Victim Legal
Network of DC

Evaluation Report

September 30, 2019

Table of Contents

Appendix Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I. Introduction

In 2010, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) launched the Vision 21 strategic initiative with engagement from advocates, allies, and stakeholders across the crime victim services field to analyze victim assistance in the United States, the challenges experienced, and provide recommendations. Findings on the status of victim assistance and recommendations for improvement were published in the Vision 21: Transforming Victim Services Final Report.[1] Based on recommendations made in this report, OVC provided funding for wraparound victim legal assistance networks to a cohort of demonstration sites with the goal of developing sustainable collaborative legal assistance networks to provide comprehensive services to victims of crime. In Fiscal Year 2014, OVC awarded a grant to the Executive Office of the Mayor, Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants (OVSJG)—which partnered with the Network for Victim Recovery of DC (NVRDC)—to develop the wraparound Victim Legal Network of DC (VLNDC).

This report presents the evaluation findings of VLNDC from July 2017 to July 2019. The report is organized into the following sections: (I) Introduction, (II) Report Highlights, (III) VLNDC and the Local Evaluation, (IV) Methods, (V) Findings, (VI) Discussion, (VII) Recommendations, and (VIII) Conclusion. The Report Highlights section is a brief overview of select main findings of this report using infographics; it is not meant to be a comprehensive summary of the full report. For details and a more indepth explanation of the findings, please see the Methods and Findings sections and the Appendices. The VLNDC and the Local Evaluation section gives a brief overview of the development and structure of the Network. The Discussion section puts the evaluation findings in the context of VLNDC's goals, while the Recommendations section offers suggestions for the continued refinement and expansion of VLNDC.

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[1] Office for Victims of Crime (2013). Vision 21: Transforming victim services final report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime. Retrieved from https://ovc.ncjrs.gov/vision21/pdfs/Vision21_Report.pdf

II. Report Highlights

This section summarizes highlights of the evaluation findings of VLNDC project from July 2017 to July 2019. Because some clients had active legal cases at the time data collection closed, the data presented here, including case outcomes, are likely to change.

WHAT DOES VLNDC LOOK LIKE?

23 member organizations, each with 1 to 3 facilitators.

58.4 percent of clients entered VLNDC through the navigator hotline or website.

27.9 percent of cases received full representation.

24.1 percent of cases received brief advice.

32.7 percent of cases were connected to external organizations.

524 clients entered VLNDC with **857** legal cases.

Clients had a range of **1 to 7** legal needs.

Most Common Legal Needs

Domestic Violence/ Protection Order

21.5%

Child Custody

20.3%

Other

8.9%

Child Support

8.4%

The number of cases increased by 145 percent.

130	207	311	318
Jul–Dec 2017	Jan–Jun 2018	Jul–Dec 2018	Jan–Jul 2019

ICF
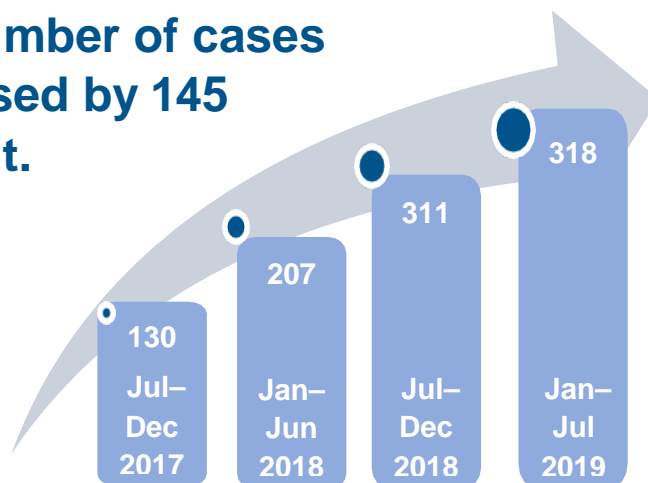
WHAT DO MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT VLNDC?

"Giving referrals has been a lot easier…especially if it's a legal issue that I'm not familiar with, I don't have to try and figure out which organization is the best fit for them."

"I haven't felt like clients are getting lost or falling through the cracks."

"I would say that [VLNDC] has made a huge impact on our organization when we are either at capacity for certain types of cases or don't do those types of cases; being able to refer out has been huge in being able to provide the next step to clients that come in."

"The [VLNDC] administrators are amazing, and they are so helpful and they're a pleasure to work with."

"When someone isn't in our client population, I feel very comfortable putting them in the Network and knowing they'll get assistance elsewhere, and that's been really great."

WHO ARE VLNDC CLIENTS?

The most common gender served by VLNDC was **female (86.5%).**

The **median age of VLNDC clients was 35**, with a range from 12 to 83.

The most common races/ethnicities served by VLNDC were **Black (49.1%) and Hispanic/Latinx (31.3%).**

24.4 percent of VLNDC clients preferred a language other than English.

VLNDC clients came from approximately **43 different countries,** and **42.5 percent of clients** were born outside of the United States.
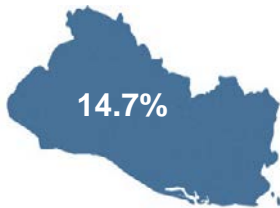
14.7%	**3.5%**	**3.5%**
El Salvador	Mexico	Guatemala

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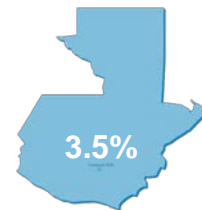
III. VLNDC and the Local Evaluation

The goal of VLNDC is to reduce the barriers in accessing legal assistance that victims of crime encounter. VLNDC offers a network of legal service providers that, together, provide holistic, wraparound, and pro bono civil, criminal, and administrative legal services. Guided by its mission to "leverage the specialized knowledge of and unite the resources of the District's legal community in order to ensure that crime victims are empowered and have all their legal needs addressed," OVSJG and NVRDC initially invited 10 member organizations into VLNDC. An additional four joined in July 2018, and a total of 23 were part of VLNDC by July 2019. This growth represents a 57 percent increase in the number of member organizations providing legal services to victims of crime in the Washington, D.C., area.

Victims of crime enter VLNDC in one of two ways: (1) through referrals by facilitators, or (2) through direct contact with the navigator (housed within NVRDC). The navigator connects clients to appropriate and available member organizations for services; if VLNDC is unable to provide services, the navigator provides the victim with external resources. (See Appendix A for a diagram of VLNDC's referral process.)

VLNDC developed a two-part communication strategy to share information internally and externally. Internal communication is facilitated through the closed, password-protected VLNDC Member Portal, which provides a secure mechanism to share internal referrals between the navigator and facilitators and serves as a central hub of information for member organizations. A public website provides external access for the public to learn about VLNDC and request assistance.

> **DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED IN THIS REPORT**
>
> **Navigator:** VLNDC staff member available to conduct Network intakes and connect clients to the appropriate member organization(s) for services.
>
> **Member Organization:** Legal service provider that signed the VLNDC Memorandum of Understanding, which allows it to participate in Network activities.
>
> **Facilitator:** Staff member from a member organization who serves as a representative for their organization and liaison between their organization and the navigator.
>
> **Referral:** Case sent from the navigator to a member organization. External referrals are cases within the Network referred to an organization outside of the Network.

OVC funding for wraparound victim legal assistance networks encourages a participatory design with a local research partner. The goals for the research partner are to inform the project by developing an overview of the victim service landscape within the individual site and to evaluate the site throughout development and implementation. ICF has provided this expertise as the research partner in the evaluation of VLNDC since July 2017.[2] This report presents ICF's evaluation findings of VLNDC.

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[2] The Justice Research and Statistics Association was the original local research partner but left the project in September 2016. ICF joined the project in July 2017.

IV. Methods

This section describes the VLNDC evaluation framework, including research methods and data collection activities. Data collection procedures and protocols were developed in consultation with OVSJG and NVRDC and approved by the ICF Institutional Review Board (IRB). The evaluation framework captures a diverse set of perspectives and experiences with VLNDC from (1) victims of crime, (2) service providers, and (3) administrative data. Some of the data collections continued across both years of the evaluation (e.g., client assessment intake interviews), whereas others only occurred in Year 1 (e.g., facilitator feedback survey) or Year 2 (e.g., new member organization training evaluation). Table 1 summarizes the data collection efforts by time period.

Table 1: Evaluation Framework

Data Collection	Year I June 2017–June 2018	Year 2 July 2018–July 2019
Victims of Crime		
Crime Victim Literature Review	✓	--
Client Intake Assessment Interviews	✓	✓
VLNDC Closed Case Client Interviews	✓	✓
Non-VLNDC Crime Victim Focus Group/Interviews	✓	--
Service Providers		
Facilitator Feedback Survey	✓	--
Member Organization Focus Group	✓	✓
New Member Organization Training Evaluation	--	✓
Social Service Provider Awareness Survey	✓	✓
Administrative Data		
OVSJG Grantee Performance Measures	✓	--
VLNDC Member Portal Data	✓	✓

Collectively, the methods outlined in this section were designed to provide NVRDC and OVSJG with a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of, and satisfaction with, VLNDC from the perspectives of victims of crime and service providers, supplemented with administrative data analysis.

1. Victims of Crime

To better understand the perspectives and needs of crime victims in the Washington, D.C., area, ICF reviewed the empirical research in the crime victim services field, with a focus on research conducted in the area. These findings were synthesized in a literature review. ICF also gathered information on victims served by VLNDC. Data were collected through client intake

assessment interviews administered within 2 weeks of a victim's intake into VLNDC to gather information on the client's experience with the intake process. ICF also developed an interview protocol to be conducted with victims of crime who received services through VLNDC and whose cases were closed. A focus group and phone interviews were conducted with victims of crime who were not seen through VLNDC to explore their experiences with services in the Washington, D.C., area, barriers to seeking legal services, knowledge of VLNDC, and recommendations for improving access to and receipt of services. The methods for each of these data collection efforts are described in greater detail below.

1.1   Crime Victim Literature Review

ICF authored a comprehensive literature review synthesizing the empirical research on access to legal services by victims of crime, with an emphasis on the Washington, D.C., area. The goal was to answer the following questions to help inform VLNDC's outreach efforts:

1.   How do victims of crime access legal services?

2.   What are the characteristics of victims who do or do not access legal services?

3.   What are the most successful outreach tools to increase victims' access to legal services?

To answer these questions, the research team searched for articles through Google Scholar, academic databases (e.g., EBSCO), and government publications (e.g., OVC, National Institute of Justice) to identify peer-reviewed, seminal research and articles published within the past 10 years. The following key search topics were used: "victims of crime," "help-seeking behaviors," "victims of crime access to services," and "legal services." Although the emphasis of the literature review was on legal services, other social services were also included when relevant. The literature review is summarized in Section V and provided in full in Appendix B.

1.2   Client Intake Assessment Interviews

The client intake assessment interviews solicited information from the 524 clients served by VLNDC about their experiences with the VLNDC intake process. Clients who consented to being contacted for research purposes were eligible to participate. Originally, clients were asked to consent verbally during intake. However, this process yielded few interviews; facilitators expressed concern with asking clients to consent during intake, as it was a juncture at which clients were highly likely to be anxious, fearful, or overwhelmed. In response, NVRDC changed the consent process to include the consent question on the client's release form paperwork. This change in protocol increased[3] the number of clients who consented to be contacted.

The navigator maintained an encrypted document with information on clients who consented and shared the file with ICF on an ongoing basis. This file contained client-level data on the total number of connections made for each individual, who conducted the intake, client contact information (i.e., phone number), and the last date possible for the interview. ICF conducted the structured interviews within 2 weeks of intake. During this timeframe, ICF made three attempts

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[3] The exact date the consent protocol was changed is unknown; thus, ICF cannot compute the percent increase demonstrating the before and after response rates.

to contact each client. To increase the likelihood of making contact, ICF called on different days and times. If no contact was made after the third attempt, ICF stopped attempts. NVRDC suggested this time restriction to improve accurate recall of the intake process and protect client-attorney privilege by reaching the client before their case began.

1.3   VLNDC Closed Case Client Interviews

In addition to speaking with clients immediately following their VLNDC intake, ICF also sought to speak with clients after they received VLNDC services in order to gather information on their awareness of legal services, access to services, receipt of services, and recommendations for improving services. To be eligible for the interview, participants had to (1) be a victim of crime over the age of 18, (2) have received services via VLNDC, and (3) have a closed case. NVRDC required that interviews only be conducted with VLNDC clients whose cases were closed to protect attorney-client privilege and not jeopardize any aspect of their ongoing legal case(s).

The recruitment procedures allowed for double-blind participation, meaning that neither ICF nor service providers were aware of who participated. This was done through two methods of recruitment. First, facilitators at each member organization were provided business cards and a brief pre-written introduction to the interview to provide to clients whose cases were closing. Second, facilitators were given an email template with information about the interview to be included in closeout letters that were emailed to clients. The business card, interview introduction, and email template included information about the interview's purpose, ICF's toll-free number, and a $20 incentive to participate. To help raise awareness about the interviews, the facilitators were also provided an informational flier to share with their colleagues about the purpose of the interviews, eligibility requirements, and incentive information. If the client had any questions or was interested in participating, they were directed to call the toll-free line. This ensured that facilitators were unaware of which of their clients called and consented to be interviewed, and ICF was unaware of which clients had been provided the phone number. Interviews could be conducted in the participant's preferred language through the use of Ayuda's Community Legal Interpreter Bank. (See Appendix D for examples of the Year 1 and Year 2 outcome interview protocols.)

1.4   Non-VLNDC Crime Victim Focus Group/Interviews

In Year 1, ICF conducted a focus group to learn about victims' experiences in seeking social or legal victim services in the Washington, D.C., area and their general awareness of services. The focus group covered topics about awareness of services, access to services, services received, and recommendations. (See Appendix E for a copy of the protocol.) This data collection was designed to provide VLNDC with knowledge about victims' awareness of available services and barriers to accessing services in the Washington, D.C., area that VLNDC could leverage to enhance its outreach techniques.

Eligible participants included victims of a crime—or family members of victims—over the age of 18 who indicated they were in a place in their recovery to safely participate. With the assistance of NVRDC, ICF developed a list of 35 crime victim service providers in the area that were not part of VLNDC. ICF contacted these organizations one to three times during the recruitment period of May 1, 2018, to June 13, 2018. Four organizations provided ICF with the names of

nine potential participants, and ICF contacted each potential participant one to three times. Of the nine potential participants, five agreed to participate in the focus group, two declined to participate in the in-person focus group but agreed to participate in phone interviews, and two were unreachable.

The focus group was scheduled for a weekday evening in a neutral, multipurpose building close to public transportation. Phone interviews occurred when most convenient for the participants. Two participants were present at the focus group and two phone interviews were conducted for a total of four participants, an overall response rate of 45 percent. Each participant received a $20 gift card. The focus group and phone interviews were recorded for quality assurance. After transcription, ICF deleted the recordings and qualitatively coded the transcripts.

2. Service Providers

In addition to the victim perspective, ICF also gathered the perspective of service providers. ICF disseminated a survey to facilitators on a regular basis during Year 1 to obtain real-time feedback about the usability and efficiency of VLNDC. Information gleaned from the survey was supplemented with more indepth information about facilitators' experiences with VLNDC and their perceptions about its effectiveness through two focus groups conducted in Years 1 and 2. ICF evaluated one of the new member organization trainings in Year 2 and surveyed community and social service providers in the Washington, D.C., area at two time points (Years 1 and 2) to determine their awareness of VLNDC. These evaluation activities are discussed in more detail below.

2.1 Facilitator Feedback Survey

The facilitator feedback survey was a fillable Word document that included open- and closed-ended questions to solicit feedback about the VLNDC referral process, clients' awareness and understanding of VLNDC, and additional resources requested by facilitators (see Appendix F for the form and full reports). The navigator disseminated the survey on a monthly basis from August to October 2017. From November 2017 to April 2018, ICF disseminated the survey via email on a monthly basis. In May 2018, OVSJG, NVRDC, and ICF agreed to disseminate the form on a quarterly basis to reduce facilitator burden. The last survey was disseminated in June 2018. The survey was not continued into Year 2.

2.2 Member Organization Focus Group

One focus group was held per year with staff from the member organizations. The purpose of these focus groups was to gather more indepth information about member organizations' experiences being part of VLNDC, their clients' experiences with VLNDC, and recommendations for improvement. (See Appendix G for a copy of the focus group protocol and Appendix H for the full report.)

The member organizations' main point of contact and facilitator(s) were invited via email to attend the focus group. In some cases, they forwarded the invitation to their colleagues who worked in the Network so they could also participate. The first focus group was held on March 12, 2018, immediately following a VLNDC meeting, and the second was held on June 27, 2019, immediately before a VLNDC meeting. Both focus groups lasted approximately 60 minutes.

2.3   New Member Organization Training Evaluation

In order to successfully onboard new member organizations to VLNDC, an orientation training was developed in Year 2 for new facilitators. The training was hosted by NVRDC at the end of each quarter for all new member organizations. The purpose of this training was to introduce VLNDC, the portal, and associated Network processes to facilitate the integration and participation of new member organizations in the Network. ICF, in collaboration with NVRDC and OVSJG, developed an evaluation protocol that would allow NVRDC to identify the experiences and recommendations of the orientation participants and improve the training, if necessary. Following the first orientation training on January 31, 2019, ICF disseminated the evaluation, analyzed the results, and provided feedback to NVRDC for consideration in future orientation training. (See Appendix L for the full report and protocol.)

2.4   Social Service Provider Awareness Survey

The awareness survey was developed to identify social service providers' awareness of VLNDC and gather information on how they refer crime victims to legal services. This information was solicited via an online survey (SurveyMonkey) and included three areas of questioning: (1) demographics on the organization and clients seen; (2) legal services, referrals, and barriers; and (3) awareness of VLNDC. (See Appendix I for the survey and full report.) The survey was estimated to take about 5 minutes. The survey was designed to help VLNDC tailor its outreach to social service providers in the Washington, D.C., area to increase awareness and utilization of VLNDC as a referral source for crime victims seeking legal services.

ICF developed a list of social service providers in the Washington, D.C., area that may come into contact with victims of crime via an online search of (1) hospitals and health care agencies, (2) mental health and counseling services, (3) community centers, (4) victim service centers, (5) women's centers, (6) homeless shelters and housing centers, (7) libraries, (8) churches, and (9) universities. In total, contact information was derived for 239 individuals from 105 organizations in Year 1 and for 550 individuals from more than 85 organizations in Year 2. Criteria for participation in the survey required that respondents be staff at social service organizations who could potentially come into contact with crime victims and did not provide legal services.

An introduction email with the survey link was sent to all individuals, inviting them to participate in the survey and forward the link to any colleagues they believed would be appropriate. A follow-up email was sent 1 week later. The survey was in the field for 2 weeks in Year 1 due to the project timeline, and approximately 7 weeks in Year 2.

3.   Administrative Data

NVRDC and OVSJG provided ICF with administrative data for secondary analysis to help inform VLNDC about the nature of victimization and service needs among crime victims in the Washington, D.C., community, both those who do and do not reach out for legal services. NVRDC provided ICF with VLNDC Member Portal data at regular intervals to gain a better understanding of the needs of victims who reached out to VLNDC and outcomes for victims who received services in the Network. To help illuminate potential gaps between victims who reached out to VLNDC compared to the larger Washington, D.C., victim population, OVSJG

provided ICF with OVSJG grantee performance measures to analyze and compare to portal data. These are discussed in more detail below.

3.1   OVSJG Grantee Performance Measures

To gather descriptive information about victims of crime in the Washington, D.C., area, OVSJG provided ICF with the performance measure indicator (PMI) data for Fiscal Year 2017 that all OVSJG grantees submit quarterly as a condition of funding. This data included demographic characteristics and service needs for victims who sought social or legal services (N=55,848). To better understand VLNDC clients' representation of crime victims, portal data (N=186) covering a similar time period (July 2017–July 2018) were analyzed alongside the PMI data.

While the findings helped shed light on potential outreach efforts, caution should be taken in making direct comparisons across the two datasets. VLNDC serves clients' legal needs; however, OVSJG grantees serve clients in many capacities, including legal and social services. This means it is possible that some of the clients seen under OVSJG grantees are not clients who would normally seek legal services. Thus, a direct comparison could create the appearance of differences that are not true. At the time of the data collection, eight OVSJG grantees were also VLNDC member organizations, which may have resulted in overlapping clients between the two data sets. Thus, a direct comparison could also result in assuming similarities that do not exist. These limitations withstanding, the analysis provided a useful framework for exploring how VLNDC might expand its outreach and service efforts.

3.2   VLNDC Member Portal Data

During Year 2, VLNDC provided de-identified data sourced from the VLNDC intake process on a quarterly basis. The data included victim demographics and information about the nature of the victimization, legal needs, and service outcomes. Information was tracked at both the client level and the case level, thereby allowing a nuanced examination of cases and clients who reached out or received services from VLNDC. ICF provided quarterly results for Year 2 Quarters One (October–December 2018) and Two (January–March 2019). (See appendix K). Quarters One, Two, and Three (April-June 2019) are combined in the findings presented in this final report.

The primary questions answered with portal data are the following:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of victims who have contact with VLNDC?
2. How is the nature and timing of referrals?
3. What are the legal needs of victims referred to VLNDC?

V. Findings

This section discusses the evaluation findings from Year 1 (June 2017–June 2018) and Year 2 (July 2018–July 2019), as well as trends between the years, where applicable. The findings are differentiated by data collection effort, starting with the results from the perspectives of victims of crime, followed by service providers, and concluding with analyses of the administrative data.

1.   Victims of Crime

Four data collection efforts centered on soliciting information and experiences from victims of crime: (1) a **literature review**, authored in Year 1; (2) **client intake assessment interviews**, conducted in Years 1 and 2; (3) **VLNDC closed case client interviews**, conducted in Years 1 and 2; and (4) **non-VLNDC client focus group/interviews**, conducted in Year 1.

1.1   Crime Victim Literature Review

According to the National Crime Victim Survey (NCVS), there were 5.7 million violent victimizations in 2016; this reflects an approximately 12 percent increase from 2015, and includes crimes such as rape, sexual assault, assault, robbery, and aggravated assault for U.S. residents 12 years or older (Morgan and Kena, 2017). In Washington, D.C., there were 4,453 violent crimes in 2017, and 2,579 violent crimes from January 1 through August 16, 2018 (DC Metropolitan Police Department, 2018).

Victims of crime access services through formal routes, such as service providers and law enforcement, and informal routes, such as family and friends. Lowry and colleagues (2015) interviewed victims of crime and found that 46 percent of the victims who were not told of services at the time of reporting their crime through a formal source later received information informally from friends, family, and community members, while 27 percent learned of services by conducting their own research. The routes to accessing services can be influenced by victimization type. For victims of non-violent crime, the amount of referrals made from personal networks closely matched that of more formal referrals from law enforcement; but, for victims of violent crime, referrals for services were 11 percent more likely to come from personal networks than a formal police referral (Aeffect, Inc., 2017). Victims of violent crime used informal networks more often because they said they believed personal networks were more informative of services available (Aeffect, Inc., 2017). Outside of personal networks, counselors, medical service providers, private victim advocates, the church, hotlines, and teachers comprised another 30 percent of referrals to services (Aeffect, Inc., 2017).

> **LITERATURE REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS**
>
> - Access to legal assistance or a legal advocate can greatly benefit victims' mental health and case outcomes.
>
> - Victims only received services in 10 percent of violent crime victimizations.
>
> - Barriers to accessing services include lack of awareness, organizational capacity, up-to-date information, and cultural accessibility.

Research suggests that access to services and knowledge of victims' rights can have a significant impact on victim outcomes. Access to legal assistance or a legal advocate to help victims navigate the civil and criminal justice system can greatly benefit victims' mental health and case outcomes (Campbell, Greeson, Bybee, and Fehler-Cabral, 2012). Yet a high proportion of victims do not, or cannot, access needed legal services. According to the most recent statistics from the NCVS, victims only received services in 10 percent of violent crime victimizations (Morgan and Kena, 2017). In Washington, D.C., in 2005 only 23 percent of victims in divorce, custody, and other family law cases received representation. This number decreases to 2 percent when looking at domestic violence civil and criminal cases (DC Access to Justice Commission, 2008).

There are significant barriers for victims in accessing services and parallel challenges for the service providers trying to provide referrals to them, including lack of awareness of services (Aeffect, Inc., 2017; Ehrhard-Dietzel, Gross, and Siwach, 2017; Lowry, Reid, Feeley, Johnson, and Williamson, 2015). Service providers' lack of awareness of available services in their area can cause victims to have to visit multiple organizations in order to get all of their needs met, which victims reported as being burdensome (DePrince et al., 2014; Lowry et al., 2015). Other barriers to providing and receiving victim services include the capacity of the organization, up-to-date referral information, and cultural accessibility (Bucher, Manasse, and Tarasawa, 2010; DePrince et al., 2014; Ehrhard-Dietzel et al., 2017; Lowry et al., 2015; Murdaugh, Hunt, Sowell, and Santana, 2004). Collectively, the research highlights the challenges victims face in finding and accessing services, and once they do, the difficulties victim service providers face to adequately refer them to needed services. The result is frustration for both victims and the victim service providers.

Information gleaned from this literature review helped inform data collection protocols for the non-VLNDC client focus group/interviews and service provider awareness survey. It also provided information about the way victims of crime access legal services and examples of successful outreach tools. These materials were leveraged by VLNDC to help inform its outreach efforts.

1.2   Client Intake Assessment Interviews

During Years 1 and 2, ICF conducted client intake assessment interviews to gather information on VLNDC clients' experiences with the intake process.

1.2.1   Year 1 Findings

From July through December 2017, an NVRDC volunteer conducted the interviews while ICF sought IRB approval. Upon approval, ICF facilitated the interviews. During Year 1, 11 clients consented to be contacted, and ICF reached 3 clients and completed 2 interviews; the third client declined to participate, for an 18 percent response rate among those clients who agreed to be contacted. The interviews were conducted over the phone and took, on average, 5 minutes to complete. (See Appendix C for the protocol and full report.)

Both participants completed the VLNDC intake process with a member organization and were referred to one member organization. One participant was aware of VLNDC because of a friend who was a former client.

On a four-point scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, **both participants strongly agreed they were treated with respect by the person conducting the intake, the organization to which they were referred responded in an appropriate amount of time, and they would recommend VLNDC to others**. One participant strongly agreed and one participate agreed that the person conducting the intake understood what they needed and that the referral fit their needs. After they were contacted by the organization to which they were referred, both participants received advice. One participant also received representation, and their case went under review.

One participant said there was nothing VLNDC could do to improve client experiences, while the other participant commented that VLNDC could improve client experiences by branching out to the full Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia (DMV) area.

"Because the DMV is close, if you could branch out to the DMV…so you could be a DC resident and custody with children could be in Maryland, so more services for the DMV area."

The participants indicated that they liked the availability of staff, the speed of the process, and that they were contacted by organizations and so did not have to do the legwork themselves.

1.2.2   Year 2 Findings

From January 1, 2019,[4] to July 12, 2019, 33 clients consented to be contacted. ICF spoke with 13 victims of crime served by VLNDC, and 9 completed the client assessment. Seven participants had their intake completed by a navigator, and two by a member organization. Five participants (55.6%) understood what VLNDC[5] was following intake into VLNDC.

On a four-point scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, **all participants agreed or strongly agreed that the informed consent release form was explained in a way they understood, and the person conducting the screening understood what they needed and treated them with respect**, as illustrated in Exhibit 1.

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[4] Data collection for the client assessment did not start until January 2019, when administrative actions for the award were finalized and IRB approval was received.

[5] To streamline and target the information collected in the client assessment, the question inquiring about how participants learned about VLNDC was removed from the protocol after Year 1.

Exhibit 1: Experiences With VLNDC Intake/Screening
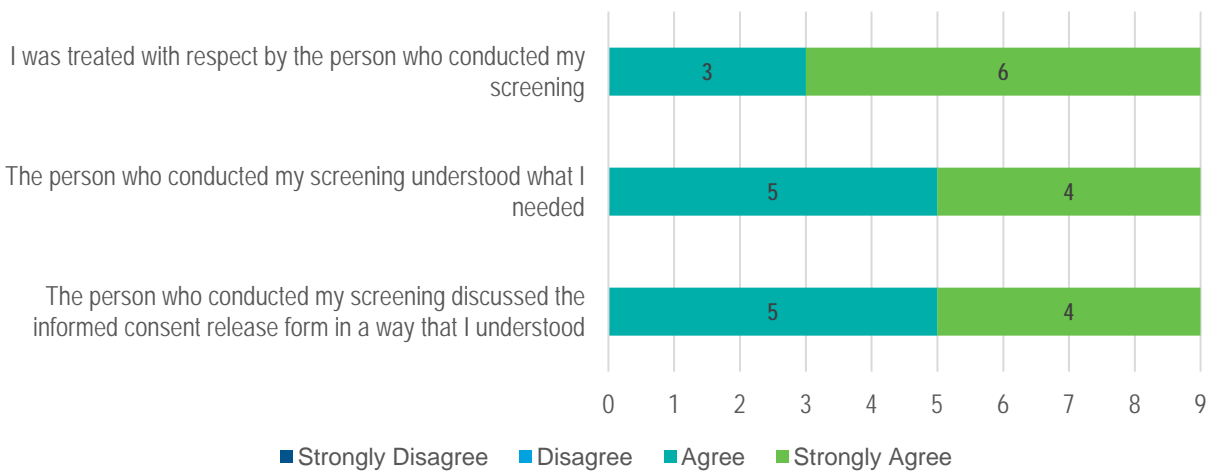
Seven participants received an internal referral to one member organization, and two participants received a referral to two member organizations. **Six participants (66.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that the referral fit their needs**, one participant disagreed, and two participants indicated the question was not applicable or skipped the question. **Eight participants (88.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that the organization to which they were referred responded in an appropriate amount of time**, while one participant disagreed, as they had still not heard from the organization to which they were referred.

