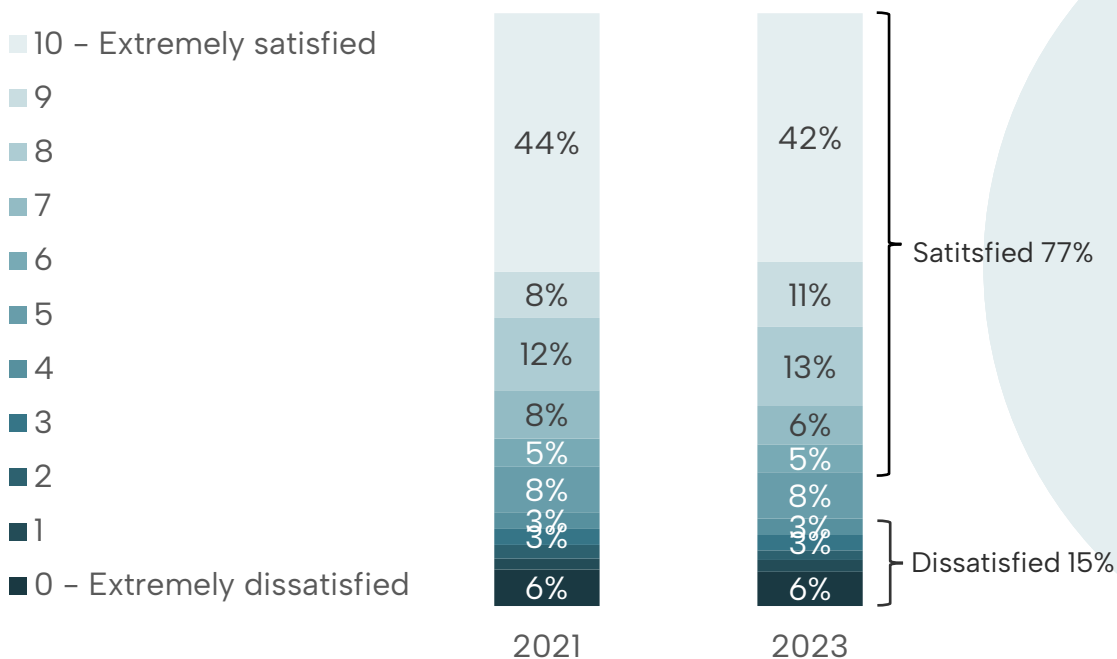


Q34A. How satisfied are you with the timeliness with which Legal Aid NSW dealt with your legal issue?
 Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014). Values of less than 3% are not labelled.

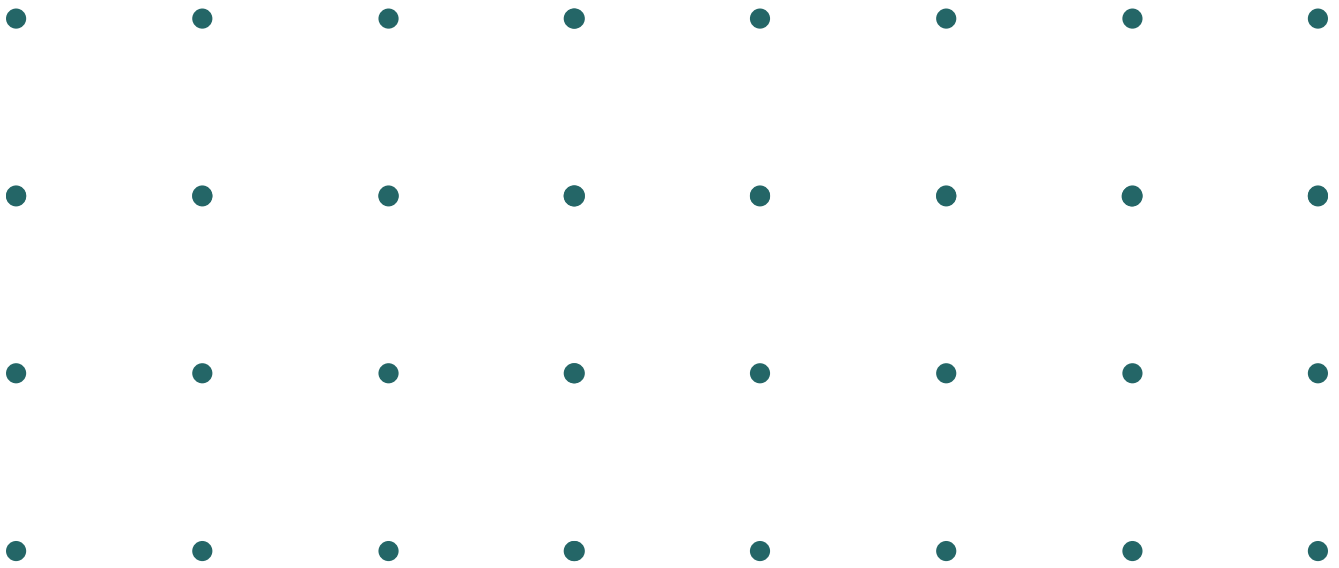
Satisfaction with timeliness has remained consistent since 2021

The proportion of clients who were *satisfied* with the timeliness Legal Aid NSW dealt with their legal issue has remained consistent since 2021 (both 77%). 2023 saw a small increase in the proportion of clients who were *highly satisfied* (66%; cf. 2021, 64%) and in the average satisfaction score clients gave (2023, 7.6; cf. 2021, 7.5).

Figure 11: Satisfaction with timeliness, 2021 - 2023



Q34A. On the same zero to ten scale, how satisfied are you with the timeliness with which Legal Aid NSW dealt with your legal issue?
 Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014), 2021 all grants clients (n=826)
 Values of less than 3% are not labelled.



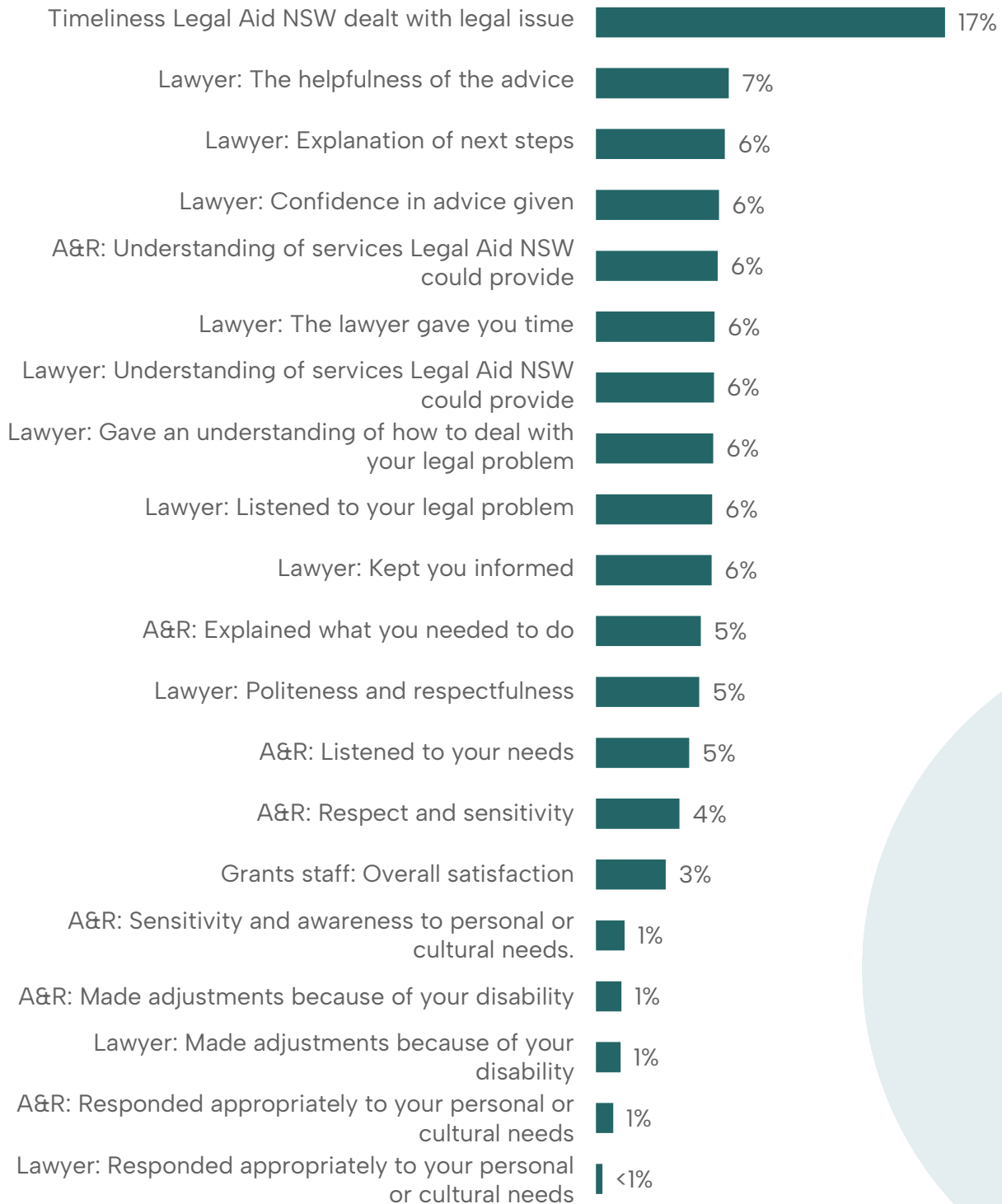
Section 04

4. Drivers of Satisfaction



4.1. Drivers of Overall Satisfaction

Figure 12: Drivers of overall satisfaction



*Driver Outcome: Q34. How satisfied are you with the service you have received so far from Legal Aid NSW?
 Predictors: Q34A. Satisfaction with timeliness, Q28. Satisfaction with aspects of the lawyer’s service, Q25.
 Satisfaction with aspects of the administration and reception staff, Q22A. Satisfaction with Grants division staff
 Relative Importance, R-squared score 0.86
 Base 2023, all clients (n=2,014), 2% of outliers automatically removed from the driver analysis*

The timeliness in which the clients' issues were dealt with was the key driver of satisfaction

Despite dropping 6 percentage points since 2021, the timeliness with which clients' legal issues were dealt with by Legal Aid NSW continued to be the strongest driver of overall satisfaction in 2023 (17%; cf. 2021 24%). The most important factor contributing to overall satisfaction regarding lawyers was the helpfulness of the advice clients were given (7%), followed by lawyers being able to clearly explain what was going to happen in clients' cases (6%).

4.2. Prioritisation Analyses

The following analyses indicate where individual metrics fall in terms of their satisfaction performance and their relative importance in driving the clients' overall satisfaction.

The performance score is the *Highly satisfied* satisfaction metric, the importance score is the relative importance metric from the driver analysis.

The intersecting lines on the chart indicate the average satisfaction and average importance. Metrics that appear in the top right quadrant are therefore of higher than average satisfaction and importance, whereas those in the bottom left quadrant are of lower than average satisfaction and importance.

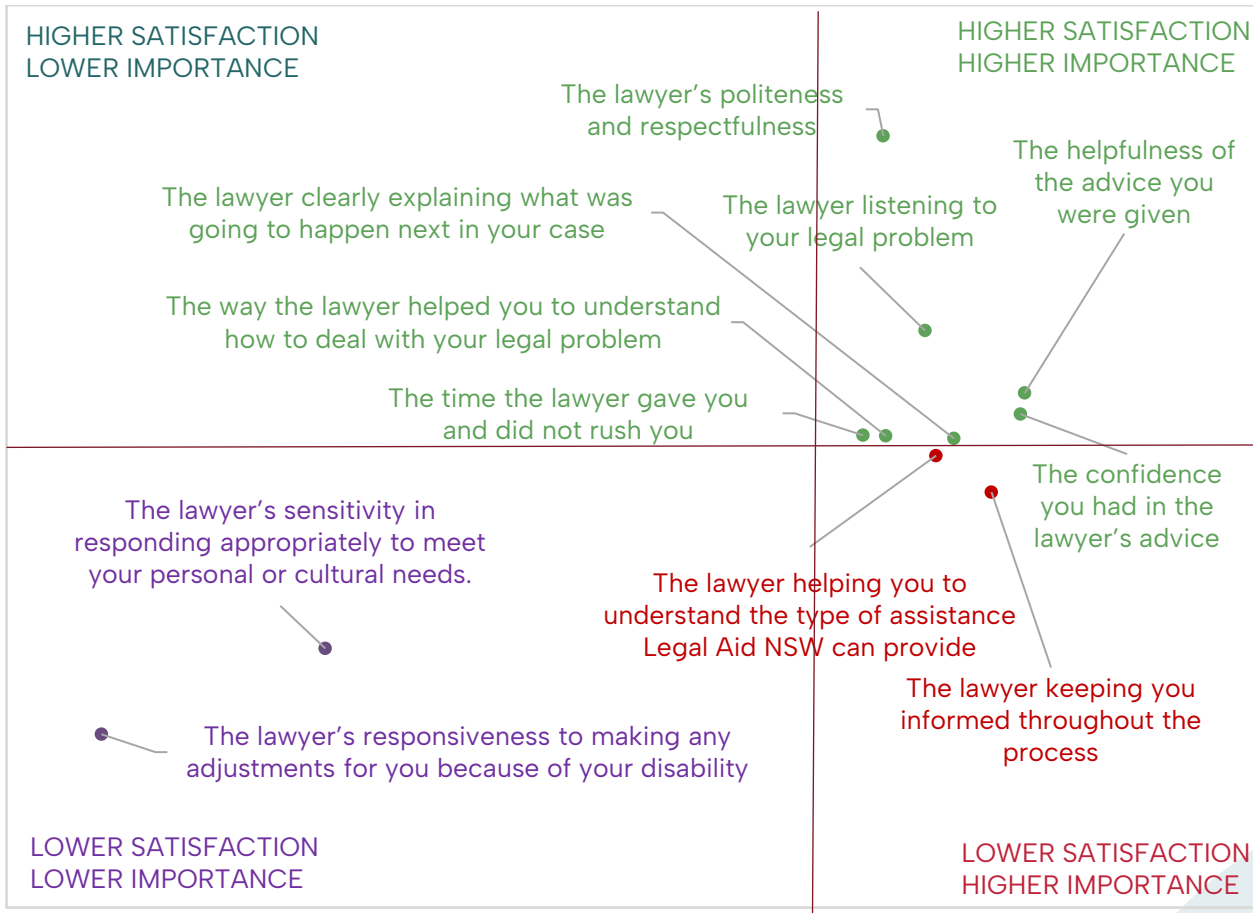
The quadrants produce a simple method to highlight where prioritisation should occur to have the best impact on improving overall satisfaction.

Each of the quadrants can be summarised as follows:

- **Higher Satisfaction/Higher importance – Maintain.** These are the more important metrics that have also performed at above average satisfaction.
- **Higher Satisfaction/Lower Importance – Evaluate.** While these metrics are performing well, they are less likely to drive overall satisfaction. Care must be taken not to focus a disproportionate amount of resources in improving these metrics.
- **Lower Satisfaction/Lower Importance – Monitor.** These are lower priority metrics, but they should be monitored to track if they are beginning to increase in importance.
- **Lower Satisfaction/Higher Importance – Improve.** These are the more important metrics that are underperforming with satisfaction. They should be prioritised for improvement as they will have the largest impact in improving overall satisfaction.

4.2.1. Prioritisation Analysis for Lawyers

Figure 13: Prioritisation analysis for lawyers



Driver Outcome: Q30. How satisfied were you overall with the service you received from the lawyer?
 Predictors: Q28. Satisfaction with aspects of the lawyer's service
 2023 Relative Importance, R-squared score 0.94, 2021, R-squared score 0.94
 Base 2023, all clients (n=2,014), 2021 all grants clients (n=858), 2% of outliers automatically removed from the driver analysis

Seven of the attributes associated with lawyer performance were deemed as having above average performance and were also above average importance to clients. However, 5 of these metrics were close to the average performance and should be monitored closely.

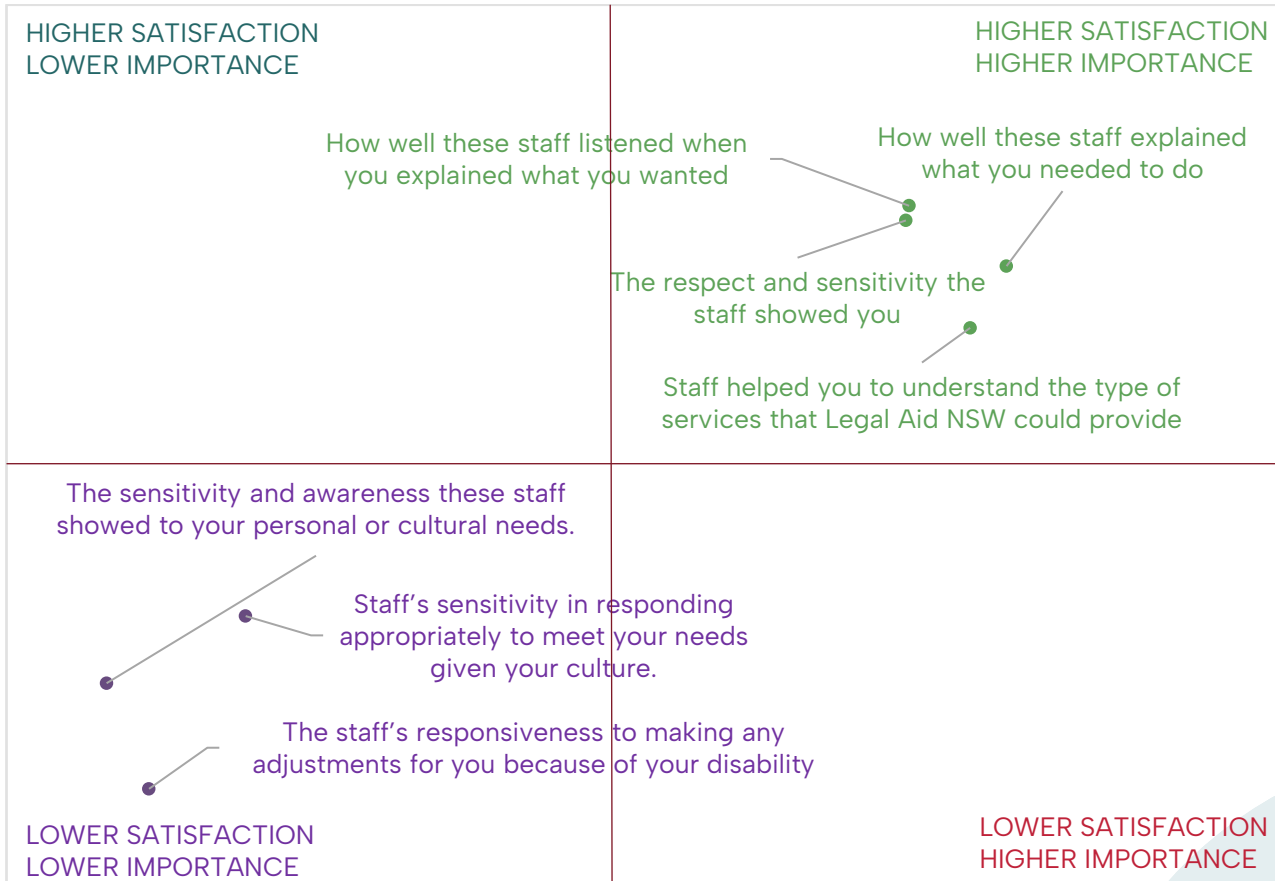
Two areas with opportunity for improvement were 'the lawyer helping you to understand the type of assistance Legal Aid NSW can provide' and 'The layer kept you informed throughout the process'. These metrics were of above average importance for clients but had below average performance. Improving the performance of these aspects of the lawyers' service should have the largest impact on overall satisfaction with the lawyer.

For clients with a personal or cultural need, the 'lawyers' sensitivity in meeting these needs' became the 4th most important attribute, behind 'helpfulness of advice', 'confidence in the lawyers' advice' and 'clearly explaining what was going to happen in the case'.

