

General Help providers – the end of the line?

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ASA Conference, 18/4/08

What types of agency are we talking about?

Agencies providing independent legal advice outside LSC contract regime, including:

- 'Mainstream' generalist advice agencies, e.g. CABx
- Client-specific advice agencies
- Subject-specific advice agencies

Why focus on this subject?

**Advice policy / CLS Strategy
+ Other policy developments**



Hostile funding climate



Uncertain future for advice agencies

Why are GH agencies important?

- **Meet community needs**
 - majority of advice need is for GH rather than specialist
 - vital access routes for specific client groups
- **Play preventative role**
 - early intervention
 - community education
 - social policy
- **Complement specialist services**
 - GH role frees up specialists to focus on most complex cases
 - problem-noticing/referral role ensures cases fed through

Legal Services Research Centre says:

“The position of these first points of contact or ‘problem-noticers’ in the fluid structure of advice-seeking and advice-giving is absolutely pivotal. Providing the right sort of information and help at the earliest possible stage must be a central objective in developing an effective policy for the provision of information, advice and assistance to members of the public involved in justiciable problems.....”

“The evidence discussed here shows how varied are the initial advice sources approached and highlights the need to pull into the ambit of the Community Legal Service a wider range of advice sources.”

Source: *Understanding Advice Seeking Behaviour: Further findings from the LSRC survey of justiciable problems*, Genn, Pleasence, Balmer, Buck & O’Grady, LSRC 2004