The seven participants who were referred to one organization had a variety of one or more referral outcomes, as illustrated in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2: Referral Outcomes

Of the two participants who received referrals to two organizations, one participant had their case go under review at both organizations, the second participant was represented by one organization, and the second organization could not represent them but provided advice.

Three participants (33%) had recommendations for what VLNDC could do to improve its experience. Recommendations included more human interaction, more available services, and prompter service and follow up.

> *"Feels a little non-human, would want more human contact. The only human contact was an intake coordinator; there was an attorney that helped with the annulment. But I had trouble finding [that person]…be more visible at the courthouse… maybe wear a ribbon."*

When asked what they really liked about the process, participants mentioned the people involved, the quick turnaround to get services, and the process in delivering services.

1.2.3   Trends

Across both years, 25 percent (n=11) of crime victims who completed an intake with VLNDC and consented to being contacted completed a client assessment. Of these participants, 64 percent (n=7)—all in Year 2—completed their intake with a navigator. The remaining four participants (36%) had their intake completed by a member organization.

Exhibit 3: Intake Conductor
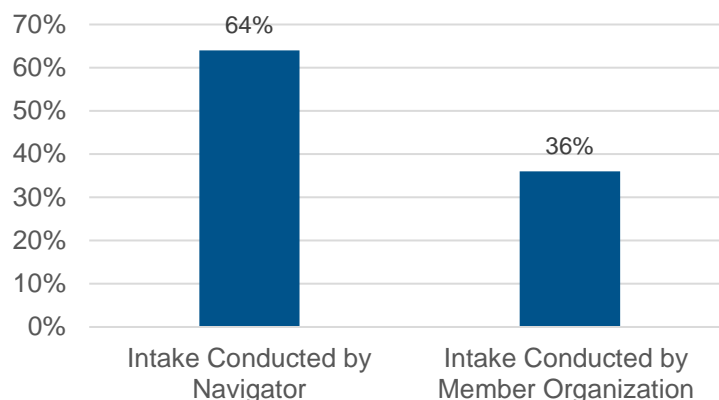
All participants agreed or strongly agreed that the informed consent release form was explained in a way they understood, and that the person conducting the screening understood what they needed and treated them with respect.

Participants' recommendations related to having more human interaction (e.g., having someone available in person and being able to identify the service provider more easily in a large courthouse setting), increasing available services, expanding to more jurisdictions to cover Virginia and Maryland, and having prompter service and follow up.

Participants praised the people involved in the VLNDC process, the quick turnaround time, and the reduced burden in accessing services they needed because of VLNDC.

People

❖ "I just liked that someone was listening."

❖ "The people that I worked with were wonderful, assisted me and told me things I wasn't aware of."

❖ "The process has been good, and everyone that talked to me has been wonderful."

❖ "I like that they are really direct and understand and assess all my needs and made sure I was comfortable."

❖ "The person who did the intake was really helpful. I liked how she was helpful, and she offered her phone number in case I needed anything or had any questions. That was really cool, I liked that."

Time

❖ "Everything was done in a timely manner; there was no delay, I thought that was wonderful."

❖ "Availability of lawyers and staff involved, and pace of the process was really quick. It didn't take long."

Reduced Burden

❖ "I liked that [VLNDC] made it easy with a lot of different programs in one place. When your name is on one list, [VLNDC] can refer me, the footwork was easy, I didn't have to go to a bunch [of] places, they contacted me, I didn't have to go to other places."

While the small sample size cannot yield conclusive findings, preliminary results are promising, suggesting that the VLNDC intake process overall was a positive experience for clients. The participants spoke about how they appreciated the assistance they received; the legal providers were caring, and several participants specifically discussed how they felt listened to and understood. The process was also highlighted as a strength

> **100% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend VLNDC to others.**

because it reduced the burden for victims and offered timely services. Moreover, the increase in percentages of intakes completed by the navigator suggests that the navigator role decreased the burden on member organizations in referring victims to organizations to meet their legal needs, thereby allowing member organizations to concentrate efforts on service provision.

Participants provided several recommendations for improving the intake process, including increased availability and visibility of service providers outside of their organization (e.g., in a court setting), expanded geographical coverage (Virginia and Maryland), and prompter service and follow up.

1.3   VLNDC Closed Case Client Interviews

Across both years, ICF sought to speak with crime victims after they received VLNDC services in order to gather information on VLNDC clients' awareness of legal services, access to services, receipt of services, and recommendations for improving legal services.

1.3.1 Year 1 Findings

The client outcome interviews were launched in March 2018, and data collection was expected to continue until July 13, 2018. By the end of April 2018, ICF had not received any calls to the toll-free line. ICF spoke to facilitators and found that this was an artifact of timing; VLNDC was still in its early stages, and member organizations either had not received any VLNDC clients or their VLNDC cases had not yet closed. By June 2018, NVRDC inquired about the low response rates with facilitators and discovered few of them discussed the interviews with their clients whose cases had closed, and the clients had expressed concern with the length of the interview (estimated at 60 minutes) and the amount of the incentive ($20). After discussions with OVSJG and NVRDC, ICF suspended this data collection protocol to revisit it in Fiscal Year 2019.

1.3.2 Year 2 Findings

During Year 2, ICF reduced the interview protocol to 30 minutes to address the concern about the length of the interview. The incentive amount and recruitment procedures did not change. ICF resumed interview recruitment from January to July 2019; only one participant contacted ICF during this time. Member organizations attributed the low participation rate to low numbers of VLNDC cases and the timing of these cases, which had not yet closed. Because the toll-free line was only monitored during business hours, calls may have been missed.

The participant with whom ICF spoke interacted with two member organizations and had two different experiences. The participant's negative experience occurred when the **service provider did not listen to the victim, did not act as if they believed the victim, and pushed the participant to accept a deal that they did not want**. The participant also indicated that the service provider did not respect the victim's time and schedule and consistently tried to meet when they were unavailable. This organization gave the participant contact information for a different member organization that the participant then called for assistance.

The participant reported a much more positive experience with the second organization. The second organization **listened to the victim, believed the victim's story, and accommodated the victim's transportation needs**.

It is not possible to ascertain if these experiences were anomalies or similar to the experiences of other victims who received VLNDC services. No conclusions or recommendations can be drawn from this interview.

1.4 Non-VLNDC Crime Victim Focus Group/Interviews

In Year 1, ICF conducted a focus group to learn about victims' experiences in seeking social or legal victim services in the Washington, D.C., area and their general awareness of services. The focus group covered topics about awareness of services, access to services, services received, and recommendations.

1.4.1 Findings

All four participants were women who experienced domestic and/or sexual violence. The participants were asked about legal and social services they received because of their

victimization, how they became aware of and accessed services, their experiences with services, and recommendations to improve services. These findings are discussed below.

AWARENESS

Participants learned about the services available to them through a variety of means at different stages in their recovery. Two participants used the internet to find services; one looked up domestic violence assistance, while the other searched for affordable counseling in the area. The third participant first became aware of services through a TV advertisement, and the fourth participant learned about services at a courthouse.

Two participants learned about legal services when they were seeking services at organizations that focused on domestic violence. They received pamphlets, booklets, referrals, and information on legal services. One participant went to the courthouse to get a civil protection order, and staff present at the courthouse sent her to a room where multiple victim service agencies had tables set up; it was there that she was interviewed by the organization that provided her with services.

ACCESS

Participants voiced a mix of perspectives, ranging from ways that services were accessible to naming areas where improvements could be made. One participant stated that once she got in touch with the organization, services were accessible. This was because they told her exactly what to do, from what to pack as she was leaving her house to which buses to take to get to their location. Participants noted other factors that enhanced accessibility, such as providing transportation to get to the organization and access to a phone once at the organization.

In contrast, services with long wait periods and organizations at capacity were viewed as inaccessible by half of the participants. One participant said she did not feel like many of the organizations had the capacity or knowledge to help her, and looking for organizations on her own took her a long time. Other barriers to accessibility included being given outdated information and a lack of transportation to services. Participants also mentioned difficulty in finding services that could accommodate people with disabilities.

When accessing legal services, one participant mentioned that she was not comfortable going to law enforcement or a legal agency as the first step in her help-seeking because of her culture. Another participant noted that law enforcement did not provide her with any useful information; they simply gave her the case number she needed but no information about services or where to go. Participants shared that law enforcement often did not have the knowledge to make service referrals. One participant mentioned that when she went to get a copy of her police report at the courthouse, she needed information about a "stay away" order but was not provided additional guidance about where to obtain it. The participant had to go back to her service provider, who looked it up, and then back to the courthouse again.

Other barriers to accessing legal/criminal services included the shame and stigma around victimization and the relationship with the perpetrator. One participant mentioned that it took her a long time to seek help because she felt that the victimization was her own fault. Participants also shared that victims in relationships with their abusers may be hesitant to report the abuse or seek help because they do not want to get the person in trouble.

SERVICES RECEIVED

All participants received services. They received services from the following organizations: George Washington Counseling Center, The Women's Center, Ramona's Way, My Sister's Place, District Alliance for Safe Housing, West Minister Church, Crime Victim Compensation Board, House of Ruth, and So Others Might Eat (SOME). The types of services received included counseling, a social worker, safe housing, basic necessities such as clothing and food, medical services, physical rehabilitation, civil protection orders, and rental assistance.

EXPERIENCES WITH SERVICES

Participants cited the guidance and continued support from the service provider as contributing to their positive experiences. Participants also reported positive experiences with services when the service providers made them feel comfortable, met them in their location, and kept in contact with them over a long time period. One participant noted that one service provider went above and beyond by providing her with housing and employment referrals, calling every day to check on her, bringing her food to cook, and sending cards for all holidays and presents on her birthday. Another participant who had a positive experience with legal services said that both law enforcement and the judge involved in her civil protection order case were helpful and informative. Her lawyer took the time to work through the case with her, was friendly, and she only had to go to the courthouse two or three times.

Participants with negative experiences cited not receiving up-to-date information, a lack of compassion from their service provider, and their provider not having specialized training as the reasons for their dissatisfaction.

PARTICIPANTS' RECOMMENDATIONS

Education. All participants recommended education as a means of improving services to victims of crime. Education in schools should begin in middle school and continue into high school and the university setting. Safety booklets or informative pamphlets should be provided during these education classes. Participants strongly indicated that education should start at a young age as a prevention measure and also to ensure that young victims have knowledge about available services.

Moreover, participants recommended that education efforts be geared toward the public to help family members and loved ones identify signs of victimization and know how to help. One suggested way to accomplish this was via social media. This would allow organizations to reach across generations due to the wide range of people who use Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. These messages should be phrased in a way that all victims can understand. Participants stated that examples of what victimization is should also be shared to raise awareness. The one hesitation a participant raised with using social media was safety. Organizations should work on ways to share the information on private pages or use techniques such as hiding browser history and quick page exits so that victims can search safely.

Community Involvement and Advertisements. Half of the participants stressed the need for the whole community to be involved. Community influencers such as leaders, police, and trusted officials should be educating the community on victimization and the services available. This can be done at community events or in more informal settings. One participant mentioned

that it would be extremely helpful if victims would share their stories with other victims or younger women. This would allow victims to have a voice and provide examples to other victims that healing is possible.

In order to improve access to services, participants indicated that information needs to be shared in a variety of venues. Recommendations included churches, women's groups, community organizations such as SOME and Bread for the City, mental health organizations, doctors' offices, Unity Health Care centers, police stations, courthouses, newspapers, and public transportation. Participants also stressed the importance of ensuring this information is accurate and current.

Legal Services. Participants' recommendations regarding legal services centered on humanizing the legal system and offering more training. The legal system should promote staff visibility to help victims view the system as more humane. Participants said they wanted advocates located within the police stations or nearby. One participant mentioned it would be helpful to have someone available to walk the victim through the legal process. Participants also recommended domestic violence training for law enforcement and attorneys, including training about local victim services. They stressed that these officials need to provide information to the victim immediately, particularly information about emergency shelter. Participants said they wanted more trauma-informed trainings that are mindful of what the victim is going through and move away from a checklist of questions. Overall, participants said they wanted to see more sensitivity and compassion for victims.

2.   Service Providers

In addition to the victim perspective, ICF gathered the perspective of service providers through (1) **facilitator feedback surveys**, conducted in Year 1; (2) **member organization focus groups**, conducted in Years 1 and 2; (3) the **new member organization training evaluation**, conducted in Year 2, and (4) **social service provider awareness surveys**, conducted in Years 1 and 2. This section of the report discusses these findings.

2.1   Facilitator Feedback Survey

The facilitator feedback survey was disseminated in regular intervals during Year 1 and provided real-time feedback about VLNDC processes and satisfaction participating in the Network.

2.1.2   Findings

Facilitator participation in this data collection activity was steady across the data collection time period, ranging from a low completion rate of 70 percent to a high of 83 percent (see Exhibit 4). The trends presented in this section are aggregated by quarter according to the following dates:

- Quarter One (Q1)[6]: July 1–September 30, 2017
- Quarter Two (Q2): October 1–December 31, 2017
- Quarter Three (Q3): January 1–March 31, 2018
- Quarter Four (Q4): April 1–June 30, 2018

Exhibit 4: Percentage of Organizations That Completed the Survey

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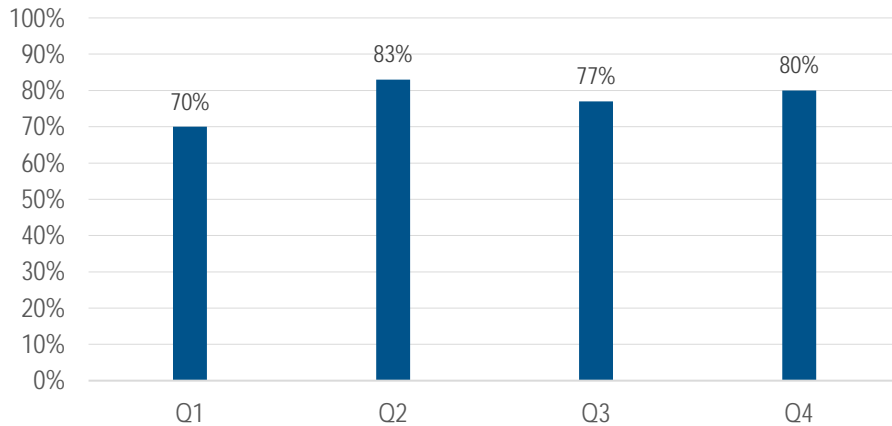
[6] NVRDC began this data collection in August 2017. They were unable to provide ICF with the data from August, so Q1 only represents the month of September 2017. They also provided ICF with the data from October 2017 (the first month in Q2).

NUMBER OF REFERRALS REPORTED BY FACILITATORS

The total number of referrals[7] made by facilitators over the course of nine months (Q2, Q3, and Q4) increased (see Exhibit 5). There were 16 referrals in Q2, increasing to 18 in Q3, and 27 in Q4. **This represents a 68.8 percent increase in referrals**. This graph also demonstrates the change in the types of referrals made over time. There are two referral options: directly into the portal or via hard copy, which was then entered into the portal. During Q2, there were two more referrals made via hard copy than via the portal. This reversed during Q3, with four more referrals via the portal than via hard copy. In Q4, the number of portal referrals was double the number of hard copy referrals.

Exhibit 5: Facilitator Referral Type by Quarter
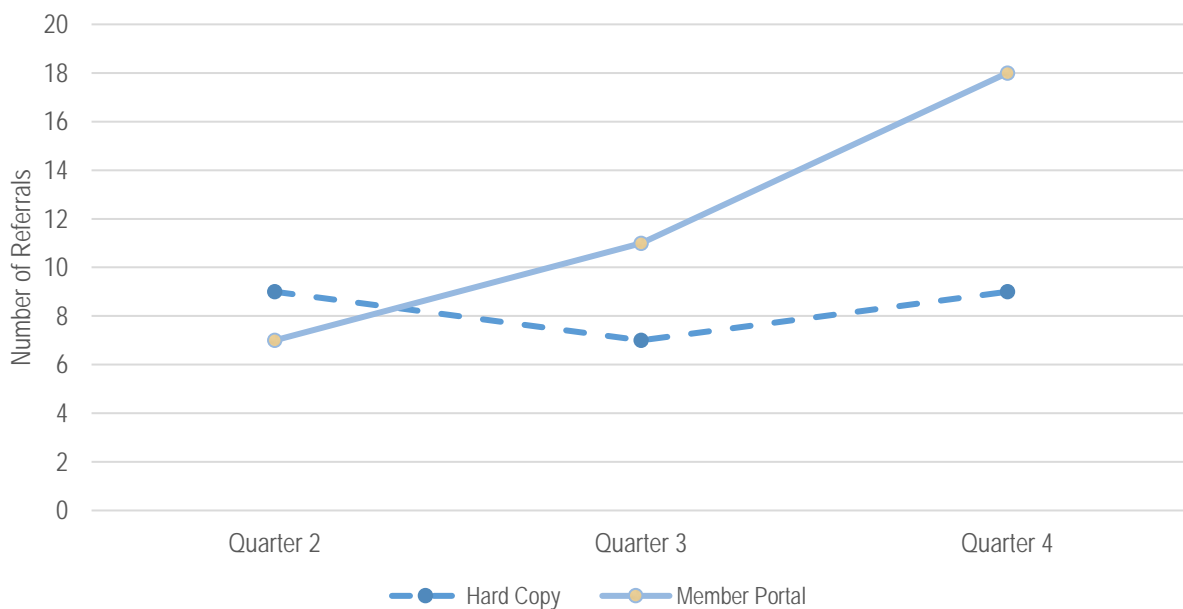
REQUESTED RESOURCES

Facilitators were asked if there were any resources VLNDC could provide that would be helpful in explaining VLNDC services to their clients. **The most frequently requested resource over the last three quarters was an FAQ sheet, which was requested 22 times**. **Also requested were a resource sheet (16 requests) and a template conversation with examples (10 requests)**. Other resources requested included more trainings (three requests) and additional meetings (one request). Suggested training topics included service provision for clients with mental disabilities or in distress (two requests) and post-submission referrals (one request).

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[7] This information is from the facilitator feedback form, self-reported by facilitators, and does not include all VLNDC referrals.

TOP SUCCESSES AND TOP DIFFICULTIES

Facilitators were asked two questions about the referral process: (1) What part of the referral process works efficiently? and (2) What difficulties do facilitators face in submitting referrals? The distribution of responses is illustrated in Exhibits 6 and 7. **The quick response of VLNDC staff was the top reported success in Q2, Q3, and Q4**, followed by the timely processing of referrals through VLNDC, and then the ease of using the portal. In Q1, two respondents selected "other" and wrote in "everything works efficiently" and "most of it was streamlined."

Exhibit 6: Facilitator-Reported VLNDC Top Successes
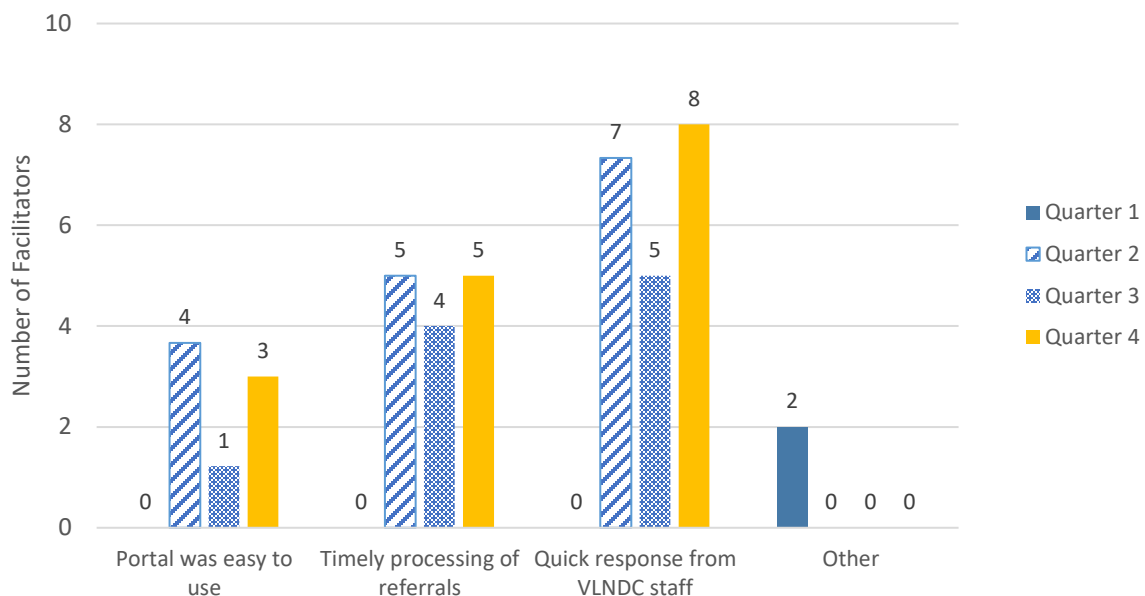
Across the four quarters, there were a total of 46 responses to the question about the difficulties facilitators faced in submitting referrals. Data for September 2017 were available; however, the question was open-ended, and so responses were included in "other." **One of the most consistent difficulties reported by facilitators in submitting referrals was having the client complete the release form**. **However, this reported difficulty dropped by more than half from Q2 to Q4**. Facilitators also commonly had "other" difficulties in submitting referrals, including issues with the layout of the intake process page/portal (8 comments), a lack of communication/notification between organizations and the navigator (5 comments), that the website was slow (4 comments), and technology issues with the website (2 comments).

Exhibit 7: Facilitator-Reported VLNDC Top Difficulties
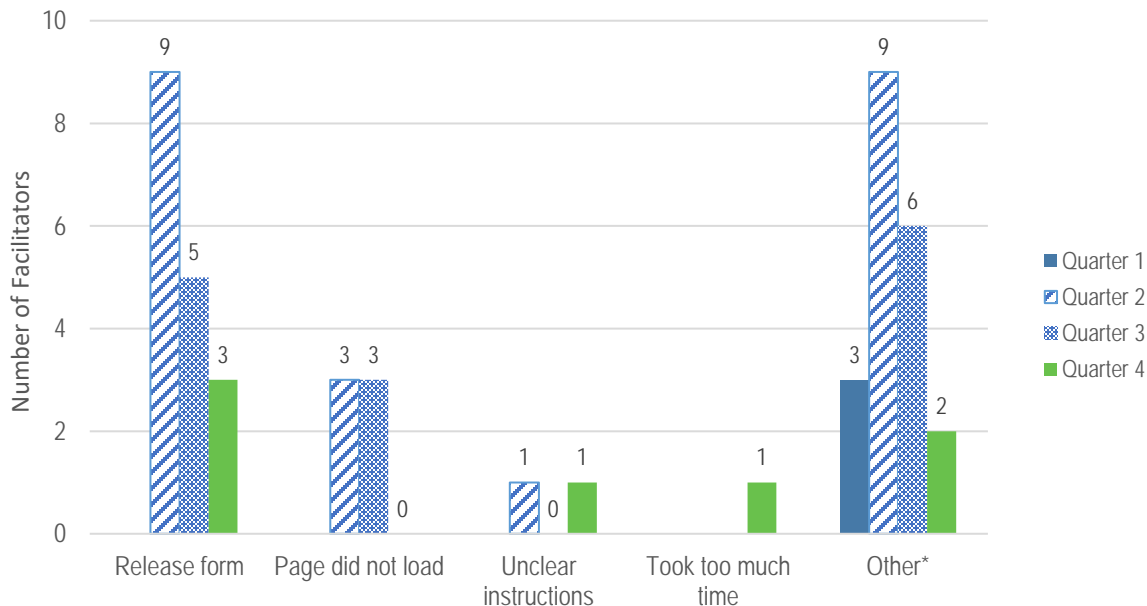
*Other responses: layout of the intake process page/portal, a lack of communication/notification between organizations and the navigator, slow website, and website technology issues.

Overall, the results from the facilitator feedback surveys suggest that the facilitators were actively engaged in VLNDC, and that the number of referrals from facilitators increased over time. Facilitators consistently reported the responsiveness of VLNDC staff as a success, as well as the timely processing of referrals. Some of the difficulties that facilitators faced (e.g., getting clients to sign the release form, challenges with the page not loading correctly) appeared to decrease over time. It is important to note that the portal used for referrals went through numerous revisions since its launch, so it is possible that difficulties arose due to temporary bugs in the system or were addressed and are no longer present in the current version of the portal. The extent to which these difficulties still occur is unknown because the surveys were not disseminated in Year 2. However, participants of the member organization focus group talked about successes and challenges with the portal.

2.2   Member Organization Focus Group

Member organizations were invited to participate in focus groups, conducted in both years, to discuss their experiences and the benefits of participating in the Network, as well as recommendations for improvement, recruitment, and sustainability.

2.2.1   Year 1 Findings

Nine individuals from six member organizations attended the focus group. The focus group discussion centered on the structure of VLNDC, the successes and challenges of VLNDC, and expanding VLNDC beyond the original 10 member organizations. Findings from this discussion fell into five categories: (1) referrals, (2) VLNDC expansion, (3) portal use and technology, (4) VLNDC collaboration, and (5) client feedback.

REFERRALS

Participants indicated that member organizations greatly benefited from being a part of VLNDC due to the ease and convenience of making referrals, and the fact that the referral process reduced the burden on their clients. Reduced burden on clients was achieved through (1) active referral processes that involved warm handoffs, and (2) reducing the number of contacts a client had to make independently. There were two challenges with referrals. **The first challenge occurred when the client had an immediate need but immediate assistance was not available**. In these cases, participants recommended that there be a script the navigator could read to inform the victim of all the information they would need to represent themselves in court.

"I think [VLNDC] is so much better than handing someone a list of phone numbers to call, that they have to call on their own. It feels very much like when the person goes into the Network, that they are going to get help versus 'here's a bunch of numbers, call all of these'."

The second challenge with referrals was getting the client to answer the phone when the organization called from an unknown number. Recommendations to alleviate this challenge centered on the navigator providing the client with the number of the organization that would be calling them, or the navigator getting more detailed information from the client about what kind of information could be left in a voicemail safely, so that the likelihood of the client calling back would increase.

VLNDC EXPANSION

When discussing VLNDC expansion, participants indicated a desire to expand VLNDC in three ways: (1) increase their number of facilitators (although member organizations faced time and capacity barriers), (2) include organizations with capacity to handle immigration and civil legal concerns, and (3) invite organizations that cover larger geographic areas (e.g., Virginia and Maryland) into VLNDC.

MEMBER PORTAL USE AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, participants indicated that the portal was easy to use and provided an efficient referral process; however, there were a few recommendations for improvement, some of which have already been implemented by NVRDC. Recommendations for improvement included expanding the gender categories, updating organization capacity information, providing notifications when a client completes their release form, providing information on referral outcomes, and giving access to other staff within the member organizations.

"The portal is really easy to use and it's very comprehensive."

COLLABORATION

Participants indicated that **participating in VLNDC improved their collaboration with other member organizations**. Specifically, the cross-trainings held on each organization's capacity, and including that information on the portal, reduced the burden on the member organizations and increased their knowledge.

CLIENT FEEDBACK

When discussing how to receive client feedback, participants said they wanted to hear negative client feedback individually when it was related to a specific staff member or organization, and as a Network when it was regarding a VLNDC policy. (See Appendix H for more detailed information on the findings from the member organization focus group.)

The positive findings gleaned from this focus group mirror the feedback from the facilitator feedback survey. Participants indicated that they greatly benefited from being a part of VLNDC and, overall, found the portal efficient and easy to use. **The participants provided several recommendations, including expanding VLNDC to increase capacity to be able to provide additional legal services (e.g., immigration) and expanding the functionality of the portal**.

2.2.2   Year 2 Findings

Six participants from six member organizations attended the second focus group, and two individuals from one member organization shared feedback via a phone interview due to conflicting schedules. Participants were staff attorneys, managing attorneys, coordinators, and directors. Findings from this discussion fell into five categories: (1) member organizations' participation and impact, (2) positive experiences with VLNDC, (3) challenges with VLNDC, (4) non-financial incentives to attract new members and encourage participation, and (5) recommendations for improving VLNDC.

> **VLNDC SUCCESSES**
>
> **Holistic services**
>
> **Increased collaboration**
>
> **Referral opportunities**

PARTICIPATION AND IMPACT

Most participants indicated they received referrals from VLNDC via the portal. Participants also used the portal to send and receive cases, and/or to network with other member organizations. Participants discussed the benefits and challenges with having a navigator coordinate the referral system. **Benefits included having a dedicated person to answer questions, send reminders, and provide additional referral information**. A challenge was having a navigator without a strong legal background because it resulted in referrals for legal needs that the crime victim either did not want or did not exist.

Based on the perspectives of the participants, VLNDC positively impacted legal service provision to victims in several ways. First, it reduced the victims' burden of needing to contact multiple organizations to have their legal needs met. In turn, this reduced the trauma associated with having to repeat the details of their victimization at each organization. Participation in VLNDC also increased the facilitators' awareness of victimization.