For clients with a disability, the 'responsiveness to making adjustments because of a disability' was ranked as the 6th most important attribute, while 'The lawyers' sensitivity in responding to adjustments to meet personal or cultural needs' was the second least important aspect.

4.2.2. Prioritisation Analysis for Administrative and Reception Staff

Figure 14: Prioritisation analysis for admin and reception staff



Driver Outcome: Q26. How satisfied were you overall with the service you received from the administrative and reception staff?

Predictors: Q25. Satisfaction with aspects of the administration and reception staff

2023 Relative Importance, R-squared score 0.91, 2021, R-squared score 0.89

Base 2023, all clients (n=2,014), 2021 all grants clients (n=858), 2% of outliers automatically removed from the driver analysis

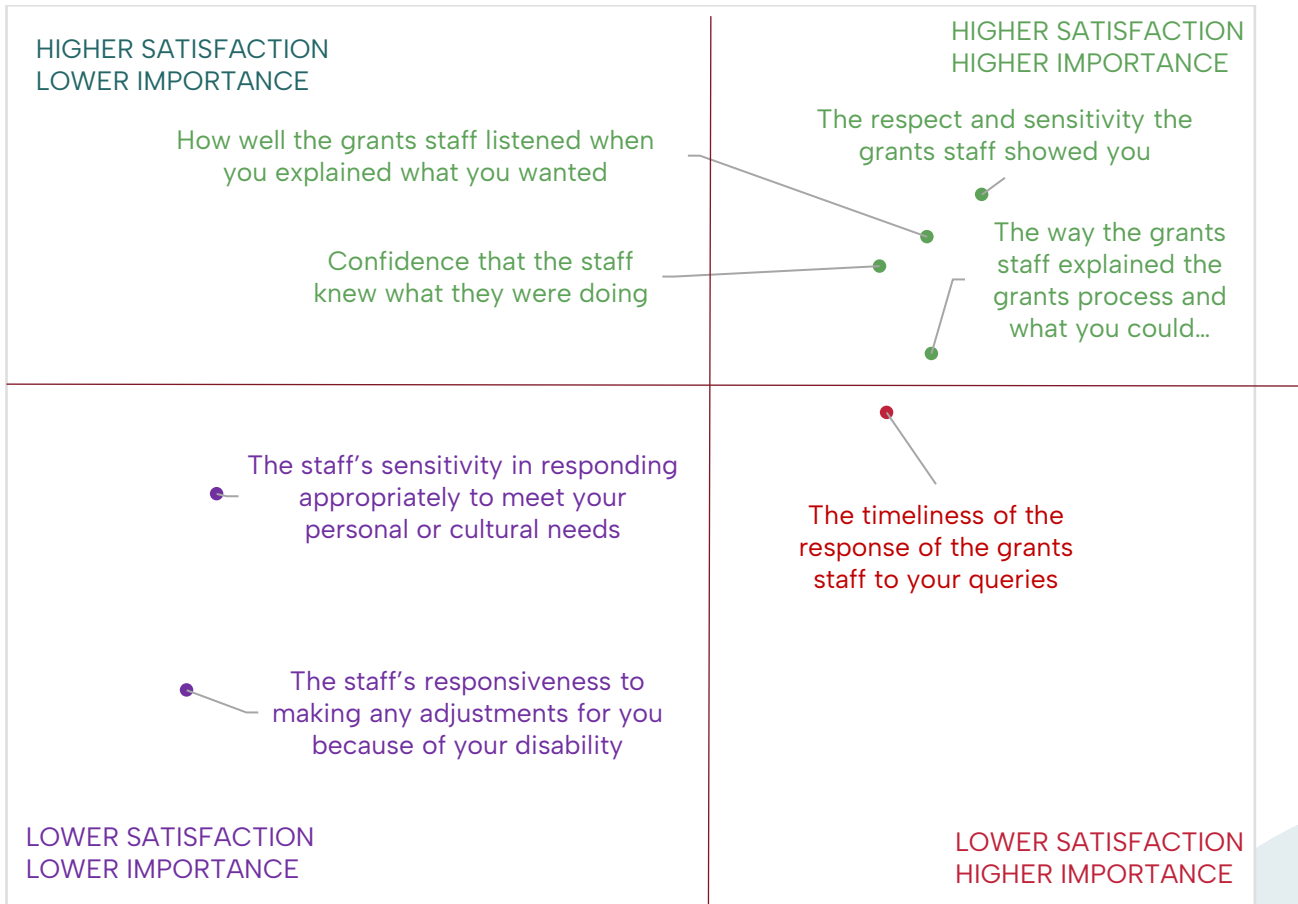
All of the metrics for the performance of administrative and reception staff fell into one of two categories: Below average performance and importance, or above average performance and satisfaction. This indicates that the most crucial aspects of the admin and reception staff service levels were already performing well.

For clients that had personal, cultural or disability related needs, the most important aspect of the service they received from the administrative and reception staff was their ability to help them understand the types of services Legal Aid NSW could provide.

For those specifically with personal or cultural needs, 'The sensitivity and awareness these staff showed to your personal or cultural needs' was the second most important part of the service.

4.2.3. Prioritisation Analysis for Grants Staff

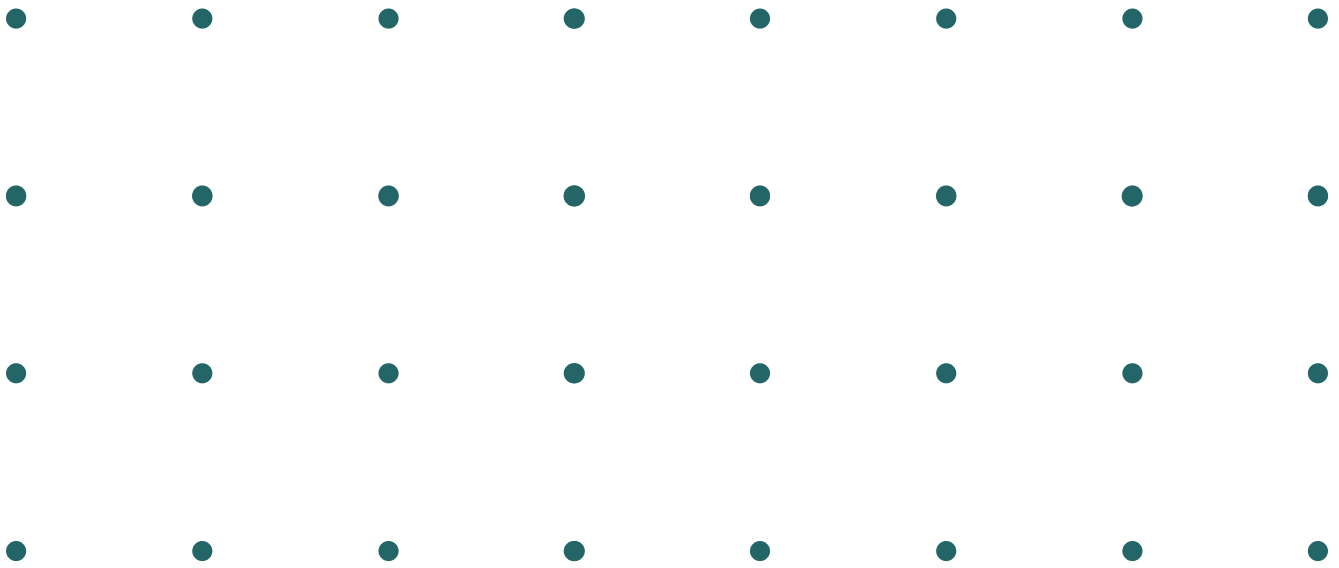
Figure 15: Prioritisation analysis for grants staff



*Driver Outcome: Q22a. How satisfied were you overall with the staff from the Grants division?
 Predictors: Q23. Satisfaction with aspects of the Grants division staff
 2023 Relative Importance, R-squared score 0.88, 2021, R-squared score 0.84
 Base: Clients who contacted the Grants division - 2023 (n=499), 2021 (n=150), 2% of outliers automatically removed from the driver analysis*

Similar to the results for lawyers and admin and reception staff, the need to respond to a clients' personal, cultural or disability needs was seen as less important than the other outcomes that the grants staff could provide.

An area that presents an opportunity for improvement was the timeliness of the response to queries. This was something that was above average importance to clients but had below average performance. Improving the response time to queries will have the largest impact on overall satisfaction with grants staff.



Section 05

5. Perceptions of Legal Aid NSW

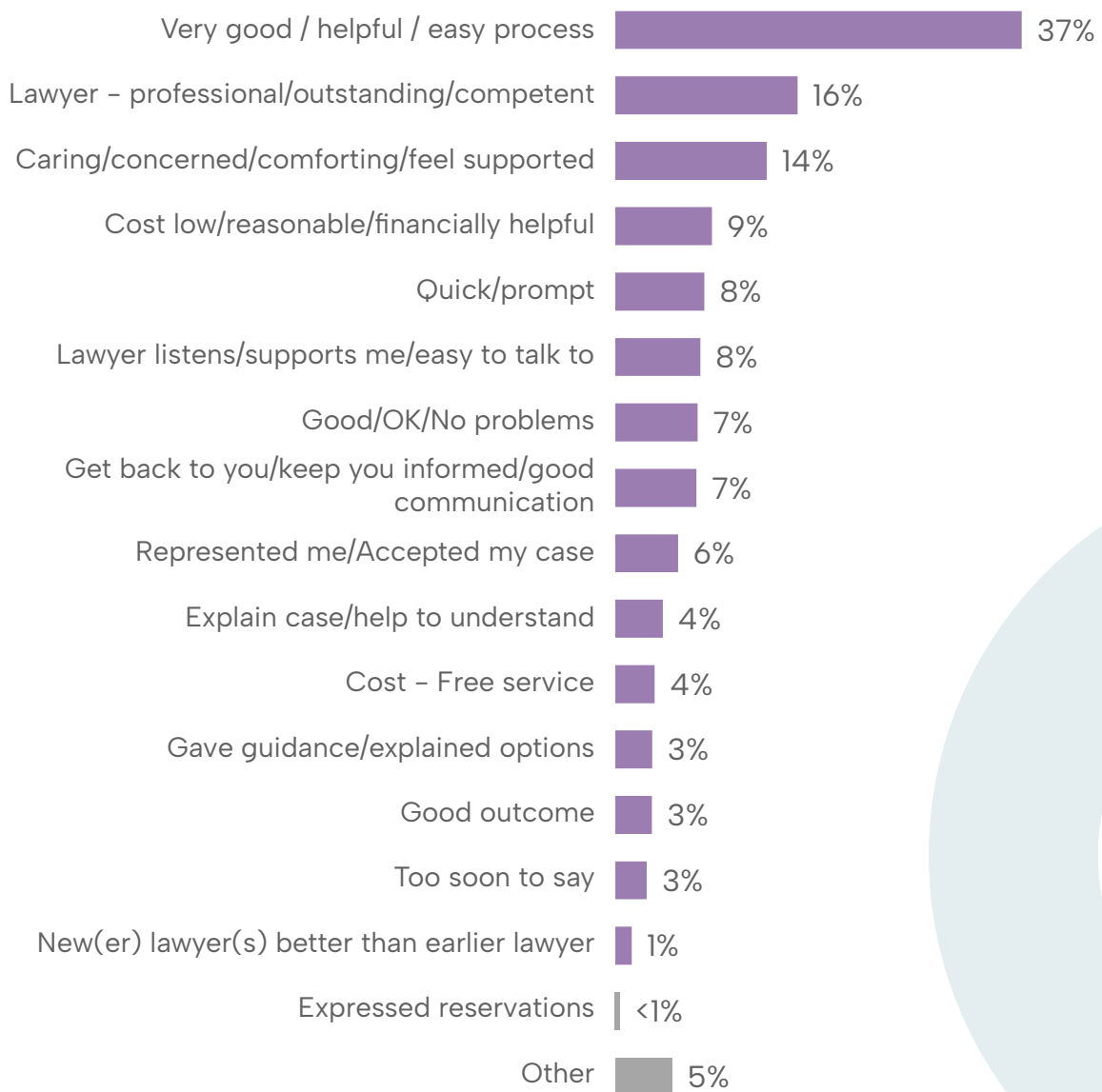


5.1. Positive perceptions

Clients frequently commented on the helpfulness and ease of the Legal Aid NSW process

Over one in three (37%) clients who provided positive comments mentioned how good, helpful and easy the Legal Aid NSW process was. One in six (16%) clients who provided a positive response commented about their lawyer, often regarding their lawyer being professional, outstanding or competent. One in eight (12%) positive comments mentioned feeling supported by Legal Aid NSW staff or staff being concerned for, comforting or caring towards clients.

Figure 16: Positive attributes regarding experience with Legal Aid NSW



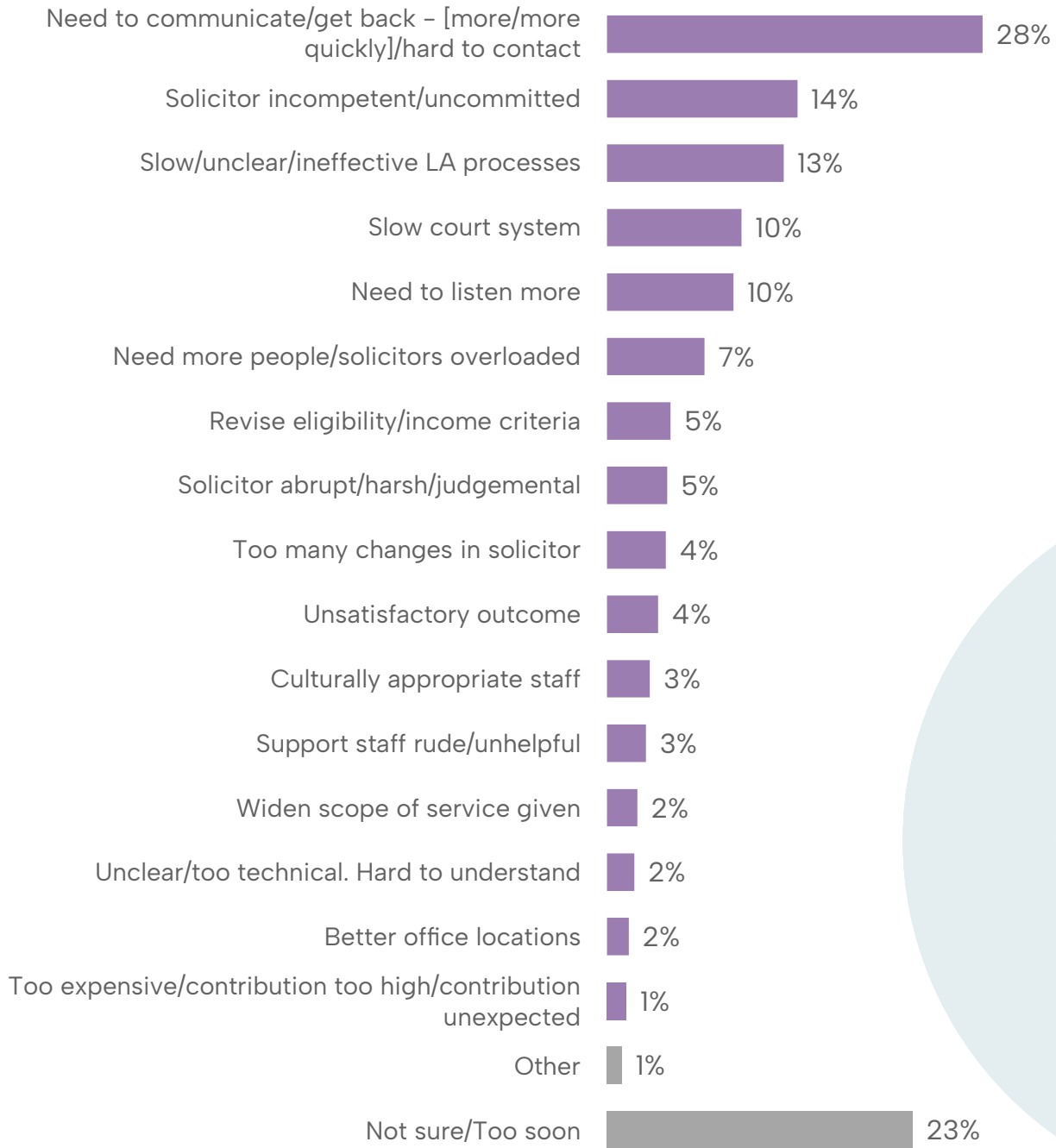
Q1. So far, what, if anything, have been the good things about your experience with Legal Aid NSW?
 Base: 2023, all clients that provided a positive response (n=1,351)

5.2. Improvement opportunities

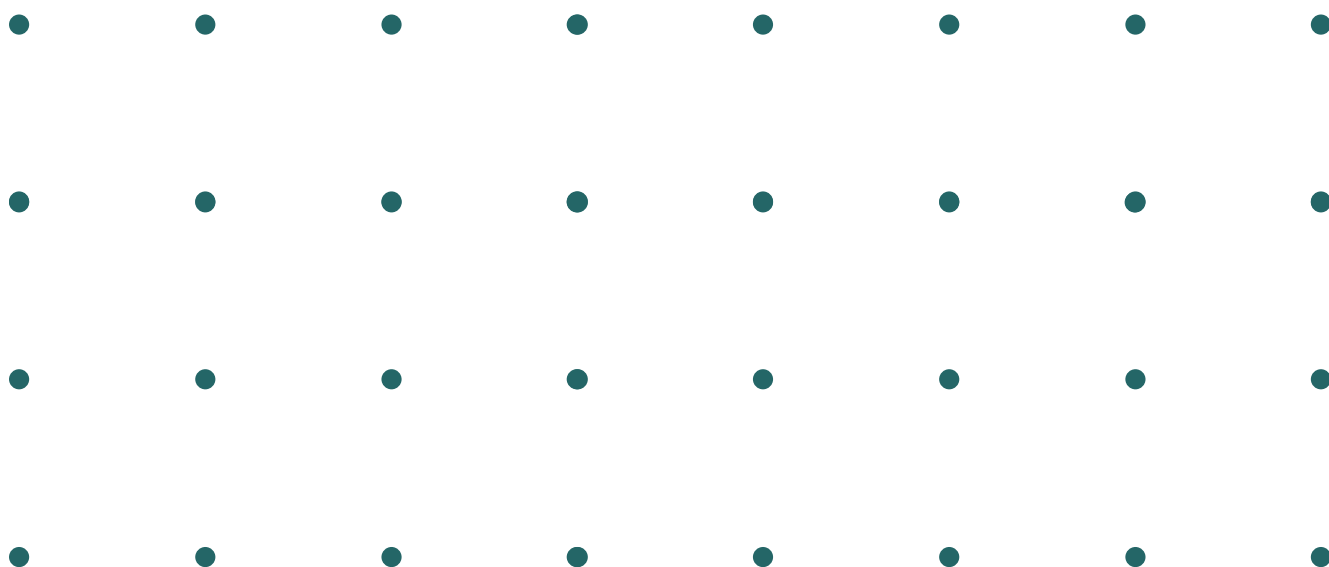
Opportunities for improvement cover a range of service areas

Comments suggesting areas for improvement cover an array of aspects of Legal Aid NSW services. Nearly three in ten (28%) responses indicated that communication should be improved, including the speed at which clients receive responses, and the ease of which clients are able to contact Legal Aid NSW.

