



Fee scheme for litigators future shape of graduated scheme announced

NEWSPAGE2



View from Lord Hunt legal aid minister comments on reform

COMMENTPAGE6

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The Criminal Defence Service
provider newsletter of the
Legal Services Commission

focus on cds

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Firms sign up for the new General Criminal Contract

Applications for the new General Criminal Contract were being received from firms across the country as Focus on CDS went to print. They began arriving by post and email on 1 October – the first day of the application period.

Current providers and new firms who wish to apply must return their applications before 4pm on 31 October.

Application packs have been sent to providers in the post and can also be downloaded from the LSC website. Providers who have not received the application pack can also obtain a copy from their regional account manager.

LSC anticipates that the majority of current providers will apply for the new contracts – just as they did with the Unified Civil Contract in March.

What's in the new GCC?

There are no surprises for providers in the new General Criminal Contract (GCC) – the LSC has consulted on everything that's in it. The amendment clauses reflect our understanding of the law as it stands following the Beatson judgment on the Unified Contract. There are no changes to the duty solicitor arrangements set in 2001.

Fixed police station fees

The main difference in the new contract is the way firms will be paid for police station work. The fixed fee level has been set by area so that in areas outside the main cities, an average provider with an average caseload will receive the same income as they currently do. Firms that already have below average case costs and an average caseload will benefit immediately. Firms that are able to reduce their case costs in future will be able to benefit as well.

In four criminal justice system areas and 17 duty solicitor scheme areas, the fixed fee has been set at 9.5% below the average. The areas are: London, West Midlands, Greater Manchester and Merseyside. The schemes are: Bristol, Nottingham, Gateshead, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, North Tyneside, Sunderland/ Houghton Le Spring, South Tyneside, Leeds, Bradford, Derby and Swadlincote, Sheffield, Hull, Leicester, Southampton, Cardiff, Brighton and Portsmouth.

Magistrates' court fees

The January 2008 contract reflects the current position on magistrates' court fees after the amendments made to the fee structures in April 2007.

The other GCC changes are:

- > expansion of the Defence Solicitor Call Centre to 'own client' work
- > expansion of CDS Direct to those elements of 'own client' work suitable for telephone only advice
- > introduction of the Very High Cost Case contracting panel to run for 18 months.

Providers who don't apply

Current providers who don't apply will not get slots from 14 January 2008 and will not be paid for any new contract work on cases started from that date. Monthly payments to these firms are likely to be reduced from December 2007 as the old contract draws to a close. If there's a shortfall of applications, providers who have signed up and have indicated capacity to take on extra work will receive more slots.



Carolyn Regan

Chief Executive

With the deadline fast approaching for applications for the new six-month General Criminal Contract, I am sure that this is what many of you will be thinking about when this copy of Focus on CDS lands on your desk. I am pleased to say that at the time of writing (only two days into the application period) our regional offices have already started to receive completed applications.

I want to take this opportunity to stress that it was not our intention to have to issue short-term contracts of this kind. It is only the uncertainty caused by the judgment in the judicial review brought by the Law Society against the civil Unified Contract which has made this necessary. However, we have made the application process very straightforward and your LSC regional office will be pleased to help if you have any questions about how to apply.

Another point I want to emphasise is that there are no surprises in the new six-month contract. It is the same as the existing contract apart from the changes necessary to introduce those reforms that we have already consulted on. These include the new fee scheme for police station work, the Very High Cost Cases Panel and the expansion of CDS Direct to cover what is currently 'own client' work. These reforms will take effect from 14 January 2008 when the new contract is in place.

We have also recently published the Litigators Graduated Fee Scheme which starts in January so that you have as much information as possible before the 31 October deadline for applying for a new contract.

There are no other changes planned to take effect during the six months of the interim criminal contract so you will not be signing up for anything you are not aware of.

I hope you will be reassured to hear this. If you have not yet applied for a contract, I would encourage you to do so soon. We look forward to continuing to work with you.

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For more information on the GCC

If you're a provider, or a new firm, and want to find out more, you can:

- > visit the LSC website
- > read the Frequently Asked Questions on the LSC website
- > speak to your regional crime manager
- > email your questions to the CDS Contracts team.



New fee scheme for litigators

The LSC has announced the future shape of the graduated fee scheme for Crown Court litigators, so providers considering the new GCC (2008) can see how the change affects them.