POSITIVE VLNDC EXPERIENCES

Participants shared positive experiences from their participation in VLNDC. **Participants spoke positively about the VLNDC member meetings; cross-trainings, which improved their ability to serve their clients; networking opportunities; and learning more about member organizations during the member meetings**. Participants stated they liked the ability to refer victims and feel confident the provider would contact the victim.

"I think it's positive because anytime you can take a step out [for] someone who's experienced a crime, someone who's experienced a trauma, a step out of what they have to take to get services is a good thing. Just any time you can remove that, even if it's just saving one or two phone calls, it's a step in a positive direction."

VLNDC CHALLENGES

Participants shared challenges they experienced as members of VLNDC. Several participants discussed challenges in integrating their colleagues in the VLNDC process. Similarly, **integrating VLNDC into already existing organizational processes was difficult for the facilitators**. The other challenge around VLNDC processes was completing paperwork (e.g., consent and release forms) and completing conflict checks in a timely manner. **Other challenges coalesced around crime victim eligibility and balancing capacity and increased number of cases**.

NON-FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Participants were asked what types of non-financial incentives would keep member organizations engaged and encourage new organizations to join. They suggested the following:
- Providing cross-trainings
- Providing networking opportunities
- Hosting a summer series event for interns and new attorneys
- Developing and disseminating written materials on member organization services
- Providing an online manual on the trainings offered for easy reference
- Informing new and existing members about the services each organization provides

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for enhancing VLNDC centered on the portal, sharing information, and non-financial incentives. Participants recommended that multiple staff have access to the portal and receive email notifications about referrals. Participants indicated that VLNDC staff should attend more member organization staff meetings to share information about VLNDC, develop a VLNDC handout, and provide up-to-date information on the capacity of member organizations.

2.2.3   Trends

Seventeen participants from member organizations participated in focus groups/interviews. Across both time periods, participants indicated that member organizations continued to struggle with getting in contact with clients; this was more of a general challenge they faced across their organizations and not directly related to VLNDC. Participants stated they found it helpful when they were able to discuss challenges such as this one as a group and hear from each other tips and techniques that worked in the past.

There was no change in what participants indicated were the main successes of VLNDC and the benefits of being part of VLNDC:

- Ease in making and receiving referrals
- Reduced burden on crime victims, with them having to call fewer organizations, not re-tell their story, and have more warm handoffs
- Increased collaboration and cross-trainings
- Reduced burden on the member organization in terms of not having to find an organization to refer to themselves

In Year 1, participant challenges and recommendations for improvement revolved around improvements to the portal. This was during a time when the portal was still in flux and changes were being made as bugs or inefficiencies were identified. Many of the recommended portal changes from Year 1 were addressed before the second focus group. In Year 2, there were fewer recommendations related to the portal. Recommendations instead revolved around how to integrate the VLNDC processes into the organizations with trainings and meetings, and non-financial incentives for continuing member engagement. This mirrors the progression of VLNDC from a planning stage focused mostly on developing and launching to a more mature implementation stage with member organizations focused on integrating the VLNDC processes and an eye toward sustainability.

"I would say that [VLNDC] has made a huge impact on our organization when we are either at capacity for certain types of cases of don't do those types of cases. Being able to refer out has been huge in being able to provide the next step to clients that come in."

2.3   New Member Organization Training Evaluation

2.3.1   Year 2 Findings

Eight orientation participants completed the evaluation. **100 percent of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that the learning objectives were met**:

- Know how to explain the VLNDC informed consent release form to a client seeking a referral
- Know how to refer a client through the portal
- Know the role of the navigator within VLNDC
- Know how to explain VLNDC services to clients who may be interested
- Feel comfortable explaining VLNDC services and benefits to staff at their organization and to other local service providers

All participants **agreed or strongly agreed that the training was an adequate length, well organized and clear, increased their VLNDC knowledge, and met their professional needs.** Participants also indicated that they planned on applying what they learned to their work and sharing the knowledge they gained with other colleagues.

Participants indicated that all of the orientation sessions were somewhat or very useful. **100 percent of participants indicated that the intake and referral process session and the portal review session were very useful.** Most participants (88%) indicated that the project orientation session and informed consent release form sessions were also very useful. 63 percent of participants indicated that the VLNDC jeopardy session was very useful, while 38 percent indicated it was somewhat useful.

Participants provided several examples for how they would describe referrals to VLNDC to their clients, including sharing the client's information, information review and conflict checks, and contact by a provider or the navigator within a specified timeframe. If participants did not have capacity at their organizations for specific kinds of legal needs but the navigator continued to send them that type of case, participants said they would do the following:

- Contact the navigator through email or the portal messaging system (8 comments)
- Update their organizational profile in the portal with their capacity (7 comments)

2.3.2   Orientation Training Evaluation Recommendations

When asked what VLNDC could do differently to improve similar orientations/trainings in the future, providers suggested the following:

- **Interaction/Activities.** Make the sessions more interactive and provide a demonstration of the portal (3 comments).
- **Content.** Explain VLNDC and the process with clients in a more detailed and clear manner (2 comments).
- **Timing/Schedule.** Cut out down time in the training schedule (1 comment).
- **Materials.** Provide printouts of slides for notetaking purposes (1 comment).
- **Evaluation.** Do not include a test in the evaluation survey (1 comment).

Other comments or suggestions included the following:

- **Positive Comments.** The training was great (3 comments), the slides were visually appealing (1 comment), the Jeopardy session was a positive experience (1 comment), and the presenters were informative and had great demeanors (1 comment).
- **Expansion.** Expand VLNDC throughout Washington, D.C., and the country (1 comment).

Overall, the results from the orientation training evaluation suggest the first new member organization training met its overall objectives, orientation sessions were useful, and participants planned on sharing their knowledge of VLDNC with others. Recommendations for training improvements included making the sessions more interactive, providing handouts, and having a portal demonstration. NVRDC continued to host new member orientation trainings and disseminate the evaluation. Using a template that was created to auto-populate findings in a report template, VLNDC will be able to continue to get real-time feedback and make data-informed decisions about its training.

"I wish we could create this legal network through all of DC + the country!"

2.4   Social Service Provider Awareness Survey

Community and social service providers in the Washington, D.C., area were recruited to complete a survey at two time points (Years 1 and 2) to help identify social service providers' awareness of VLNDC and gather information on how they refer crime victims to legal services.
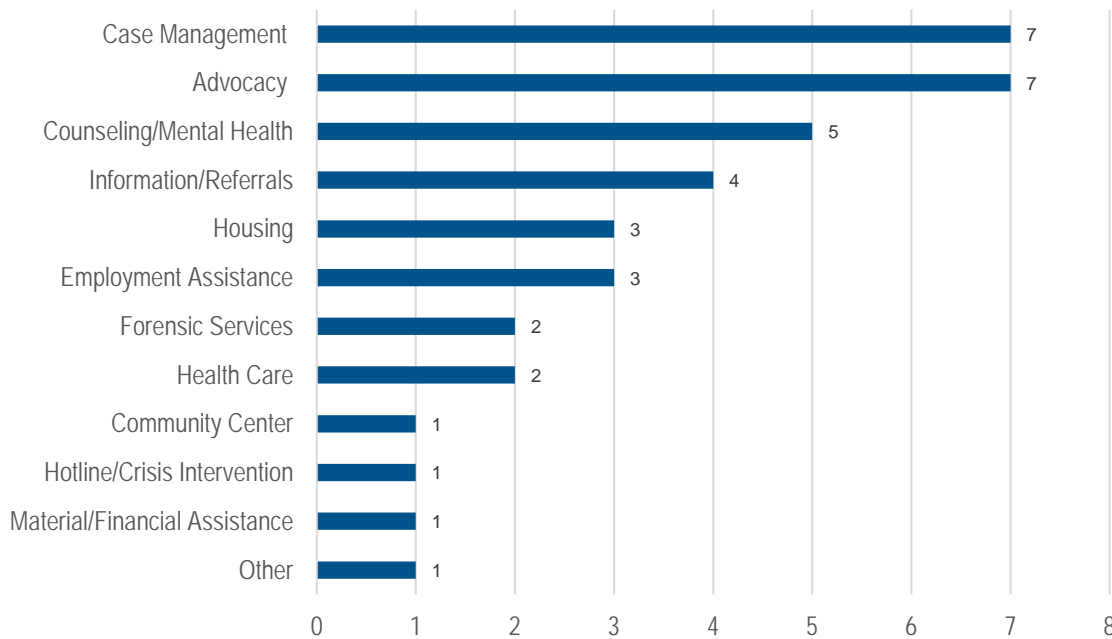
2.4.1   Year 1 Findings

In total, 17 participants responded to the survey. Of the 17 respondents, 2 consented to participate but then did not answer any questions; 1 person completed the survey twice; and 6 participants indicated that their organizations provided legal services and, per NVRDC's focus on social services, were removed from analysis. This resulted in eight surveys for analysis. A response rate was not calculated because participants were encouraged to forward the survey link to colleagues. The eight participants' organizations fell into three categories: social services (n=5), community (n=2), and other (n=1). The respondent who selected "other" wrote in "non-profit/crisis counseling." The two respondents who indicated they were from community organizations also wrote in "mental health" and "LGBTI Latinos."

The ZIP Codes of the eight respondents varied. Two of the organizations were located in ZIP Code 20001, and two others in 20002. One organization was located in each of the following ZIP Codes: 20009, 20012, 20019, and 22043. The organization that indicated it was located in 22043, which is in Virginia, serves the DMV area and was included in all analyses.

The primary types of services[8] provided by respondents were **advocacy (88%), case management (88%), and counseling/mental health services (63%).** One participant marked "other" and wrote "drop in center." The complete list is illustrated in Exhibit 8.

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[8] Childcare, language access, religious center, and TANF/SNAP were not selected by any respondents and therefore not depicted in the chart.

Exhibit 8: Awareness Survey–Services Provided

Service	Value
Case Management	7
Advocacy	7
Counseling/Mental Health	5
Information/Referrals	4
Housing	3
Employment Assistance	3
Forensic Services	2
Health Care	2
Community Center	1
Hotline/Crisis Intervention	1
Material/Financial Assistance	1
Other	1

The most common clients whom respondents served were men, adults, Black, Hispanic/Latinx, White, and LGBTQIA+. The specific breakdown of gender, age, vulnerable populations, and ethnicity is presented in Exhibit 9.

Exhibit 9: Awareness Survey–Gender, Age, Vulnerable Populations, and Ethnicity

Men	Women	Transgender Men	Transgender Women
88% n=7	75% n=6	75% n=6	63% n=5

Children	Adolescents	Adults	Elderly
50% n=4	63% n=5	88% n=7	25% n=2
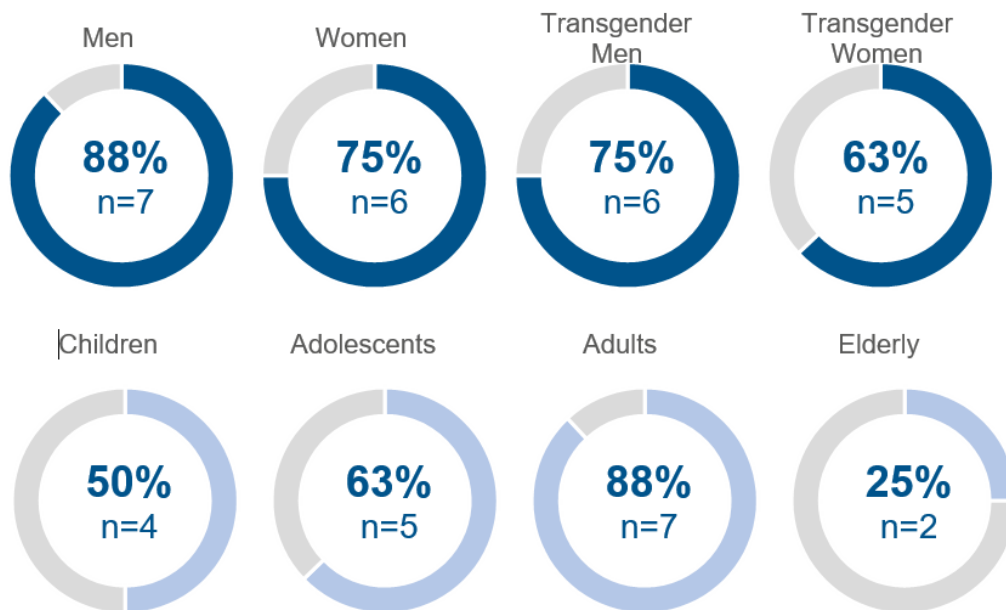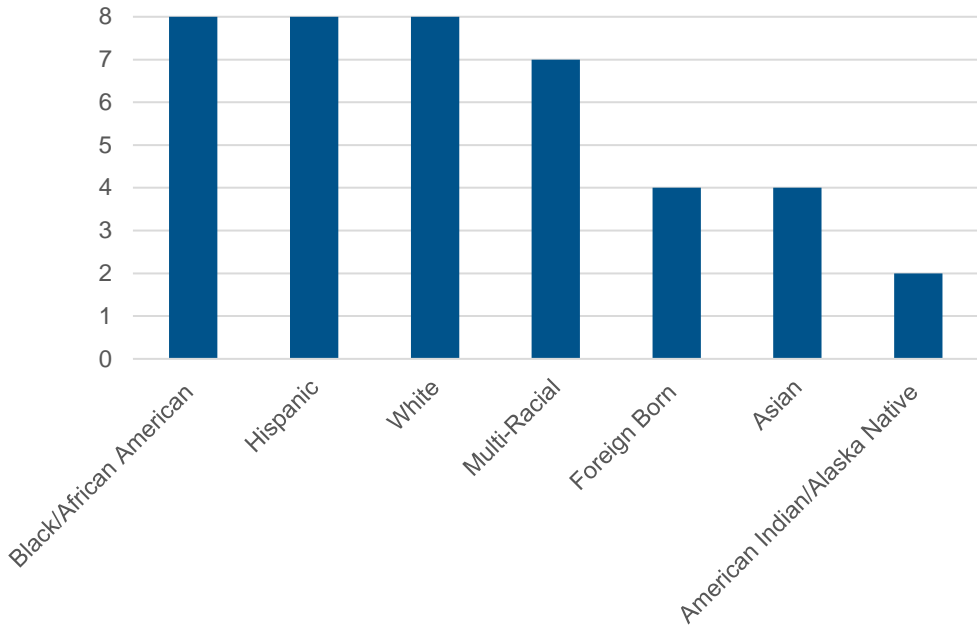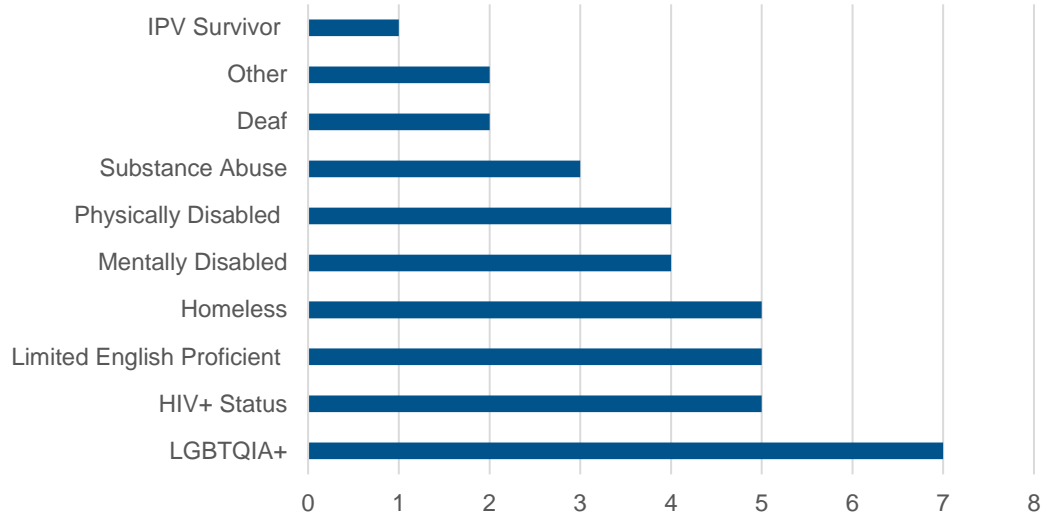
The majority of respondents indicated they saw at least one client in the past month who was seeking an attorney or lawyer. The number of clients ranged from one to seven. The organization with seven clients needing an attorney or lawyer was not aware of VLNDC but did make referrals to legal aid resources.

STEPS FOR LEGAL REFERRALS

When asked what steps the respondent would take if a victim of crime requested their help in finding legal assistance, all eight said they would make referrals; one respondent also said they would assist the victim with filling out paperwork, and another said they would first assess the victim's safety, get them to a safe location, and then make a referral. Referrals were made to organizations such as Mary's Center and Amara Legal Center, a VLNDC member organization.

BARRIERS

The most common **barriers organizations faced when connecting a victim to an attorney was a lack of available pro bono lawyers, the cost of services or not meeting pro bono eligibility requirements, funding, custody help, language, and the length of time it takes for a victim to be seen**.

VLNDC AWARENESS

Six of the eight respondents were not aware of VLNDC. **Two respondents were extremely aware of VLNDC**. Of the two organizations that were aware of VLNDC, one had referred clients with legal needs to VLNDC a moderate amount, while the other had almost never referred clients to VLDNC. Participants became aware of VLNDC through social media (n=3) and/or community meetings (n=2).

VLNDC EDUCATION

All eight respondents indicated they would like to learn about VLNDC. Seven respondents indicated that they would like to learn about VLNDC's eligibility requirements, followed by how to refer a client, what communities VLNDC serves, and what types of legal services are provided (n=6).

Respondents said they would like to learn about VLNDC through the VLNDC website (n=5), a VLNDC listserv or pamphlet (n=3), and social media or direct contact (n=2).

EXAMPLES OF REFERRAL STEPS

"Provide referrals to legal aid resources in DC. Visit the courthouse with victims to provide support in filing relevant documents."

"First check to see if they need immediate help, call the local domestic violence shelter and the police if needed. The goal is to get the victim to a safe environment first. Then I would connect the victim to pro bono legal assistance."

"We usually refer them to Amara Legal Center."

"Make referral at Mary's Center."

REFERRAL BARRIERS

"Lack of pro bono lawyers taking specific cases."

"They can't afford it or they don't qualify for pro bono services OR the child's case does not qualify."

"Due to the low availability of pro bono and/or nonprofit attorneys, the common barrier is the length of time it takes for the victim to be seen."

"Language."

"Funding."

The results from this survey suggest that social service providers are frequently in contact with victims of crime who need or want legal services. Some of the barriers faced by organizations when connecting their clients to legal services are barriers also noted in the needs assessment[9] and align with VLNDC's strategic plan. All respondents expressed interest in learning more about VLNDC, providing further evidence that a comprehensive legal network like VLNDC is needed in the Washington, D.C., area.
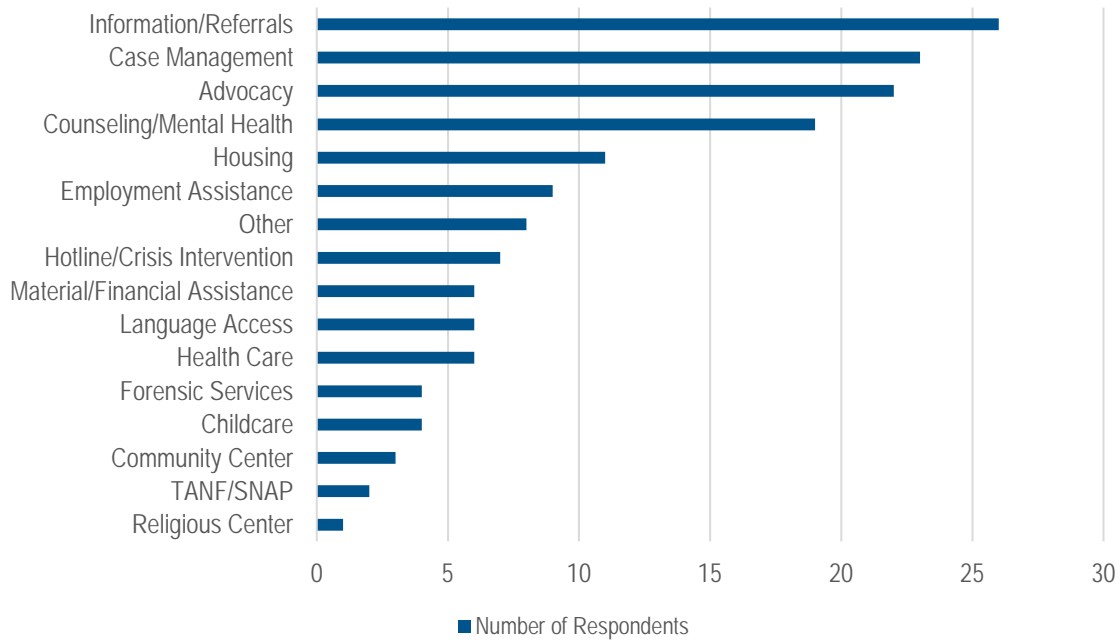
2.4.2   Year 2 Findings

In Year 2, there were 69 respondents to the survey. Of the 69 respondents, 2 declined to participate, 3 completed the survey twice, and 12 were from member organizations and so removed from analysis. This resulted in a final sample size of 52. A response rate was not calculated because participants were encouraged to forward the survey link to colleagues. **More than half of the participants that responded (n=48) listed their organization type as primarily social services (62.5%, n=30)**, 16.7 percent (n=8) as community organizations, 8.3 percent (n=4) as medical organizations, and 12.5 percent (n=6) as "other." Other responses included "legal services," "mental health," "mostly clinical mental health…we also provide community workshops on various topics," "psychotherapy & coaching," "religious," and "safe housing/shelter."[10]

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[9] The needs assessment was conducted by the Justice Research and Statistics Association and is not discussed in this report.

[10] 18.9 percent (n=10) of the participants indicated that their organization provides legal services. These participants followed a skip logic built into the survey that allowed them to skip to the section on awareness. They did not respond to any of the other questions to ensure that the focus was on social service providers.

Exhibit 10: Awareness Survey–Services Provided

Information/Referrals
Case Management
Advocacy
Counseling/Mental Health
Housing
Employment Assistance
Other
Hotline/Crisis Intervention
Material/Financial Assistance
Language Access
Health Care
Forensic Services
Childcare
Community Center
TANF/SNAP
Religious Center

0   5   10   15   20   25   30

■ Number of Respondents

Most organizations were located in ZIP Code 20001 (n=7), followed by 20005 (n=5), and 20002 (n=4). Thirty-seven participants indicated the services their organizations primarily provide; the most common services were information and referrals (70.3%), followed by case management (62.2%, n=23), and advocacy (42.3%, n=22). None of the organizations provided all of the services listed.

PARTICIPANTS' CLIENTS

The client populations most frequently served by the organizations were women, adults, White, LGBTQIA, and limited English proficient. Ten (27.8%) organizations indicated they served clients in all categories provided.

Exhibit 11: Awareness Survey–Client Gender and Age

Women   Men   Transgender Women   Transgender Men

Adults   Adolescents   Children   Elderly
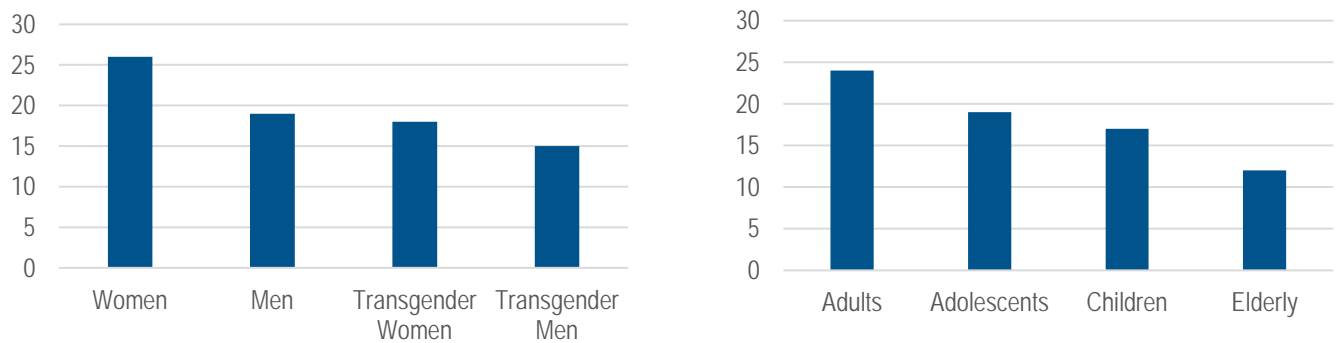
Participants indicated that they would take the following steps if a victim requested their help in finding legal assistance:

1. Refer to an organization they already knew (77.8%, n=28)
2. Ask a colleague for help (44.4%, n=16)
3. Google the information (41.7%, n=15)

BARRIERS

The following were the most common barriers participants faced when connecting a victim to an attorney:

1. The victim not being able to afford an attorney (58.3%, n=21)
2. The victim being too scared to seek help (41.7%, n=15)
3. The victim not wanting to contact an attorney themselves (33.3%, n=12)

VLNDC AWARENESS

All participants, including legal service providers, were asked about their awareness of VLNDC. Overall, **68.2 percent (n=30) of participants were slightly to extremely aware of VLNDC**. Forty percent of social service providers were not aware of VLNDC, compared to 11.1 percent of legal providers. Most participants were aware of VLNDC through community meetings (25%, n=7) and a colleague at their organization (25%, n=7). Community meetings was the most cited reason (33.3%) for how social service providers knew about VLNDC, whereas legal providers most commonly learned about VLNDC through a colleague at their organization (50%).

Regarding referring victims to VLNDC, 34.8 percent referred occasionally or a moderate amount. More than half of social service providers (62.5%) and legal providers (71.5%) never or almost never referred clients to VLNDC.

VLNDC EDUCATION

A majority of the participants, both social and legal service providers, indicated that they wanted to learn about each aspect of VLNDC, including the legal services provided (86.8%, n=33), the eligibility requirements (84.2%, n=32), the process for referring a client (81.6%, n=31), and what communities were served by VLNDC (68.4%, n=26). An overwhelming majority of participants, both social and legal providers, wanted to learn about VLNDC via a website (84.2%, n=32), followed by a pamphlet or the VLNDC listserv. **Social service providers had more interest in being contacted directly (30.4%) than legal service providers (12.5%).**

2.4.3   Trends

Across both time periods, the main types of services provided by the participants' organization included case management, advocacy, information/referrals, and counseling/mental health. If participants interacted with a victim who required legal assistance, many of the participants would provide a referral for legal services.

The main barrier providers faced in connecting a victim to an attorney regarded money and the perspective that victims would not be able to afford an attorney or the lack of available pro bono attorneys; this barrier was consistent across both years. In Year 1, other barriers involved the victims' unique situation, such as needing specific language assistance or requiring more immediate services, while in Year 2, the barriers were around emotional issues, such as the victim being too scared to seek help or not wanting to contact an attorney themselves.

A majority of participants indicated they wanted to learn about VLNDC, and respondents from both time periods indicated they wanted to learn about the legal services provided, eligibility requirements, the referral process, and what communities were served by VLNDC. **Participants preferred to learn about VLNDC via a website, followed by a listserv or pamphlet**.

3.   Administrative Data

Across both years, ICF conducted secondary data analyses on administrative data. In Year 1, OVSJG shared performance measure data from grantees to develop a profile of crime victims in Washington, D.C. In Year 2, NVRDC shared the VLNDC Member Portal data on a quarterly basis to help provide real-time feedback about the operations of VLNDC, as well as trends and service outcomes for those victims who contacted VLNDC for services. These analyses are discussed in more detail below.
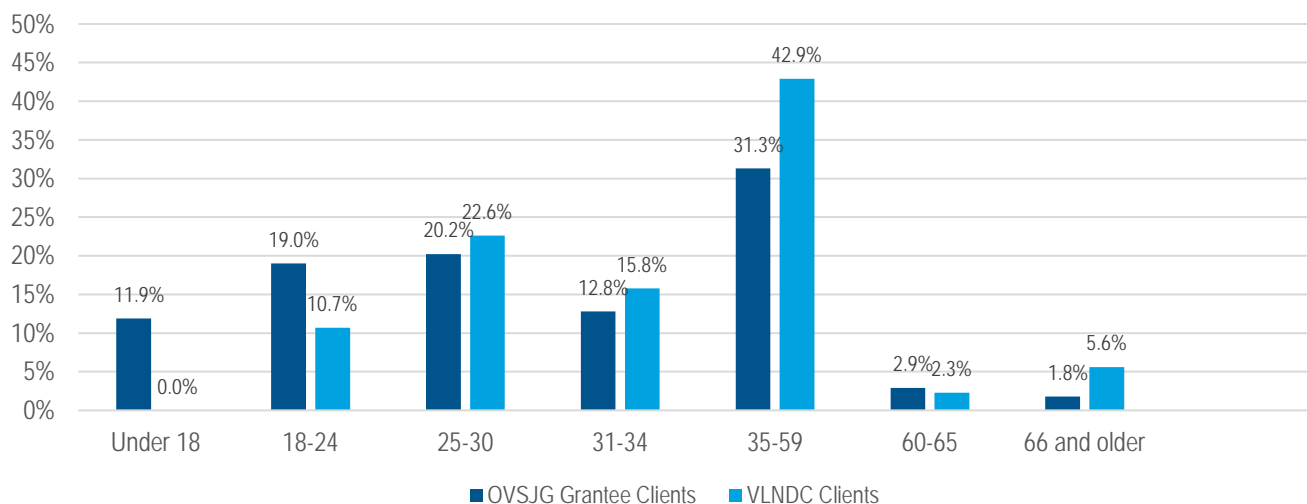
3.1   OVSJG Grantee Performance Measures

The purpose of this data collection was to examine characteristics of victims who reached out to OVSJG grantees and VLNDC clients. This comparison[11] was designed to help VLNDC identify population differences between its clients and the general Washington, D.C., victim population in order to inform its outreach efforts and ensure all victims who require legal services are being reached. These findings are summarized below. (See Appendix J for the full report.)