Figure 17: Negative attributes regarding experience with Legal Aid NSW



Q2. And what, if anything, needs to be improved?
 Base: 2023, all clients who provided a response (n=275)



Section 06

6. Pathways to the service

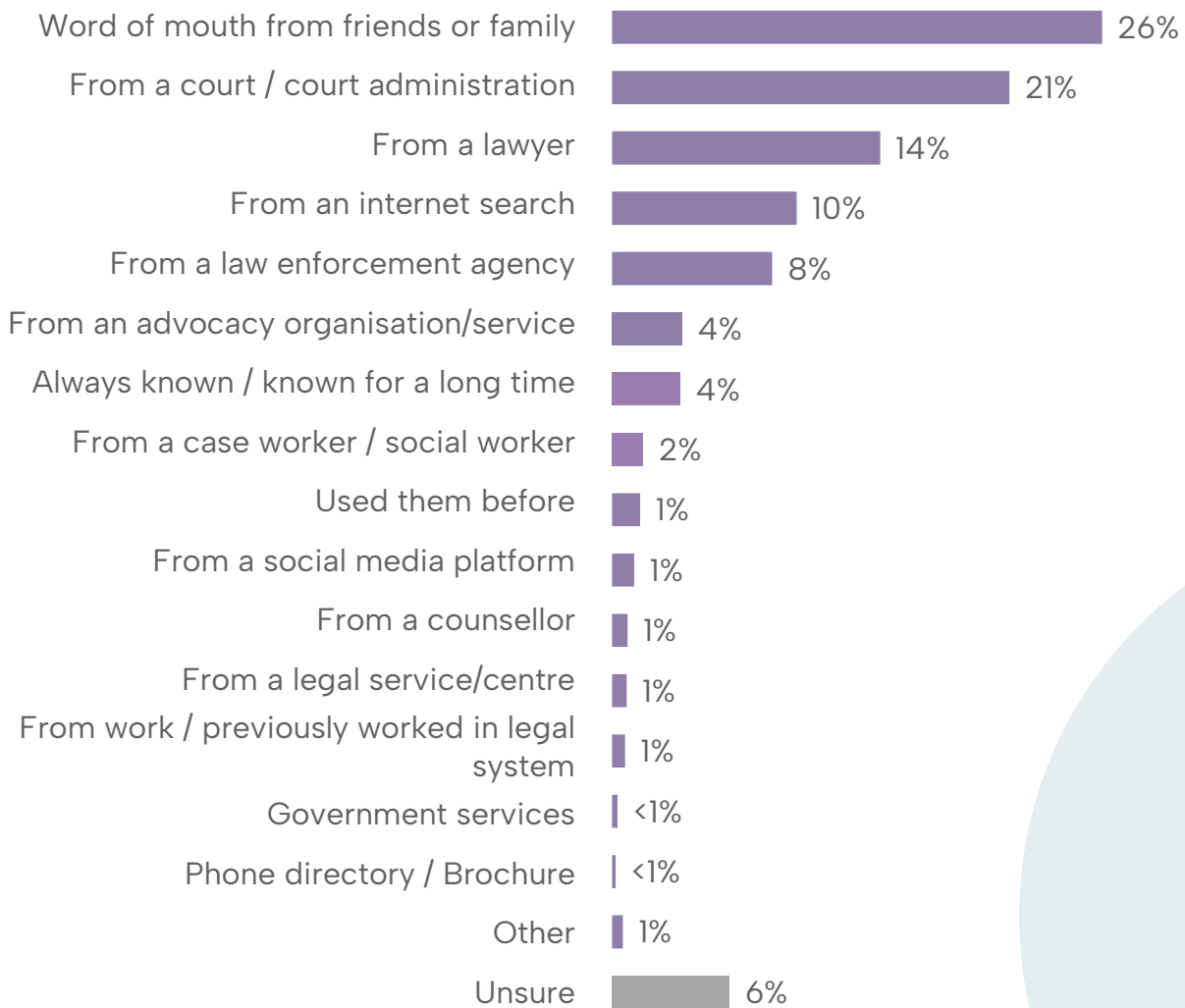


6.1. Awareness of Legal Aid NSW

Word of mouth drives awareness of Legal Aid’s services

A quarter (26%) of clients first find out about Legal Aid’s services through word of mouth from friends and family, followed by 21% from a court or court administration, and 14% from a lawyer. Once someone became initially aware of Legal Aid’s services, they were most likely to build their knowledge by searching for Legal Aid NSW on the internet, or talking to a lawyer if they wanted to find out more.

Figure 18: Initial awareness of Legal Aid NSW



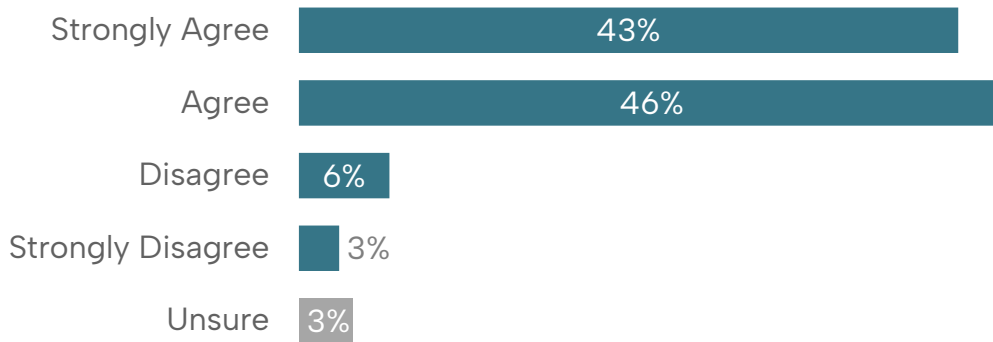
Q16. Where did you first find out about Legal Aid NSW Services?
 Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014)

6.2. Ease of contacting Legal Aid NSW when help was first needed

Nearly nine in ten clients agreed it was easy to contact Legal Aid NSW when first needing help

Almost nine in ten (88%) clients agreed or strongly agreed that it was easy to contact Legal Aid NSW when first needing help. Only just under one in ten (8%) did not feel that first contacting Legal Aid NSW was easy.

Figure 19: Agreement it was easy to contact Legal Aid NSW when help was first needed



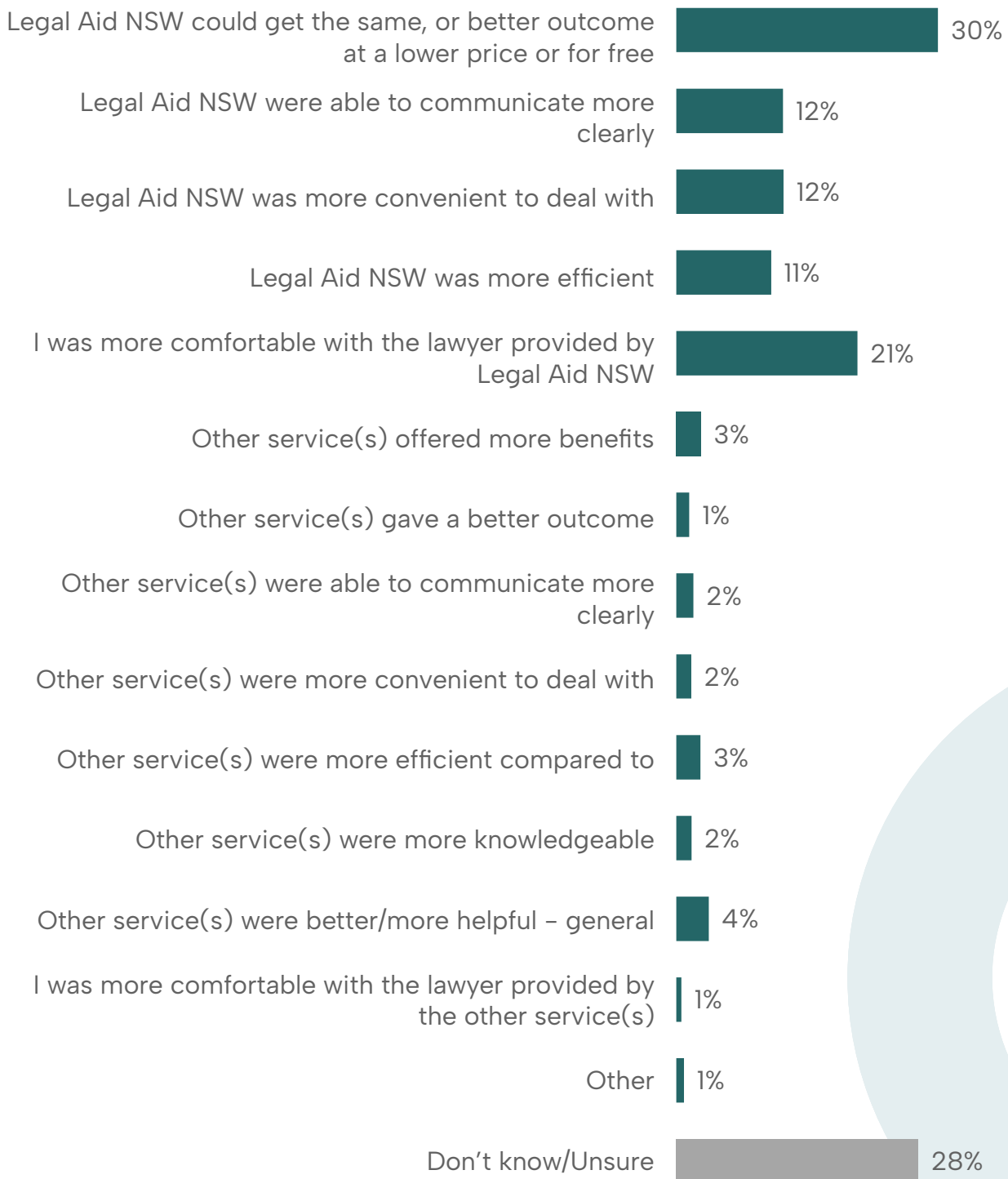
Q5. Agreement with the statement: It was easy to contact Legal Aid NSW when you first needed help
Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014)

6.3. Engagement of Legal Aid NSW services

Majority of clients did not contact another lawyer before or after approaching Legal Aid NSW

Less than two in five (37%) clients contacted or spoke to another lawyer for help with the same legal problem before approaching Legal Aid NSW. Further, only 15% of clients had contacted or spoken to another lawyer for help with the same legal problem after talking to Legal Aid NSW.

Figure 20: Differences with other legal services

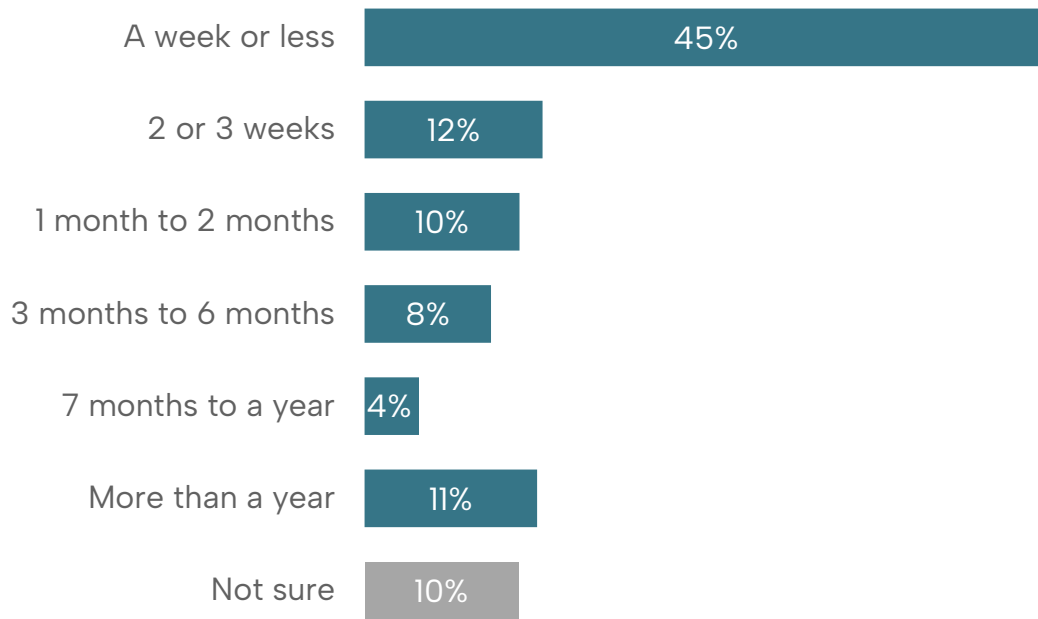


Q20. What were the main differences between the other services(s) you spoke to and Legal Aid NSW
 Base: 2023, all clients who had contacted another legal service (n=887)

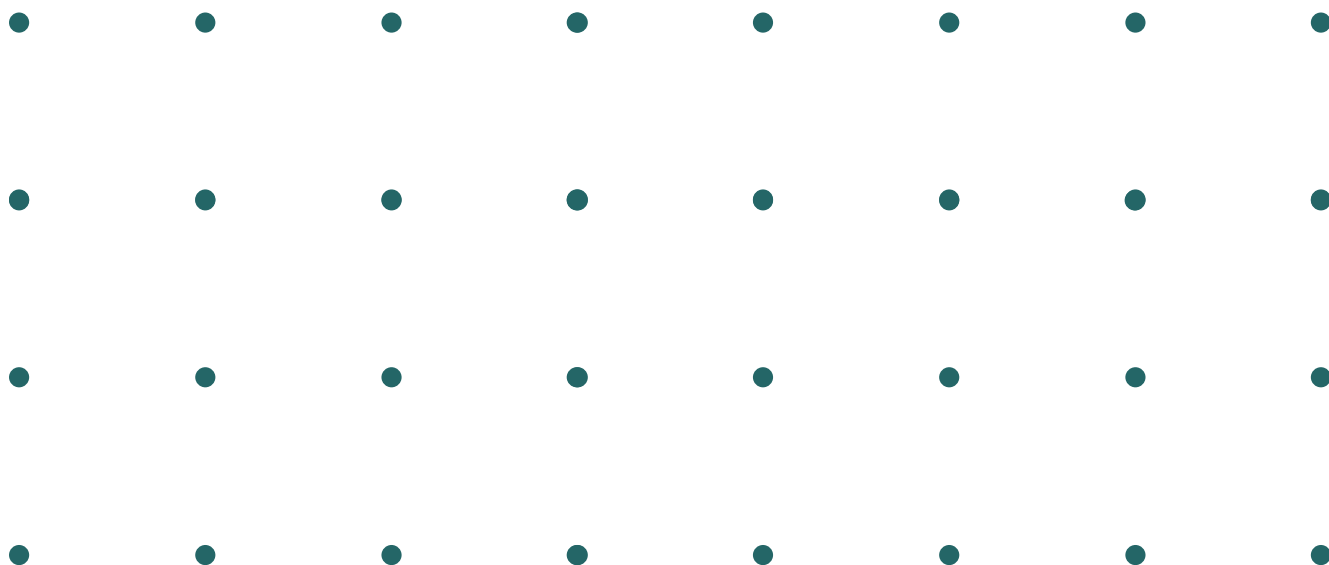
Clients most commonly sought help for their legal case immediately

Almost half (45%) of the clients sought help for their legal problem within a week of becoming aware of their problem. Nearly a quarter (23%) of clients waited over three months before seeking help, while one in ten (11%) did not find help for their legal problem for over a year after becoming aware of it.

Figure 21: Length of time before help was sought



Q15c. How long were you aware of the legal problem before you sought help?
Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014)



Section 07

7. Access to Legal Aid NSW and Services



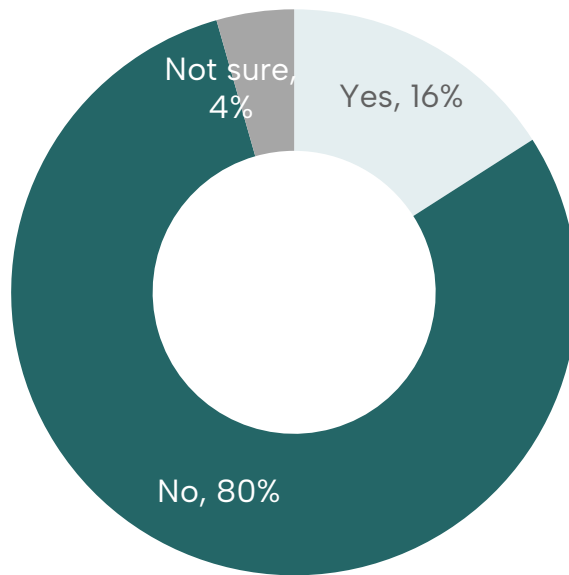
7.1. Barriers to accessing Legal Aid NSW

Four in five clients did not experience issues accessing Legal Aid NSW services

Four in five (80%) clients indicated that they did not experience any problems when accessing Legal Aid NSW services when they first needed help, while 16% reported that they encountered at least some level of difficulty.

Family law clients were significantly more likely to have encountered an issue when accessing Legal Aid NSW for the first time (19%; cf. civil 13%, criminal 13%). A quarter (24%) of clients with a disability experienced difficulties when first accessing Legal Aid NSW, a significantly higher proportion than those clients without a disability.

Figure 22: Had problems accessing Legal Aid NSW when they first needed help

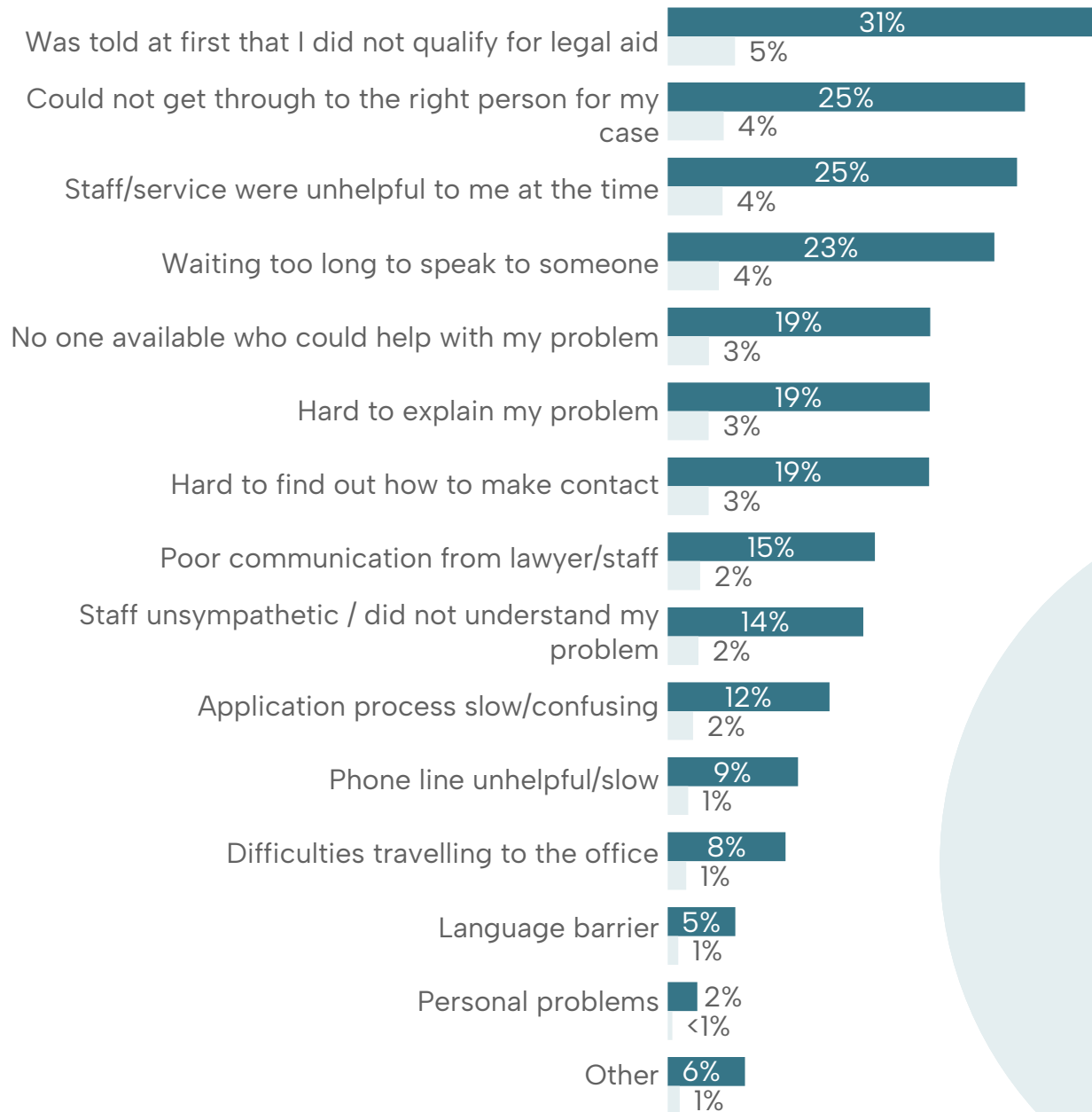


Q3. Did you have any problems accessing Legal Aid NSW when you first needed help?
Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014)

The majority of problems accessing Legal Aid NSW revolved around communication and misinformation

Among the 16% of clients who experienced issues when first approaching Legal Aid NSW, the most common problem encountered was being told at first that they did not qualify for legal aid, experienced by 31% of this group. A quarter of clients were not able to get through to the right person (25%) or found the staff or service to be unhelpful (25%) when first approaching Legal Aid NSW for assistance.