Under the Litigators Graduated Fee Scheme (LGFS), Crown Court litigators will be paid a graduated fee for a case, which will be determined by factors such as the length and type of case, the number of pages of prosecution evidence and the number of defendants represented. It will be similar to the successful Advocates Graduated Fee Scheme, which has operated since 1997.

Derek Hill, Director of the Criminal Defence Service, said "The reforms will give litigators a chance to benefit directly if they work more efficiently and this means better value for public money, more money to spend on other areas of legal aid and more certainty for criminal defence solicitors. The fact that fees are graduated will incentivise lawyers to deliver quality for the clients."

The LGFS, to be introduced in January 2008, is the latest step in the legal aid reform programme that will pave the way for the proposed best value tendering process for Crown Court work.

It will produce savings of £11m each year, which is a reduction from the £28m savings originally consulted on but still within the LSC's budget of £255m, representing a 5.5% saving.

The LGFS aims to:

- > give litigators an incentive to speed up cases and encourage them to deliver the right quality of service for clients by paying more for longer and more serious cases
- > simplify the process of claiming a bill and speed up payment
- > cap inflationary increases on the budget and provide savings.

In future the LSC intends to consult on proposals for a single fee to establish a new payment system for litigation and advocacy and further paving the way for best value tendering of Crown Court work.

Between 1997/98 and 2004/05 there was an 86% increase in costs, in real terms, for Crown Court defence litigation services. The Constitutional Affairs Select Committee recently highlighted this unsustainable growth in their report on legal aid reform.

How the graduated fees are calculated

The LGFS payments will be based on the following key variables:

- > the nature of the alleged offence
- > the type of case (for example, if there is a guilty plea or if the case goes to full trial)
- > the length of trial
- > the number of pages of prosecution evidence
- > the number of defendants.

There is also a mechanism for dealing with a small number of complex cases that last 25 to 40 days and which meet Very High Cost Case criteria. These will be passed onto VHCC Panel members. The panels start work next January.

@ CONTACT & INFORMATION

web: lsc website > cds > criminal areas of work > Crown Court > litigator fee

email: CDS.Contracts@legalservices.gov.uk

Criminal legal aid means testing

The Post Implementation Review (PIR) of the first six months of means testing in the magistrates' courts has now been completed.

The Criminal Defence Service Act came into force on 2 October 2006, along with the reintroduction of means testing for legal aid in the magistrates' courts. This transferred responsibility for granting criminal legal aid from the courts to the LSC.

Means testing ensures that those who can pay for their criminal defence do so and that public money is used to help those who are in most need of support. It forms part of wider reforms that are significantly changing the way legal aid is administered to provide justice at a fair price.

This Review concludes that the introduction of means testing in magistrates' courts was largely successful, but acknowledges that it presented some operational challenges.

The new system was implemented on time, on budget and is on track to deliver the anticipated savings of £35 million. However, a number of operational and policy issues that were highlighted in the report remain to be resolved through joint working between the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the LSC and Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS).

These organisations have committed to continuous improvement and delivery of an efficient legal aid scheme, particularly within the framework of wider justice system efficiency. As a result, several key recommendations are already in the process of implementation.

For example, one of the Review's most significant recommendations is to extend the 'passporting' provisions for youths so that all defendants appearing before the youth court and all under 18-year-olds appearing before the magistrates' court are exempt from the means test. This change will be implemented on 1 November 2007. All cases will still need to satisfy the Interests of Justice test.

To learn more, visit the LSC website.

@ CONTACT & INFORMATION

web: lsc website > cds > getting criminal legal aid

LSC sets new corporate targets for 'whole system reform'

For the first time the LSC has set corporate targets aimed at improving the justice system to help it work more effectively.

The importance of this work was highlighted in *Legal Aid: A market-based approach to reform* and reinforced by providers in subsequent consultations. Quarterly legal aid stakeholder meetings have been established with senior members and officials from key stakeholder groups, including:

- > Senior Presiding Judge
- > Attorney General's Office
- > Her Majesty's Courts Service
- > Crown Prosecution Service
- > Association of Chief Police Officers
- > Office for Criminal Justice Reform
- > Law Society
- > Bar Council
- > Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
- > Advice Services Alliance
- > Her Majesty's Treasury
- > Department for Children, Schools and Families.

There have been three meetings to date chaired by Carolyn Regan, LSC Chief Executive, and Rod Clark, Ministry of Justice (MoJ), and a number of cross-cutting justice system issues were discussed.