3.1.1   Year 1 Findings

Approximately 81 percent of VLNDC clients were between the ages of 25 and 59, while approximately 63 percent of clients of OVSJG grantees were under the age of 35. VLNDC served a significantly higher proportion of clients between the ages of 35 and 59 compared to OVSJG grantees.

Exhibit 12: Age of Clients of VLNDC and OVSJG Grantees

Age	OVSJG Grantee Clients	VLNDC Clients
Under 18	11.9%	0.0%
18-24	19.0%	10.7%
25-30	20.2%	22.6%
31-34	12.8%	15.8%
35-59	31.3%	42.9%
60-65	2.9%	2.3%
66 and older	1.8%	5.6%

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[11] VLNDC serves clients' legal needs; however, OVSJG grantees serve clients in many capacities, including legal and social services. This means some clients seen by OVSJG grantees may not be clients who would normally seek legal services. To the extent that this is the case, using PMI data as a benchmark would be inappropriate.
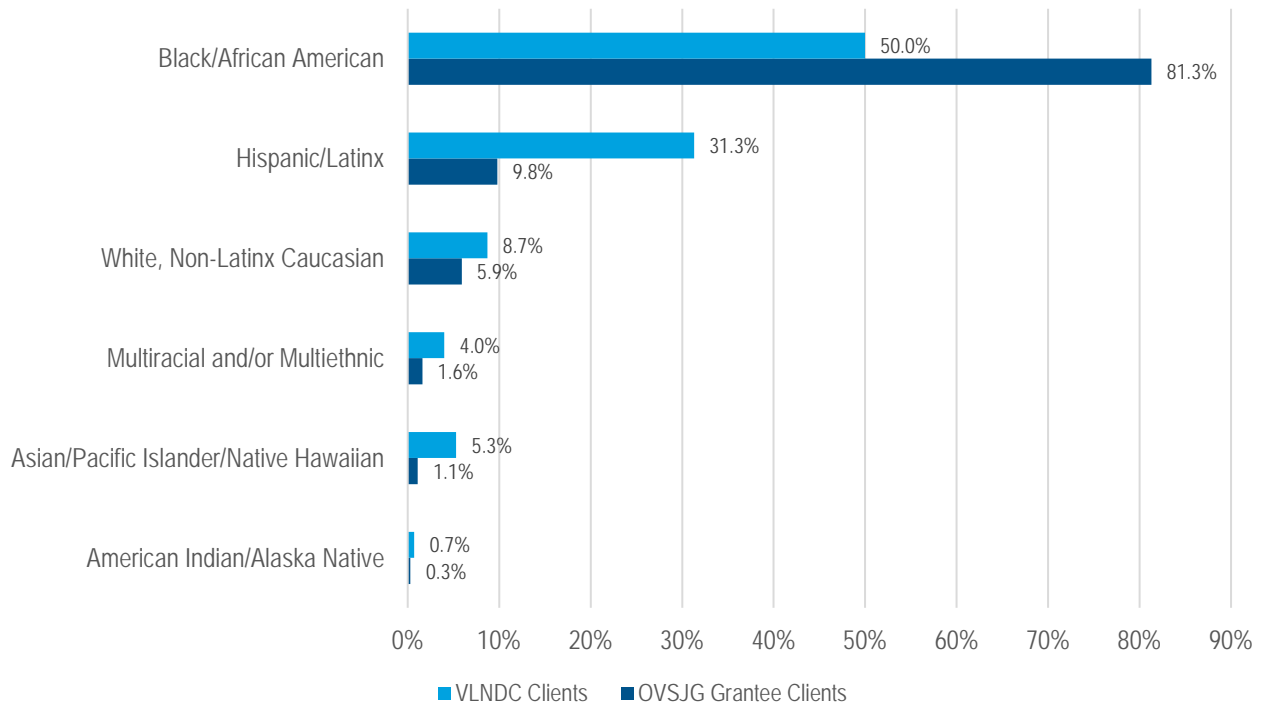
Clients from both VLNDC and OVSJG grantees were most often female. VLNDC served a statistically significant higher proportion of female clients compared to OVSJG grantees.

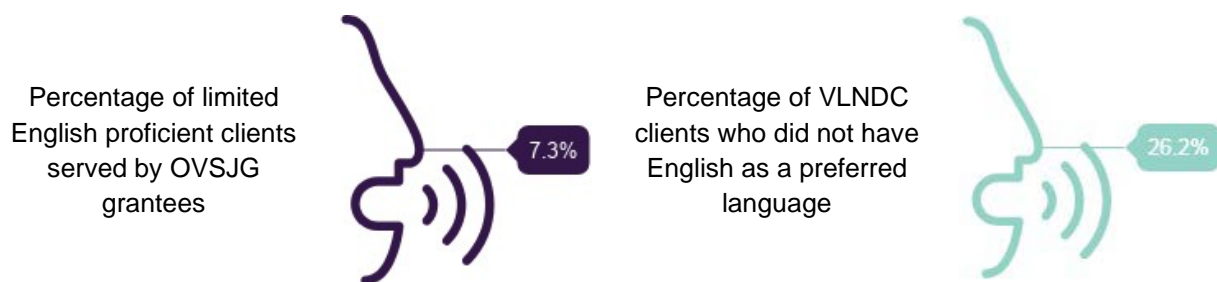**Exhibit 13: Gender of Clients of VLNDC and OVSJG Grantees**
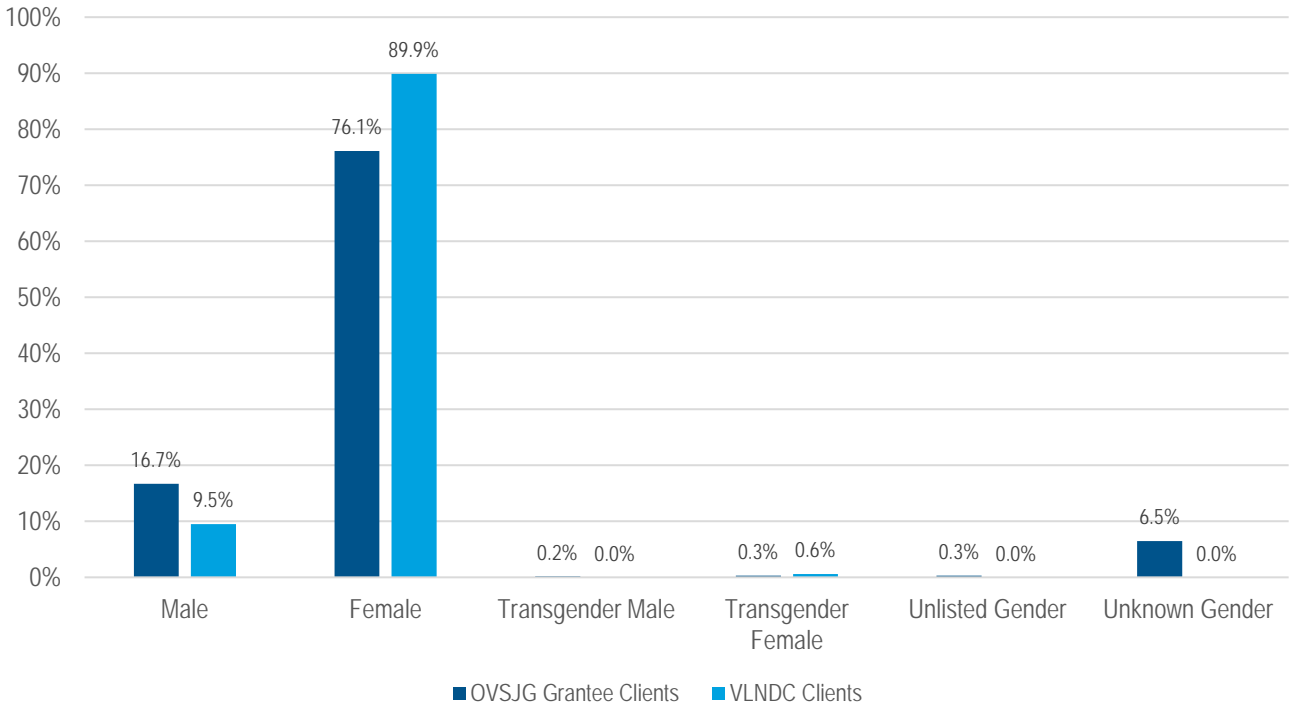
The largest percentage of clients seen by both VLNDC and OVSJG grantees[12] were Black. The second most frequent ethnicity seen by both was Hispanic/Latinx, although VLNDC clients were significantly more likely to be Hispanic/Latinx compared to the clients of OVSJG grantees. The same finding holds for Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian.

Exhibit 14: Ethnicity of Clients of VLNDC and OVSJG Grantees

Ethnicity	VLNDC Clients	OVSJG Grantee Clients
Black/African American	50.0%	81.3%
Hispanic/Latinx	31.3%	9.8%
White, Non-Latinx Caucasian	8.7%	5.9%
Multiracial and/or Multiethnic	4.0%	1.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	5.3%	1.1%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.7%	0.3%

OVSJG and VLNDC measure the language needs of their clients differently, making a direct comparison impossible. The preliminary data suggest VLNDC saw clients with a preferred language other than English more often than OVSJG grantees saw clients who were limited English proficient.

Exhibit 15: Language Needs of Clients of VLNDC and OVSJG Grantees

Percentage of limited English proficient clients served by OVSJG grantees — 7.3%

Percentage of VLNDC clients who did not have English as a preferred language — 26.2%

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[12] 41.9 percent of clients of OVSJG grantees were excluded from the client profile because the races of those clients were not comparable to the information collected in the VLNDC data set.

The most frequent crime type seen by VLNDC was domestic violence/intimate partner violence, followed by assault (non-sexual), and sexual assault. The top crime type seen by OVSJG grantees was domestic violence/intimate partner violence, followed by child abuse or neglect, and sexual assault.

Exhibit 16: Victimization Type of Clients of VLNDC and OVSJG Grantees

Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence: VLNDC Clients 66.5%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 54.2%
Child Abuse or Neglect: VLNDC Clients 8.7%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 13.3%
Other: VLNDC Clients 1.2%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 9.8%
Sexual Assault: VLNDC Clients 19.7%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 9.6%
Assault (Non-Sexual): VLNDC Clients 26.6%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 4.5%
Stalking: VLNDC Clients 13.3%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 2.6%
Homicide: VLNDC Clients 0.0%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 2.5%
Human Trafficking: VLNDC Clients 0.6%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 1.6%
Identify Theft: VLNDC Clients 2.9%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 0.6%
Robbery: VLNDC Clients 1.2%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 0.6%
Elder Abuse: VLNDC Clients 1.2%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 0.4%
Hate or Bias Crime: VLNDC Clients 1.2%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 0.2%
Arson: VLNDC Clients 0.0%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 0.1%
DUI/DWI: VLNDC Clients 0.0%, OVSJG Grantee Clients 0.0%
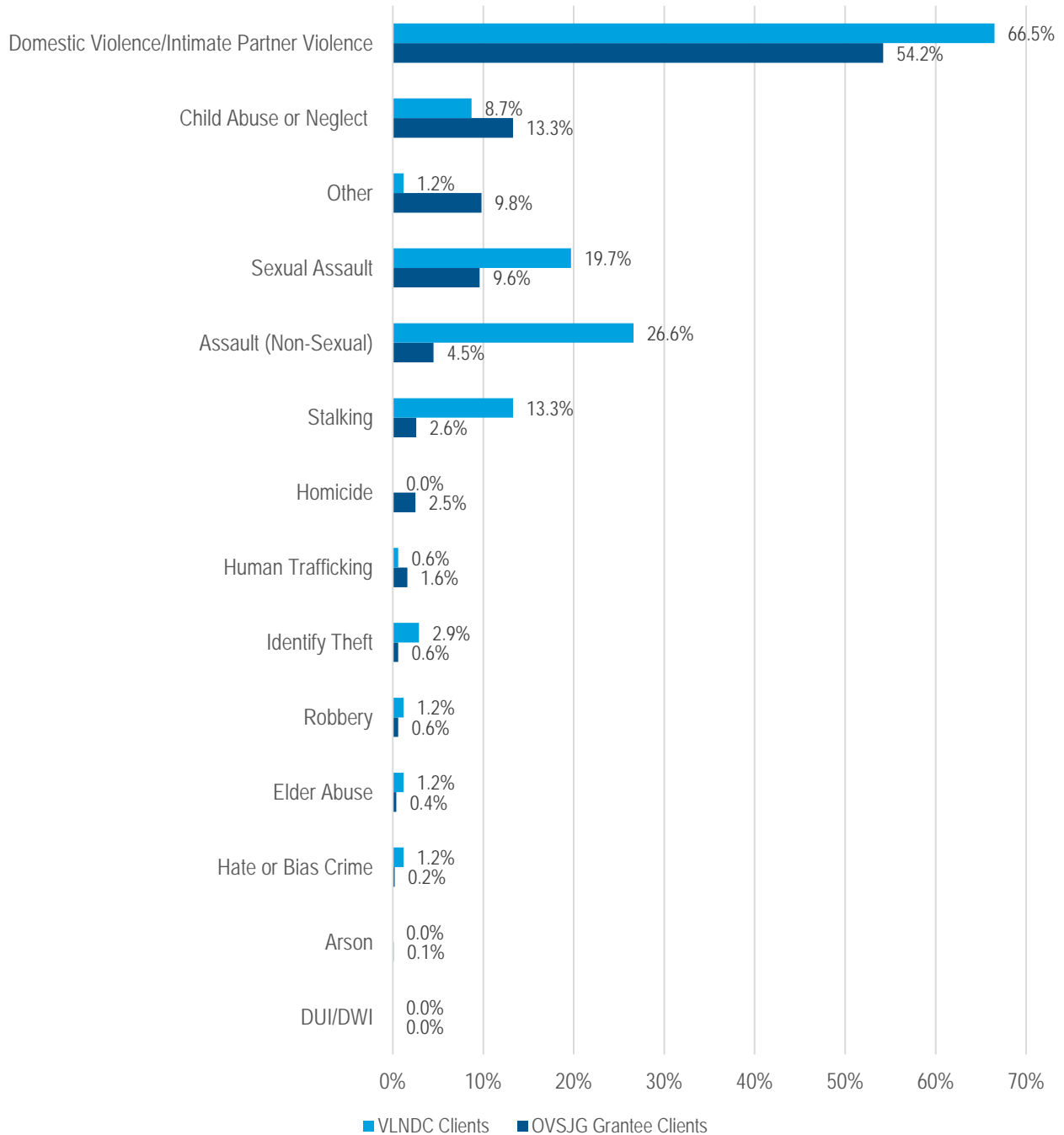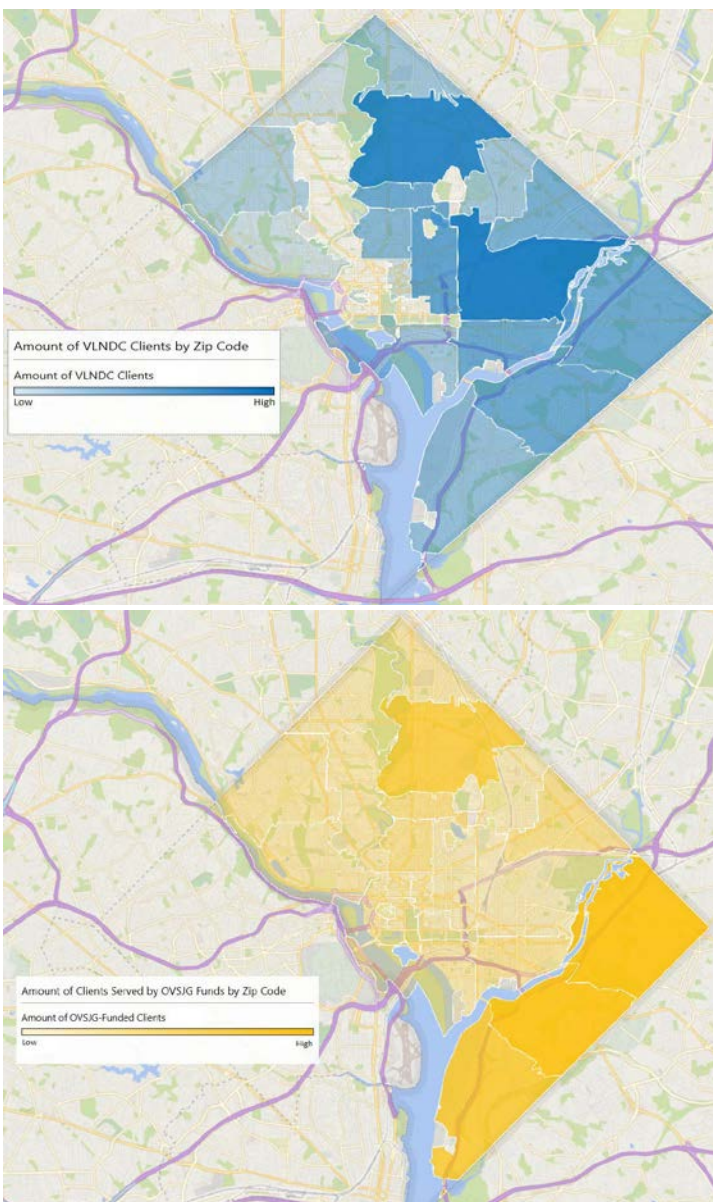
■ VLNDC Clients ■ OVSJG Grantee Clients

Exhibit 17 illustrates a comparison between where clients of VLNDC and OVSJG grantees reside using ZIP Codes. Clients served by VLNDC were heavily represented in ZIP Codes 20002, 20011, and 20001, seen in the heat-mapped blue data. Clients served by OVSJG grantees were heavily represented in ZIP Codes 20019, 20020, 20032, and 20011, illustrated by the darker yellow color. Overlap between high numbers of clients of VLNDC and OVSJG grantees can been seen in ZIP Code 20011. Caution is warranted in making comparisons in client locations. ZIP Code data collection for clients of VLNDC began in April 2018, whereas data for clients of OVSJG grantees were collected for all of 2017. As the data collection dates do not overlap, it is possible that client location changed across the different time periods.

Exhibit 17: Heat Maps Depicting Location of Clients of VLNDC and OVSJG Grantees

Although the comparisons between clients from OVSJG grantees and VLNDC should be interpreted cautiously, they suggest some similarities across victim profiles in terms of demographics, geographic locations (as determined by ZIP Codes), and types of victimizations. For example, clients were most commonly female, more concentrated in certain ZIP Codes (e.g., 20011), and victims of domestic violence/intimate partner violence or sexual assault. There were also some differences across the two victim profiles. For example, VLNDC served some minority populations with greater frequency, including Hispanic/Latinx and Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, compared to OVSJG grantees.

3.3   VLNDC Member Portal Data

In Year 2, ICF analyzed de-identified data collected by the navigator or member organization during the VLNDC intake process. The purpose of this data collection effort was to provide real-time feedback about VLNDC cases and clients. (See Appendix K for a report for Fiscal Year 2019 Q1 and Q2.) The findings presented in this section include data from September 2018 through June 2019 and a trends section inclusive of all data collected from July 2017 through July 2019.

3.3.1   Year 2 Findings

From September 2018 through June 2019, there were **273 crime victims** who sought VLNDC services, of whom 4 (1.5%) were repeat clients, and **472 cases**.

CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender

The **majority (85%, n=226) of victims who entered VLNDC were female**, even though the Washington, D.C., population has similar rates of males (47.4%) and females (52.8%).[13] Male victims comprised 14.3 percent (n=38) of the sample. There was one victim who identified as transgender (0.04%), and one case in which the gender was reported as unknown (0.04%).

Exhibit 18: VLNDC Clients: Gender

0.4%   0.4%

14.3%

85.0%

■ Female   ■ Male   ■ Transgender   ■ Unknown

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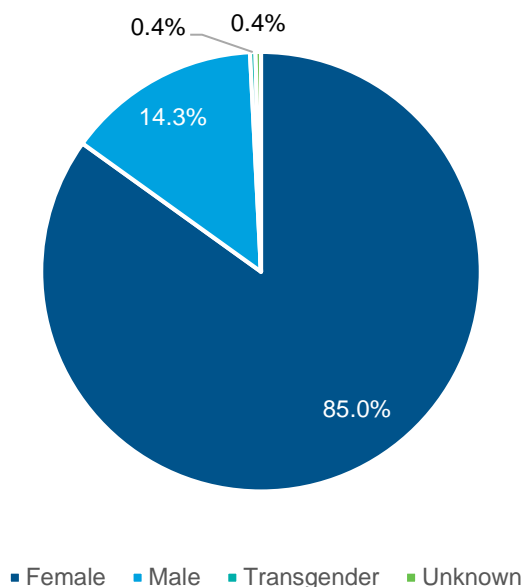
[13] U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2017. American Factfinder. Retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml.

Age

VLNDC clients' ages ranged from 12 to 83, with a **mean age of 38** (mode and median were 35). Slightly less than half (45.6%) of clients were between the ages of 35 and 59, and 20.7 percent of clients were between the ages of 25 and 30.

**Exhibit 19: VLNDC Clients: Age Distribution**
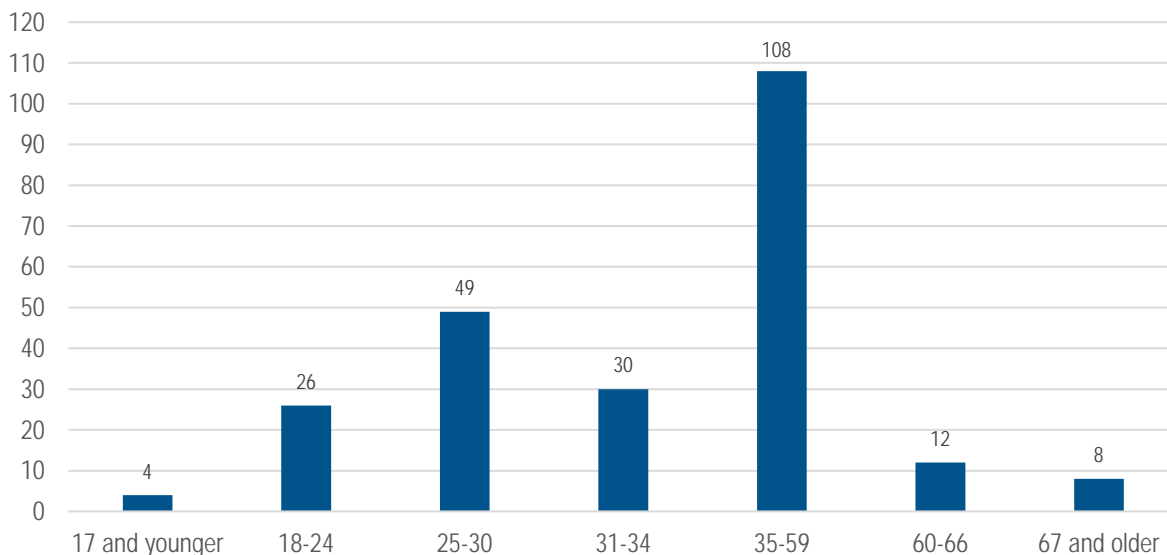
The age distribution of VLNDC clients was comparable to the population of Washington, D.C., residents, 31 percent of whom are between the ages of 35 and 59. 11.7 percent of VLNDC clients were 24 or younger, compared to 29 percent of the Washington, D.C., population. Similarly, 8.5 percent of VLNDC clients were 60 or older, compared to 16.8 percent of the Washington, D.C., population.[14]

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[14] U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2013 – 2017. Fact Finder. Retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml.

Sexual Orientation

The majority of VLNDC clients who reported their sexual orientation identified as **straight (86.9%)**, followed by gay (4.9%), lesbian (3.3%), bisexual (2.2%), other (2.2%), and asexual (0.5%).

Exhibit 20: VLNDC Clients: Sexual Orientation
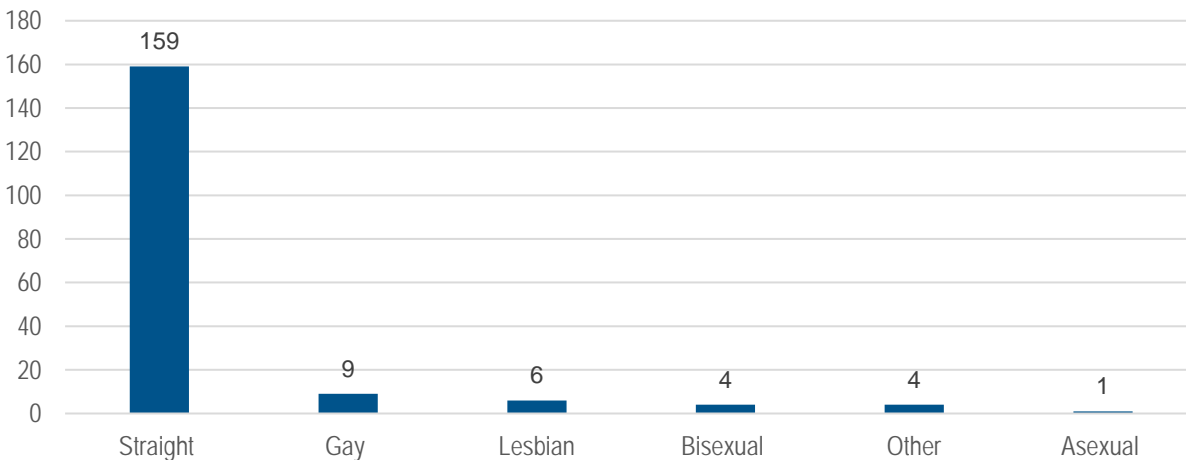
Preferred Language

VLNDC clients' preferred language was English. The languages, ranked from most to least requested, are provided in Table 2. These findings are comparable to the language preferences of Washington, D.C., residents, of whom 82.4 percent speak only English. VLNDC did have a higher percent of clients who preferred Spanish (20.9%) compared to residents of Washington, D.C., who speak Spanish (9.4%).[15]

**Table 2: VLNDC Clients: Preferred Language**

Language	Frequency	Percent
English	204	77.6%
Spanish	55	20.9%
American Sign Language	3	1.1%
Amharic	1	0.4%

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[15] U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2013 – 2017. Fact Finder. Retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml.

Race/Ethnicity

Approximately **half of VLNDC clients were Black (49.3%)**, followed by Hispanic/Latinx (31.5%), White (11.5%), multiracial (3.8%), Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (2.8%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (0.5%). Similar to age, VLNDC clients were mostly representative of the Washington, D.C., population, of whom 47.7 percent identify as Black, 2.9 percent as multiracial, 3.8 percent as Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 0.3 percent as American Indian/Alaska Native. VLNDC had a higher representation of Hispanic/Latinx clients (31.5% compared to 10.7%) and a lower representation of White clients (11.5% compared to 40.7%).[16]

Exhibit 21: VLNDC Clients: Race/Ethnicity
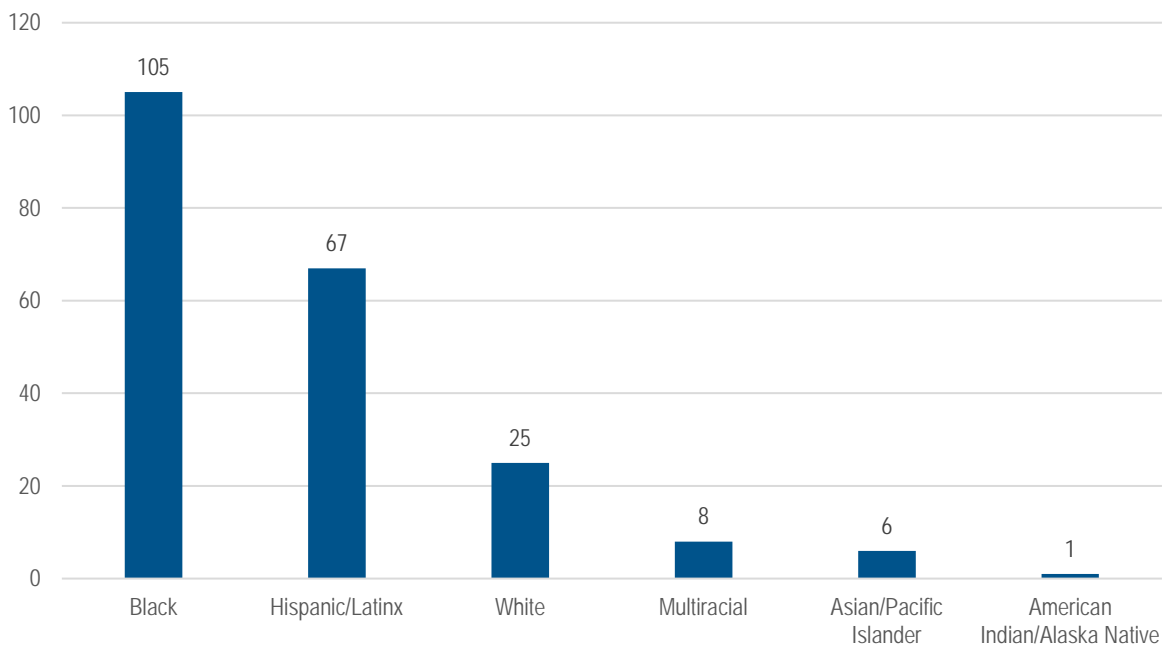
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[16] U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2013 – 2017. Fact Finder. Retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml.