Figure 23: Barriers to accessing Legal Aid NSW



- Proportion of those who had problems accessing Legal Aid NSW
- Proportion of total sample

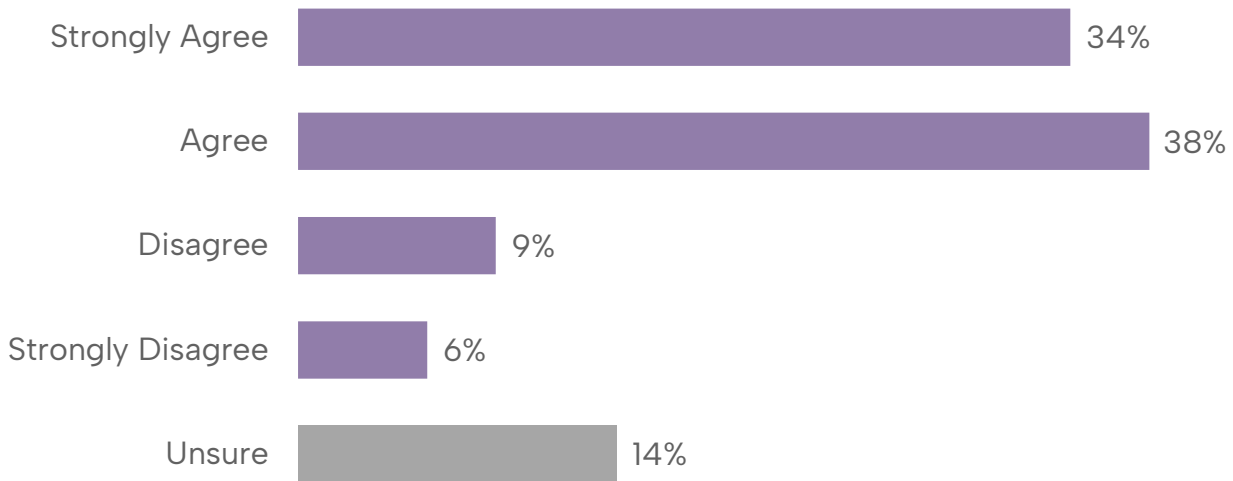
Q4. What (if anything) made it hard to access Legal Aid NSW when you first needed help?
 Base: 2023, all clients who indicated they had problems accessing Legal Aid NSW when they first needed help (n=324), total clients (n=2,014)

7.2. Access to services

Nearly three quarters of clients found their lawyer’s office easily accessible

Nearly three quarters (72%) of clients found their lawyer’s office was easily accessible. Two in four (38%) clients agreed, and a third (34%) strongly agreed. On the other hand, one in six (14%) clients did not agree that their lawyer’s office was easy to get to, and another one in six (14%) were unsure.

Figure 24: Agreement that lawyer’s office was easy to get to



Q6. The location of the lawyer’s office I dealt with was easy to get to.
Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014)

7.3. Clients with personal or cultural needs

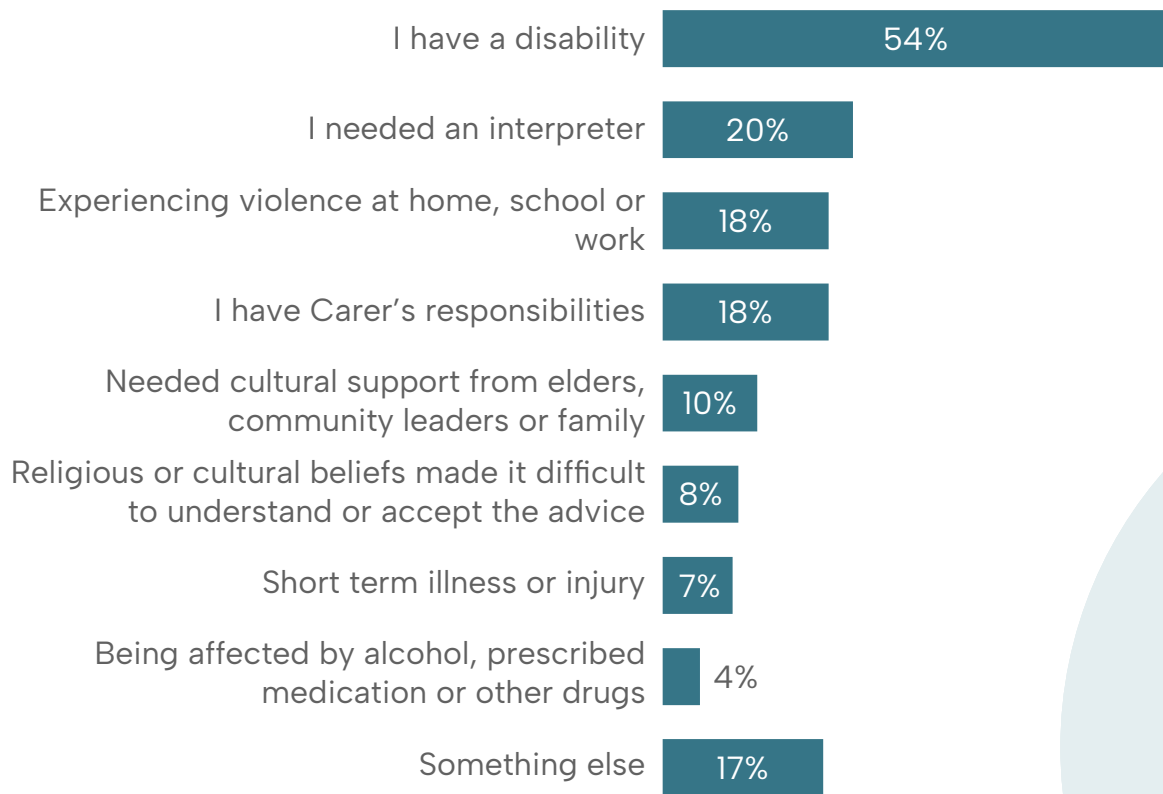
A fifth of Legal Aid NSW clients indicated they had a personal or cultural need

20% of clients indicated that they had a personal or cultural need that Legal Aid NSW needed to consider when providing them assistance, remaining statistically consistent with 2019 (17%) and 2021 (18%).

Identifying as having a disability was the most common personal or cultural need

The most common personal or cultural need identified by clients was having a disability, including a mental health condition, physical disability, learning disability, neurodiversity or a sensory disability. One in five clients with a personal or cultural need responded that they needed an interpreter (20%), were experiencing violence at home, in school or at work (18%) or had carers' responsibilities (18%).

Figure 25: Types of personal or cultural needs

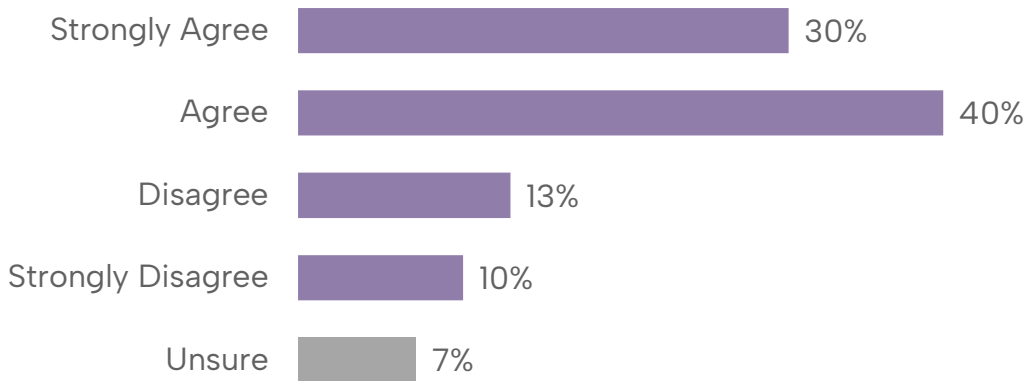


Q7b. What were those personal or cultural needs?
Base: 2023, clients who indicated they had a personal or cultural need (n=412)

7 in 10 clients with personal or cultural needs agreed their needs were met by Legal Aid NSW

Of the 20% of clients who indicated a personal or cultural need, 70% agreed that Legal Aid NSW met these specific needs, with 30% strongly agreeing that their personal or cultural needs were met. Just under a quarter (23%) of clients did not agree that their personal or cultural needs were met by Legal Aid NSW, while less than one in ten (7%) were unsure. Of the total client base, less than 5% of clients did not feel their personal or cultural needs were met.

Figure 26: Agreement that Legal Aid NSW met the cultural or personal needs



*Q7a. Agreement that Legal Aid NSW met those specific needs
Base: 2023, clients who identified as having personal or cultural needs (n=408)*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients less likely to have had needs met

Clients who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and indicated having personal or cultural needs were significantly less likely to agree that these specific needs were met by Legal Aid NSW (56%; cf. non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander clients with personal or cultural needs 74%).

Clients with a disability less likely to agree their needs were met

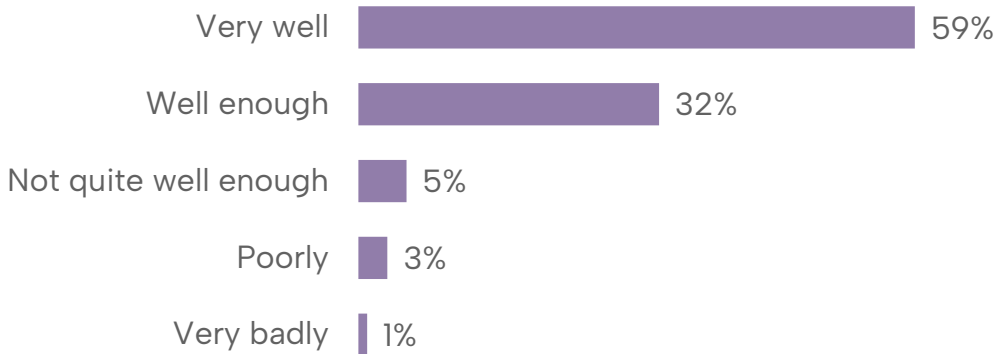
Only two thirds (66%) of clients with a disability either agreed or strongly agreed that Legal Aid NSW met their specific needs, compared to nearly four in five (78%) of clients without a disability but who had personal and cultural needs to be considered.

7.4. Interpreter requirements

Majority of clients feel Legal Aid NSW handled their request for an interpreter well

Only 5% of clients asked for an interpreter when contacting Legal Aid NSW. Of these clients, over nine out of ten (91%) were satisfied with how their request was handled. Three in five (59%) felt their request was handled very well, while only one in ten (9%) felt their request for an interpreter wasn't handled satisfactorily.

Figure 27: Legal Aid NSW’s ability to handle a request for an interpreter



Q9a. How well did Legal Aid NSW staff handle your request for an interpreter?
 Base: 2023, clients who requested an interpreter (n=103)

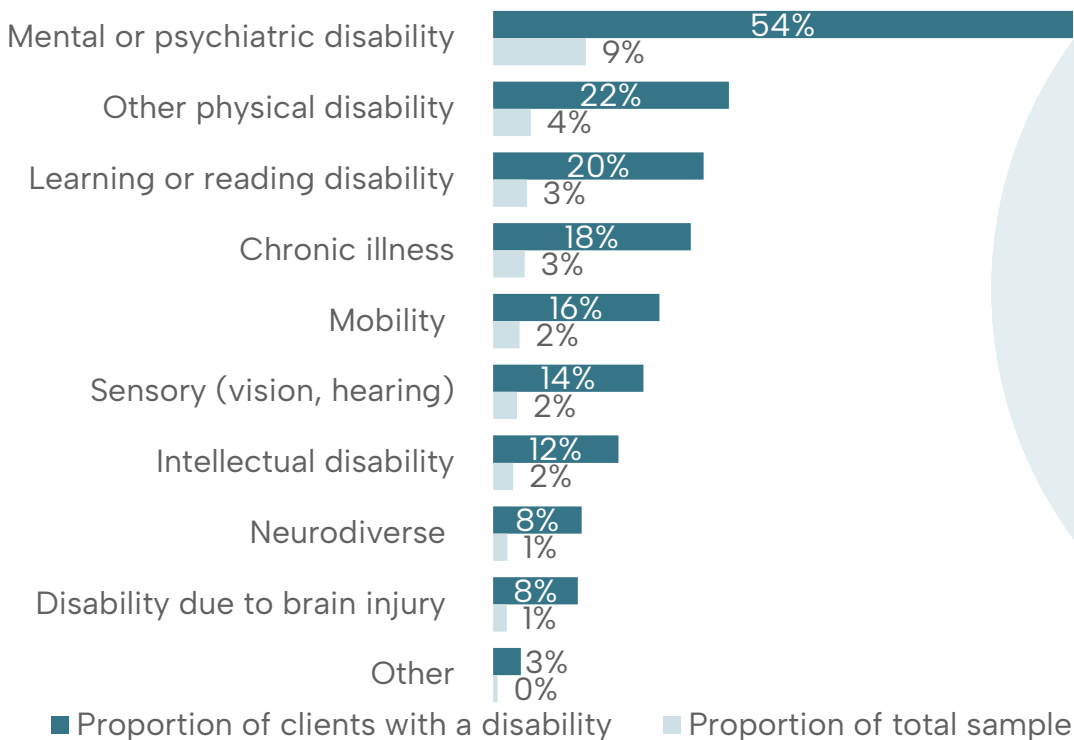
7.5. Clients with a disability

The most common disability among clients was a mental or psychiatric disability

16% of the clients identified as having a disability, equating to 69% of those who had a personal or cultural need.

More than half (54%) of the clients that indicated they had a disability responded that they had a mental or psychiatric disability. One in five clients identified as having a physical disability not specified in the list (22%), a learning or reading disability (20%) or a chronic illness (18%).

Figure 28: Types of disability

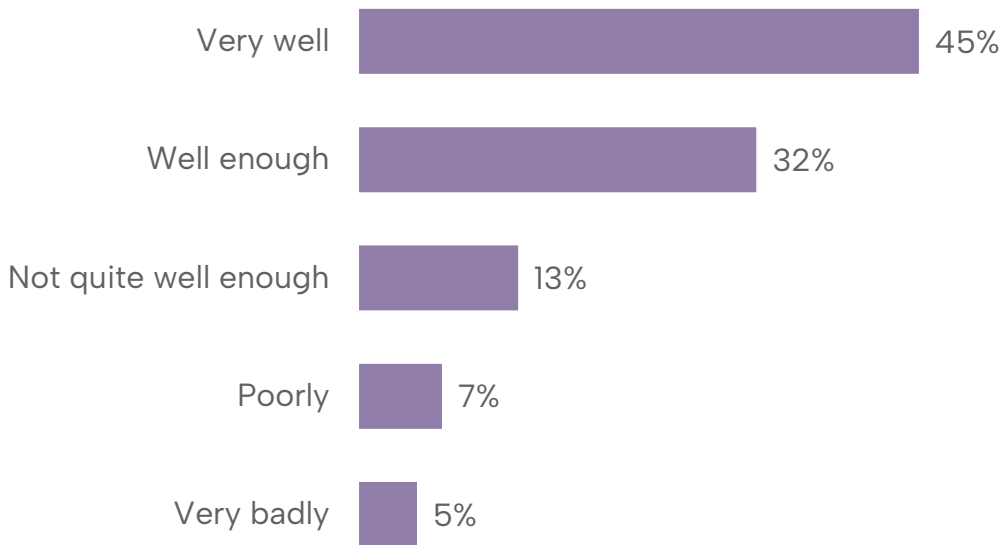


Q11. What type of disability do you have? Base: 2023, clients with a disability (n=315), all clients (2,014)

Three quarters of clients with a disability felt Legal Aid NSW staff handled their accessibility needs well

76% of clients with a disability were *satisfied* with how Legal Aid NSW staff handled their accessibility needs well. Over two in five (45%) felt that their accessibility needs were met very well. However, a quarter (24%) were unhappy with how well their accessibility needs were met.

Figure 29: How Legal Aid NSW staff handled accessibility needs



Q13. How well did Legal Aid NSW staff handle your accessibility needs?
Base: 2023, clients with a disability (n=315)

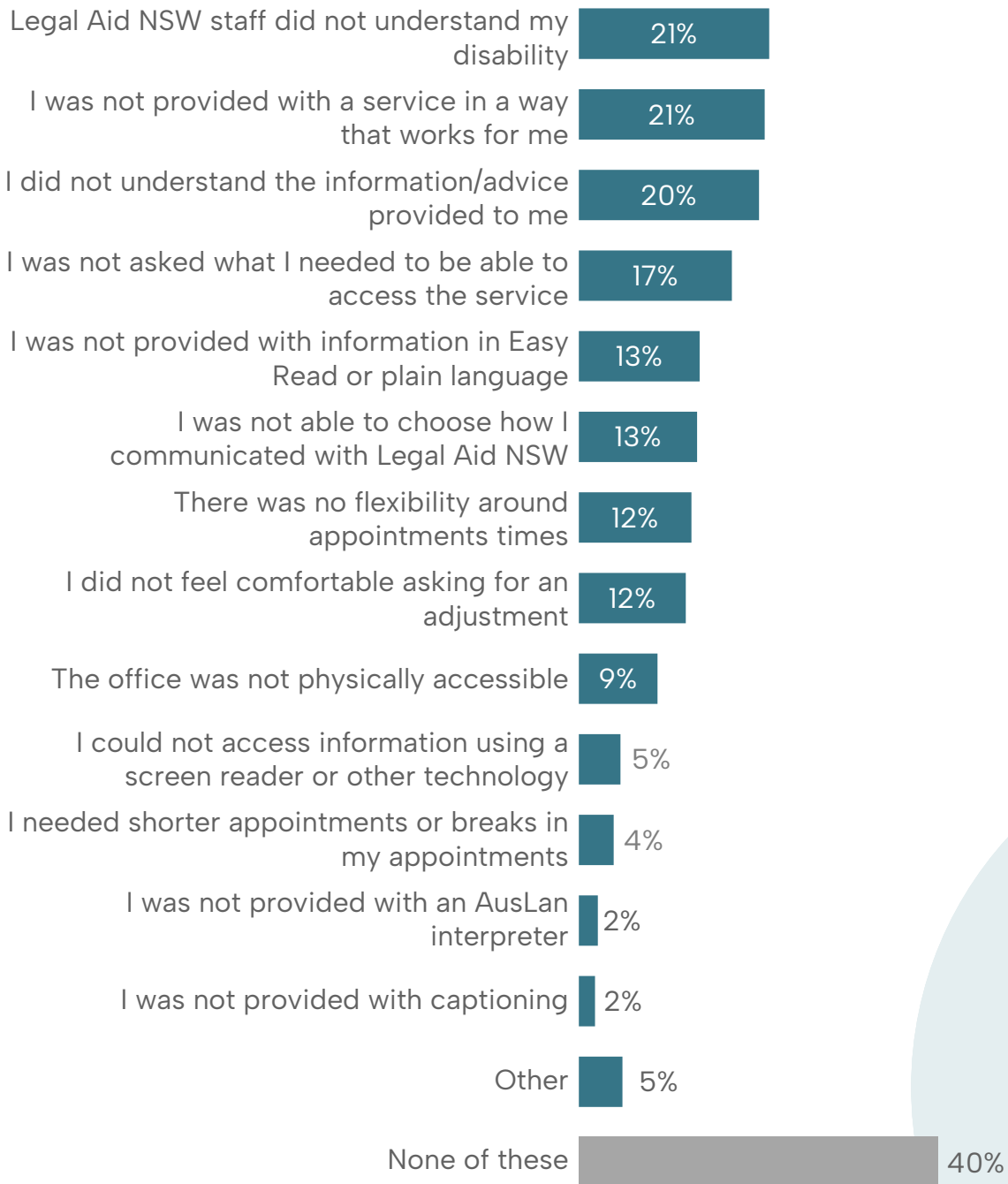
Satisfaction with handling of accessibility needs correlated with overall satisfaction

Clients who felt their accessibility needs were met well were significantly more likely to be *satisfied* overall with Legal Aid NSW (87%; cf. accessibility needs not met 13%). Conversely, clients who were not happy with the way their accessibility needs were met were significantly more likely to be *dissatisfied* overall (77%; cf. accessibility needs met 23%).