All LSC regions will be examining the links between operational practice and legal aid provision and expenditure by working with their providers and partners in the judiciary and magistrates courts, family courts and police.

Achieving the targets to date has involved data collection and analysis to identify key

issues. Over the next six months the focus will be on developing and agreeing regional action plans and working with providers and relevant agencies to maximise improvements to the whole system. Each region will develop an agreed action plan by 31 December 2007.

Work is being carried out nationally and regionally, with emphasis on engaging with Her Majesty's Court Service, one of the LSC's key MoJ partners. This includes aligning the LSC's magistrates' court target with Criminal Justice: Simple, Speedy Summary (CJSSS), which is to be rolled out nationally during 2007-08. The LSC's family court target will link to the Government target to complete care proceedings cases within 40 weeks, from application to court or initial case conference to final hearing, alongside the recently reviewed Public Law Outline (see article on page 4.)

Provider views are key to establishing best practice and identifying practical areas for improvement. The LSC has been seeking feedback from providers regionally over the past three months through workshops and Regional Duty Solicitor Committees.

Provider input has already proved invaluable in implementing local initiatives such as a new protocol in Nottingham magistrates' court for changes to the listing process and improvements to Manchester police bail back policies.

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Criminal legal aid point of principle

A point of principle of general importance is a decision made and certified by the Cost Appeals Committee relating to an issue on claiming or conducting work under civil or crime contracts.

Points of principle (POPs) tell the LSC's bill assessors how to interpret contract rules for assessing providers' claims and files.

All current POPs, along with associated guidance, are published in the Points of Principle Manual, which is available on the LSC website. New POPs and any necessary guidance are published on the LSC website as they arise and in the LSC Manual.

The following new Point of Principle for criminal legal aid clarifies the position with regard to claiming for post-charge police station work under the General Criminal Contract.

CRIMLA 77 Claiming for post-charge work carried out in police stations

Decision no: CRIMLA 77

Date: 4 May 2007

Point of Principle: Firms have a choice as to how to claim for work carried out after charge in the police station, either on the representation order or as part of the police station claim. The wording in the guidance in the Criminal Bills Assessment Manual was permissive rather than prescriptive ('may' rather than 'must') because in cases where there is a change of solicitor, it will only be possible to claim under the work type which that firm has carried out. In different cases, this may be either the investigations class or proceedings.

Proceeds of Crime Act 2002

This article offers further clarification about available funding both before and after charge, and for ancillary matters relating to enforcement of confiscation orders after conviction.



Funding before charge

If a client is under investigation for a matter which is likely to lead to charges being laid, Advice and Assistance is available under the Criminal Investigations Class of Work until the client is charged with an offence.

If the prosecution make an application to the Crown Court for a restraint order (before any substantive criminal proceedings have started or whilst those proceedings are still in the magistrates' court), civil legal aid funding may be available, subject to the civil means and merits test. These applications fall within paragraph 3 of Schedule 2 of the Access to Justice Act 1999.

Legal Help covers work excluding representation at court. To pay for representation in the Crown Court, an application should be made for a civil legal aid certificate from the London Regional Office using the CLSAPP1 form. Emergency certificates may be granted in some circumstances. The client will have to satisfy the civil means and merits test in order to be eligible. Where the opponent is the Assets Recovery Agency, applications for funding should be sent to the Special Cases Unit. For further guidance on the scope of civil funding under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, see section 23 of the LSC Manual Volume 3, Part C. Suppliers with a CDS Contract may do this work under the Associated CLS Part of the General Criminal Contract.

Post-charge funding

Regulation 3(3)(c) of the CDS (General)(No.2) Regulations 2001 provides that confiscation and forfeiture proceedings in connection with criminal proceedings are to be regarded as incidental to the proceedings from which they arise, and so are treated as criminal proceedings for funding purposes. Regulation

4 of the CDS (Representation Orders and Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2006 provides that a representation order granted for the main criminal proceedings extends to incidental proceedings. It follows that if there is a representation order in place for the main criminal proceedings, this will cover the confiscation/restraint proceedings. Conversely if there is no longer a representation order in place, an application for a fresh representation order should be made using the CDS14 form to the appropriate court.

Confiscation Order Funding (for a certificate of inadequacy)

Under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, an application for a certificate of inadequacy is made to the Crown Court making the confiscation order. If the existing representation order has not been discharged, then the application may be made under that representation order. If there is no representation order in place then a fresh application for a representation order should be made using the CDS14 form.

