Perceptions of Primary Care Patients Attending a Legal Health Clinic: A Qualitative Descriptive Study

Legal Health Clinic

Medical-legal partnership between 2 legal agencies and 1 family health team to provide free legal assistance within a primary care office.

Participant Characteristics

- **50%** female
- **50%** retired/unable to work/unemployed
- **75%** receiving social service benefits
- **38%** had good self-reported health
- **88%** had family and community supports legal issues

THEME 1: PERSONAL BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

Personal Benefits

- **Received Referrals & Directions**
- **Educational**
- **Participant Empowerment**

Personal Challenges

- **Did Not Meet Expectations**
- **Personal Lack of Motivation**
- **Frustration with Legal Process**

THEME 2: PROGRAM STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS

Facilitators of Program Success

- **Program Set-Up**
- **Underlying Program Philosophy**

Barriers to Program Success

- **Program Scope**
- **Lack of Proper Communication with Clinic**

- The Legal Health Clinic provided participants with referrals, resources, and clear direction on legal issues.
- Suggested program changes include improved program scope, screening processes with supports, training on patient centered care, and inclusion of patient advocate roles.

VIP Research Lab | McMaster University | Family Medicine McMaster Family Practice | Legal Aid Ontario / Aide juridique Ontario | Hamilton Community Legal Clinic / Clinique juridique communautaire de Hamilton | Ontario | Ontario Trillium Foundation / Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

Agarwal G, Ziesmann A, Paramalingam A, Nair K, Delleman B, Edwards D, Crowe S, Tye H. Perceptions of primary care patients attending a legal health clinic: a qualitative descriptive study. BMC Health Serv Res. 2025 Dec 9. doi: 10.1186/s12913-025-13759-6.