Accessibility needs were often not met because of the way information and advice were presented

One in five clients with a disability who did not have their accessibility needs met mentioned that this was due to Legal Aid NSW staff not understanding their disability (21%), not being provided with a service that works for them (21%), or because they did not understand the information or advice provided to them (20%).

Figure 30: Ways in which Legal Aid NSW did not meet accessibility needs

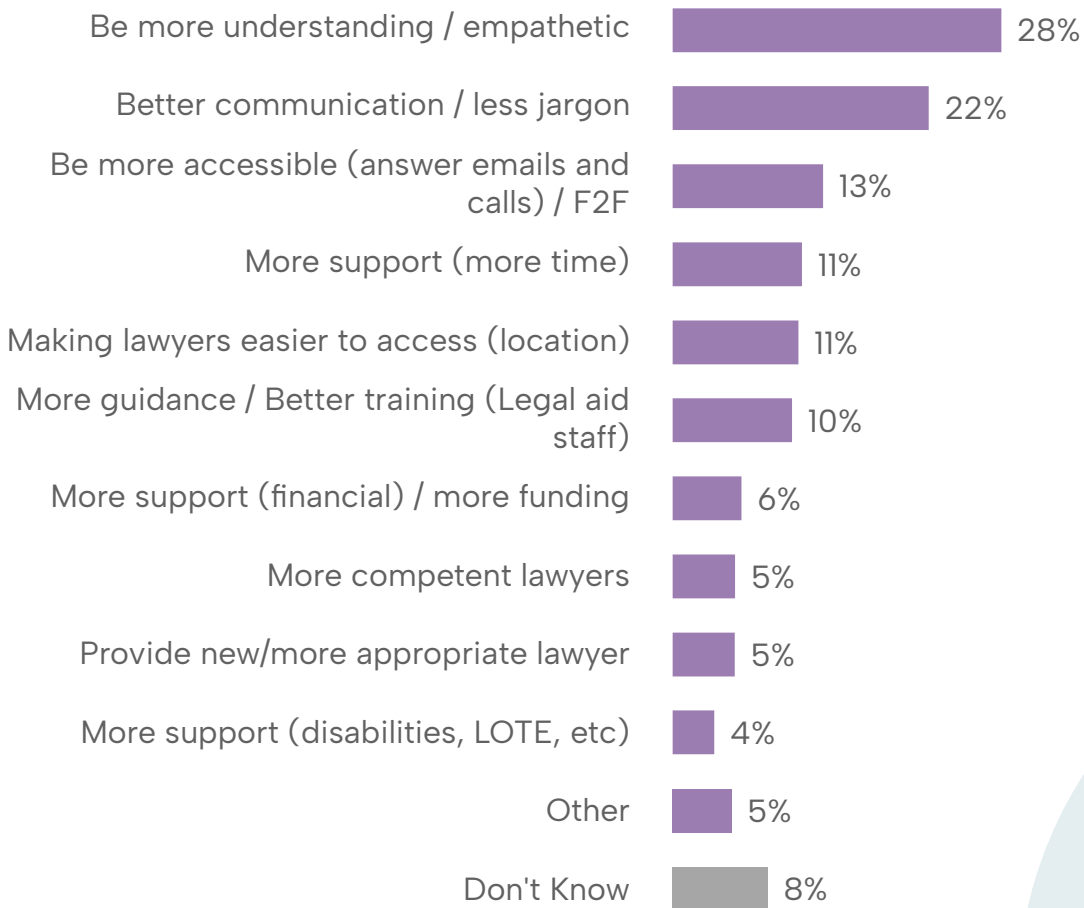


Q13B. In what way did Legal Aid not meet your accessibility needs?
 Base: 2023, clients with a disability and did not have their accessibility needs met (n=173)

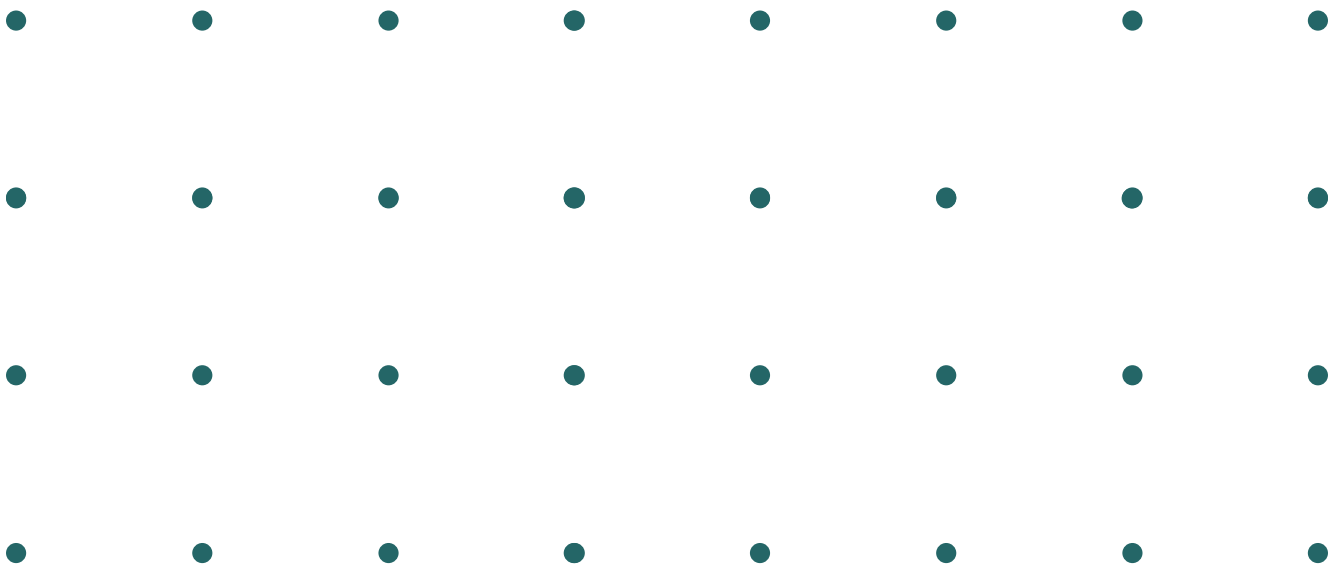
The most common suggestion was for staff to be more empathetic and understanding

Over one in four (28%) clients with a disability who did not have their accessibility needs met suggested that Legal Aid NSW staff could have better met their accessibility needs by being more understanding and empathetic. Over one in five (22%) clients with a disability who did not have their accessibility needs met mentioned that improved communication and less use of jargon would result in Legal Aid NSW staff better meeting their needs.

Figure 31: Opportunities to better meet accessibility needs



Q14. What, if anything, could Legal Aid staff have done to better meet your accessibility needs? – Coded from an open-ended question
 Base: 2023, clients with a disability who did not have their accessibility needs met (n=121)



Section 08

8. Legal Aid NSW Lawyer

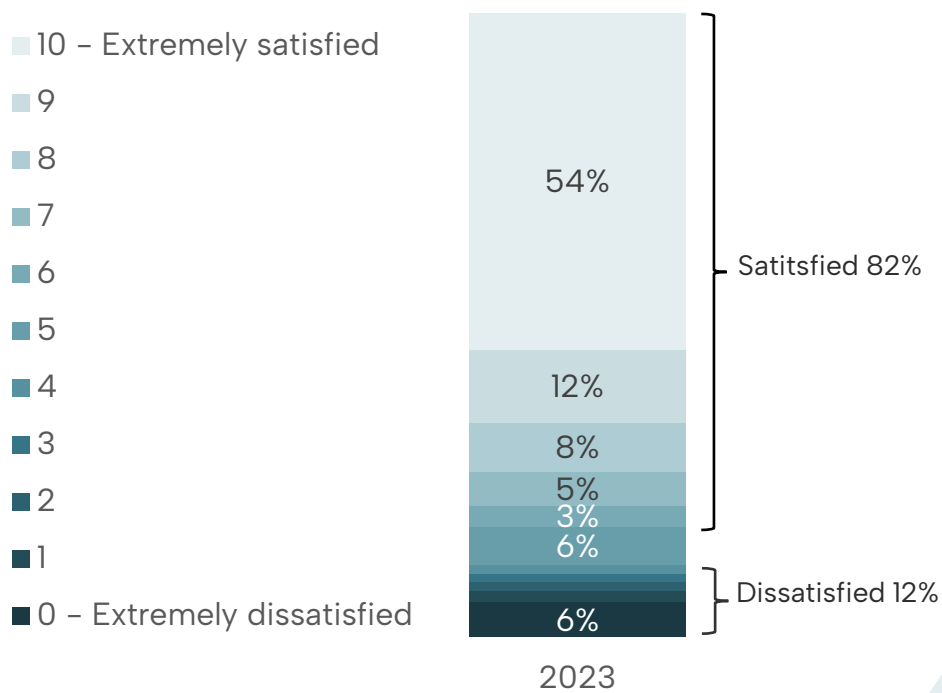


8.1. Overall satisfaction with service from lawyer

Three quarters of clients were highly satisfied with their Legal Aid NSW lawyer

74% of clients were *highly satisfied* with the service they received from their Legal Aid NSW lawyer, and more than half (54%) gave the maximum score of 10 out of 10. One in six (15%) clients were *moderately satisfied* with their lawyer’s service, and only 12% were *dissatisfied*. Over four in five (82%) clients were *satisfied* with the service they received, and the average rating given from all clients was 8.1.

Figure 32: Overall satisfaction with the service from the lawyer



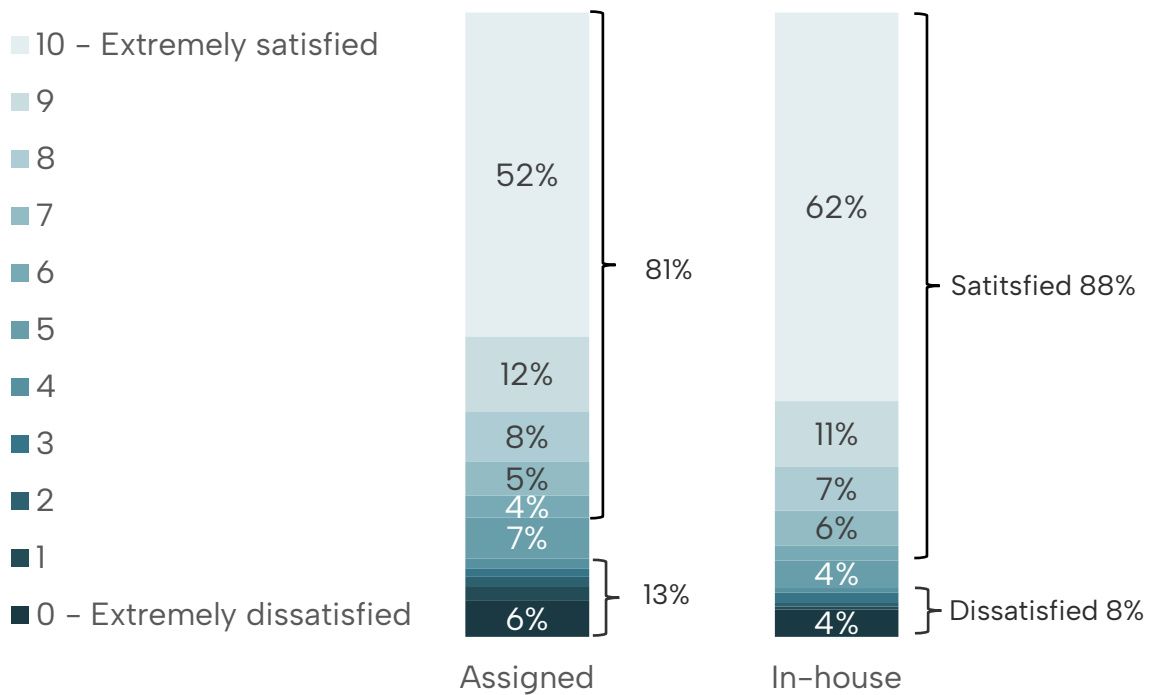
Q30. On the scale where zero means very dissatisfied and ten means very satisfied, how satisfied were you overall with the service you received from the lawyer?

Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014). Values of less than 3% are not labelled.

In-house lawyers given significantly higher satisfaction ratings

Almost nine in ten (88%) clients with in-house lawyers were *satisfied* with the service received from their lawyers, as opposed to 81% of clients with lawyers assigned from a private practice. For the clients with in-house lawyers, this has remained consistent from 2021 and increased slightly for the assigned lawyers (88% in-house; cf. 78% assigned in 2021)

Figure 33: Overall satisfaction with the service from the lawyer, by type



Q30. On the scale where zero means very dissatisfied and ten means very satisfied, how satisfied were you overall with the service you received from the lawyer?

Base: 2023, In-house lawyers (n=2,014), assigned lawyers (n=). Values of less than 3% are not labelled.

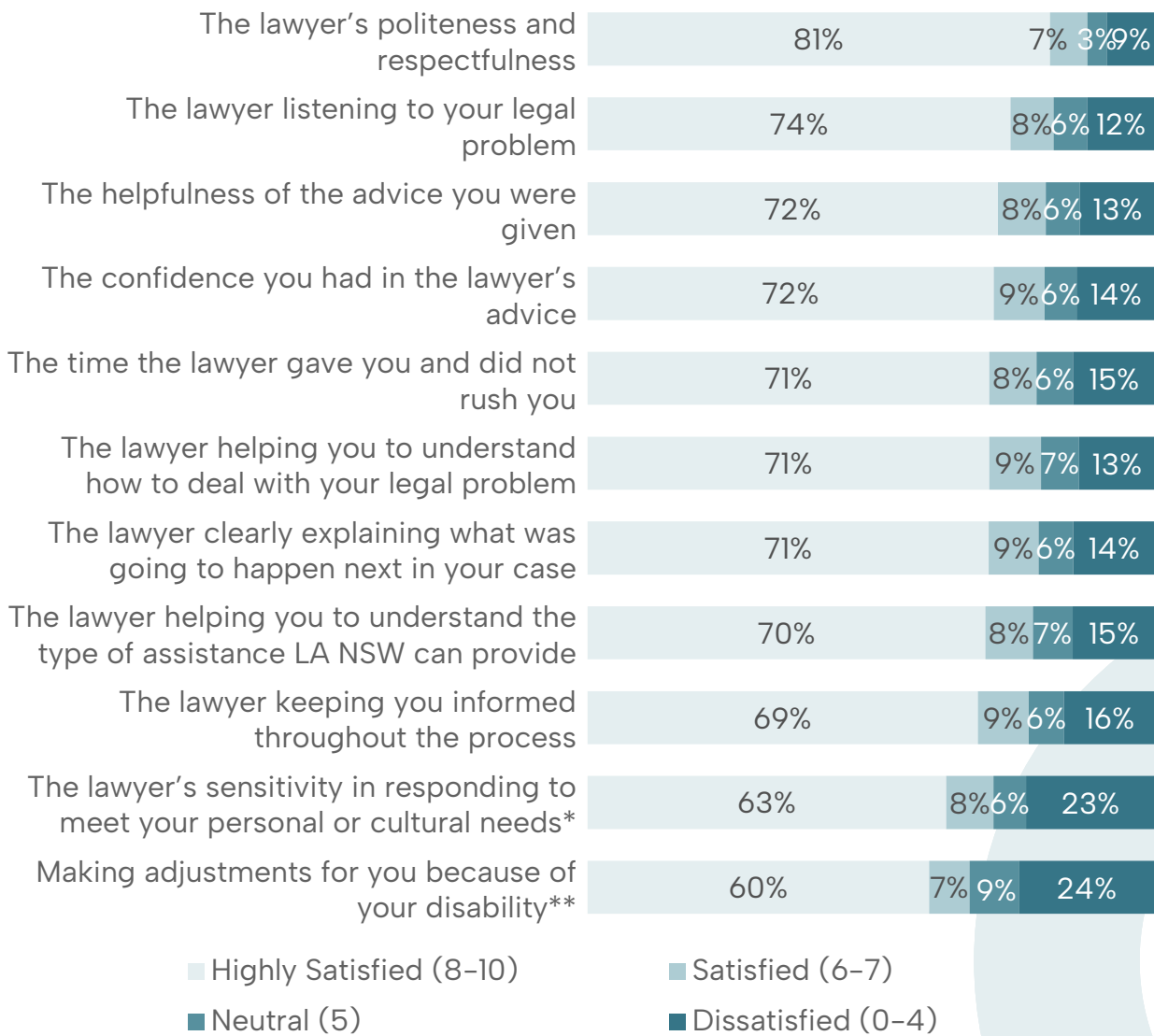
Clients with a disability less satisfied with their lawyers' service

Twice the proportion of clients with a disability were *dissatisfied* with the service received from their lawyer compared to clients without a disability (clients with a disability 20%; cf. clients without a disability 10%). Clients with a disability were also significantly less likely to be *satisfied* (74%; cf. clients without a disability 84%) and *highly satisfied* (66%; cf. clients without a disability 75%) with their lawyers' service.

Clients were very satisfied with their lawyers’ conduct, but were not satisfied with their responsiveness and sensitivity to personal needs and disability

All performance aspects saw most clients feeling *highly satisfied*. Similar to trends seen in 2021, clients were most *highly satisfied* with their lawyers’ politeness and respectfulness (81%) and with their lawyer listening to their legal problem (74%).

Figure 34: Overall satisfaction with the service from the lawyer



Q28. For each statement, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014).

* all who answered they had personal or cultural needs (n=408)

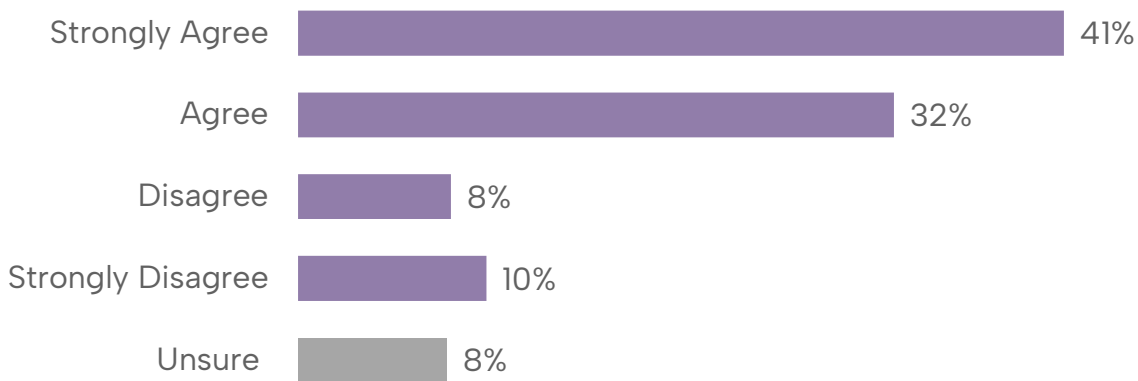
** all who answered that they had a disability (n=315)

8.2. Meeting personal or cultural needs

Three quarters of clients with personal or cultural needs agreed their lawyer met these needs

74% of clients with personal or cultural needs agreed that their lawyer met their specific personal or cultural needs. Over two in five (41%) strongly agreed that this was the case, while almost one in five (18%) disagreed that their specific needs were being met by their lawyer. Less than one in ten (8%) were unsure whether this was the case.

