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# OTTAWA LEGAL CLINICS TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2016

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## PILOT PROJECTS

This month the four staff Working Groups have continued to meet and discuss transition options and opportunities for the new clinic. Within these four groups, staff discuss new ways to work collaboratively with teams across the whole clinic system, how to manage work flow across the offices, new ways to conduct intake, and the logistics of having one Office Manager covering three offices. The staff Working Groups have come up with the idea to ‘pilot’ new ideas, testing an idea for a system first before implementing it, for example implementing a new intake system. These pilot projects will be discussed further in the upcoming months.

## INCREASING CAPACITY IN THE NEW CLINIC

This month the Steering Committee has been starting to work on some other ways to increase capacity that were named in the recommendations made in the 2014 needs assessment. This includes some of the following:

- Decreasing overall time spent on administrative tasks by amalgamating the Office Manager role of the three clinics, while still ensuring that all Support Staff tasks are completed;
- Increasing services to rural areas in Ottawa by developing partnerships and satellite offices with agencies that serve rural areas;
- Increasing services to First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities by doing outreach with agencies that serve this population in Ottawa;
- Better meeting the housing law demand by increasing staff trained in housing law, either through hiring a housing lawyer, paralegal, or community legal worker, and bringing on articling students specializing in housing;
- Exploring options to increase capacity for community development and Public Legal Education, such as creating a community development worker position.

In the upcoming months, the Steering Committee will continue to discuss the next steps in meeting the recommendations listed in the Final Report.

The full list of recommendations can be found [here in the Final Report](#).

## STAFF WORKING GROUPS

Over the past month, the four staff Working Groups have continued to meet to discuss priority issues within the new amalgamated clinic. These staff Working groups will continue to meet until May, and onward as needed. The purpose of the groups is to engage staff on discussions about transition structures to be able to come up with structures that work best across the three current offices.

**Work flow management and joint intake:** This month the Working Group discussed what a joint intake system would look like, and has decided to pilot a structure of a shared calendar across the offices, allowing intake workers to balance the workload of caseworkers across the three offices.

**Legal practice teams:** This month the working group discussed what a team approach would look like in different areas of practice. The first area of practice being looked at as a team approach is housing, since it was named as a priority in the recommendations from the needs assessment conducted in 2014.

**Support staff and office management:** This past month this Working Group has been discussing in detail the logistics of having one Office Manager for three offices, and the distribution of work to ensure that tasks are not overlooked.

**Harmonizing policies:** This Working Group will meet to review current policies held in each of the three offices, and work together to recommend one suite of policies for the amalgamated clinic.

## NEXT STEPS

The Working Groups will continue to discuss the important issues that arise from amalgamating the three clinics, and provide their recommendations to the Steering Committee in May. Once the staff Working Groups have prepared their recommendations, a proposed transition plan will be developed and presented to board members, community partners and clients who will be invited to provide their feedback.

To learn more about this process, please visit [www.ottawaclinics.ca](http://www.ottawaclinics.ca).

To contact us, please email [info@ottawaclinics.ca](mailto:info@ottawaclinics.ca).