Ward

VLNDC clients most frequently reported residing in Ward 8 (14.3%, n=32). VLNDC clients also frequently lived in Wards 4 (13.4%, n=30), 6 (9.8%, n=22), and 7 (9.4%, n=21).

When looking at Washington, D.C., as a whole, Ward 8 also experienced the highest domestic violence calls to the Metropolitan Police Department in 2017, followed by Wards 7 and 4.

Exhibit 22: VLNDC Clients: DC Ward of Residence
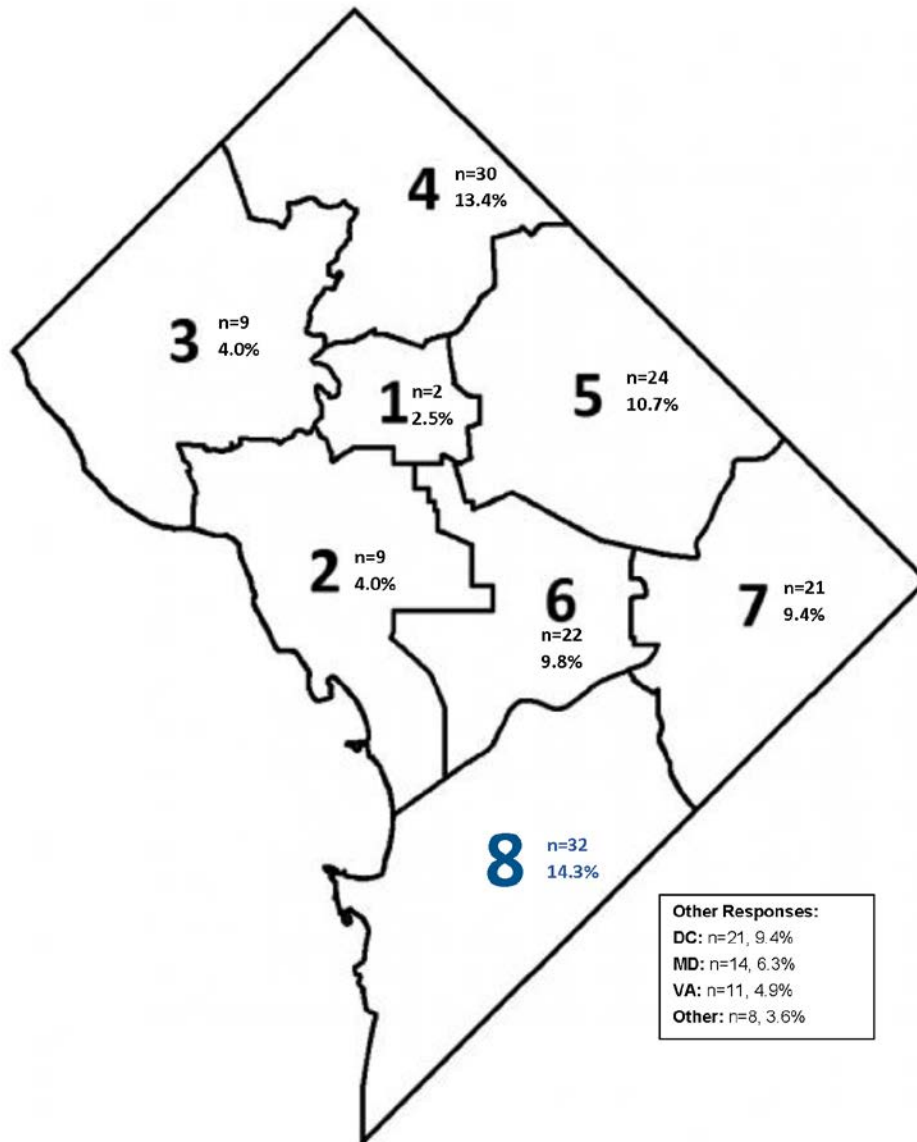
Number of Children

About half (50.9%, n=139) of VLNDC clients had children, with a range of 1 to 7 and a mean of 2 (median was 2 and mode was 1).

Employment and Education Status

Slightly less than half of VLNDC clients (46.3%) were employed, and 15.6 percent were in school. Compared to the population of Washington, D.C., the percentage of employed clients was low, with 69.5 percent of Washington, D.C., residents being employed.[17] Approximately 6 percent (n=12) of clients were both employed and in school.

Exhibit 23: VLNDC Clients: Employment and Education Status

Employed

46%
n=99

In School

16%
n=30
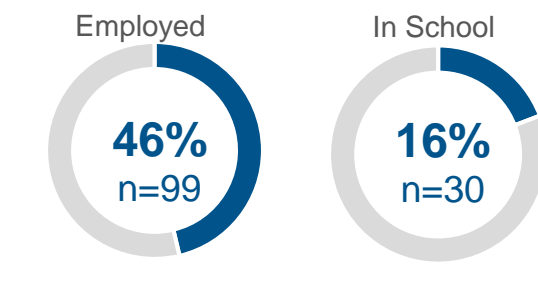
Income

In Q1 of 2019, the **median monthly income for VLNDC clients was $412**,[18] with monthly incomes ranging from $0 to $110,000.

VLNDC clients ranged from 0 to 880 percent of the Federal Poverty Level, with **67 percent of clients falling between 0 and 100 percent** of the Federal Poverty Level.

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[17] U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2013 – 2017. Fact Finder. Retrieved from:
https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml.

[18] The median is presented here instead of the average because one monthly income was reported to be $110,000. This skewed the monthly average to a much higher dollar amount ($1,328), resulting in a misrepresentation of the monthly income of VLNDC clients.

Exhibit 24: VLNDC Clients: Percentage of Federal Poverty Level
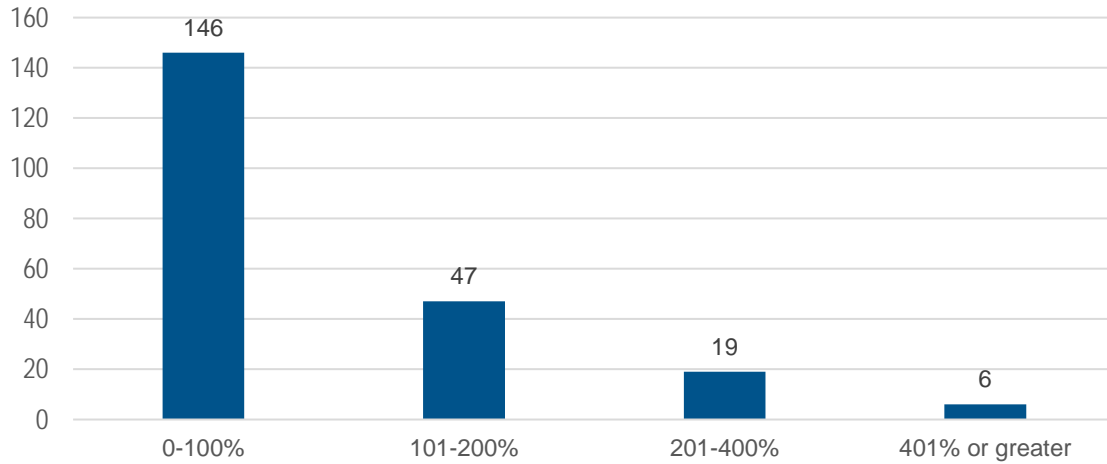
Victimization Type

Regarding case level,[19] **56 percent of VLNDC clients experienced domestic violence**, followed by non-sexual assault (non-sexual) (24.1%). At least 10 percent of clients also reported sexual assault (15.1%), threats (14.7%), and stalking (11.2%). Other victimization types—child abuse or neglect, destruction of property, theft, hate or bias crime, identity theft, financial exploitation, robbery, homicide survivor, burglary, cyberstalking, human trafficking, and elder abuse—were reported less frequently.

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[19] This analysis is at the case-level. VLNDC clients might have more than one legal case. As 81 percent of clients experienced more than one type of victimization, the victimization percentages reported here duplicate across clients.

Exhibit 25: VLNDC Clients: Victimization Type
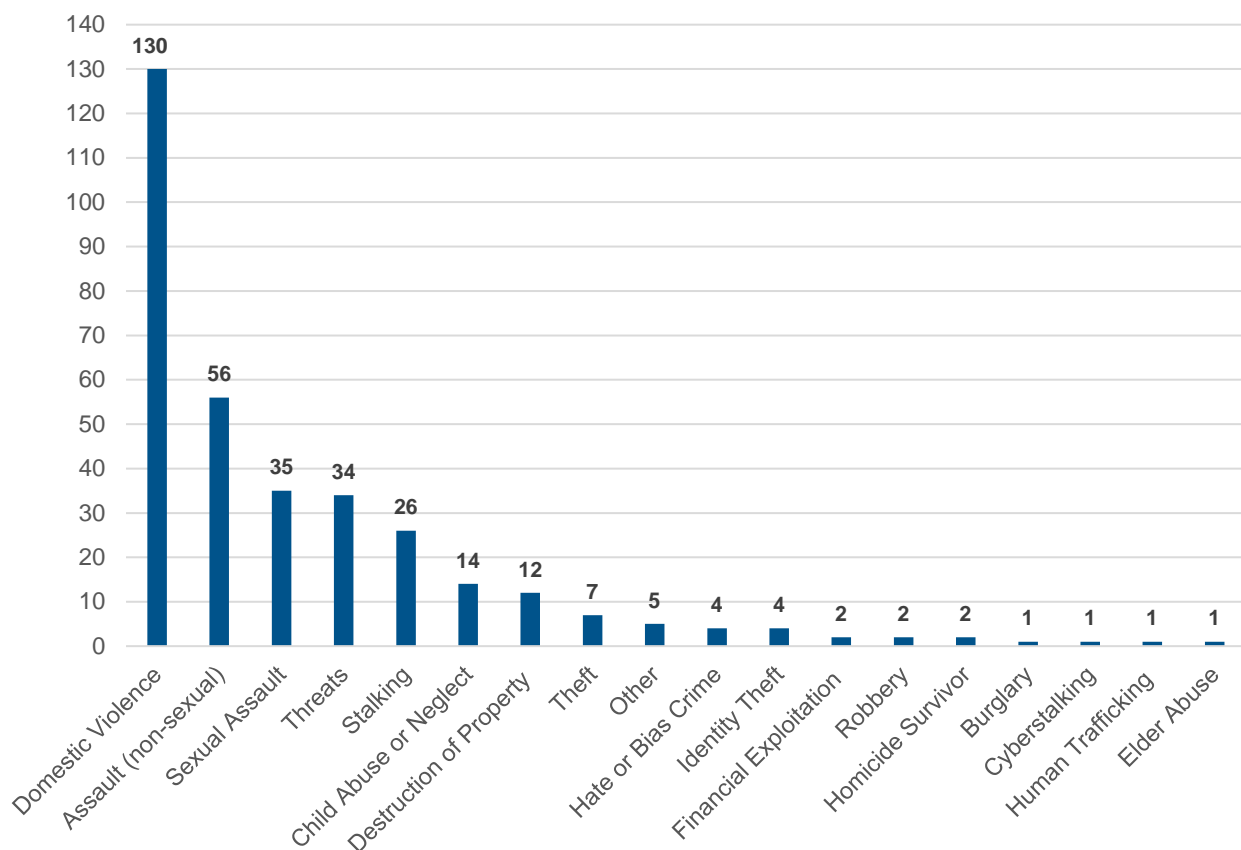
In 2015, the original VLNDC research partner, Justice Research and Statistics Association, conducted a needs assessment that surveyed 149 legal service providers in the Washington, D.C., area that serve victims of crime. The association found that the clients seen by providers experienced sexual assault (23%), domestic violence (22%), hate or bias crime (19%), assault (13%), theft (8%), stalking (6%), robbery (5%), sex trafficking (2%), identity theft (1%), and abuse or neglect (1%).[20] The most notable difference between the findings from the needs assessment and clients served through VLNDC related to hate or bias crime, which was the third most common victimization served among needs assessment respondents but seen much less frequently in VLNDC.

Polyvictimization was experienced by 81 percent (n=149) of VLNDC clients. Of these 149 victims, 63.4 percent experienced polyvictimization by the same person, 3.3 percent by a different person, and 14.1 percent by both the same person and a different person.

Table 3: VLNDC Clients: Polyvictimization

| Polyvictimization	Frequency	Percent

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[20] Needs Assessment Report: A Survey of Legal Professionals Serving Victims of Crime in the District of Columbia (2016). Victim Legal Network of Washington, D.C. (VLNDC) Project Justice Research and Statistics Association.

Yes, by the same person	117	63.4%
No	35	19.0%
Yes, by both	26	14.1%
Yes, by a different person	6	3.3%
Total	**184**	**99.8%**

Relationship to Offender

Across 2019 Q1 and Q2, **the most frequent relationship VLNDC clients had with the offender was child in common (39.8%).** This was followed by stranger (24.2%), and then romantic/dating relationship (22.5%).

Exhibit 26: VLNDC Clients: Victim-Offender Relationship
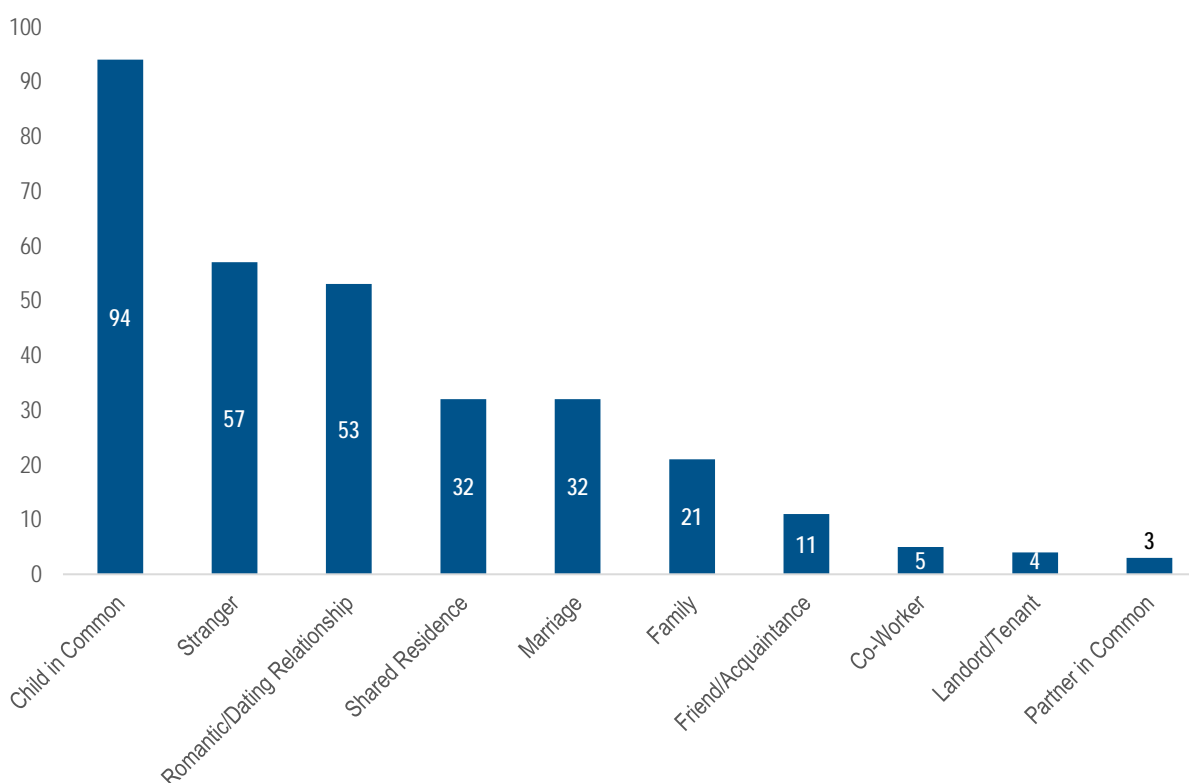
LEGAL NEEDS

Point of Entry

The majority of victims contacted VLNDC through the navigator. **Nearly 70 percent of the sample entered the Network via the navigator hotline (51.5%) or website (15.6%)**. The remaining victims (32.9%) entered VLNDC through a member organization.

Table 4: Point of Entry

Entry Point	Frequency	Percent
Navigator – Hotline	139	51.5%
Navigator – Website	42	15.6%
Ayuda	34	12.6%
DC Volunteer Lawyers Project	20	7.4%
Legal Aid	15	5.6%
NVRDC	7	2.6%
Break the Cycle	4	1.5%
Amara Legal Center	3	1.1%
Christian Legal Aid	2	0.7%
Whitman-Walker	1	0.4%
CARECEN	1	0.4%
Legal Counsel for the Elderly	1	0.4%
Law Students in Court	1	0.4%
Total	**270**	**100%**

Types of Legal Issues

In Year 2, VLNDC clients had a number of legal needs, **ranging from 1 to 6 legal issues per client.** The most frequent legal need of VLNDC clients was **domestic violence/protective order (20.2%)**, followed closely by child custody (19.3%).

Exhibit 27: VLNDC Clients: Identified Legal Issues

Legal Issue	Count
Domestic Violence/Protective Order	89
Child Custody	85
Other	52
Other Representation Needs	42
Tort	34
Child Support	29
Divorce	25
Landlord/Tenant	21
U Visa	15
Non-Representation and Advocacy	6
Expungements	5
Title IX	4
Public/Subsidized Housing	3
VAWA Petition	3
Medicare/Medicaid	3
Social Security Disability	3
Restitution	2
Defense	2
Asylum	2
Harassment	2
Unemployment Benefits	2
Civil Rights	1
Discrimination	1
Disability Rights	1
Homeownership	1
Creditor Harassment	1
Special Security Supplement	1
Employment Visa	1
Special Education	1
Unfair/Deceptive Sales Practice	1
Workers Compensation	1
Debt	1

According to the needs assessment, respondents' top criminal legal needs related to legal representation when meeting with a government attorney (30%), victim compensation (30%), victim impact statements (26%), and filing police reports (24%).

The top civil legal needs related to landlord-tenant (60%), civil protection orders (54%), child custody (53%), divorce (48%), personal injury (37%), and civil rights claims (34%). The top three administrative legal needs were public benefits (46%), public housing (42%), and immigration status (40%).[21]

Urgent Cases

There were **64 VLNDC cases classified as urgent (13.5%)**. Examining the intersection of urgent cases by legal issue, the most frequent legal issue with cases marked as urgent was **domestic violence/protective order (n=38)**, followed by child custody (n=12). The distribution of urgent cases by legal issue is reflected in Table 5.

Table 5: Urgent Cases

Legal Issue	Frequency	Percent
Domestic Violence/Protective Order	38	59.4%
Child Custody	12	18.7%
Other	1	1.6%
Child Support	3	4.7%
Divorce	2	3.1%
Landlord/Tenant	2	3.1%
Medicare/Medicaid	2	3.1%
Other Representation Needs	2	3.1%
Title IX	1	1.6%
VAWA Petition	1	1.6%
Total	**64**	**100%**

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[21] Needs Assessment Report: A Survey of Legal Professionals Serving Victims of Crime in the District of Columbia (2016). Victim Legal Network of Washington, D.C. (VLNDC) Project Justice Research and Statistics Association.

REFERRALS

A total of **19[22] member organizations <u>received</u> at least one referral through VLNDC**. Two member organizations—the DC Volunteers Lawyer Project and NVRDC—received the highest number of referrals (118 and 96, respectively). Legal Aid followed closely with 92 referrals.

Exhibit 28: Referrals Made to Member Organizations

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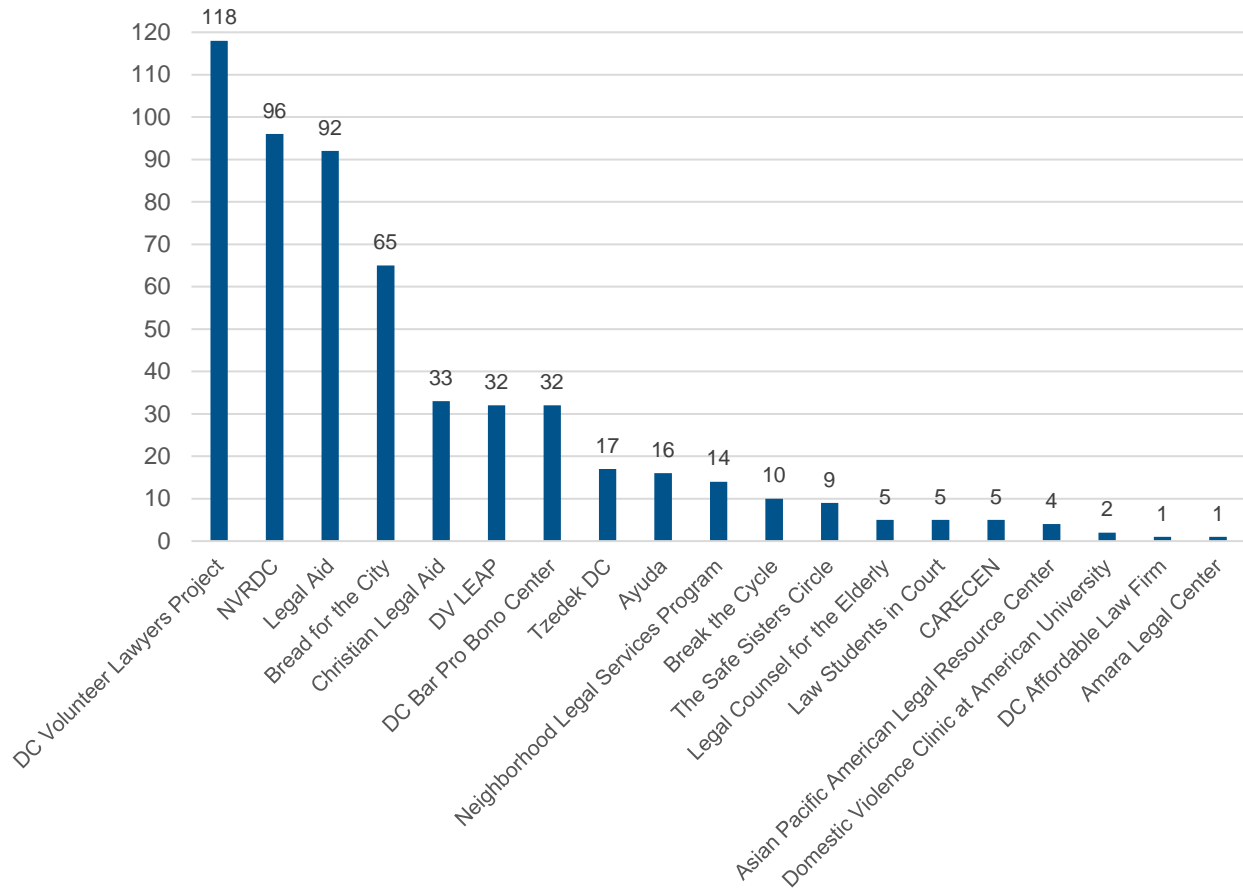
[22] One member organization, the Domestic Violence Clinic at American University, was no longer part of VLNDC; however, it was at the time of the referral, so it is considered as such for this analysis.

A total of **18 member organizations <u>accepted</u> at least one referral. Amara Legal Center, the Domestic Violence Clinic at American University, and DV LEAP had the highest case acceptance rate (100%)**. DC Affordable Law Firm had the highest reject rate (100%),[23] followed by Christian Legal Aid (87.9%) and Bread for the City (84.6%). Other member organizations that rejected at least 75 percent of VLNDC referrals included Break the Cycle (80%) and CARECEN (80%).

Exhibit 29: Referrals Accepted and Rejected by Member Organizations

■ Accept　■ Reject

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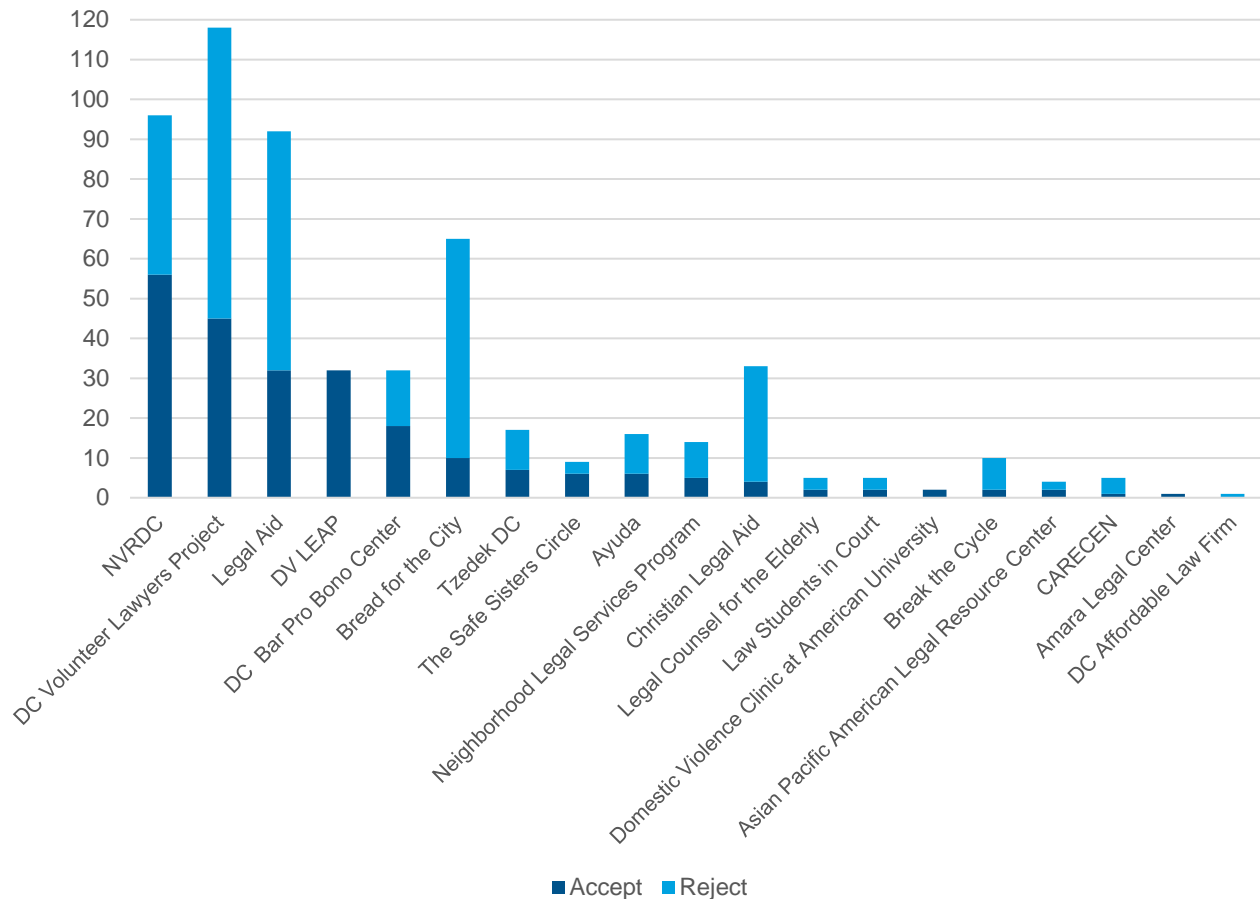
[23] Note that this member organization also only had one referral.

Referral to Conflict Check

On average, it took **1 day from the date a client was referred to VLNDC for a conflict check to be conducted** by the member organization, with a range of 0 to 12 business days. **The majority of cases (88.4%) were conducted within 2 business days,** with 52.5 percent of conflict checks occurring on the same day as the referral date. There were several cases (n=10) that had a time lapse of more than 5 business days, thus skewing the mean. When looking at other measures of central tendency (i.e., mode and median), the average was 0 days.

The time between referral and conflict dates varied by legal need. The median[24] number of days by legal need is noted in Table 6. Non-representation and advocacy legal needs had the longest median time lapse, at 3 business days. Only 16 percent of legal needs had a median time greater than 1 day. **Approximately 56 percent of legal needs had a median time of less than 1 day**.

Table 6: Referral to Conflict Check

Legal Need	Time Lapse (In Business Days)
Non-Representation and Advocacy	3.0
Expungements	2.0
Title IX	2.0
Restitution	1.5
U-Visa	1.0
Unfair/Deceptive Sales Practice	1.0
Other	1.0
Homeownership	1.0
Other Representation Needs	1.0
Unemployment Benefits	1.0
VAWA Petition	1.0
Landlord/Tenant	0.5
Asylum	0.5
Medicare/Medicaid	0.5
Divorce	0.0
Domestic Violence/Protective Order	0.0
Child Custody	0.0
Child Support	0.0
Creditor Harassment	0.0
Social Security Supplement	0.0
Public/Subsidized Housing	0.0
Debt	0.0
Harassment	0.0
Workers' Compensation	0.0
Social Security Disability	0.0

[24] The median is used here instead of the mean because the mean is skewed by outliers.