Figure 35: Agreement that lawyer met the client’s personal or cultural needs



*Q27_3. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. – You indicated earlier that you had personal or cultural needs that Legal Aid NSW needed to consider. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree that your current lawyer met those specific needs.
Base: 2023, clients who answered they had personal or cultural needs (n=408)*

In-house lawyers more likely to have met personal and cultural needs

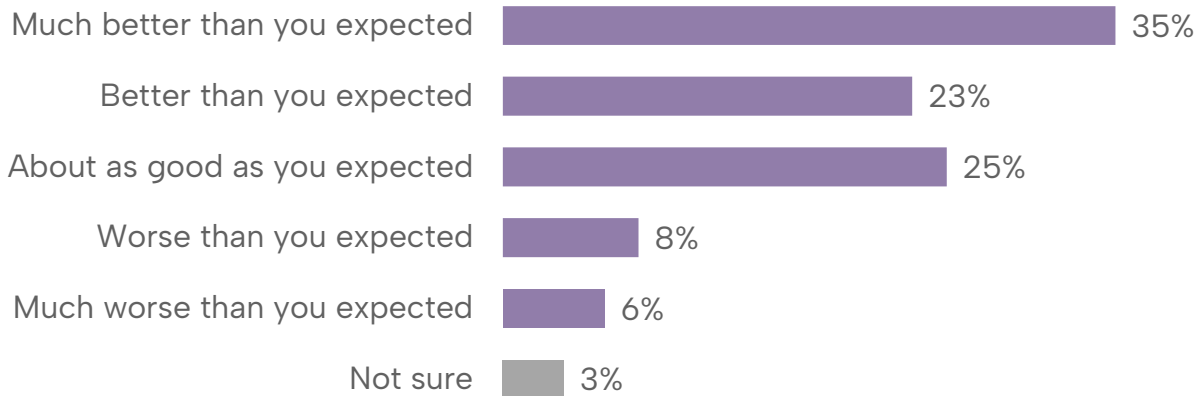
A greater proportion of clients with in-house lawyers indicated that their lawyers met their specific personal and cultural needs, compared to those with assigned private practice lawyers (in-house 83%; cf. assigned 70%). Further, a higher proportion of clients with private practice lawyers disagreed that their lawyer met their specific needs (20%; cf. in-house 14%).

8.3. Meeting expectations

Lawyers exceeded the expectations of a majority of clients

Almost three in five (58%) clients received a service from their lawyer that exceeded their expectations, with over a third (35%) receiving a service much better than they were expecting. A quarter (25%) received a service about as good as they had expected, while over one in ten (13%) did not have their service expectations met.

Figure 36: Performance vs expectation of lawyer

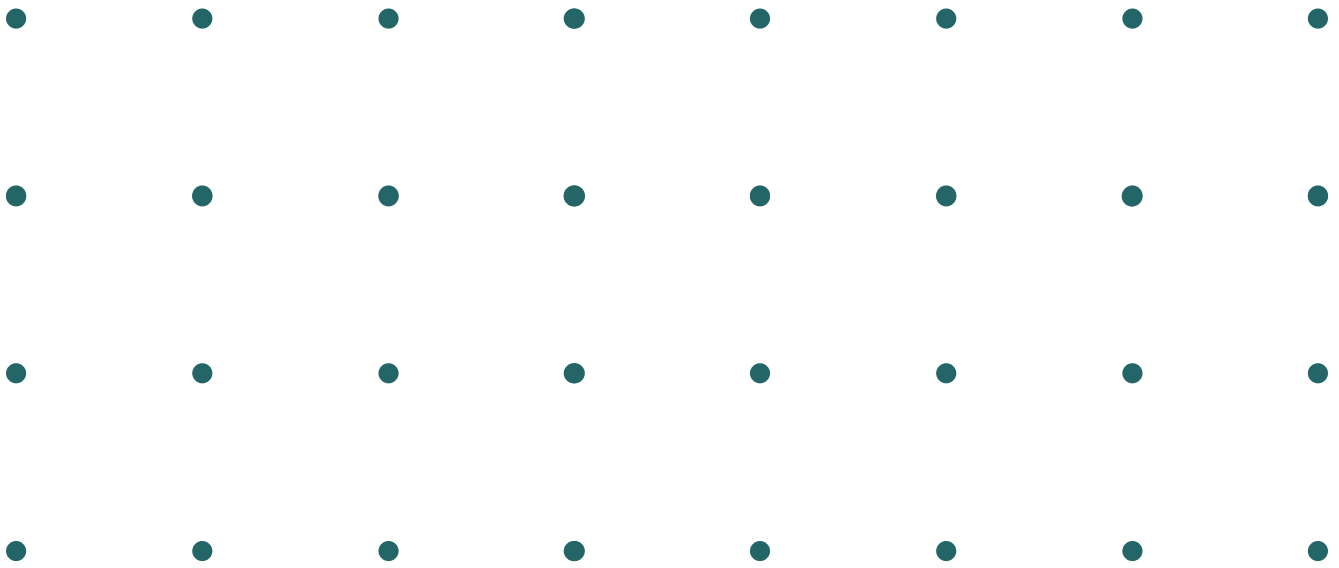


Q29. Would you say the service you received from the lawyer was better, worse than expected or about as good as expected?

Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014)

Civil law clients more likely to have expectations exceeded

Clients receiving help for civil law cases had their service expectations exceeded significantly more than clients receiving help for criminal or family law cases (civil 75%; cf. criminal 58%, family 56%). A significantly higher proportion of civil law clients also responded that the service received was much better than expected (54%; cf. criminal 36%, family 32%).



Section 09

9. Administrative and Reception Staff

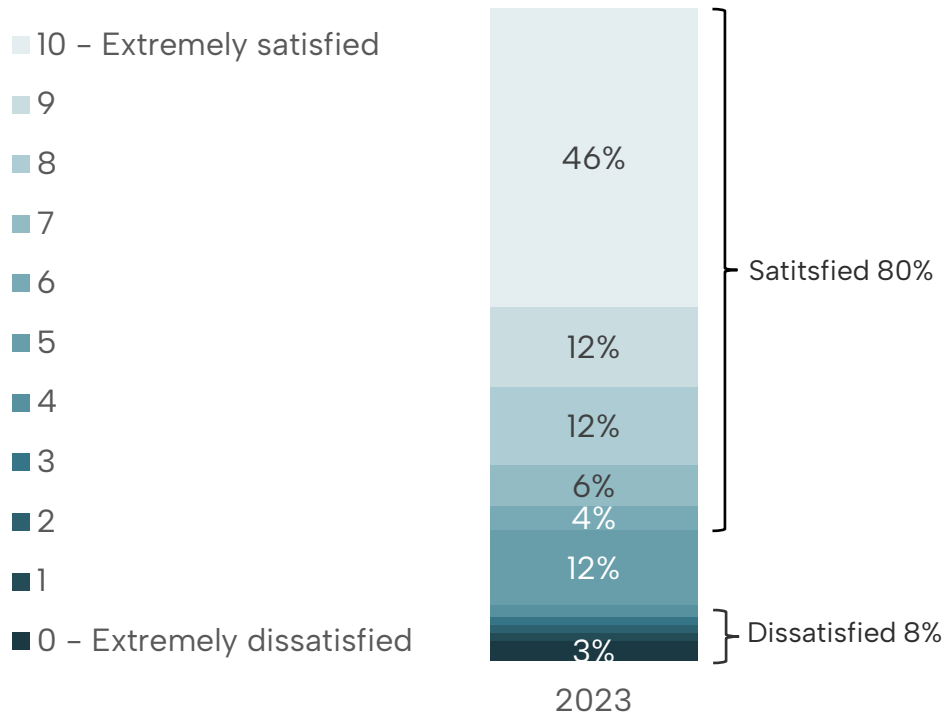


9.1. Overall satisfaction with administrative and reception staff

Seven in ten clients highly satisfied with administrative and reception staff

70% of clients were *highly satisfied* with Legal Aid NSW administrative and reception staff, and four in five (80%) were *satisfied*. Over two in five (46%) gave the maximum score of 10/10. Less than one in ten (8%) of clients were *dissatisfied*. The average satisfaction score given for administrative and reception staff was 8.0.

Figure 37: Overall satisfaction with administrative and reception staff

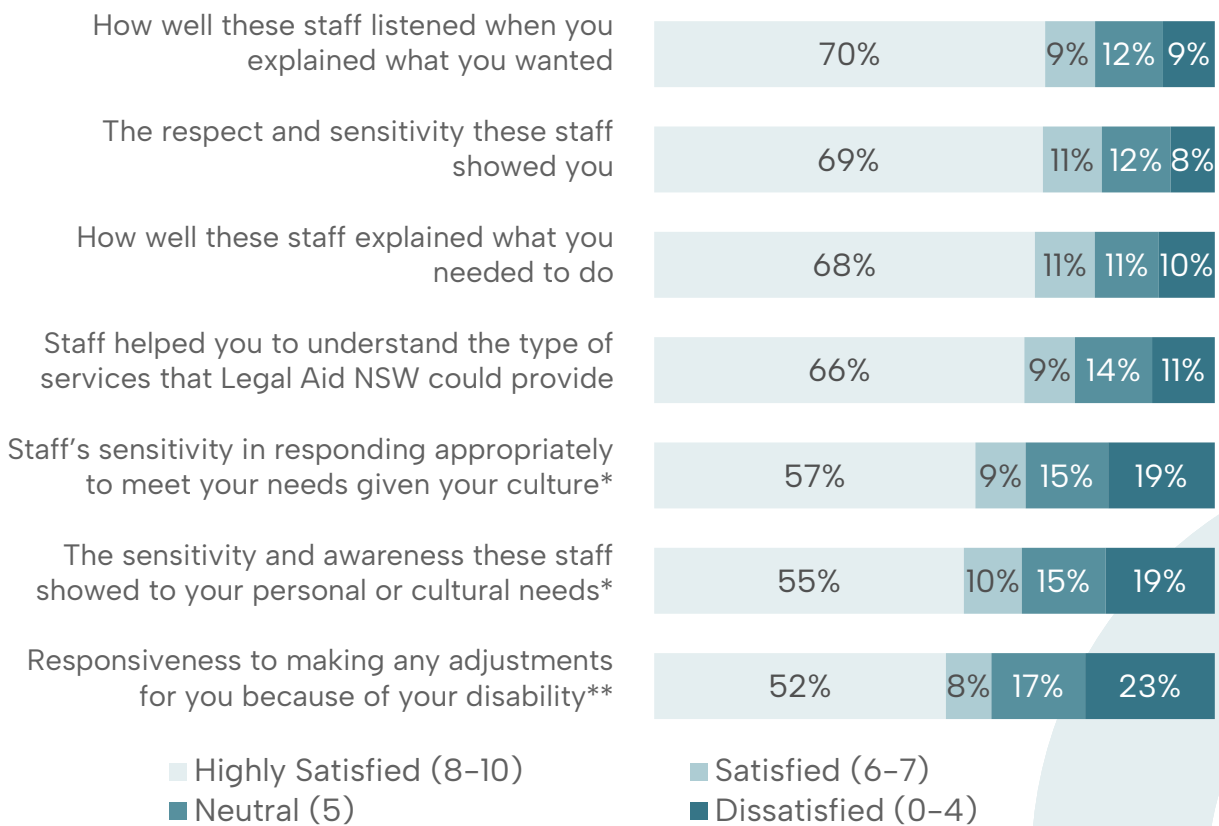


Q26. On the same scale, how satisfied were you overall with the service you received from the administrative and reception staff?
 Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014). Values of less than 3% are not labelled.

9.2. Satisfaction with service from administrative and reception staff

Clients were most *satisfied* with the listening skills of administrative and reception staff, with seven in ten (70%) *highly satisfied* with this aspect of the service they received. Just below seven in ten clients were *highly satisfied* with the respect and sensitivity they received from staff (69%) and the quality of explanations from staff on what the client needed to do (68%). One in five (19%) clients with personal or cultural needs were *dissatisfied* with the administrative and reception staff’s sensitivity in responding appropriately to their cultural needs, and the sensitivity and awareness staff showed to their personal or cultural needs.

Figure 38: Satisfaction with service from administrative and reception staff

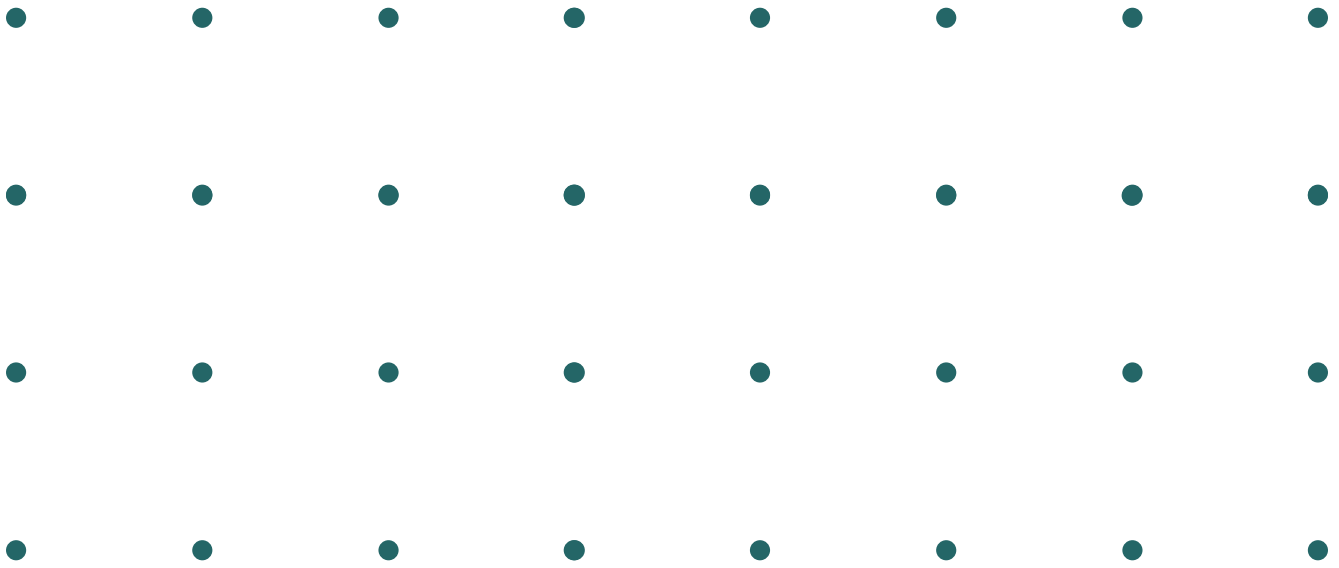


Q25. Please indicate how satisfied you were with each aspect of the service you received from the administration and reception staff on a scale from zero to ten

Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014)

* Base: had personal or cultural needs (n=93)

** Base: had a disability (n=315)



Section 10

10. Grants application and grants staff



A third of clients contacted grants staff

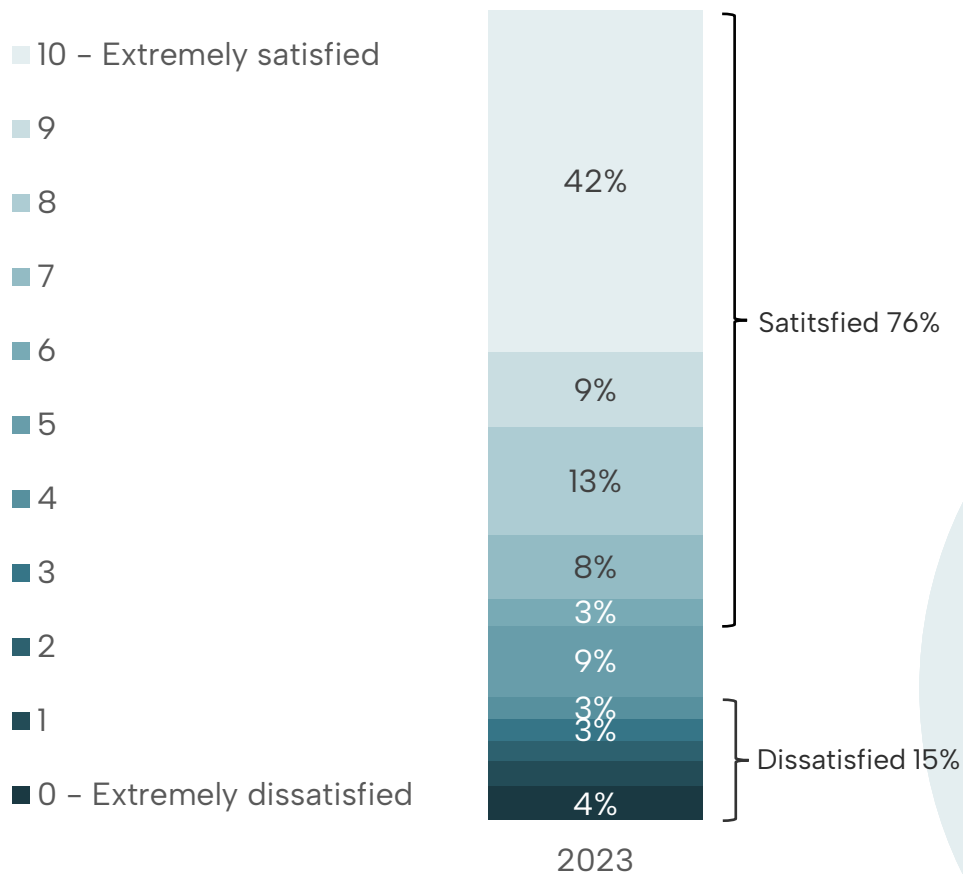
A third (32%) of clients contacted Legal Aid NSW at some point during their matter to discuss their grants application. A further 54% did not, and 14% of clients were unsure if they had. Significantly more family law clients spoke to Legal Aid NSW about their grants application than those receiving help for other law types (family 37%; cf. civil 35%, criminal 25%).

10.1. Overall satisfaction with staff from the grants division

Vast majority of clients satisfied with staff from the grants division who contacted them about grant application

Three quarters (76%) of clients who were contacted by the Grants division were *satisfied* with the staff. Two in three (65%) were *highly satisfied* and over two in five (42%) gave the maximum satisfaction score of 10. One in six (15%) were *dissatisfied*. The average satisfaction score given to staff who contacted clients about their grant application was 7.6.

Figure 39: Satisfaction with staff who contacted the client about their grant application

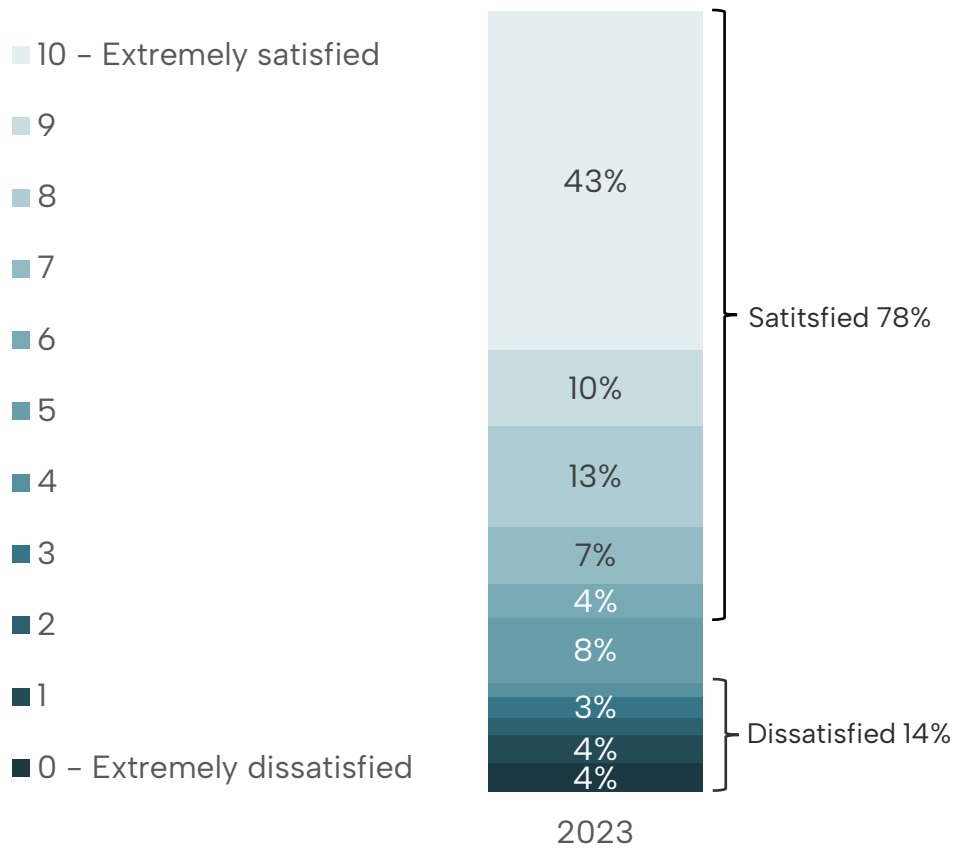


Q21a How satisfied were you overall with the staff who contacted you about your grant application?
 Base: 2023, all clients who contacted the Grants division (n=500)
 Values of less than 3% are not labelled

Four in five clients satisfied overall with Grants division staff

78% of clients who contacted the Grants division were *satisfied* overall with the service received from staff. Two thirds (66%) were *highly satisfied*, and over two in five (43%) gave the maximum satisfaction score of 10. Less than one in six (14%) were *dissatisfied* with service received from Grants division staff. The average satisfaction score given was 7.7.