Where a confiscation order has been made under the Drug Trafficking Act 1994 or the Criminal Justice Act 1988, an application for a certificate of inadequacy is made to the High Court. An application for a representation order should accompany the application for a certificate of inadequacy and be made using the CDS14 form. Where the client is not exempt from the court fee, an application can be made for remission. More information is available on Her Majesty's Courts Service website at www.hmcs.gov.uk

Civil recovery of assets

Applications under Part 5 of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 concern civil recovery of the proceeds of unlawful conduct, and CDS funding is not available. However, civil funding may be available subject to the client satisfying the means and merits test. The table on the facing page consolidates previous information contained in Focus 15 (August 2004) and Focus 17 (April 2005).

@ CONTACT & INFORMATION

web: lsc website > pay rates and schemes > guidance on fees and funding

@ CONTACT & INFORMATION

web: lsc website > cls or cds > forms

Available funding for ancillary matters relating to enforcement of confiscation orders after conviction.

Is the individual charged with or accused of an offence?	Type of proceedings/ application	Act(s)	Funding
No	Application by prosecution to Crown Court for a restraint order	Section 42 of Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	Civil legal aid. Apply to the London Regional Office using the CLSAPP1 form (can be done under CDS Contract under Associated CLS Work).
Yes	Confiscation, restraint or receivership arising from criminal proceedings	Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	Proceedings are in the Crown Court. As proceedings are considered incidental to the proceedings from which they arise, they are covered by the representation order granted for the substantive criminal proceedings.
No	Defendant's application for a certificate of inadequacy	Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	Application to be made to Crown Court. Apply for fresh representation order if the representation order for substantive proceedings is discharged.
N/A	Forfeiture and other proceedings	Part 5 of Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	CLS Funding is available to resist the application for both defendants and third parties, (Access to Justice Act 1999, Schedule 2, paragraph 3). Means and merit tested. Representation is Licensed Work.
Yes	Confiscation, restraint or receivership arising from criminal proceedings	Criminal Justice Act 1988 and Drug Trafficking Act 1994 (for alleged criminal conduct occurring before 24 March 2003)	Considered incidental to criminal proceedings from which they arise and so covered by the representation order granted in the substantive criminal proceedings. CDS (General) (No.2) Regulations 2001, regulation 3(3)(c). If no representation order is in place, apply on CDS14 for a fresh representation order. Costs are claimed from the LSC (see Focus 15, page 6). If the proceedings are appealed to the Court of Appeal, see regulation 10 of the CDS (General) (no.2) Regulations 2001 about making an application to the Court of Appeal for a representation order.
N/A	Enforcement proceedings in the magistrates' court for confiscation orders	Criminal Justice Act 1988, Drug Trafficking Act 1994 and Proceeds of Crime Act 2002	Fresh proceedings CDS14 to the magistrates' court hearing the matter. Means tested in the magistrates' court
N/A	Defendant's application for a certificate of inadequacy	Criminal Justice Act 1988 and Drug Trafficking Act 1994	Applications for a certificate of inadequacy are made to the High Court. A representation order should be applied for from the High Court using the CDS14 form. Where the client is not exempt from the court fee, an application can be made for remission to reduce the court fee (see Her Majesty's Courts Service website).

Developing an IT system for the future

LSC Online's website is being expanded following the success of the online billing service. As part of our e-business strategy, the new LSC Online website will launch on 5 November 2007.

The website will offer providers a range of improvements that will be implemented in phases following launch. These will include:

- > the ability to maintain your own reference and contact data
- > improved validation of submissions
- > the ability to view your performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- > the ability to view your most recent financial statement
- > an electronic notification system for information on key contract activity
- > the facility to control user access to key information such as contract and KPI information within your offices.

An iSupplier portal will be the single point of-access to all these features and the LSC

has worked with vendors of electronic case management systems (ECMS) to ensure that providers' internal systems are compatible.

Providers who hold a current crime or civil contract will receive a training CD-ROM in the post from 10 October 2007. Using realistic system simulations, the CD-ROM contains fully interactive modules taking the user through each of the new e-business tools.

The training should be conducted by 5 November to enable users to commence making electronic submissions straight away.