External Referrals

During Year 2, **VLNDC made external referrals in 151 cases** to more than 24 different organizations. The two organizations to which VLNDC most frequently referred were DC Pro Bono Clinic[25] (n=40) and Jackson & Associates (n=20). The majority (95.3%, n=144) of external referrals were initiated by the navigator. The most frequent reason cases were referred out of VLNDC was because **member organizations did not practice the legal area (37.3%, n=59).**
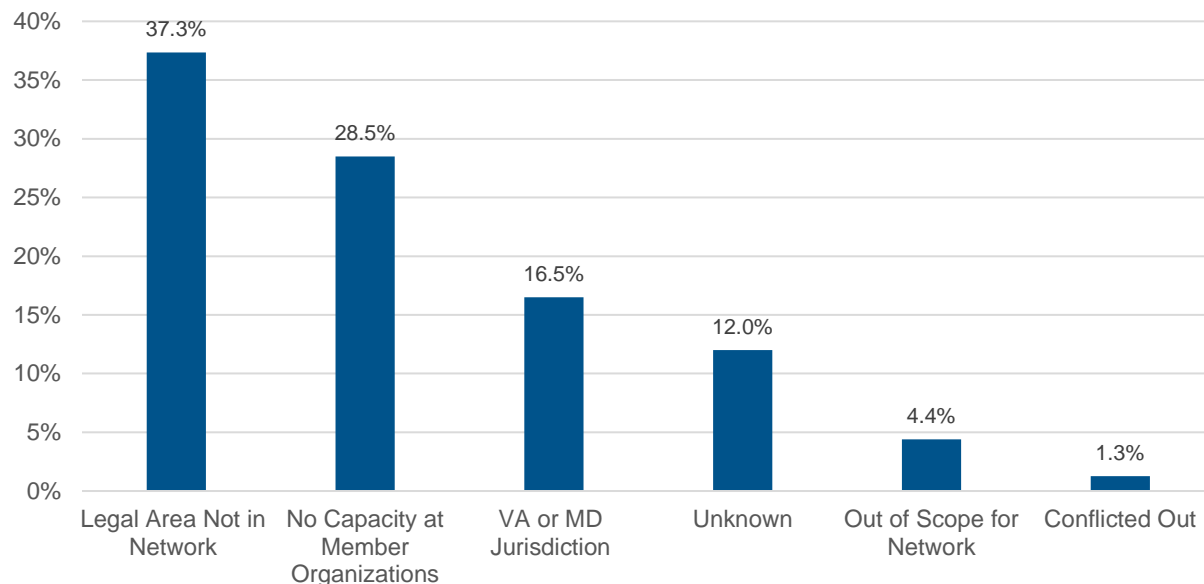
Exhibit 30: Reasons for External Referrals

Table 7 delineates the number of legal needs referred out of the Network by type of legal issue.

Table 7: External Referrals

Legal Issue	Number of External Referrals
Tort	32
Other	24
Child Custody	15
Other Representation Needs	13
Domestic Violence/Protective Order	12
Landlord/Tenant	9
Divorce	6
Child Support	6
U-Visa	4
Title IX	3
Social Security Disability	2
Asylum	2

[25] These referrals occurred prior to joining VLNDC, so they are counted as external referrals here.

Harassment	2
Defense	2
Special Education	1
Discrimination	1
Employment Visa	1
Expungements	1
Non-Representation and Advocacy	1
Medicare/Medicaid	1
Civil Rights	1
Total	**139**

CASE OUTCOMES

In Year 2, VLNDC provided a range of legal services. **The most frequent service provided during this time period was extended representation (27.5%, n=110)**, followed by brief advice from a Network partner (19.1%, n=78).

Exhibit 31: VLNDC Case Outcomes
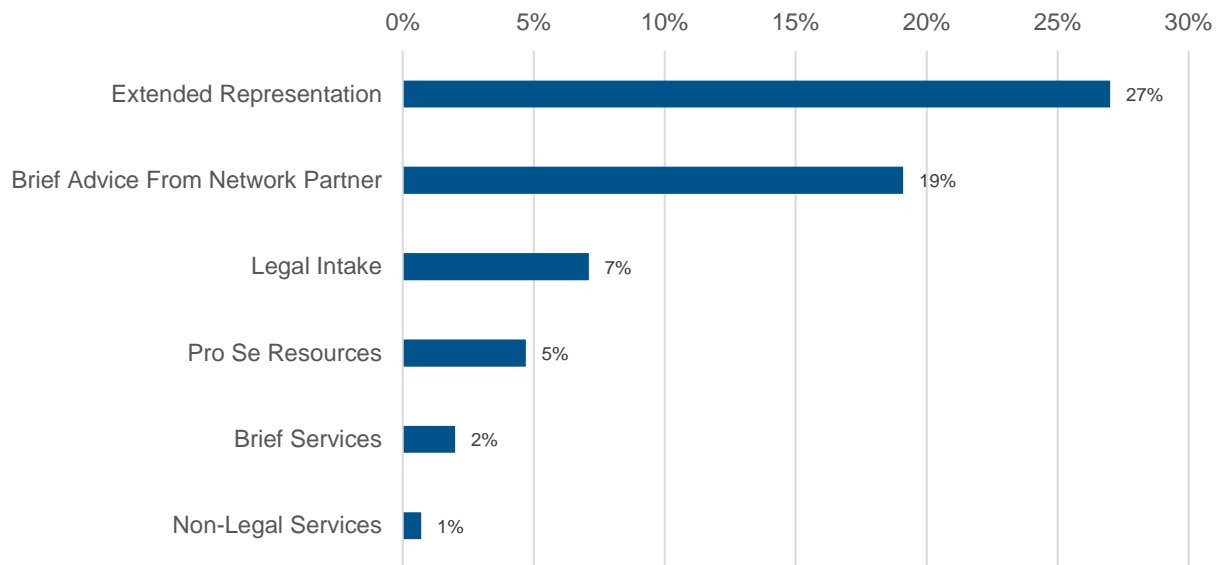
VLNDC did not provide services to 18.1 percent (n=74) of cases. In exploring these cases further, a few different reasons[26] regarding the victim or case help provide context for the lack of services provided. Three quarters of victims were no longer seeking assistance. VLNDC was unable to make contact in slightly more than half of the cases.

Table 8: Reasons VLNDC Did Not Provide Service

Crime Victim or Case Issue	Frequency	Percent
No longer seeking assistance	56	75.7%
No contact	44	59.5%
Not a victim	16	21.6%
Found representation	11	14.9%
Confused about VLNDC	6	8.1%
Not a legal need	6	8.1%
Wants a second opinion	4	5.4%

3.3.2   Trends

The case and client trends provided in this section cover the time period from July 2017 through June 2019.[27] More specifically, this section explores trends for the number of clients, number of referrals, and number of urgent cases.

Overall, the trend for **clients[28] contacting VLNDC for services increased over time, by approximately 159 percent**. **Referrals increased 146 percent**. These trends are presented in Exhibits 32 and 33, respectively.

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[26] In some cases, more than one reason was provided; thus the total counts equal more than the number of cases that were not provided services. Percent calculations used the n=74 as the denominator.

[27] The trends presented in this section only include through June 2019 because that was the last month with complete data.

[28] This trend was calculated with unduplicated clients.
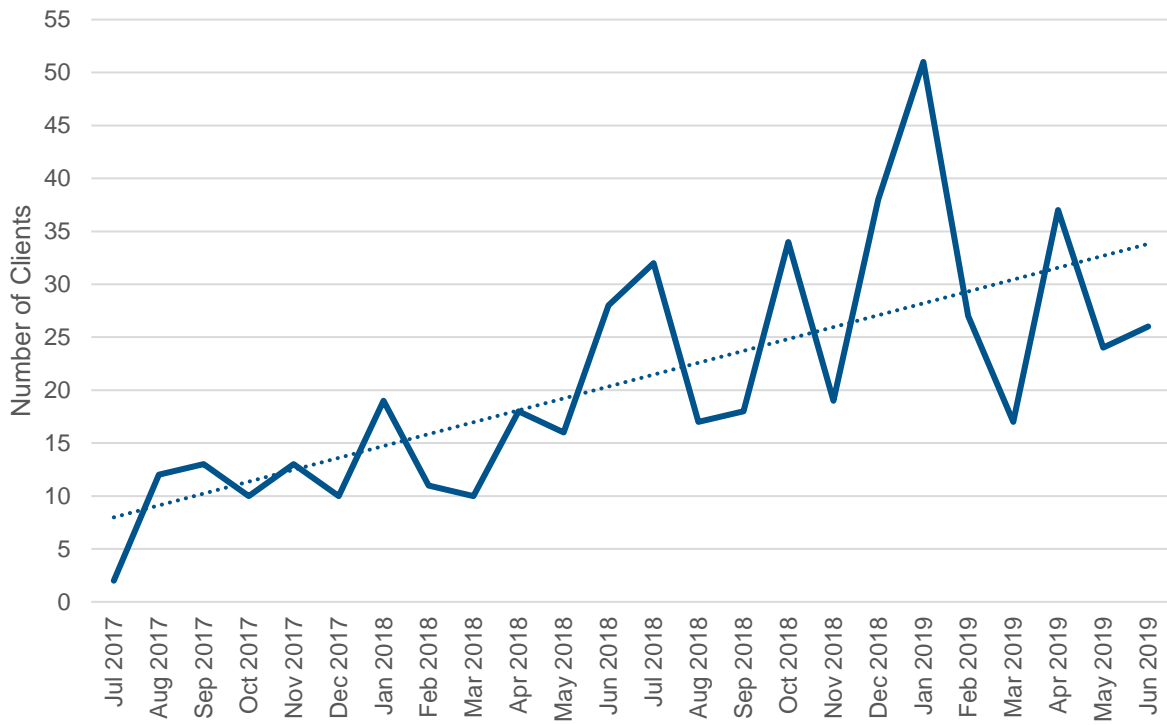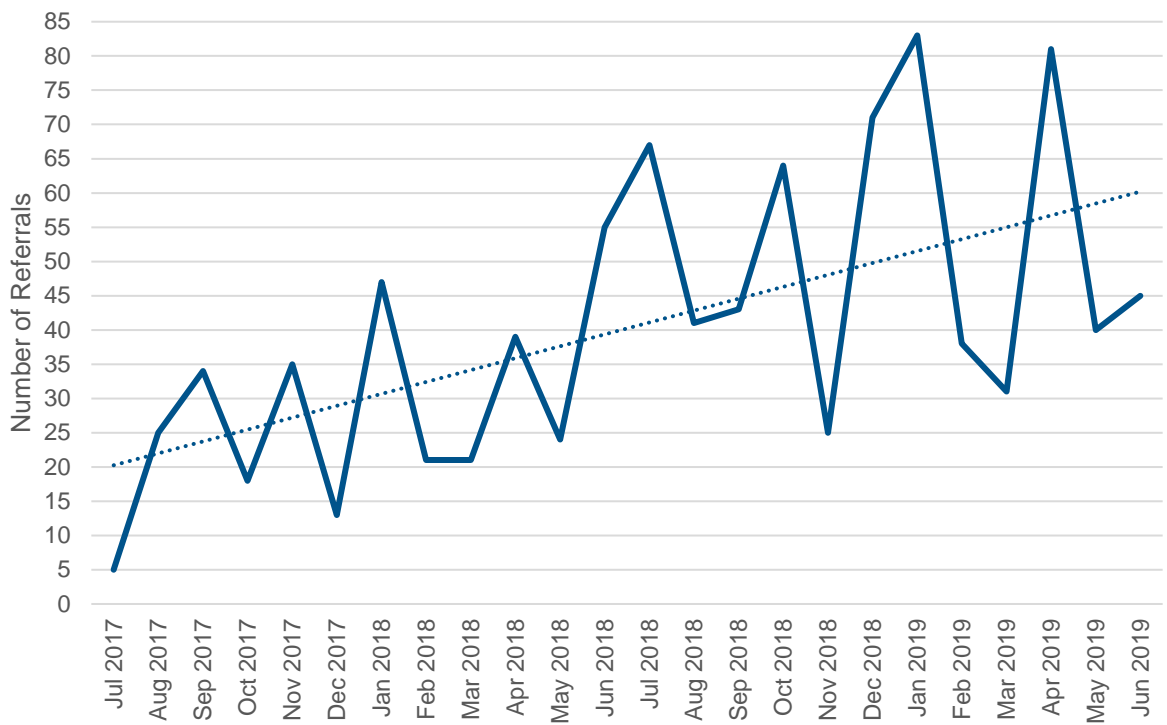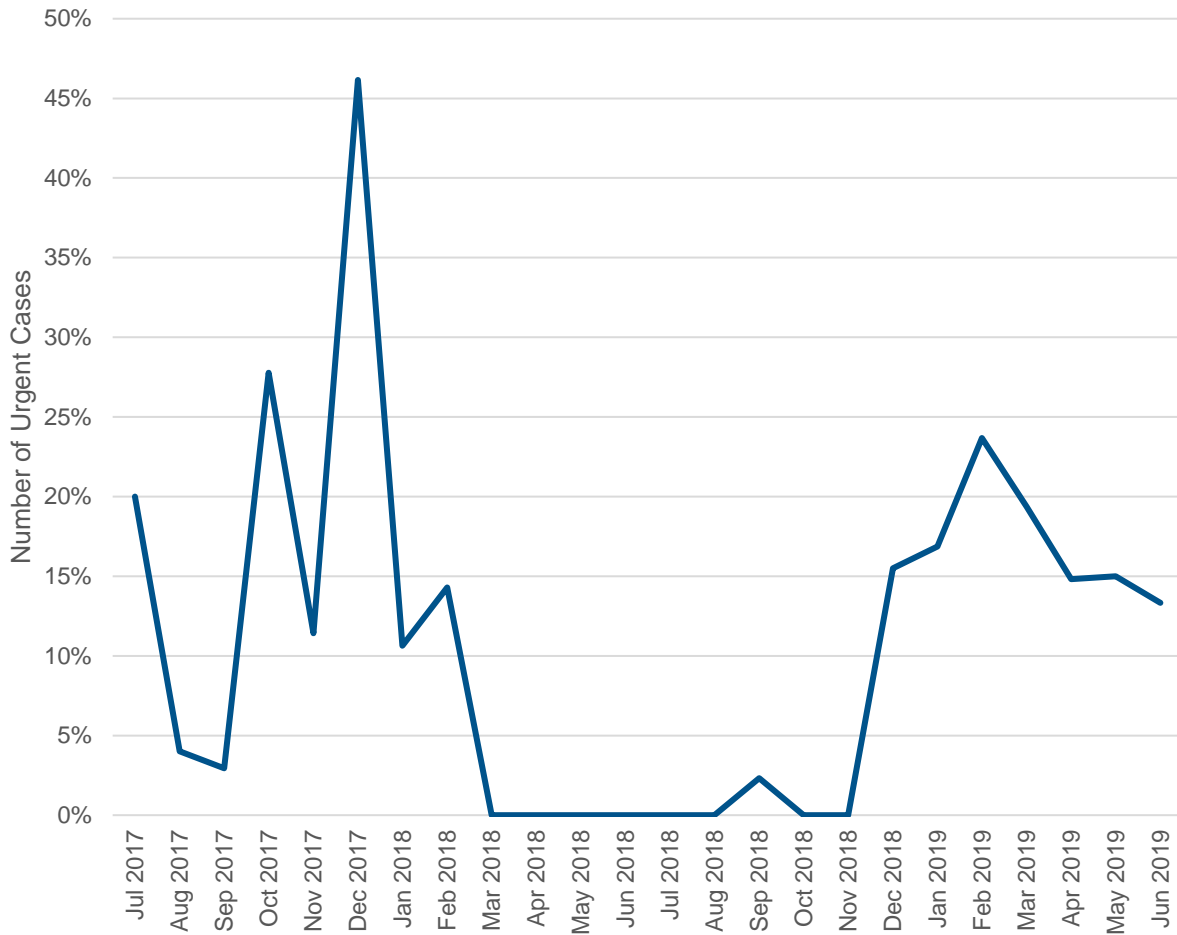
Exhibit 32: VLNDC Client Trends

Exhibit 33: VLNDC Referral Trends

There is no discernible trend in the percent of urgent cases across each month. However, the data do **suggest a potential spike in urgent cases during the winter months**. Additional data points are needed to determine if this is a pattern or random fluctuation.

Exhibit 34: VLNDC Trends in Urgent Cases

VI. Discussion

The findings presented in the previous sections draw from the diverse set of perspectives and experiences with VLNDC. This includes victims of crime, service providers, and administrative data collected from VLNDC and OVSJG grantees. Collectively, these findings shed light on the experiences of victims seeking help (within and outside VLNDC), VLNDC operations, and VLNDC satisfaction. These findings, and associated recommendations, are discussed in more detail below.

1. Victims of Crime

VLNDC's vision is that "all crime victims in the District receive legal services for their civil and administrative legal needs, in addition to crime victims' rights representation in criminal matters." The victim services landscape in the Washington, D.C., area has numerous legal service providers; however, many agencies provide specific types of legal services or provide services to specific subgroups of crime victims. VLNDC intends to fill the need for comprehensive legal services for diverse victims of crime in Washington, D.C. The evaluation findings suggest progress was made on this front.

VLNDC identified several underserved populations that include (but are not limited to) youth (ages 12–24), elderly (60+), foreign-born individuals, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans and Hispanic/Latinx individuals, and victims of domestic sex trafficking. Using PMI data as a benchmark for the demographic profile of a Washington, D.C., crime victim, in Year 1 VLNDC served a significantly higher proportion of Hispanic/Latinx clients and Asian and Pacific Islander Americans. Additionally, VLNDC served a higher proportion of clients who do not have English as their preferred language. Other demographic characteristics of VLNDC clients, including the most commonly served age group, did not significantly differ from victims served by OVSJG grantees.

These trends in providing services for underserved populations continued in Year 2, with almost 90 percent of VLNDC clients identifying with a minority racial or ethnic category (primarily Black). In Year 2, VLNDC increased the number of preferred languages from three to four (adding Amharic in addition to American Sign Language, Spanish, and English). The type of victimizations experienced by victims seeking VLNDC services also expanded from Year 1 to Year 2, suggesting outreach efforts were successful. Collectively, these findings suggest that VLNDC reached some of its identified underserved populations and that its clientele is similar to the broader victim population seeking services in the Washington, D.C., area.

LIMITATIONS

A primary limitation to this study was small sample sizes. Small sample sizes were obtained for the awareness survey, client assessment interviews, client interviews, and non-client focus group. Possible reasons for the small sample size include a limited data collection window and stakeholder buy-in.

The majority of data were collected via self-reports, which relies on respondents' perceptions and memories. Further, the use of non-probability sampling methods (i.e., snowball), limited data collection windows, need for stakeholder buy-in, and early phase of the project could have impacted the nature and quality of the data collected. Moreover, ICF was only able to conduct interviews with one VLNDC client, so ability to measure satisfaction with VLNDC was limited.

2.   VLNDC Operations

The goal of OVSJG and NVRDC is "to alleviate the legal obstacles that crime victims face by creating a seamless network of high-quality, well-trained legal service providers in the areas of criminal, civil, and administrative representation." Evaluation results suggest that VLNDC is accomplishing this goal.

During Year 1 of this evaluation, a total of 10 member organizations had between one and three facilitators. An additional four member organizations joined after the April 2018 launch of VLNDC, and nine more organizations joined by July 2019. Collectively, these agencies helped VLNDC to provide a diverse range of civil, administrative, and legal needs to crime victims with equally diverse legal needs. The top legal services provided to VLNDC clients were domestic violence/protective order (n=184, 21.5%), child custody (n=174, 20.3%), and child support (n=72, 8.4%) but also included a range of other legal services, such as non-representation and advocacy, divorce, landlord/tenant, expungements, name change, VAWA petition, probate, Social Security disability, and adjustment of status. It is possible that an individual client had multiple legal services. The diversity in legal services parallels the diversity of types of crime experienced by those who sought services with VLNDC,[29] including domestic violence/intimate partner violence (n=268, 59.3%), assault (non-sexual) (n=121, 26.8%), sexual assault (n=78, 17.3%), threats (n=54, 11.9%), child abuse or neglect (n=34, 7.5%), stalking (n=21, 4.6%), theft (n=21, 4.6%), identity theft (n=10, 2.2%), and at least nine other types of victimization.

Facilitators consistently praised the responsiveness of NVRDC staff and the timeliness of referrals processed through VLNDC. Moreover, the trends identified in the facilitator feedback survey suggest that member organizations increasingly made their referrals directly through the portal compared to when VLNDC was first established. This suggests that member organizations became more comfortable using the portal to make referrals. Additionally, the number of difficulties with the referral process, as reported by facilitators, steadily decreased over time. These are all positive indicators of VLNDC's efficiencies.

3.   VLNDC Satisfaction

VLNDC satisfaction was evaluated from two perspectives: member organizations and VLNDC clients. Member organizations expressed satisfaction with their experiences and participation in VLNDC during the focus groups. Facilitators discussed how their participation in VLNDC enhanced their professional network and improved collaboration with other member organizations. Facilitators also expressed satisfaction with trainings and cross-trainings because they helped build a stronger knowledge base of local services for victims of crime. The professional networking and increased knowledge were particularly helpful when clients had complicated legal needs outside of the member organization's expertise. The collaboration among member organizations and their willingness to leverage VLNDC's expertise was further illustrated with the trend of increasing referrals.

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[29] These numbers are distinct from other numbers reported in this section. They reflect the types of crime experienced by all individuals who sought services at VLNDC, even if they were not served by VLNDC.

The results from the client assessment interviews suggest that initial interactions between victims of crime and VLNDC services are positive. Participants agreed or strongly agreed that the person conducting the intake treated them with respect, the informed consent release form was explained in a way they could understand, and the person conducting the screening understood what they needed. The participants said they liked the availability of staff, how helpful and comforting staff were, and being contacted by member organizations as opposed to having to do the legwork themselves. These preliminary results suggest that the VLNDC intake process was a positive experience for clients.

Initial findings from the orientation training also indicate that the onboarding process for new member organizations is a positive and informative experience.

VII. Recommendations

Collectively, the evaluation findings suggest several recommendations for consideration as VLNDC continues to improve and expand. Recommendations are grouped into seven categories: (1) awareness, (2) service provision, (3) member organizations, (4) VLNDC processes, (5) VLNDC expansion, (6) onboarding, and (7) non-financial incentives.

1. Awareness

Victims of crime had numerous recommendations to raise awareness of services available. It is recommended that, where possible, VLNDC share information about services available via the following means:

- Collaborating with community members such as community leaders, police officers, and trusted officials
- In churches, women's groups, community organizations such as SOME and Bread for the City, health care centers, police stations, and courthouses
- Via advertisements in newspapers, on public transit, and through social media
- Sharing handouts and pamphlets with social service agencies that they can pass out to victims
- Using Google analytics to ensure the VLNDC website shows up when victims search the internet to find services
- Providing education during community meetings to train the public on how to identify victims and help them, and educating law enforcement agencies about VLNDC and how and when to connect victims

2. Service Provision

The following are recommendations to improve the services provided to victims of crime:

- More human interaction, and having someone available in person and easily identifiable in a crowded location like a courthouse (e.g., carrying a certain color clip board, wearing a ribbon)

- Trauma-informed training for providers to ensure that victims feel heard and believed and that providers exhibit more compassion and sensitivity (e.g., not just going through a checklist of questions)
- Collaboration between different parties involved (e.g., law enforcement, legal provider, court staff)
- Ensuring providers or the person giving referrals has up-to-date information

3. Member Organizations

The following are recommendations on how VLNDC can continue to engage member organizations and improve their understanding of VLNDC:

- Provide an FAQ document that facilitators can have on hand when clients ask questions about VLNDC
- Have a resource sheet that is kept up-to-date and provides facilitators with information on each member organization and where to refer clients
- Have a script that the navigator reads to inform victims what they need to know before representing themselves in court when immediate assistance is not available via VLNDC

Member organizations had the following recommendations for information sharing and training:

- How to interact with crime victims who have mental disabilities or are in distress
- How to identify if a client is a victim of crime
- Tips and tricks for getting clients to complete the release form
- Tips and tricks for getting in contact with the victim, which could include having the navigator provide the client with the number of the organization that will call them and/or the navigator getting more details about what kinds of information can be said in a voicemail
- Continue with cross-trainings on member organizations' capacity and how better to serve victims, because it reduces the burden on the member organizations and increases their knowledge
- How to integrate more staff within a member organization into VLNDC

4. VLNDC Processes

The following are recommendations on how to improve the portal in order to continue to grow and improve upon the VLNDC process:

- Allow multiple staff within a member organization to have portal logins so they can enter in their own referrals/intakes
- Include an option for additional staff, in addition to the facilitator, to receive email notifications about a referral

The following are recommendations for improving information sharing:

- Have VLNDC staff attend member organization staff meetings more often to remind (or inform new) staff of VLNDC and the process

- Develop a handout about VLNDC, including who is involved and the services available
- Provide up-to-date information on member organizations' capacity
- Provide information on national resources and, if possible, expand connections/collaboration to national resources
- Provide an opportunity for member organizations to share success stories during the VLNDC meetings

5. VLNDC Expansion

As VLNDC continues to expand and grow, it should do the following:

- Add more service-providing organizations to account for capacity
- Add service-providing organizations that cover issues such as immigration, disabilities, and civil legal concerns and can provide transportation services
- Add additional organizations that provide pro bono or low-cost services to account for financial barriers crime victims experience
- Expand to cover the Maryland and Virginia jurisdictions
- Share information to social and legal providers about VLNDC eligibility requirements, how to refer a client, what communities VLNDC serves, and types of legal services provided
- Share information about VLNDC to other service organizations via a website, listserv, or pamphlet

6. Onboarding

As VLNDC expands and adds additional member organizations, it should continue to host onboarding trainings, because new member organizations have had positive experiences with the training and indicated it increased their VLNDC knowledge and comfort with participating in VLNDC and referring clients. The following are recommendations to improve these trainings:

- Make the session more interactive and provide a demonstration of the portal
- Explain VLNDC and the process with clients in a more detailed and clear manner
- Provide printouts of slides for notetaking purposes

7. Non-Financial Incentives

As part of VLNDC's expansion and sustainability plan, there should be a focus on non-financial incentives that attract new member organizations and keep them engaged. The following are recommendations for non-financial incentives:

- Training opportunities for new lawyers and interns on what VLNDC is and how to become involved
- Cross-trainings or clinics and other opportunities for member organizations to work together and learn in a group setting

- Online manuals with hyperlinks to additional information on trainings that were held
- A guidebook of VLNDC services

VIII. Conclusion

VLNDC provides comprehensive, wraparound, no-cost legal services for victims of crime. As of the writing of this report, August 2019, VLNDC had 23 member organizations that provide civil and administrative legal assistance, in addition to crime victims' rights representation in criminal matters. As the local research partner, ICF assisted with developing an overview of the Washington, D.C., victim services landscape, as well as evaluating VLNDC throughout development and implementation.

The findings from this report suggest great strides were made by VLNDC toward accomplishing its goal to reduce the barriers victims of crime encounter post-victimization. For example, having a "no-wrong door" philosophy ensured that victims of crime did not have to bear responsibility of seeking out organizations to help them. VLNDC provided or received trainings and cross-trainings on victims' rights and knowledge about available legal services in the Washington, D.C., area. Victims of crime who entered VLNDC reported positive experiences, particularly indicating that they were treated with respect by the person conducting the intake, the organization to which they were referred responded in an appropriate amount of time, and they would recommend VLNDC to others. Member organizations also overwhelmingly reported satisfaction with their participation in VLNDC, and new organizations reported enjoying the onboarding process. Social and legal service providers in the Washington, D.C., area showed a strong interest in learning more about VLNDC so that they can refer victims with legal needs. ICF hopes the findings presented in this report provide VLNDC with additional knowledge from which to inform the expansion and sustainability of the Network.

APPENDIX TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX A: VLNDC REFERRAL PROCESS FLOWCHART

VLNDC
Victim Legal Network of DC

Victim Legal Network of DC: Referral Process

A DC crime victim, with legal issues stemming from their victimization, is looking for legal assistance from:

Member Organization (member)

- Member cannot meet all of the client's legal needs in house.
- Member org. can meet all of the client's legal needs in house.
  - No need for VLNDC services

- Member explains VLNDC Services
  - Client declines VLNDC services
    - No further VLNDC services
  - Client accepts VLNDC services
    - Member reviews release form, gathers additional intake information
    - Member transmits intake information and copy of release form to Navigator

Navigator*

- Navigator reviews network details with client
  - Client accepts VLNDC services
    - Navigator reviews release form, gathers additional intake information
  - Client declines VLNDC services
    - No further VLNDC services

- Navigator determines appropriate referral member (s)
- Navigator sends conflicts information to referral member (s)
  - There is no conflict
    - Navigator sends rest of intake information to Member
      - Member contacts client directly and assesses for consultation or representation
  - There is a conflict
    - If the network cannot provide services
      - Navigator will contact crime victim and provide alternative non-network referrals

*Navigator. VLNDC staff member available to conduct network intakes and connect clients to appropriate members for services.

Victim Legal Network of DC

www.vlndc.org
202-629-1788

APPENDIX B: CRIME VICTIM LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature Review on Victims of Crime Access to Legal Services

Why and how do some victims of crime access services as opposed to others?