Figure 40: Overall satisfaction with the staff from the Grants division

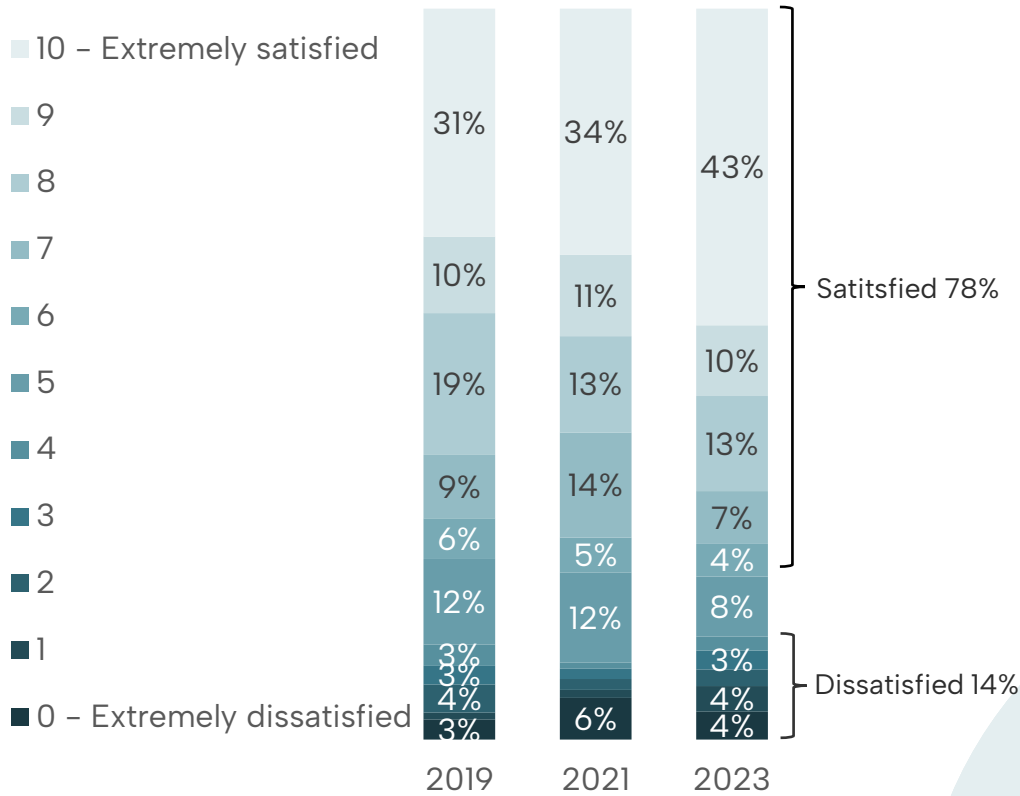


Q22a. How satisfied were you overall with the staff from the Grants division?
 Base: 2023, all clients who contacted the Grants division (n=499)
 Values of less than 3% are not labelled

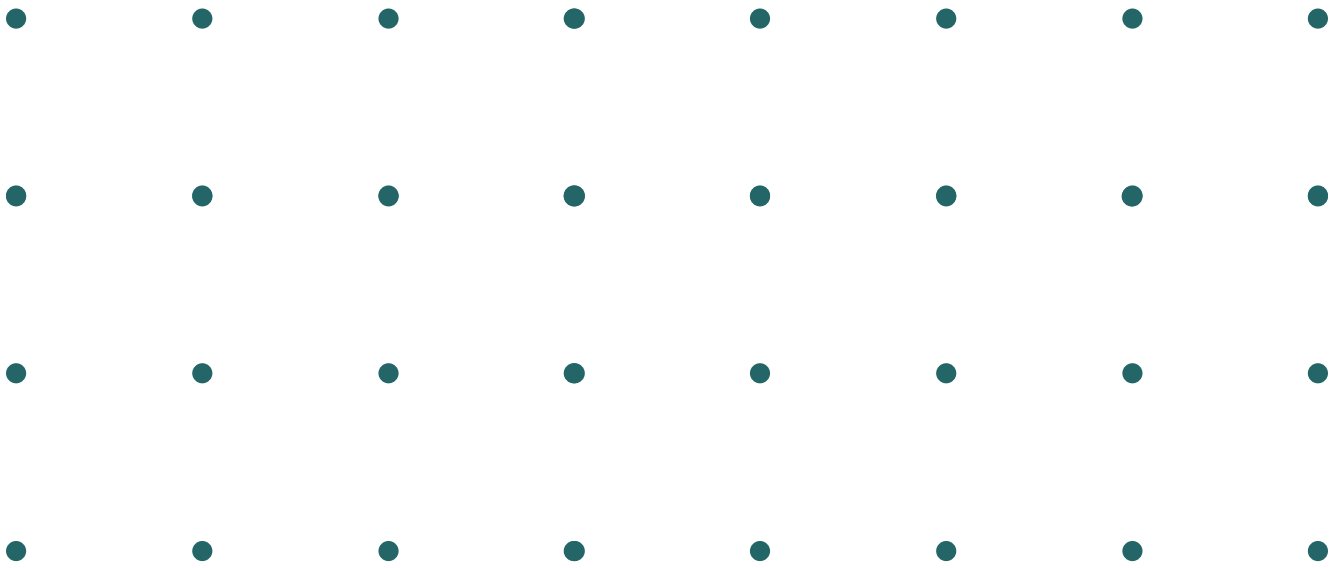
Satisfaction on an upward trend since 2019

Since 2019 and 2021, both overall *satisfaction* (6–10/10) (2023 78%; cf. 2021 77%, 2019 75%) and *high satisfaction* (8–10/10) (2023 66%; cf. 2021 58%, 2019 61%) of Grants division staff have increased among Legal Aid NSW clients who contacted the Grants division. The proportion of respondents who gave the maximum satisfaction score of 10 increased significantly in 2023 (43%; cf. 2021 34%, 2019 31%).

Figure 41: Overall satisfaction with the staff from the Grants division, 2019–2023



Q22a. How satisfied were you overall with the staff from the Grants division?
 Base: all clients who contacted the Grants division, 2023 (n=499), 2021 (n=162), 2019 (n=299)
 Values of less than 3% are not labelled



Section 11

11. Key Client Outcomes

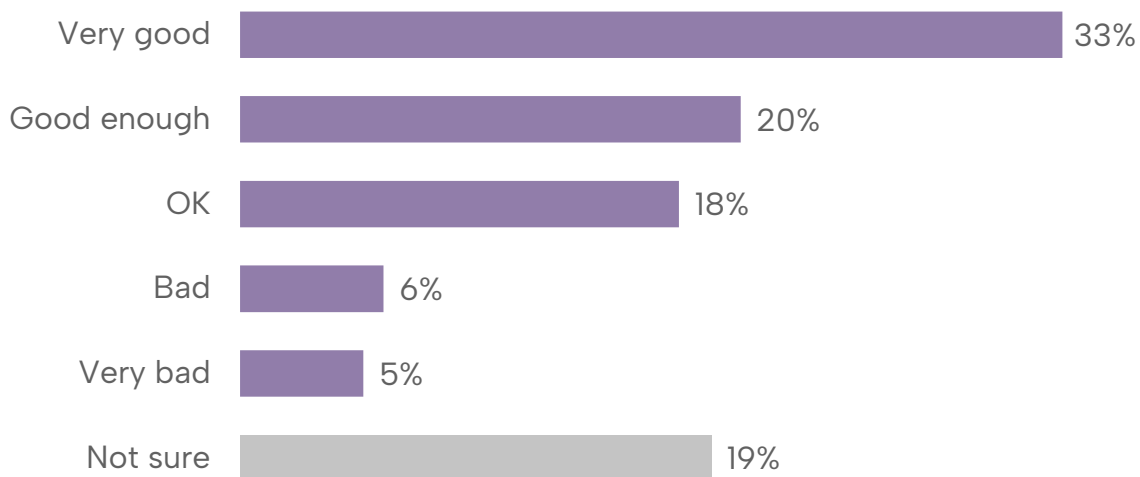


II.1. Expected case outcomes

Majority of clients expect a good outcome for their case

More than half (53%) of the clients expected a good outcome regarding their case, while only one in ten (11%) thought they would have a bad or very bad outcome. Just under one in five (18%) clients expected their case to have a satisfactory outcome, while a similar proportion (19%) were not sure what to expect from their case.

Figure 42: Expected degree of outcome regarding legal case



*Q33. Acknowledging that your case may not have been finalised yet, based on the information you currently have, what do you think about the expected outcome of your case? Do you think it will be good, bad, or OK?
Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014)*

Early Resolution Assistance clients were less optimistic about case outcomes

Clients with an Early Resolution Assistance application type were significantly less likely to expect a good outcome (47%) from their case, compared to Extended Legal Assistance (60%) and Grants (54%) clients. Early Resolution Assistance clients were also significantly less likely to expect very good outcomes (24%) from their case, compared to Extended Legal Assistance (40%) and Grants (35%) clients.

Family law clients less likely to expect good case outcomes

Just under half (49%) of family law clients expected a good case outcome, significantly less than the three in five civil (61%) and criminal (58%) law clients. Furthermore, only three in ten (29%) family law clients expected very good outcomes from their cases, significantly less than civil (39%) and criminal (38%) case clients.

Disability correlated with expecting poorer outcomes

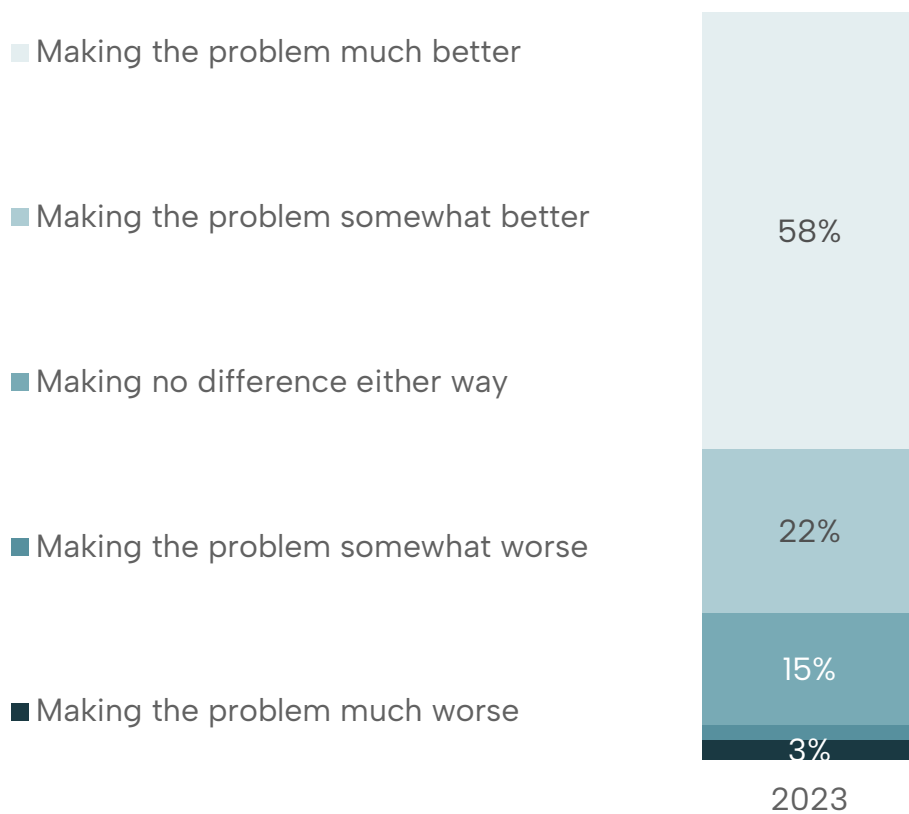
The proportion of clients with a disability who expected a good case outcome was significantly lower than clients without a disability (clients with a disability, 46%; cf. clients without a disability, 54%). Clients with a disability were also significantly more likely to anticipate a very bad outcome from their case (clients with a disability, 18%; cf. clients without a disability, 9%).

11.2. Impact of on-going lawyer on legal problem

Four in five clients reported that having ongoing support from a Legal Aid NSW lawyer has improved the resolution of their legal problem

Four fifths (80%) of clients believed that having an ongoing lawyer from Legal Aid NSW has improved their legal situation (somewhat + much better), with nearly three fifths (58%) feeling that this support has made their legal problem much better. Only one in twenty (5%) of clients report that ongoing support from a Legal Aid NSW lawyer has made their legal situation worse, while one in six (15%) report that such support has made no difference either way.

Figure 43: Impact of having an ongoing lawyer on resolution of client's legal problem

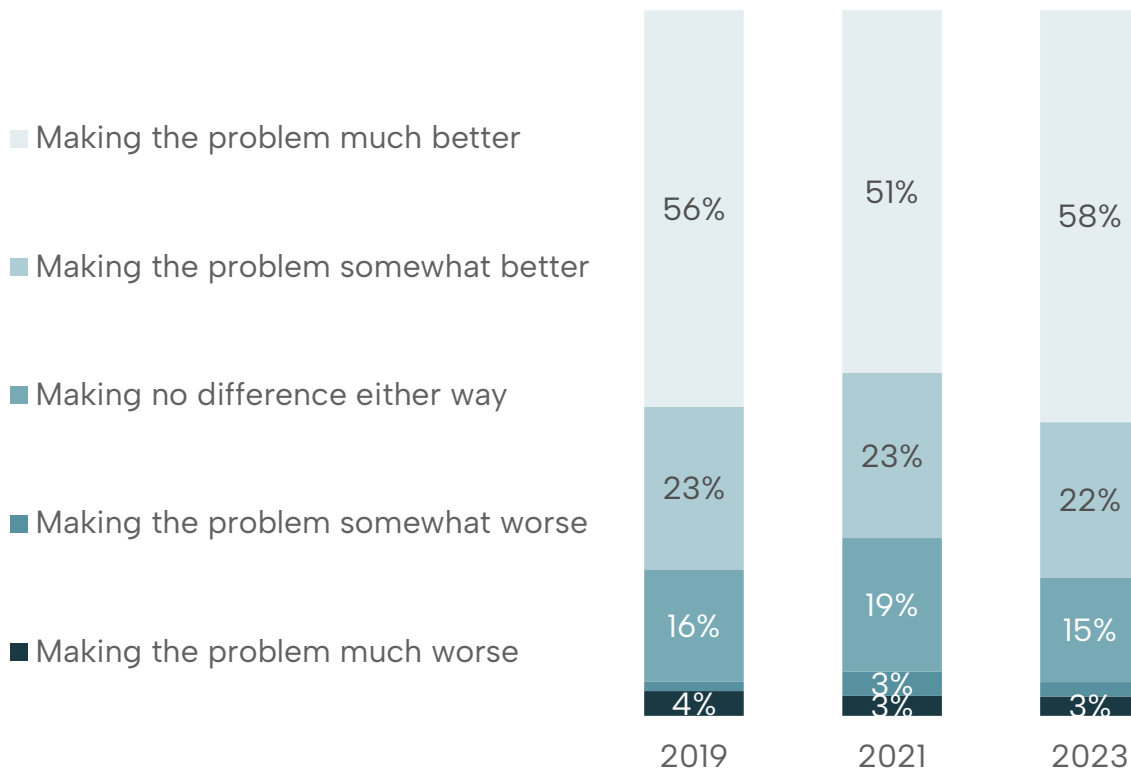


Q32. To what extent is having an ongoing lawyer helping you to sort out your legal problem? Is it better, worse or no difference? Would you say it is...
Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014). Values of less than 3% are not labelled.

Significant improvement in the impact of the lawyer compared to 2021

Legal Aid NSW clients have reported an increased level of improvement on their legal situation thanks to ongoing lawyer support since 2021 (80% in 2023; cf. 75% in 2021), with the proportion of clients who reported an improvement at higher levels than in 2019 (79%). Furthermore, there was an increase from 2021 in the number of clients feeling that their ongoing lawyer had made their legal problem much better (58% in 2023; cf. 51% in 2021).

Figure 44: Impact of having an ongoing lawyer on resolution by wave



Q32. To what extent is having an ongoing lawyer helping you to sort out your legal problem? Is it better, worse or no difference? Would you say it is...

Excludes 'Not sure/too soon to say'. Values of less than 3% are not labelled.

Base 2023: all clients (n=2,014), 2021: all grants clients (n=805), 2019: all clients (n=1,328)

11.3. Impact of legal assistance

Majority of clients report legal assistance improving situations regarding their legal case

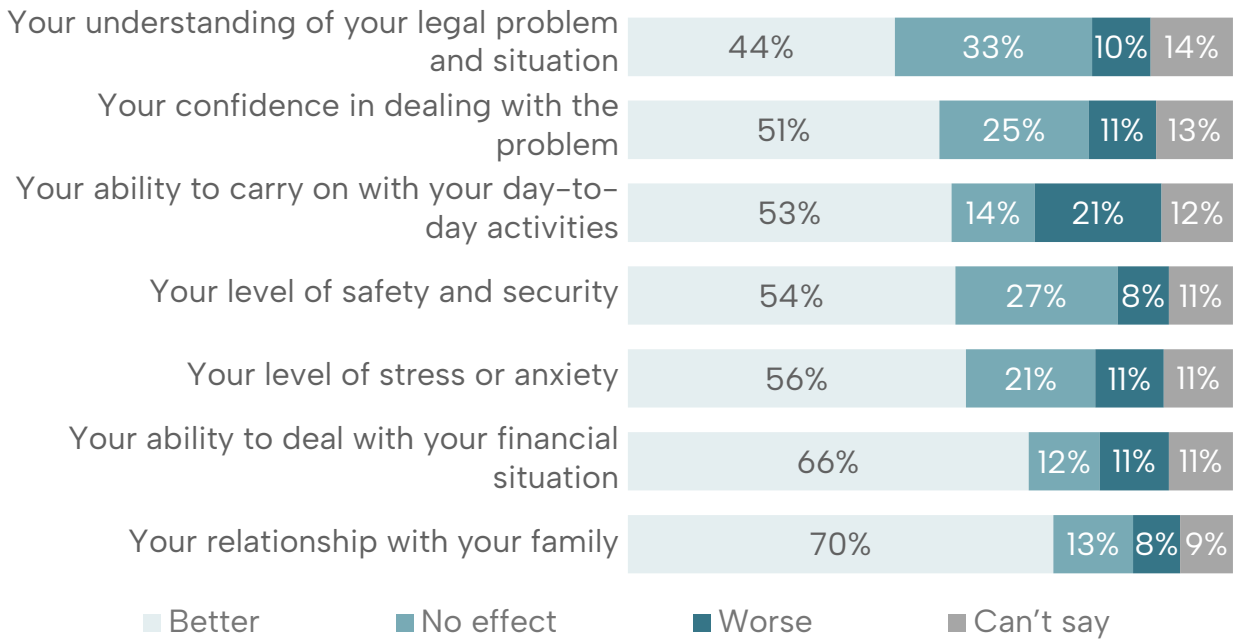
More than four in five (82%) clients reported that help received from Legal Aid NSW led to an improvement in at least one aspect of their life, with the most commonly improved aspect being the clients' understanding of their legal problem and situation (70%). Only a quarter (26%) of clients reported that help from Legal Aid NSW led to a worsening in at least one of these aspects.