@ CONTACT & INFORMATION

web: lsc website > cls or cds > electronic billing – LSC Online

email: online-support@legalservices.gov.uk





Lord Hunt
Minister for Legal Aid

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath shares his views on legal aid reforms

Legal aid is a vital public service that is fundamental to social and legal justice. Since its introduction nearly 60 years ago, the legal aid scheme has helped millions of people resolve a whole range of problems through legal advice and representation. It has helped safeguard some of society's most vulnerable and disadvantaged people and ensured access to justice for those who could not otherwise afford it.

We have built a very successful legal aid system, regarded by many as the best in the world, and the Government is committed to ensuring its future so that it can continue to deliver for the people who need it. That's exactly what the legal aid reform programme is designed to do: to ensure that we can build on the success of recent years and continue to increase the number of people helped.

I am, of course, aware that the reform programme makes this a rather controversial time to be the Minister for Legal Aid. I have used my first few months in the job to meet legal aid providers and their representative bodies and I have many more such meetings lined up. I am listening closely to the views being expressed and I understand some of the concerns about the pace of change. The LSC has already adjusted the timing and content of many of the proposals in response to points you have raised so far and I am committed to ensuring that we continue to listen and to take your views on board as new elements of the reform programme are developed.

I must stress, however, that the Government is absolutely committed to this reform programme. We believe it is the most effective way to ensure for the future that people have access to quality legal services when they need it.

We are seeking three outcomes from the reform programme: quality, access and value for money. Much of what I have read and heard about legal aid reform has been focused on the final point – value for money – which has often been interpreted as cost-cutting. In fact, it is about making best use of the funds we have available and rebalancing within the budget to increase the funding for civil legal aid. And it is about setting clear priorities, such as cases involving children and domestic violence.

Achieving value for money is crucial – because without it, we can't have quality or access either. All public services have to work within a budget that is necessarily limited because it comes from taxpayers, and legal aid is no different. Our priority, and indeed our responsibility, is to help the maximum number of people possible because we are buying quality services which represent value for money.

The fact is that I am not in a position to be able to demonstrate that at the moment. We are paying very different amounts for the same types of cases in the same areas. We are often still paying for the number of hours worked rather than for what is delivered for legal aid clients. We have average case costs which are increasing substantially in some categories of law with no sensible explanation. And we need to rebalance the available funding so that more money can be used to help people with their civil problems.

I want to be able to say with confidence that I know we are helping the greatest number of people possible and that is why I am absolutely committed to making these reforms work.

We are seeking three outcomes from the reform programme: quality, access and value for money. Much of what I have read and heard about legal aid reform has been focused on the final point – value for money – which has often been interpreted as cost-cutting.





I absolutely agree that we need to work to improve the efficiency of the justice system as a whole at the same time as reforming legal aid. This is a real priority for the Government.

We are now well into the implementation stage of the reform programme, with fixed fees for Magistrates' Court work in urban areas in place since April and new fee schemes for many areas of civil work from the start of this month. We see fixed fees as an interim step on the way to commissioning legal services through competition, when the market would set the rate rather than an administrative process. I'm sure you will agree that this has to be a good thing.

In a competitive market, the LSC would set out the services it needs to buy on behalf of people in a particular area. Then it would be up to you to decide if you want to provide that and at what price. It is only once you are offering the price you believe is fair and that we know offers the best value available, that we will be able to demonstrate that we have a value for money system that is helping the greatest possible number of people.

The LSC is currently developing its ideas on how a competitive process might operate, particularly for criminal work where Best Value Tendering would be introduced first, and will be sharing its thinking with you soon to allow time for discussion and consultation.

I want to finish by saying a few words about two recurring themes in my discussions so far with providers and their representative bodies: inefficiencies in the administrative

processes relating to legal aid; and inefficiencies across the justice system as a whole. On the first, I want to reassure you that, based on the changes being made to how services are commissioned, the LSC is re-working the processes involved so that they are much simpler for everyone concerned. This will reduce the administrative burden for providers and make significant savings in the LSC's costs too. Providers are involved in testing out the new ways of working as they are being developed.

On the second point, I absolutely agree that we need to work to improve the efficiency of the justice system as a whole at the same time as reforming legal aid. This is a real priority for the Government. We are already seeing some successes, such as new court procedures which are reducing delays, and I know the LSC is also working very actively with partners in the Local Criminal Justice Boards to identify inefficiencies and find effective solutions. Of course, there is plenty more to do and I will be working with my colleagues in the Ministry of Justice and in other government departments to ensure that this work is given the priority it deserves. I would also encourage you to do what you can in your own local engagement with different parts of the justice system to flag the issues and work towards solutions.