02/13/2018

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

Based on National Crime Victim Survey (NCVS) data, there were 5.7 million violent victimizations in the U.S. in 2016; this reflects approximately a 12% increase from 2015, and includes crimes such as rape, sexual assault, assault, robbery, and aggravated assault for U.S. residents of 12 years or older (Morgan & Kena, 2017). Although the number of violent victimizations increased, less than half of the documented violent victimizations were reported to police. Research suggests that access to services and knowledge of victims' rights can have a large impact on a victim's outcome. In particular, having access to legal assistance or a legal advocate to help victims navigate the civil and criminal justice system can greatly benefit the victim of crime with mental health and case outcomes (Campbell, Greeson, Bybee, & Fehler-Cabral, 2012). When legal assistance or a legal advocate is provided, police and court officials are less likely to: discourage victims from filing a report, show reluctance in taking a report, refuse to take a report, inquire of a prior relationship with the perpetrator and sexual history, and inquire whether or not the victim responded sexually to the assault (Campbell et al., 2012). Legal assistance can also result in a greater percentage of follow-up actions such as contact from a judge or prosecutor, or an arrest, compared to those that do not received any assistance (Langton, 2011). When victims are able to access legal advocates they are significantly less likely to feel bad about themselves, feel guilty and/or blame themselves, feel depressed, and feel reluctant to seek further help (Campbell et al., 2012).

Access to legal services also has tangible benefits for both the victim and the community. Crimes have tangible and intangible costs. In a study conducted by McCollister, French, and Fang (2010), the two crimes with the highest cost to society were murder with an average of $8,982,907, and rape/sexual assault with an average of $240,776. Legal assistance can have large cost savings for the criminal justice system, social service programs, and the individual themselves. These cost savings include savings with mental health care and the criminal justice system (Rosenberg & Grab, 2015). These findings underscore the benefits of accessing services in the aftermath of victimization. Research suggests that access to legal services: reduces the likelihood of re-victimization (Ranapurwala, Berg, & Casteel, 2016; Rosenberg & Grab, 2015), reduces mental and physical traumas (Ofstehage, Gandhi, Sholk, Radday, & Stanzler, 2011) and improves financial outcomes (Ofstehage et al., 2011; Rosenberg & Grab, 2015). Research has found that access to civil legal services in particular can be more effective in reducing future rates of violence than some social services such as shelters and counseling (Rosenberg & Grab, 2015).

Yet a high proportion of victims do not, or cannot, access the services they need. According to the most recent statistics from the NCVS, victims only received services in 10% of violent crime victimizations (Morgan & Kena, 2017). This low percentage is consistent with other research on victims' help-seeking behaviors (McCart, Smith, & Sawyer, 2010). The purpose of this literature review is to provide a synthesis of the empirical research on access to legal services by victims of crime. In particular, the goal is to answer the following questions:

1. How do victims of crime access legal services?

2. What are the characteristics of victims that do or do not access legal services?
3. What are the most successful outreach tools to increase crime victims' access to legal services?

To answer these questions, we searched for articles on Google Scholar, academic databases (e.g., EBSCO), and government publications (e.g., Office on Victims of Crime, National Institute of Justice) for peer-reviewed seminal research and articles published within the past ten years using the following search topics as a minimum: "victims of crime", "help-seeking behaviors", "victims of crime access to services", and "legal services". The emphasis of this literature review is on legal services, although other social services are also mentioned when relevant. The literature review is organized into two primary sections: (1) how victims access legal services, including: types of services accessed, the demographic characteristics of victims, and the barriers to accessing services; and (2) techniques to improve service access, including: training, outreach, and collaboration.

II. How Victims of Crime Access Legal Services

There are generally two main avenues of accessing services or seeking help: formal and informal. Formal help seeking avenues include reporting to law enforcement or seeking out service providing organizations, while informal avenues include reaching out to social support systems, such as friends and family (Davies, Block, & Campbell, 2007; McCart et al., 2010; Truman & Planty, 2012). An example of formal access to legal services (Aeffect, Inc., 2017) is:

1. The victim first comes into contact with law enforcement following their victimization.
2. After initial contact with law enforcement, the victim is connected with an assigned police detective who refers the victim to a victim advocate within the department.
3. Once assigned a victim advocate, the victim receives their third point of contact through a referral to local victim service providers, including specific legal service assistance providers.

Although this scenario is thought of as a traditional route to legal assistance for a victim of crime, there are other sources of first contact aside from law enforcement. Other avenues of first contact to include referrals from: a medical staff, a hotline number, or more informal routes such as a personal connection (e.g., family or friends, the church or the victim's community, a school counselor or teacher, an employer, an advocate/counselor), or independent research (Aeffect, Inc., 2017).

Victims often rely on these more informal routes for seeking help (Aeffect, Inc., 2017; Davis, Anderson, Whitman, & Howley, 2009; Lowry, Reid, Feeley, Johnson, & Williamson, 2015; Sims, Yost, & Abbott, 2006). Lowry and colleagues (2015) interviewed victims of crime and found that 46% of the victims that were not told of services at the time of reporting their crime through a formal source later received information informally from friends, family, and community members, while 27% learned of services by conducting their own research. The routes to accessing services can be influenced by victimization type, for victims of non-violent

crime, the amount of referrals made from personal networks closely matches that of more formal referrals from law enforcement; but, for victims of violent crime, referrals for services are 11% more likely to come from personal networks than a formal police referral (Aeffect, Inc., 2017). The reason reported by victims of violent crime as to why they used informal networks more was that they believed personal networks were more informative of services available (Aeffect, Inc., 2017). Outside of personal networks, counselors, medical service providers, private victim advocates, the church, hotlines, and teachers make up another 30% of referrals to services (Aeffect, Inc., 2017).

The avenues of seeking help may have implications for referrals and access to services. According to the NCVS conducted from 2000-2009, violent crime victims who did not report their crime to police only received assistance from victim service providers 4% of the time, whereas violent crime victims who did report to the police received direct assistance 14% of the time (Langton, 2011). While reporting to police may improve access to services, approximately 50% of victims of crime during 2006-2010 chose not to report their crime to the police. This number of unreported crimes increased in 2016 to 68% (Langton, Berzofsky, Krebs, & Smiley-McDonald, 2012; Morgan & Kena, 2017). There are also differences in reporting patterns by crime type. For example, a study conducted by Sabina and Ho (2014) found that college victims of sexual assault did not report coercion and dating violence to law enforcement, but did report 13% of forced sexual assaults. College sexual assault reporting to other formal sources such as campus services, health care, and crisis services was slightly higher at a range of 0-16% (Sabina & Ho, 2014).

1. Types of Legal Services Needed and Accessed

Legal assistance for victims is a broad category that encompasses a variety of services. In one of the first studies to closely examine the civil legal services for victims, Bouffard and colleagues (2017) found that the majority of legal services used included assistance with: protective orders, intimidation protection, victim impact statements, restitution assistance, compensation assistance, and escorts to court. In New York, the types of legal services accessed by victims of crime included help with preparing forms and legal documents, legal representation, legal advice, and accompaniment to legal proceedings (Ehrhard-Dietzel, Gross, & Siwach, 2017). In Pennsylvania, the most often used service related to a victimization was court accompaniment followed by justice support and advocacy, and follow-up services (Sims, Yost, & Abbott, 2006).

"The need for legal assistance is great. Our clients constantly need legal consultation and representation. We have great difficulty finding legal assistance for clients that is high quality and affordable." (Lowry et al., 2015)

1.1   Legal Services Needed

A large percentage of victims are unable to access legal services. Service providers reported that the second highest need of victims that was currently unavailable was legal assistance (19%). Service providers stated that civil legal assistance (including civil litigation, child custody, divorce, immigration, and landlord tenant disputes) was one of the top service needs of victims of crime (Lowry et al., 2015). Victims of violent crime need civil legal assistance to obtain protection from the abuser (protection orders, separation, divorce), to secure child custody, and to receive assistance with paperwork (Aeffect, Inc., 2017). A majority of service providers surveyed in Massachusetts cited that including civil legal assistance there was also a high need for legal advocacy related to privacy, education such as negotiating with a victim's university, and immigration assistance. A review of two studies conducted on crime victims nationally found that the main civil legal needs for victims of crime included: assessment of needs and service planning, criminal justice advocacy, safety services, information on case process and case updates, and protection orders and advocates to go to court appointments (Newmark, Bonderman, Smith, & Liner, 2003). It was also found that legal advocacy and legal information was one of the most frequently unaddressed need among victims of crime (Newmark et al., 2003). The need for legal information also includes needing information about victims' rights (Murdaugh, Hunt, Sowell, & Santana, 2004).

1.2   Legal Services in Washington, DC

These needs are similar for victims of crime in the Washington, DC area. A survey conducted with 401 victims of crime living in Washington, DC found that the most commonly accessed services were heath care, family and friends, victim assistance groups, counselors, and church support groups (Ramsey & Joyce, 2001). In terms of criminal legal services in Washington DC, providers rated meeting with a government attorney, help receiving money from the Victims Compensation Fund, help writing a victim impact statement, and help filing a police report as the most often provided service (Flower, Pierotte, & Farley, 2016). For civil legal needs it was found that victims most often needed help with landlord tenant disputes, civil protection orders, child custody cases, and divorce cases. While for administrative legal needs, victims most often needed help with public benefits, public housing, and immigration issues (Flower et al., 2016).

COMMONLY PROVIDED LEGAL SERVICES

- Child support
- Consumer
- Court orientation
- Custody
- Divorce
- Escorts to court
- Guardianship
- Housing
- Identity theft and financial fraud
- Immigration (VAWA petitions, visas, etc.)
- Intimidation protection
- Landlord/tenant
- Liaison to prosecuting/defense attorney
- Property return
- Protective orders
- Public benefits (Medicaid, TANF, etc.)
- Referrals to private attorneys
- Restitution assistance
- Tribal assistance
- Victim impact statements
- Wage claims
- Wills and estate planning
- Witness reception area

(Bouffard et al., 2017)

1.3 Demographics of Victims of Crime Accessing Services

Help seeking behaviors and access to services can be effected by the specific demographics of the victim and the type of crime experienced. This can include characteristics such as: gender, race, victimization type, and other factors (McCart et al., 2010).

1.3.1 Gender

Research is unclear on how gender impacts help seeking behaviors. Some studies indicate that women are more likely to seek out formal avenues, such as law enforcement, in regards to victimization (Catalano, 2006; McCart et al., 2010) whereas other studies indicate that men are more likely to report crimes to law enforcement (Aeffect, Inc., 2017). It is possible that the relationship between gender and help seeking behaviors is mediated by types of crime. For instance, a greater percentage of female victims of serious violent crime (15%) receive service assistance than males of serious violent crime (6%) (Langton, 2011). The difference in services received was also found for victims of intimate partner violence; 23% of female victims utilized service assistance compared to 8% of male victims (Langton, 2011).

1.3.2 Race

Research suggests the relationship between help seeking behaviors and race may also be mediated by type of crime. African American women are more likely to seek help from formal avenues following rape or domestic violence when compared to female victims from other ethnic groups (Hollenshead, Dai, Ragsdale, Massey, & Scott, 2006; McCart et al., 2010). However, victims of sexual assault at historically black colleges only reported disclosure to health or crisis-related services 8-14%, and to law enforcement 3-10%, with physically forced attacks being more likely to be disclosed than attacks that occurred when the victim was incapacitated (Crosby, 2016). Hispanic victims of violent crimes are more likely to report to police than white or black victims (Morgan & Kena, 2017). Immigration also effects help seeking behaviors. A study by Zadnik, Sabina, and Cuevas (2014) found that Latina women who were undocumented were less likely to use formal avenues of help as opposed to Latina women that had legal status.

Race can also play a role in determining which victims receive services. Data from the NCVS found that victims of two or more races made up the largest percentage of victims (17%) that received services. Following multiracial victims, white victims (11%) and black victims (9%) were the next two largest populations who received direct service assistance (Langton, 2011). In urban areas non-white racial groups had significantly more unaddressed needs in relation to their victimization than white victims (Newmark, 2006). Race can also play a role in regards to the perpetrator with victims of campus assault being more likely to seek help if the perpetrator was of a different race than the victim (Sabina & Ho, 2014).

1.3.3 Victimization Type

Type of victimization can also influence help seeking behaviors. Victims of violent crime are more likely to seek help and access services than those who experienced non-violent crimes (Morgan, 2016; Sims et al., 2006). Victims of intimate partner violence are also more likely to seek help than other victimizations (Kaukinen, 2004). Victims of stalking are more likely to seek

formal avenues of help when they experience fear, loss time at work, and identify as a victim, while victims of cyberstalking and victims of stalking where the perpetrator was a stranger are less likely to seek formal avenues of help (Reyns & Englebrecht, 2014). Victims of campus sexual assault are more likely to seek help when there is a weapon during the assault, fear of death, identification of the victimization as a rape, and if the assault occurrs on campus as opposed to off-campus (Sabina & Ho, 2014).

1.3.4 Additional Factors

Age, education, victim-offender relationship, and mental health also impacts help seeking behaviors, although the nature of these relationships appear to be contingent on type of help seeking behaviors. McCart and colleagues (2010) found victims who are younger, have more education, or have a diagnosis of depression were more likely to exhibit informal help seeking behaviors (McCart et al., 2010). However, the NCVS found that the percentage of victims that received direct assistance from a victim service agency was greater among victims age 35 or older (12%), compared to those between age 18 and 34 years old (9%) (Langton, 2011). The victim-offender relationship can also influence help seeking behaviors. For example, when female victims know their offender, studies suggest that they are less likely to report or seek help from formal avenues (Kaukinen, 2004; McCart et al., 2010). This is also found with victims of campus sexual assault being more likely to seek services if the perpetrator is a stranger (Sabina & Ho, 2014).

2. Barriers to Accessing Services

Victims of crime face numerous barriers when accessing services, including: (1) lack of awareness of available services or how to access them; (2) lack of culturally appropriate services; (3) lack of available services in their area; (4) fear of repercussions; and (5) the burden placed on the victim.

BARRIERS

- Burden on the Victim
- Capacity
- Cultural Competency
- Fear of Negative Outcomes
- Lack of Awareness

2.1   Lack of Awareness

Both victims of crime and crime victim service providers report lack of awareness of services as a large barrier experienced by victims of crime (Aeffect, Inc., 2017; DePrince et al., 2014; Ehrhard-Dietzel et al., 2017; Lowry et al., 2015; Tsui, 2014). A study conducted in New York looking at crime victims and civil legal service providers found that among crime victims who reported not receiving any services, more than half stated that they were not aware that any services were available to them (Ehrhard-Dietzel et al., 2017). Furthermore, 57% of victims in Illinois reported that they were unaware of how or where to get services (Aeffect, Inc., 2017). Lack of awareness also translated into victims not having knowledge of: the civil and criminal system, victims' rights, what was expected of them, whether they were eligible for services, or whether they were receiving incorrect or inconsistent information (Aeffect, Inc., 2017; DePrince et al., 2014). Service providers reported

that a victim's lack of awareness of available services is a critical barrier in seeking the services they need (Lowry et al., 2015).

Lack of awareness on the part of the first responders and providers is also a barrier for victims of crime. Service providers' lack of awareness of available services in their area can cause a victim to have to visit multiple organizations before receiving needed services (Lowry et al., 2015). In a study conducted by Ehrhard-Dietzel and colleagues (2017), of the almost two-thirds of the victims that reported interacting with law enforcement, only 9% were referred to a civil legal service by police. In Illinois, 51% of crime victims stated that no one informed them of services available for victims (Aeffect, Inc., 2017). In Washington, DC a survey of victims of crime who had police reports taken: 72% were not provided with referral information to other organizations, less than 50% were given information on their rights as victims, and less than 11% were given information about crime victims' compensation (Ramsey & Joyce, 2002).

A lack of awareness of victims' rights amongst providers and victims is a large barrier. There is some research to suggest that service providers and law enforcement, even if they are sharing information with victims, can better assist victims by explaining victims' rights (DePrince et al., 2014). However more research is needed showing how victims' rights are implemented and whether or not they are received (Office for Victims of Crime, 2013).

2.2   Cultural Competency

The demographics of the victim can also affect their access to services due to fear and discrimination. This includes victims that identify as LGBTQ+, or victims of crime that are immigrants (Bucher et al, 2010; Ehrhard-Dietzel et al., 2017; Lowry et al., 2015). Victims of crimes that are immigrants may be fearful of the criminal justice system and fear of deportation (Ehrhard-Dietzel et al., 2017; Murdaugh et al., 2004). One of the top rated barriers to accessing services for Hispanic and limited English proficient crime victims is finding services that are available in their primary language; this can include court interpreters, translators, or advocates that speak their language (Ehrhard-Dietzel et al., 2017; Lowry et al., 2015; Murdaugh et al., 2004). Research has found that across the United States, only 12% of law enforcement officers spoke the language of the limited English proficient (LEP) victim they were responding to, with only 43% of officers able to identify the language the victim spoke (National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project, 2013).

Washington DC has become a hub for immigrants over the past few decades due to the presence of foreign embassies, international organizations, and refugee resettlements (Bernstein, Gelatt, Hanson, & Monson, 2014). As of 2012, the largest immigration populations were from Latin America (44%), Asia (19%), Europe (18%), and Africa (16%). Five percent of the DC resident population is limited or non-English proficient with about two-thirds of those households having no one over the age of 14 that is English proficient. The most common non-English languages spoken are Spanish, French, Amharic/Ethiopian, German, and Chinese (Bernstein et al., 2014). This showcases the need for services in the DC area to be culturally competent in order to successfully serve the large immigrant population.

As a step toward eliminating this barrier in Washington DC, the DC Language Access Act of 2004 was passed requiring all DC organizations with public contact to have interpreter and translator services available for limited English proficient residents. However, organizations within the DC area are still facing barriers in terms of awareness of their language services, lack of continued evaluation on language needs and use in the area, lack of appropriate training for staff, lack of coordination amongst agencies, and a lack of enforced compliance (Bernstein et al., 2014). Sexual orientation can also cause barriers in victims' access to services. Victims that identify as LGBTQ+ may face barriers in regards to not being aware of what victimization is, or feeling shame, stigma, discrimination, and re-victimization by a lack of services tailored to their needs (Ciarlante & Fountain, 2010). Victims of crime that have disabilities may also experience barriers in regards to communication and physical barriers (Lowry et al., 2015).

2.3   Capacity

Capacity of the service providing organizations is also a barrier that victims face in having their needs met. Organizations that are under staffed are not able to have continuous contact with the victim or provide timely assistance (Yost, 2005). Low capacity of legal service organizations also leads to providers not taking enough time to walk victims through the services, and reduces the amount of resources available for all victims of crime such as guardian ad litems, and low-cost attorneys (DePrince et al., 2014). Service providers also experience capacity barriers when providing services to victims of crime (Ehrhard-Dietzel et al., 2017; Lowry et al., 2015). This includes not having the financial resources or capacity to meet service demands, not being able to provide transportation to victims, and having trouble reaching underserved victims (Lowry et al., 2015). In civil cases, providers struggle with capacity in terms of high probono caseloads, lack of communication between civil and criminal courts, and a lack of knowledge of victimization (DePrince et al., 2014). Providers also struggle with a lack of appropriate and current referral information for victims (Ehrhard-Dietzel et al., 2017).

2.4   Fear of Repercussions

Service providers rate fear of retaliation, lack of trust in the system, and feelings of shame as the most critical barriers that victims of crime face when seeking services (Lowry et al., 2015). A lack of social support, cognitive consequences of trauma, and discrimination also lead to barriers in victims participating in legal services (DePrince et al., 2014). This may be caused by crime victims' fear of law enforcement or case outcomes (DePrince et al., 2014). Both male and female college students rate fear of retaliation by the offender as a barrier for female sexual assault victims, while for male victims the barrier was around fear of being judged as homosexual (Sable, Danis, Mauzy, & Gallagher, 2010). Male victims also experience barriers due to the stigma surrounding male victimization, lack of belief in the male victim, and the traditional masculine role (Lowry et al., 2015). Other barriers to reporting that college students list as relevant for sexual assault victims include: feelings of shame and embarrassment, not wanting friends or family to know, fear of not being believed, and confidentiality concerns (Sable et al., 2010). Another barrier to accessing services arises when victims encounter legal

service providers that are not informed of the mental health impacts of trauma (DePrince et al., 2014). Similar to campus sexual assault victims, victims of any type of crime rated fear of victim-blaming and fear of not being believed as large barriers (Aeffect, Inc., 2017).

Victims can also experience negative outcomes due to experiencing secondary victimization. This can occur when the victim encounters instances of insensitivity, victim-blaming, or a lack of understanding and knowledge of the situation from actors within the criminal justice system; which can further traumatize the victim (Campbell, 2006; Orth, 2002). Secondary victimization can negatively impact other variables including the victim's self-esteem, trust in the criminal justice system, and perception of the future (Orth, 2002).

2.5   Burden on the Victim

Providers also report the criminal court process as being one of the most burdensome for victims to participate in. The inconsistency of court responses to crime victims, the long duration of the court process, a lack of child care options, a lack of cultural and language accessibility, and the intimidating nature of the court system can act as insurmountable barriers for victim participation in the criminal justice process (DePrince et al., 2014; Lowry et al., 2015). Victims also report it being burdensome to visit multiple agencies to receive all their needed services (DePrince et al., 2014). Transportation is a major burden, with victims not having access to or not being able to afford their own transportation to the service locations (Aeffect, Inc., 2017; Murdaugh et al., 2004).

III. Improving Outreach and Service Access

Due to the high rate of victimization in this county, the low rate of reporting to law enforcement, and the numerous barriers victims face in accessing services, this next section will focus on how to improve victim awareness and access to legal services to improve victim outcomes. Recommendations for improvement include: training service providers and first responders, tailoring program outreach and advertising, collaboration amongst social, legal, and law enforcement organizations, and educating the community.

"Training needs included improved and increased training regarding victims' rights, victim's compensation, available government benefits and financial assistance of victims, cultural competence, trauma-informed responses, issues specific to certain victim groups (LGBTQ, undocumented immigrants, domestic violence victims); and institutionalization of such training to ensure consistent and updated knowledge across providers." (DePrince et al., 2014)

1.   Training

Based on all of the identified needs and gaps of victims of crime, service providers had numerous ideas on how to improve victims' access to civil legal assistance. These included (1) making sure that providers were trained to provide legal advocacy in situations that would not require a lawyer, (2) making sure that attorneys are trauma-informed, and (3) having a network

of trauma-informed pro-bono attorneys (Lowry et al., 2015). Providers also recommended training social service providers on how to identify civil legal needs that a victim may have and how to make proper referrals for those needs. Providers in this study also recommended social service providers work with legal providers to develop intake forms or standardized questions that will allow them to identifying civil legal needs during the intake process (Lowry et al., 2015).

Trainings are recommended for all possible first responders. These trainings should be trauma informed and tailored to a variety of underserved crime victim populations. Recommendations on trainings for law enforcement and criminal attorneys included cultural competency, trauma-informed responses, and outreach to victims on victims' rights (DePrince et al., 2014). Cultural competency trainings should include information on becoming a legally certified interpreter and translator to increase service access among limited English proficient victims (DePrince et al., 2014). Criminal justice personnel frequently rely on unqualified interpreters. The National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project (2013) found that law enforcement used unqualified interpreters 30% of the time, court officials 30% of the time, and prosecutors 25% of the time. This documents a large need for highly trained, qualified interpreters. The translators and interpreters are necessary for access to legal and social services but are particularly necessary in the court system to ensure that LEP victims are able to fully participate in the legal process (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016). These trainings will allow providers to not only increase their capacity to serve all victims of crime, but will increase their abilities to identify victims of crime in order to inform them of the services available and how to access them. For women at historically black colleges, campus police officers should receive trauma-informed training, have dedicated private spaces to disclose, and to be more visible on campus (Lindquist, Crosby, Barrick, Krebs, & Settles-Reaves, 2016).

Trainings should also be provided to law enforcement agencies, legal service providers, court staff, and advocates on the nuances of working with specific underserved populations, including LGBTQ+ victims. These trainings can reduce some of the barriers that victims from underserved populations face when trying to access services by teaching sensitivity, educating on outreach techniques, addressing personal biases, and identifying unique needs (Ciarlante & Fountain, 2010). The Office for Victims of Crime, Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) is one resource that organizations and communities can use to address some of these training needs (see callout box).

OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

"OVC, through OVC TTAC, can help by offering education and tools to the field at no cost, so those who provide services have the skills to reach out to victims of every type of crime, from every background, in every place, and offer them what they need to rebuild their lives."
(https://www.ovcttac.gov/views/HowWeCanHelp/dspHowWeHelp.cfm)

2. Program Materials and Advertisements

Victims of crime also provided recommendations on how to improve access to services through advertisements including: billboards and commercials, informational materials provided in a variety of languages, informational sessions held in communities and schools, and informational sessions provided by volunteer survivors that have already gone through the criminal justice process (Lowry et al., 2015). Advertising recommendations included (1) posting information in locations where victims may be separated from their abusers, such as pediatrician's offices and grocery stores, (2) indicating all populations in marketing tools, and (3) making sure there is trust built with the local providers (Ehrhard-Dietzel, Gross, & Siwach, 2017). Victims of crime should be provided with lists that include referrals for accessing information on legal services, current laws, victims' rights, and justice procedures (Office for Victims of Crime, 2010).This information should be given multiple times due to the trauma and associated consequences of victimization (DePrince et al., 2014).

Public awareness campaigns should also be made to local communities on victims' rights and different types of victimizations. For example, this could include campaigns to raise awareness on how to recognize and report LGBTQ+ hate crimes and intimate partner violence. As awareness on what constitutes a crime is increased within communities, not only will victims learn that they are not alone but crimes are more likely to be identified and reported (Ciarlante & Fountain, 2010).

Given that victims frequently contact friends and family for support in the aftermath of victimization, materials should be developed for friends and family members of victims to help them react to a disclosure and provide information on how to refer a victim to a hotline or service provider (Ciarlante & Fountain, 2010). This will allow organizations to increase knowledge of services directly to this type of first responder, which in turn, will raise awareness of services within a community and increase the possibility of victims of crime accessing the services they need.

There is a large move to online-advertising through website or social media presence to raise awareness about available services and services tailored to specific victimizations (e.g. sexual assault, domestic violence, human trafficking) (National Network to End Domestic Violence, 2014). These websites are using trauma-informed techniques to increase awareness and access to service. This includes having an escape button on the provider webpage so that if the victim is in an unsafe location while on the site they can exit out of the website immediately as needed, adding safety alerts to websites to remind victims that their online activities may be monitored, and using web forms instead of email contact sheets so that the message the victim sends to the organization will not show up in their email sent box (National Network to End Domestic Violence, 2014). Leveraging technology as a resource is creating additional opportunities for access to crime victim information and utilization of services (National Network to End Domestic Violence, 2014). When using online outreach tools, it is recommended that there is a centralized location for forms, information, and resources, including information on the legal system and court procedures. Information should be presented in simple language

and using both audio, visual, and written medias to account for differing literacy levels, the website must be accessible from a computer and phone, and should include access to a live person through email, chat, or phone (Ehrhard-Dietzel et al., 2017).

3. Collaboration

As part of the Office for Victims of Crime Vision 21 initiative, a need was identified for coordinated community networks of legal services. These "wraparound networks" would allow for a victim to more readily access administrative, civil, criminal, and other legal services to address all of their legal needs (Office for Victims of Crime, 2013). Collaborations between organizations that serve different victim needs and cultural groups can increase victims and providers' awareness of services available and build trust between the organizations themselves, as well as between the victim and the organization from which they require services. Collaborations should occur between legal and social providers, as well as between criminal and civil-legal providers in order to improve victims' experiences with the legal system (Newmark, 2006). This will help account for the multiple, cross-discipline needs that victims may have including concerns about privacy, family, mental health, and financial needs (DePrince et al., 2014).

Research has found that collaborations between service providers and law enforcement lead to an increase in law enforcement using language line and interpreters for immigrant and LEP populations (National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project, 2013). For LGBTQ+ communities, it is recommended that there should be collaborations between LGBTQ+ anti-violence programs, law enforcement agencies, and service providers. This collaboration will help bridge the gap between LGBTQ+ victims and the civil and criminal justice system. It will also allow for victims to be referred to an organization that can serve their needs without risking the re-traumatization of being rejected from providers that do not have the capacity to help them (Ciarlante & Fountain, 2010). Civil/private attorneys should collaborate with community-based agencies, allied professionals, and medical staff to ensure appropriate referrals and holistic service delivery (DePrince et al., 2014). It is recommended that they also become more visible at community agencies through activities, such as hosting legal clinic nights (DePrince, Srinivas, & Lee, 2014). Research has found that the collaboration between various victim serving organizations such as service providers and advocates, police departments, and court staff can lead to victims receiving access to all of their service needs (Cattaneo, Cho, & Botuck, 2011; Zweig & Burt, 2007).

In Richmond, VA *the Second Responders Program* is a joint effort between the Richmond Department of Social Services and the Richmond Police Department. The program requires social workers to be on call and respond to incidents of domestic violence with the responding police officers (Lane, Greenspan, & Weisburd, 2004). This program was developed with the goal that the immediacy of a response from both police officers and social workers would increase the likelihood of the victim utilizing services and pursuing legal avenues. Research found that these social workers were able to immediately provide the domestic

violence victim with information about their legal rights, protective orders, the court process, and referrals to legal services. Law enforcement that were paired with the social workers were more likely to provide information to the victim about the court process, legal rights, protective orders, and provide them with referral cards. Victims that reviewed the joint social worker and law enforcement team experienced almost a 10% increase in legal service referrals over victims that were only presented with the law enforcement officer. These referrals covered issues such as protective orders, court, and legal aid (Lane et al., 2004). Another form of collaboration that was recommended is having co-located services that include social and legal services housed in the same building (Black et al., 2011).