Legal Aid usually creates higher levels of confidence and better mental health outcomes

Two in three (66%) Legal Aid NSW clients felt more confident in dealing with their legal problem as a result of the help they had received. More than half felt they could carry on with their day-to-day activities better (56%), had an increased level of safety and security (54%), and had improved levels of stress and anxiety (53%). Half (51%) felt they could deal with their financial situation better, and over two in five (44%) felt that their relationship with their family had improved.

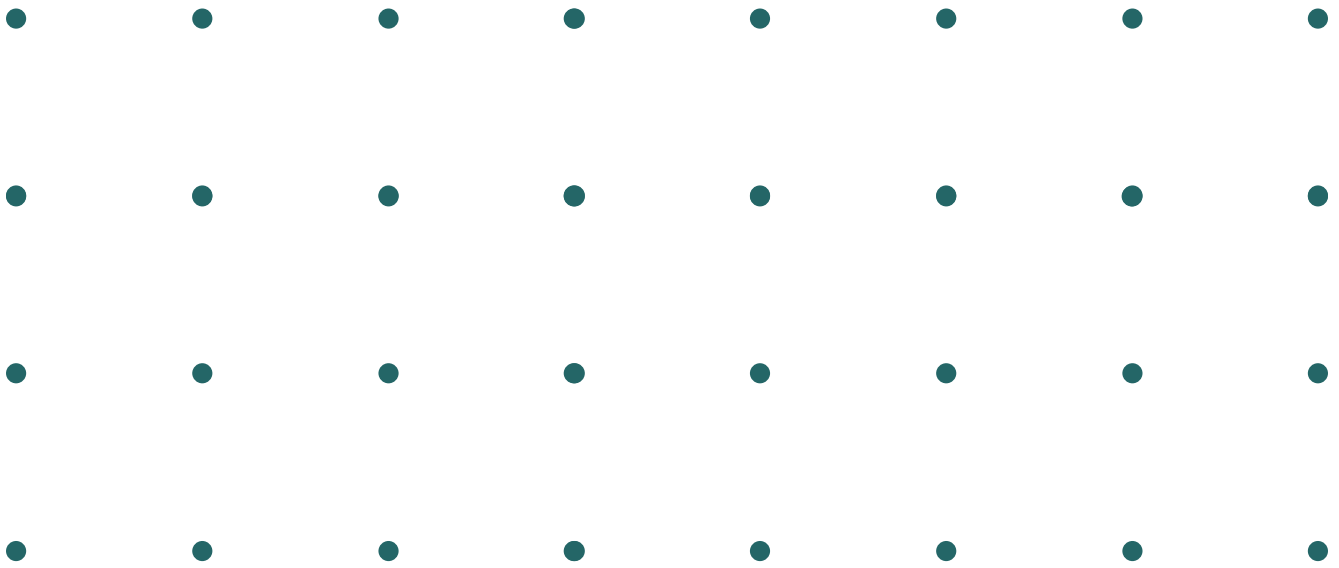
About one in five (21%) clients felt that their levels of stress and anxiety had worsened since seeking help from Legal Aid NSW, and approximately one in ten experienced having another area of their life worsen (understanding of legal problem, 8%; confidence, 11%; ability to do day-to-day activities, 11%; safety and security, 8%; ability to deal with financial situation, 11%; relationship with family, 10%).

Figure 45: Outcomes of help received from Legal Aid NSW



Q32A. Below are some aspects of help you may have received so far from Legal Aid NSW. For each please indicate whether it made that situation better, worse, no effect or you can't say?
 Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014). Values of less than 3% are not labelled.





Section 12

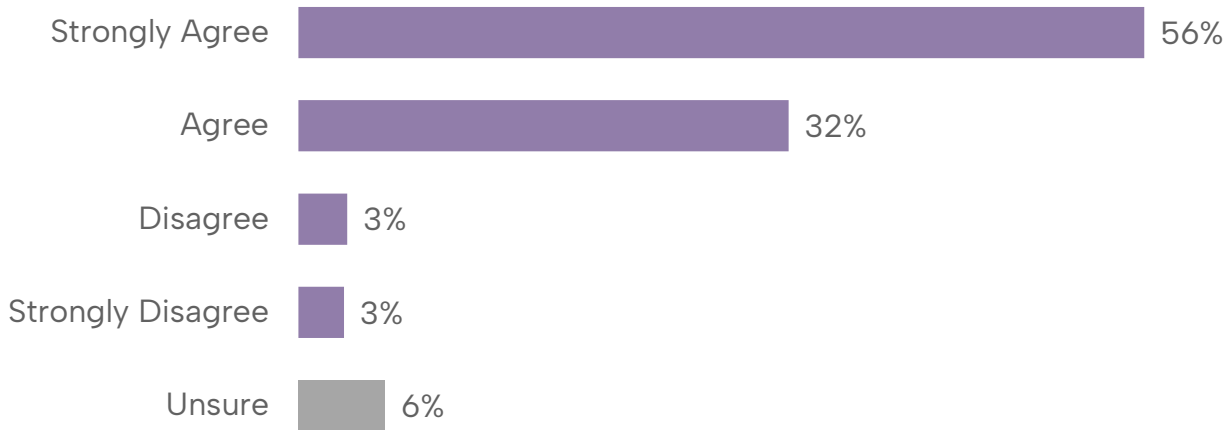
12. Future Usage and Client Recommendation



Most clients indicated they know where to get legal help in the future

Nearly 9 in 10 (88%) Legal Aid NSW clients reported that they know where to get legal help in the future if they needed it. More than half (56%) of the clients strongly agreed while a third (34%) agreed. Only one in twenty (6%) clients did not know where to get help for future legal problems, and the same proportion indicated they were unsure.

Figure 46: Agreement that the client would know where to seek help in future



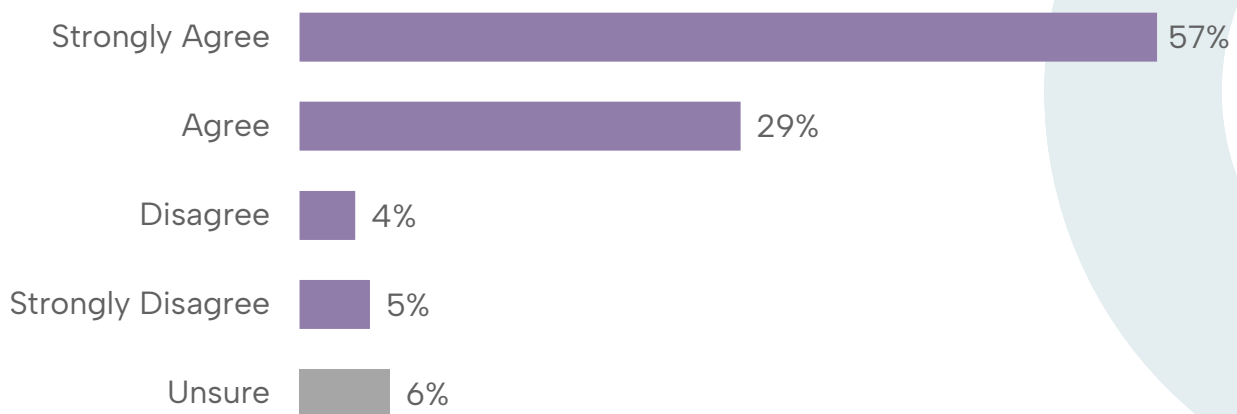
Q35_1. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. – You know where to get help if you have another legal problem in the future
Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014)

12.1. Recommendation of Legal Aid NSW

Majority of clients would recommend Legal Aid NSW to other people

Well over 8 in 10 (86%) clients indicated that they would recommend Legal Aid NSW to other people, with 29% agreeing and nearly three in five (57%) strongly agreeing. 8% of clients either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while one in twenty (6%) were unsure whether they would recommend Legal Aid NSW to others.

Figure 47: Agreement that the client would recommend Legal Aid NSW’s services

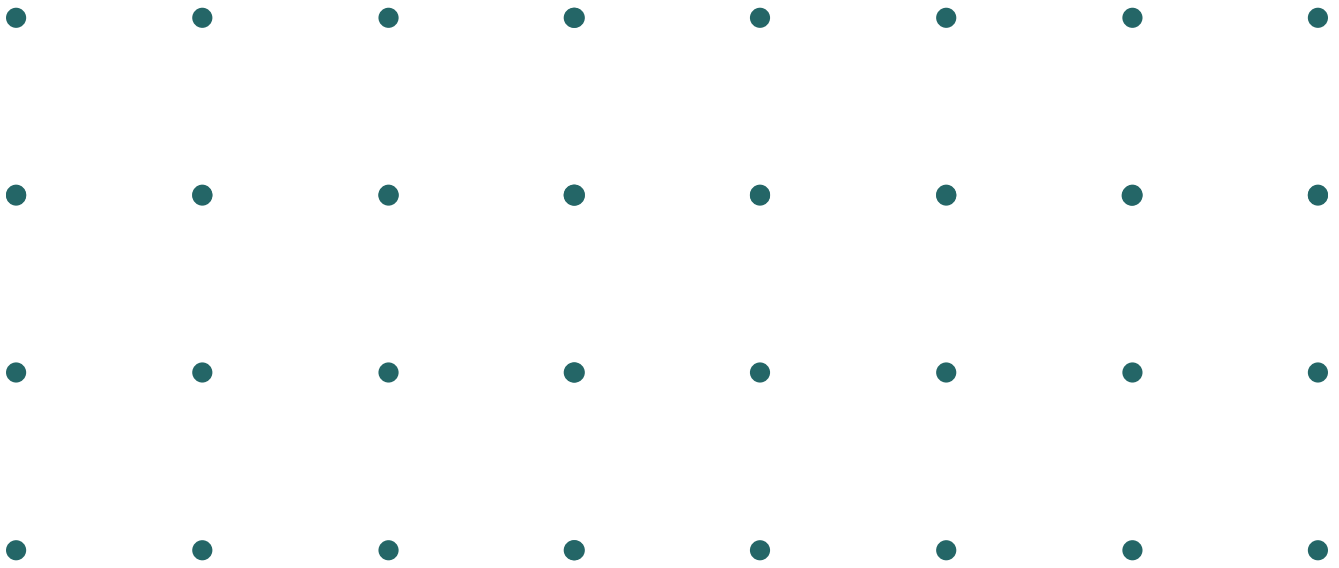


Q35_2. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. – You would recommend the legal service to other people
Base: 2023, all clients (n=2,014)

Clients with a disability less likely to recommend Legal Aid NSW

Less than four in five (78%) clients with a disability would recommend Legal Aid NSW services to others, significantly less than clients without a disability (87%). Similarly, clients with a disability were significantly more likely to either disagree or strongly disagree that they would recommend the service to others (14%; cf. clients without a disability 7%).





Section 13

13. Conclusion



13.1. Conclusion

Legal Aid NSW continues to enjoy high levels of satisfaction in 2023, driven by the timeliness in which it deals with clients' legal issues, and the service offered by its lawyers.

There was, however, an opportunity for improvement at the outset of the communications with clients, with 5% being told that they did not qualify for legal assistance.

The lawyers are seen as polite and respectful professionals who listen to the clients' legal problems and provide helpful advice that inspires confidence and has a positive impact on the clients' situation and wellbeing. In-house lawyers outperformed assigned private lawyers across a range of metrics including their ability to listen and help the client understand their situation in a polite and respectful way.

There is opportunity for the lawyers to improve their service by clearly outlining the type of assistance they can provide to clients at the earliest opportunity, and providing regular updates for clients throughout the legal process.

The administration and reception staff also performed well, and though their impact on overall satisfaction is not as important as the lawyers', they do provide an effective role when it comes to onboarding clients, listening to their needs, and explaining the next steps in the process in a respectful and sensitive manner.

The grants staff also contribute to overall satisfaction and, as with the administration and reception staff, are capable communicators who listen and advise with respect and sensitivity. The main area for improvement for grants staff is in the timeliness of their responses, which is regarded as a highly important component of their interaction with the clients.

Clients with specific personal or cultural needs and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders were less likely to have experiences and outcomes that were as satisfactory as clients without specific needs.

Interactions with clients with specific needs can be improved through additional sensitivity and respectfulness, and responsiveness of Legal Aid NSW staff in relation to their needs. There is room for improvement in this area across all interactions with lawyers, grants, administration, and reception staff.

21% of clients had a specific personal or cultural need in 2023, an increase from 17% in 2019 and 19% in 2021. The most common need was having a disability, followed by the need for an interpreter.

The proportion of clients that speak a language other than English at home has increased from 11% in 2019 to 21% in 2023, while the requirement for an interpreter has increased from 2% to 5% in the same timeframe.

The most common form of disability was having a mental or psychiatric disability, which has increased from 37% of clients with a disability in 2019 to 54% in 2023.

Clients with a disability who didn't feel their accessibility needs were met were likely to highlight the need for more understanding and empathy, and communicate clearly with less jargon. They were sometimes left without a clear understanding of the information or advice

that was provided to them, and not always asked about their specific needs, creating an opportunity for Legal Aid NSW staff to be more proactive.

Clients with a disability are also more likely to seek legal advice elsewhere compared to clients without a disability, which also highlights some possible shortcomings of Legal Aid NSW's service for these clients.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients find it harder to contact Legal Aid NSW, and need more effective communication with the service, including better timeliness and responsiveness, and more culturally appropriate staff. In particular, the responsiveness and clarity of communication from the lawyers is an area of lower satisfaction with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

More than a third of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients with personal or cultural needs do not feel they have been met. As a result, the impact of the help received from Legal Aid NSW is less likely to have a positive impact.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients are significantly less likely to understand their legal problem and situation than other clients, this ladders into a situation where they are also less likely to see an improvement in their stress and anxiety, impacting their ability to carry on with day-to-day activities, financial situation, and relationship with their family.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients are also far more likely to have a disability than other clients (24% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; cf. 14% other clients).

13.2. Recommendations

13.2.1. Recommendations from Priority Analyses

Aspects of Legal Aid NSW service have been assigned a recommendation action based on their relative importance to the client, and their satisfaction score (scoring 6–10 out of 10). These recommendation actions are summarised as follows:

Maintain. These are the more important metrics that have also performed with above average satisfaction scores.

Evaluate. While these metrics are performing well, they are less likely to drive overall satisfaction. Care must be taken not to focus a disproportionate amount of resources in improving these metrics.

Monitor. These are lower priority metrics, but they should be monitored in case they increase in importance in future waves of the study.

Improve. These are the metrics with relatively high importance that are underperforming with satisfaction. They should be prioritised for improvement as they will have the largest impact in improving overall satisfaction.

Lawyers

Aspect of service	Relative Importance	Satisfaction score	Action
Helpfulness of the advice given to client	12%	72%	Maintain
Confidence in the lawyer's advice	12%	72%	Maintain
Keeping client informed throughout the process	11%	69%	Improve
Clarity of explanation of what was going to happen next in the case	11%	71%	Maintain
Explanation of the type of assistance Legal Aid NSW can provide	11%	70%	Improve
The lawyer's ability to listen to the legal problem	10%	74%	Maintain
The way the lawyer explained how to deal with the legal problem	10%	71%	Maintain
The lawyer's politeness and respectfulness	10%	81%	Maintain
The time the lawyer gave the client without rushing them	10%	71%	Maintain
The lawyer's sensitivity in responding to meet personal or cultural needs.	3%	63%	Monitor
The lawyer's responsiveness to making any adjustments for client's disability	1%	60%	Monitor

Administration and reception staff

Aspect of service	Relative Importance	Satisfaction score	Action
How well these staff explained what needed to be done	24%	68%	Maintain
Explanation of the type of services that Legal Aid NSW could provide	23%	66%	Maintain
The staff's ability to listen	22%	70%	Maintain
The respect and sensitivity the staff showed	22%	69%	Maintain
Sensitivity in responding to meet the client's cultural needs	5%	57%	Monitor
The staff's responsiveness to making any adjustments for client's disability	3%	52%	Monitor
Sensitivity and awareness in responding to meet personal or cultural needs.	2%	55%	Monitor

Grants staff

Aspect of service	Relative Importance	Satisfaction score	Action
The respect and sensitivity shown by the staff	20%	68%	Maintain
The way the staff explained the grants process and set expectations	19%	62%	Maintain
The staff's ability to listen	19%	67%	Maintain
The timeliness of the response to queries	18%	59%	Improve
Confidence in the staff	18%	65%	Maintain
Sensitivity and awareness in responding to meet personal or cultural needs.	4%	56%	Monitor
The staff's responsiveness to making any adjustments for client's disability	3%	48%	Monitor

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Clients

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients are more likely to experience stress, anxiety, financial, and social issues due to their legal situation. Counter this by avoiding jargon, and regularly checking the client's understanding of the information they have been given with a sensitivity and empathy.

Increase the availability of culturally available staff for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Become more responsive, shorten timeframes where possible, and set expectations where longer timeframes are unavoidable.

Lawyers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Clients

Aspect of service	Relative Importance	Satisfaction score	Action
Confidence in the lawyer's advice	12%	69%	Maintain
Helpfulness of the advice given to client	12%	70%	Maintain
Explanation of the type of assistance Legal Aid NSW can provide	11%	68%	Maintain
Keeping client informed throughout the process	11%	65%	Improve
Clarity of explanation of what was going to happen next in the case	11%	69%	Maintain
The time the lawyer gave the client without rushing them	11%	68%	Maintain
The way the lawyer explained how to deal with the legal problem	10%	66%	Improve
The lawyer's ability to listen to the legal problem	10%	73%	Maintain
The lawyer's politeness and respectfulness	10%	78%	Maintain
The lawyer's sensitivity in responding to meet personal or cultural needs.	3%	58%	Monitor
The lawyer's responsiveness to making any adjustments for client's disability	<1%	55%	Monitor

Administration and reception staff for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Clients

Aspect of service	Relative Importance	Satisfaction score	Action
How well these staff explained what needed to be done	22%	63%	Maintain
Explanation of the type of services that Legal Aid NSW could provide	20%	62%	Maintain
The staff's ability to listen	20%	67%	Maintain
The respect and sensitivity the staff showed	19%	64%	Maintain
Sensitivity in responding to meet the client's cultural needs	8%	56%	Monitor
Sensitivity and awareness in responding to meet personal or cultural needs	6%	53%	Monitor
The staff's responsiveness to making any adjustments for client's disability	6%	45%	Monitor

Grants staff for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Clients

Aspect of service	Relative Importance	Satisfaction score	Action
The timeliness of the response to queries	20%	60%	Maintain
The way the staff explained the grants process and set expectations	20%	68%	Maintain
The staff's ability to listen	17%	67%	Maintain
Confidence in the staff	17%	71%	Maintain
The respect and sensitivity shown by the staff	15%	66%	Maintain
Sensitivity and awareness in responding to meet personal or cultural needs.	7%	46%	Monitor
The staff's responsiveness to making any adjustments for client's disability	4%	41%	Monitor

13.2.2. Additional recommendations

Overall

Continue to ensure services are delivered in a timely manner, with the initial contact points in Legal Aid NSW being capable of accurately advising if potential clients can qualify for legal aid.

Clients with specific personal or cultural needs (including clients with a disability)

Train staff to be more proactive in asking and assessing the personal and cultural needs of clients at the initial contact points, with a focus on needs surrounding mental health and requirements for an interpreter.

Express the need to communicate with more understanding and empathy, and with less jargon.