I am looking forward to meeting more of you during the next few months and I know that the LSC is meeting with many of you too. As new proposals are developed which aim to move us towards a competitive market, I encourage you to continue to work with us, to let us have your views and to respond to consultations. Together, we have achieved so much for the people who depend on legal aid. I look forward to working with you to ensure that we can do even better for them in the future.

Focus on CDS

Focus on CDS is sent automatically to all LSC account holders who undertake criminal work.

It is usually published four times a year but is not strictly quarterly as it is produced whenever the LSC needs to communicate important information to the profession rather than according to a rigid timetable. Changes to the production and delivery of Focus on CDS are scheduled for implementation in the New Year. More information is available in the adjacent article.

While Focus on CDS contains guidance, the LSC Manual should be referred to for definitive information.

Focus on CDS is distributed using the names and addresses of LSC account holders, details of which are held on the LSC's Master Index database. If you have not received a copy of Focus on CDS it may be because you have not alerted the Master Index Section to changes to your name, address or DX. Please make sure you send any relevant changes in writing to the Master Index Section and include your LSC account number.

It is important that Focus on CDS is seen by everyone in your firm who is involved in LSC work, so copies of this publication should be made available as required. Focus on CDS editions 1 to 20 are available for download as PDFs from the LSC website. If you require assistance to obtain copies of Focus on CDS, please contact the editor using the details listed below.

If you have any questions regarding the articles that appear in Focus on CDS, please refer to the contact details included with each article. If there are no contact details, or for other editorial questions or requests for extra copies, please contact the editor.

@ CONTACT & INFORMATION

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Focus on CDS to move online

A readership survey provided useful feedback to guide the development of Focus and Focus on CDS. From 2008, Focus and Focus on CDS will be designed and produced as an electronic publication.

Those readers taking part in the survey were asked to rate several aspects of the magazine's content. When asked if the news, comment and legal sections help readers find information, 67% of respondents said the sections were 'quite' or 'very helpful'. The comment pieces were rated as 'quite' or 'very helpful' for understanding the LSC's priorities and plans by 59.4% of respondents.

Several people had ideas for further improving content, such as including alternative points of view from providers and those working in legal aid in addition to comment from the LSC's senior leaders. This suggestion will be considered as Focus and Focus on CDS develop in 2008.

Many people requested that "useful information should be published on the website". The LSC's website remains the primary repository for information, and its content is constantly reviewed. The LSC website has recently been refreshed to make it easier for people to find what they are looking for. For instance, payment dates were recently added, under [cls](#) or [cds](#) > [pay rates and schemes](#) > [payment dates](#). The LSC has also introduced a new fortnightly email update, LSC Update, which summarises the latest news.

Cost and frequency

Many of the comments received raised concerns about the cost of producing the two print publications. Many readers also requested a more regular publication schedule, to be updated with relevant news and guidance more frequently. The cost of producing and distributing hard copies of Focus and Focus on CDS is significant, and to date the schedule has remained roughly quarterly because more frequent publication would substantially increase production costs.

The legal aid reform programme aims to maximise access to legal aid for the future, achieve best value for money and rebalance the overall budget to allow the LSC to continue to increase the number of people helped. Reducing administration costs internally is one aspect of the programme, as is the LSC's move to becoming a more e-enabled operation.

Focus and Focus on CDS move online

In response to these drivers, Focus and Focus on CDS will continue to be produced as hard copy publications until December 2007. Focus and Focus on CDS are already available for download as a PDF from the LSC website. However from 2008, the two publications will become an online publication available through the LSC website.

The new online publication will be produced more regularly so that providers will have faster access to information. This means that comments, feedback and opinion from legal aid providers and those working in the legal aid system can be incorporated into the publication, and it can become a vehicle for dialogue between readers and the LSC rather than simply an information delivery mechanism.

Those who like to read their copy of Focus or Focus on CDS as a print publication will still be able to, by printing from the website any or all of the articles in each publication. Readers will also be able to refer back to previous content through the website.

Information and updates concerning the move online will be posted on the LSC's website and in the emailed LSC Update.

Comments and feedback

We are keen to get feedback on Focus on CDS, the LSC website and the new LSC Update email, so please email comments to the editor.



Focus on CDS is produced by the Communications Department at the Legal Services Commission.

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The LSC delivers legal aid and services through two schemes: the CLS and CDS.

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