4. Education

Some of the best practices on outreach to victims of crime include conducting prevention activities in the community, planning information sessions on community safety, and regularly engaging key community stakeholders for feedback (Office for Victims of Crime, 2010). To increase the number of victims of campus sexual assault who seek services, more education should be conducted on acquaintance rape and confidentiality laws (Sabina & Ho, 2014). Women from historically black colleges also recommend education on: existing sexual assault services, how law enforcement respond to sexual assault, and how to contact formal services (Lindquist et al., 2016). More education should also be provided to victims on legal terms, victims' rights, and procedures, this will allow for the victims to be better informed about what services to look for (DePrince et al., 2014). Additional recommendations can be found within OVC's Model Standards for Serving Victims and Survivors of Crime (see callout box).

IV. Conclusion

The purpose of this literature review was to provide a synthesis of the empirical research on access to legal services by victims of crime, and, where possible, highlight research findings based on the needs of victims of crime residing in the Washington, DC area. These findings can be leveraged by VLNDC to target their outreach activities to maximize the impact of the Network.

Overall, research suggests that victims access services through a variety of informal and formal sources. Among D.C. victims of crime, commonly accessed services and supports include health care, family and friends, victim assistance groups, counselors, and church support groups (Ramsey & Joyce, 2001). Formal avenues of help seeking include meeting with government

attorneys and seeking compensation through the Victims Compensation Fund (Flower et al., 2016). As suggested by McCart and colleagues (2010), help seeking behaviors and access to services differ across a number of demographic characteristics such as gender, age, race and immigration status, victimization type, among others (see also Crosby, 2016; Kaukinen, 2004; Reyns & Englebrecht, 2014; Sabina & Ho, 2014; Sims et al., 2006).

Outreach efforts should be attuned to these differences in help seeking behaviors and barriers noted by victims and service providers, including lack of awareness of services and victim of crimes' needs (e.g., Ehrhard-Dietzel et al., 2017), cultural competencies (e.g., Ciarlante & Fountain, 2010), service provider capacity (e.g. Lowry et al., 2015), fear of repercussions (e.g., DePrince et al., 2014), and undue burden on the victim (e.g., Murdaugh et al., 2004). Some of these barriers can be overcome through training service providers and first responders; tailoring program and outreach efforts to a variety of victimization types and populations; increasing collaboration amongst social, legal, and law enforcement organizations, and; providing education programs for the community to increase awareness and knowledge of victimization and the services available.

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APPENDIX C: CLIENT INTAKE ASSESSMENT INTERVIEWS

VLN·DC
Victim Legal Network of DC

VLNDC Client Assessment

This tool is used to determine if the network services were delivered in a professional and responsive manner to any crime victim utilizing VLNDC referral services.

* Required.

1. (*Please fill in based on spreadsheet*). **The client's intake was conducted by:** *

   ☐ Navigator

   ☐ A Member Organization

2. **Do you know what the Victim Legal Network of DC is?**

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No   *Skip to Question 4*

3. **How did you hear about the Victim Legal Network of DC?**

   _____

   _____

Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements:
*If the participant is unfamiliar with the term 'intake' explain in greater detail: "the person who took my information to enter me into the network" "the person who asked me questions about my victimization and legal issues" "I was treated with respect by (intake person's name) when he/she asked me questions"

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
4. **I was treated with respect by the person who conducted my intake**.	1	2	3	4	NA
5. **The person who conducted my intake understood what I needed.**	1	2	3	4	NA
6. **The organization that I was referred to responded to me in an appropriate amount of time.**	1	2	3	4	NA
7. **The referral I was given fit my needs.**	1	2	3	4	NA
8. **I would recommend the Victim Legal Network of DC to others.**	1	2	3	4	NA

9. (*Please fill in based on spreadsheet*). **How many organizations was this client referred to?** *

   ☐ 1

   ☐ 2   *Skip to question 11*

   ☐ 3   *Skip to question 13*

☐ None   *Skip to question 16*

1 Referral

10. What happened after you were contacted by the organization (open-ended)?

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

Skip to question 16

2 Referrals

11. What happened after you were contacted by the first organization (open-ended)?

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

12. What happened after you were contacted by the second organization (open-ended)?

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

Skip to question 16

3 Referrals

13. What happened after you were contacted by the first organization (open-ended)?

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

14. What happened after you were contacted by the second organization (open-ended)?

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

15. What happened after you were contacted by the third organization (open-ended)?

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

Conclusion

16. What could the Victim Legal Network of DC do to make your experience better?

_____

_____

_____

_____

17. What was something you really liked about this process?

_____

_____

_____

_____

18. (*If there are positive comments or answers*)**. Can VLNDC use this quote to tell other people about this service and to get funding for the service? The reason these services are free is because others are paying for it; the way VLNDC encourages others to continue providing these services is by sharing positive experiences with our program. Can they share your positive experience for this purpose? (***Enter quote below***)**

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

VLNDC Client Assessment

This tool is used to determine if the network services were delivered in a professional and responsive manner to any crime victim utilizing VLNDC referral services.

* Required.

1. (*Please fill in based on spreadsheet*). **The client's intake was conducted by:** *

   ☐ Navigator

   ☐ A Member Organization

2. **Do you know what the Victim Legal Network of DC is?**

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements:
If the participant is unfamiliar with the term 'screening' explain in greater detail: "the person who took my information to enter me into the network" "the person who asked me questions about my victimization and legal issues"

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
3. **I was treated with respect by the person who conducted my screening**.	1	2	3	4	NA
4. **The person who conducted my screening understood what I needed.**	1	2	3	4	NA
5. **The person who conducted my screening discussed the Informed Consent Release form in a way that I understood.**	1	2	3	4	NA
6. **The organization that I was referred to responded to me in an appropriate amount of time.**	1	2	3	4	NA
7. **The referral I was given fit my needs.**	1	2	3	4	NA
8. **I would recommend the Victim Legal Network of DC to others.**	1	2	3	4	NA

9. (*Please fill in based on spreadsheet*). **How many organizations was this client referred to?** *

   ☐ 1

   ☐ 2   *Skip to question 11*

   ☐ 3   *Skip to question 13*

☐ None   *Skip to question 16*

1 Referral

10. **What happened after you were contacted by the organization (record what they say and select a box)?**

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

Skip to question 16

So I know that you spoke to two organizations about your needs, I want to ask a question about [each/ just one of those] organization separately so thinking about one of those organizations….

2 Referrals

11. **What happened after you were contacted by the first organization (record what they say and select a box)?**

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

Great, and now thinking about the other organization….

12. **What happened after you were contacted by the second organization (record what they say and select a box)?**

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

Skip to question 16

3 Referrals

So I know that you spoke to three organizations about your needs, I want to ask a question about [each/ just one of those] organization separately so thinking about one of those organizations….

13. **What happened after you were contacted by the first organization (record what they say and select a box)?**

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

Great, and now thinking about the other organization….

14. **What happened after you were contacted by the second organization (record what they say and select a box)?**

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

Great, and now thinking about the other organization….

15. **What happened after you were contacted by the third organization (record what they say and select a box)?**

☐ No one got back to me

☐ The organization contacted me but I haven't responded to them yet

☐ The organization was not able to assist me

☐ I was placed on a waitlist

☐ I received advice

☐ The organization represented me

☐ My case went under review

☐ An intake was scheduled

☐ Other (please explain):

_____

_____

Conclusion

16. **Is there anything the Victim Legal Network of DC could have done to make your experience better?**

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

17. **What was something you really liked about this process?**

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

18. (*If there are positive comments or answers*)**. Can VLNDC use this quote to tell other people about this service and to get funding for the service? The reason these services are free is because others are paying for it; the way VLNDC encourages others to continue providing these services is by sharing positive experiences with our program. Can they share your positive experience for this purpose?**

   A. Yes

   B. No

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Victim Legal Network of DC Client Assessment Findings
Quarter 2: January 1st – March 31st, 2019

This report presents the findings of the client assessment telephone interviews. The client assessment is conducted with victims of crime who have completed a screening with VLNDC. Clients consent to be contacted by the evaluators through a consent question included in their release form. The purpose of these interviews is to obtain feedback on the VLNDC screening process.

I.   Sample

	Number of Clients Consenting	Number of Completed Assessments
Quarter 2	15	5

In Quarter 2, **fifteen clients consented to be contacted** to participate in the telephone interview. Of those that consented ICF was able to speak with seven VLNDC clients and **five completed the assessment**. The remaining clients did not respond to outreach attempts.
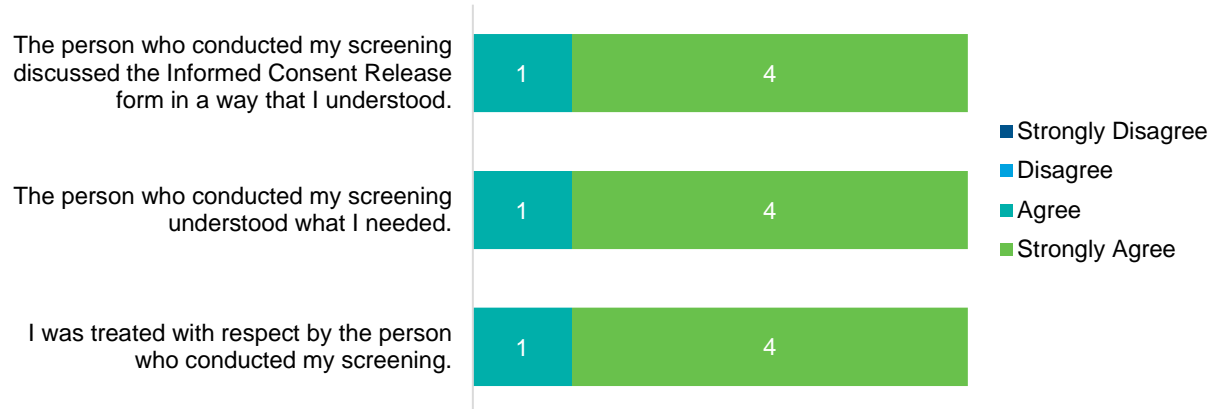
Of those that completed the assessment, **four had their intake conducted by a navigator, and one by a member organization.**

II.   Findings

Out of the five participants, **three participants (60%) indicated that they knew about VLNDC**, the remaining participants (n=2) did not know about VLNDC.

1.   Screening Experience

Participants rated their experience with the screening process. **All participants agreed or strongly agreed the informed consent release form was explained in a way they understood**, and the person conducting the screening understood what they needed and treated them with respect.

The person who conducted my screening discussed the Informed Consent Release form in a way that I understood. — Agree: 1, Strongly Agree: 4

The person who conducted my screening understood what I needed. — Agree: 1, Strongly Agree: 4

I was treated with respect by the person who conducted my screening. — Agree: 1, Strongly Agree: 4

Legend: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

2. Referral Experience

Participants recounted their experience with receiving a referral. Four of the participants received a referral to one organization, one participant received a referral to two organizations. **All participants agreed or strongly agreed that their referral fit their needs** and the organization they were referred to responded in an appropriate amount of time.
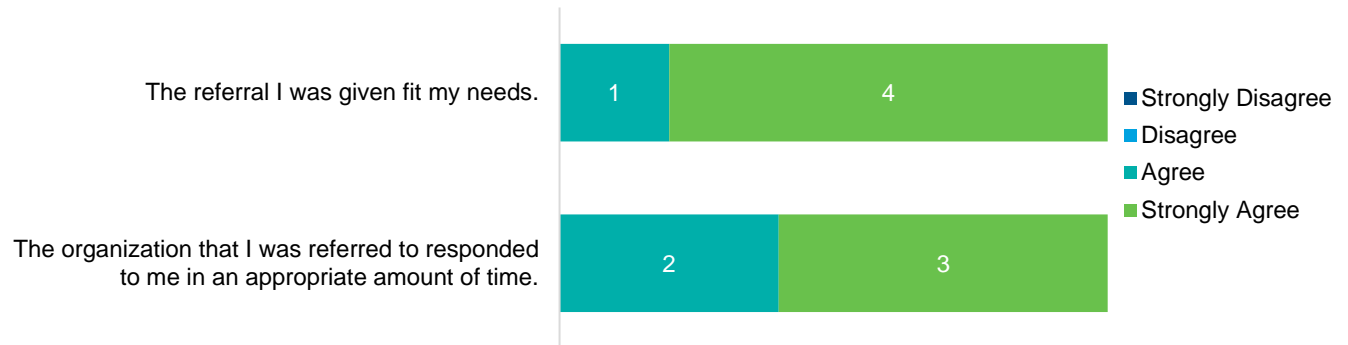
Of the four participants who received a referral to one organization, one participant had their case go under review, one participant was represented, one participant was contacted but has not responded yet, and one participant received advice.

There was one participant that received referrals to two organizations. Their case went under review at both organizations.

III. Recommendations

One hundred percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they **would recommend VLNDC to others.**

A majority of the participants did not have any recommendations for what VLNDC could do to improve their experience. Recommendations that were mentioned included more human interaction and more services available:

Nothing:

- *"Everything was fine, safe house is comfortable."*
- *"I can't think of anything, maybe bring me a coke and some chocolates."*
- *"No, I think they were one of the best that I've had."*

More human interaction:

- *"Feels a little non-human, would want more human contact. The only human contact was an intake coordinator, there was an attorney that helped with the annulment. But I had trouble finding [that person]…be more visible at the courthouse… maybe wear a ribbon."*

Increased services:

- *"It would be nice if they had someone that could go to court with me and they didn't have anyone. I was given a lot of numbers to call, it was a lot trying to contact people. They did the best they could do. When someone calls they need to have some type of lawyer to help with cases and they didn't have that. They gave me numbers to call and no one was available."*

When asked what they really liked about the process participants mentioned the people involved and the time it took to get services:

People:

- *"I just liked that someone was listening."*
- *"The people that I worked with was wonderful, assisted me and told me things I wasn't aware of."*
- *"The process has been good and everyone that talked to me has been wonderful."*

Time:

- *"Everything was done in a timely manner there was no delay, I thought that was wonderful."*

Other:

- *"It was okay."*

All participants agreed that their positive quotes could be shared.

VICTIM LEGAL NETWORK OF DC CLIENT ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

QUARTER 3: APRIL 1ST – JUNE 30TH, 2019

This report presents the findings of the client assessment telephone interviews. The client assessment is conducted with victims of crime who have completed a screening with VLNDC. Clients consent to be contacted by the evaluators through a consent question included in their release form. The purpose of these interviews is to obtain feedback on the VLNDC screening process.

I.   SAMPLE

	Number of Clients Consenting	Number of Completed Assessments
Quarter 3	15	4

In Quarter 3, **fifteen clients consented to be contacted** to participate in the telephone interview. Of those that consented, ICF was able to speak with six VLNDC clients and **four completed the assessment**. The remaining clients did not respond to outreach attempts.

Of those that completed the assessment, **three had their intake conducted by a navigator, and one by a member organization.**

II.   FINDINGS

Out of the four participants, **half of the participants (n=2) indicated that they knew what VLNDC was**, the remaining participants (n=2) did not.

Screening Experience

Participants rated their experience with the screening process. **All participants agreed or strongly agreed** that the informed consent release form was explained in a way they understood, and the person conducting the screening understood what they needed and treated them with respect.
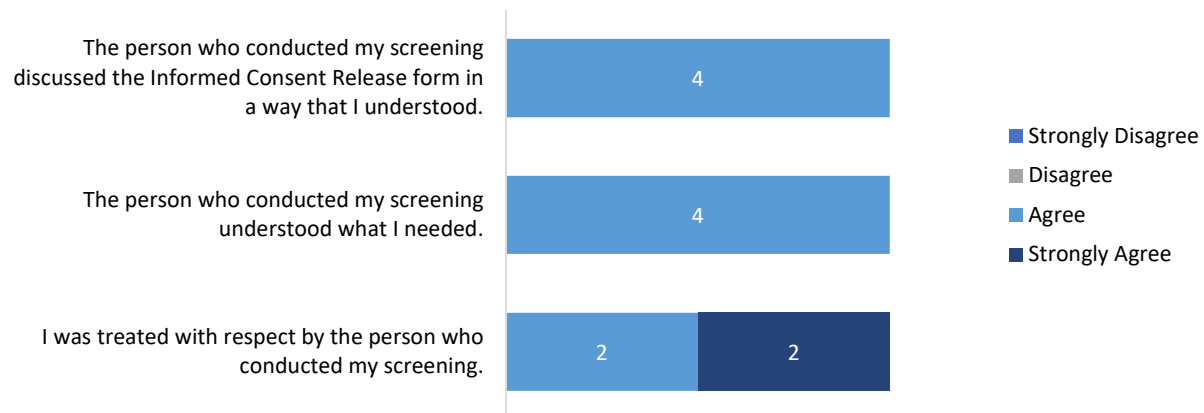
Referral Experience

Participants recounted their experience with receiving a referral. Three of the participants received a referral to one organization and one participant received a referral to two organizations. Participant responses were mixed when thinking about if the referral they received fit their needs. **One participant agreed that their referral fit their needs and one participant disagreed. The remaining two participants said that the question was not applicable or skipped the question.**

Three out of the four participants agreed or strongly agreed that the organization they were referred to responded in an appropriate amount of time, while one participant disagreed.
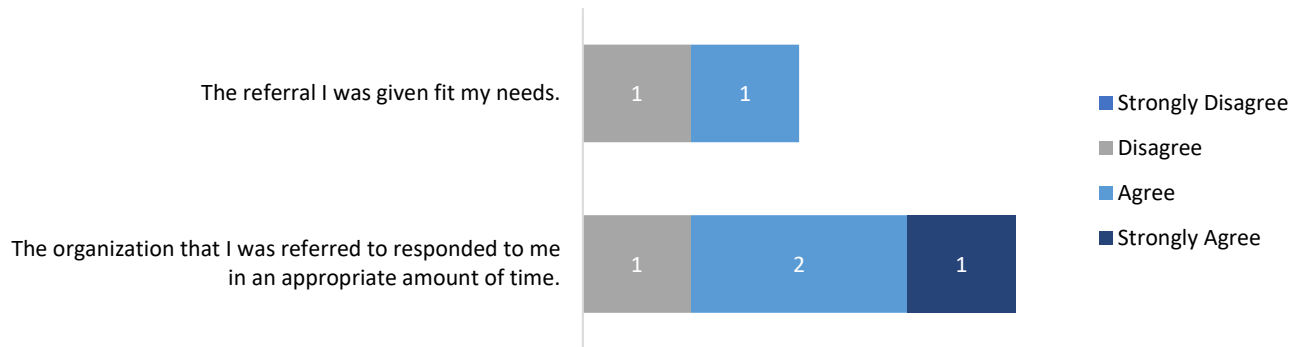
Of the three participants who received a referral to one organization, one participant had their case go under review and an intake scheduled, one participant had not yet heard back from the organization, and one participant was not able to receive assistance from the organization.

There was one participant that received referrals to two organizations. The first organization was able to represent the participant, while the second organization was not able to assist the participant but did provided the participant with advice.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

One hundred percent of participants **agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend VLNDC to others.**
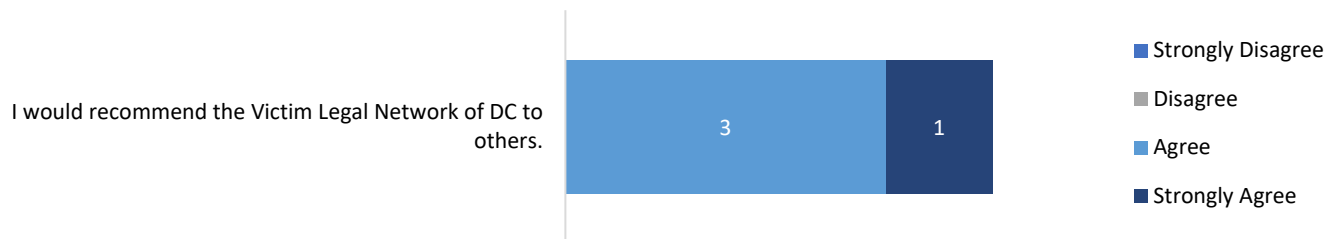
A majority of the participants did not have any recommendations for what VLNDC could do to improve their experience. One recommendation that was mentioned was for prompter service and follow up.

Nothing:

- ❖ *"I don't think I can really answer that right at this moment, I will be speaking with the attorney more today. I haven't really spoken to [the attorney] too much. So far, they have been in touch and everything has been okay."*
- ❖ *"I'm not sure yet."*
- ❖ *"No, she was really helpful and a really nice lady."*

Prompter service and follow up:

- ❖ *"Prompter service, more information, follow up."*

When asked what they really liked about the process participants mentioned the people involved and the process in delivering services.

People:

- ❖ *"I like that they are really direct and understand and assess all my needs and made sure I was comfortable."*
- ❖ *"The person who did the intake was really helpful, I liked how she was helpful, and she offered her phone number in case I needed anything or had any questions. That was really cool, I liked that."*

Process:

- ❖ *"I think the victim legal network, is that the one they send you a paper over email and you send it over email to a portal? I liked that."*

All participants agreed that their positive quotes could be shared.

APPENDIX D: VLNDC CLIENT OUTCOME INTERVIEWS

Date and Time:_____

Organization Number/Name:_____

I. Awareness of Services

1. Describe how you learned about the Victim Legal Network of DC. *(e.g., law enforcement, organization referral, court referral, family/peer, internet, printed advertisement, signage, others)*

2. Where did you first learn about this network? How soon after your victimization?

3. Do you believe that you were made aware of the variety of legal services and resources available to crime victims/survivors in your community?

4. Is there a better method for telling crime victims/survivors about available legal services and resources? And if so, what would that be? Looking back how would you suggest that other survivors like yourselves be notified of services and resources?

II. Access to Services

5. Once you became aware of the Victim Legal Network, was it easy to access?

    a. If not, what were those difficulties?

6. Were you ever denied services?

    a. If yes, why were you denied (e.g., financial, victimization type, the organization did not have capacity to take your case, the organization does not work on your type of case)?

    b. Were you referred to another service provider after being denied? If yes, who?

7. What are the greatest barriers to accessing victim legal services?

8. What would make it easier to access legal services?

III. Services Received

9. What type of services have you received? And by what agency? (i.e., custody, protection order, divorce, immigration, referral)

10. Were the services you received sensitive to your individual needs? If yes, how so? If no, then how not? *For example, if you required a translator, handicap accessibility, cultural considerations, or other individualized services, were service providers able to meet your needs?*

11. In your opinion, were services provided in a way that was welcoming and made you feel comfortable?

    a. Please describe your level of comfort when receiving services.

12. Were the services you received helpful? Why/why not?

13. Did you have any legal needs that were not met? (e.g., court advocacy, protection orders, custody, immigration)

    a. If yes, what types of services would have been helpful?

    b. In your opinion, why were you not able to receive needed services?

14. How would you describe your overall experience with the legal services received?

IV.   Future Directions and Recommendations

15. Overall, what recommendations do you have for improving victim legal services in DC?

16. What do you think is the most helpful legal service for crime victims/survivors? And why?

17. What is the most important thing for service providers to know about crime victim/survivor experiences with their legal services?

Thank you for participating today, the information you have provided me will be immensely helpful in shaping the future directions of victim services in DC and improve service delivery to crime victims/survivors. As a thank you for your time I would like to send you a $20 gift card. Do you have a mailing address that I could send the card to?

If no: Do you have an email address, I could send the gift card electronically.

APPENDIX E: NON-VLNDC CLIENT FOCUS GROUP/INTERVIEW

I.   Awareness of Services

1. Describe how you learned about the types of services and resources available to you? *(e.g., law enforcement, organization referral, court referral, family/peer, internet, printed advertisement, signage, others)*

2. Where did you first learn about the types of services available?? How soon after you were impacted by the crime?

3. Do you believe that you were made aware of the variety of legal services/attorneys and resources available to crime victims/survivors in your community?

4. If you had a criminal case, did you know that you could have an attorney representing you in the case separate than the prosecutor?

    a. *If yes*: How did you find out?

5. Is there a better way for telling crime victims/survivors about available legal services/attorneys and resources? And if so, what would that be? Looking back how would you suggest that other survivors like yourselves be notified of services and resources?

II.   Access to Services

6. Once you learned about available services, were they easy to access?

7. What are some things that made services accessible? *For example, if you required a translator, day care, the provider calling at times that were convenient, handicap accessibility, cultural considerations, or other individualized services.*

8. In what ways were services difficult to access?

9. Did you receive a referral for legal services/an attorney?

    a. *If yes*: How did that process go?

10. Were you ever denied services?

    a. If yes, why were you denied (e.g., financial, victimization type, the organization did not have capacity to take your case, the organization does not work on your type of case)?

    b. Were you referred to another service provider after being denied? If yes, who?

11. What are the greatest barriers to accessing victim legal services/an attorney?

12. What would make it easier to access legal services/an attorney?

III. Future Directions and Recommendations

13. Overall, what recommendations do you have for improving legal help for victims in DC?

14. What do you think is the most helpful legal help for crime victims/survivors? And why?

15. What is the most important thing for attorneys to know about crime victim/survivor experiences with their legal services?

Additional Questions if there is time:

IV. Services Received

16. What type of services have you received? (i.e., family law, custody, protection order, divorce, immigration, referral)

17. Were the services you received sensitive to your individual needs? If yes, how so? If no, then how not? *For example, if you required a translator, handicap accessibility, cultural considerations, or other individualized services, were service providers able to meet your needs?*

18. In your opinion, were services provided in a way that was welcoming and made you feel comfortable?

    a. Please describe your level of comfort when receiving services.

19. Were the services you received helpful? Why/why not?

20. Did you have any legal needs that were not met? (e.g., court advocacy, protection orders, custody, immigration)

    a. If yes, what types of services would have been helpful?

    b. In your opinion, why were you not able to receive needed services?

21. How would you describe your overall experience with the legal services received?

Date and Time:_____

Organization Number/Name:_____

I.   Legal Services Received

1. What type of legal services have you received? (i.e., custody, protection order, divorce, immigration, referral)

2. Did you receive any referrals for legal services?

    a. If yes, how was that referral given? (e.g. client was provided the referral(s) in person, over the phone, over email)

3. Were the legal services you received sensitive to your individual needs? If yes, how so? If no, then how not? *For example, if you required a translator, handicap accessibility, cultural considerations, or other individualized services, were service providers able to meet your needs?*

4. In your opinion, were legal services provided in a way that was welcoming and made you feel comfortable?

5. Were the legal services you received helpful? Why/why not?

6. How have the legal services you received impacted your life? (e.g., able to recover from victimization, better employment, better relationships)

7. Did you have any legal needs that were not met? (e.g., court advocacy, protection orders, custody, immigration)

    a. If so what were they?

8. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being Very Poor and 5 being Very Good, how would you rate the overall quality of help you received?

9. Overall, are you satisfied with the legal services you received? Why/Why not?

II.   Future Directions and Recommendations

10. Overall, what recommendations do you have for improving victim legal services in DC?

Thank you for participating today, the information you have provided me will be immensely helpful in shaping the future directions of victim services in DC and improve service delivery to crime

victims/survivors. As a thank you for your time I would like to give you a code for the $20 Amazon gift card. Do you have a pen to write down the code?

If no: Do you have an email address, I could send the gift card code to you electronically.

APPENDIX F: FACILITATOR FEEDBACK FORM AND COMPLETED REPORTS

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VLNDC Facilitator Process Survey

Please take this opportunity to provide anonymous feedback on the VLNDC process for the months of April, May, and June. Thank you!

1. **Approximately how many staff members at your organization generated a VLNDC referral this quarter?**

2. **How many VLNDC referrals did your organization submit this quarter?**_____

   How many were completed:
   Directly on the Member Portal:_____
   Hard-Copy to be later transferred to the Member Portal:_____

3. **Approximately how many victims have you discussed VLNDC services with within the past quarter?**

   ○ None   ○ 10 - 12

   ○ 1 - 3   ○ 13 - 15

   ○ 4 - 6   ○ 16 or more

   ○ 7 - 9

4. **If you discussed VLNDC services with a victim this past quarter, do you believe the victim understood the VLNDC referral process?**

   ○ Yes   ○ N/A

   ○ No

5. **If you worked with a victim on completing a release form this past quarter, do you believe the victim understood what they were consenting to?**

   ○ Yes   ○ N/A

   ○ No

6. **Is there anything else that VLNDC can provide that you believe might be helpful in explaining VLNDC services to a victim?**

   ☐ Resource sheet

   ☐ Template conversation with examples

   ☐ FAQ document

   ☐ More frequent meetings

   ☐ More trainings (please list suggestions for topics):

   _____

   _____

   ☐ Other (please explain):

   _____

   _____

7. **Have you been able to use the portal to create or accept referrals?**

   ○ Yes   ○ N/A

   ○ No

8. **What, if any, difficulties do you face in submitting referrals?**
   ☐ Unclear instructions   ☐ Other (please explain):

   ☐ Page did not load
   _____

   ☐ Took too much time
   _____

   ☐ Having the client complete the
     release form

9. **If you submitted referrals this past quarter, did any clients reach out to you post submission for clarification about VLNDC services or for a status update on their VLNDC referral?**
   ○ Yes   ○ N/A

   ○ No

10. **What, if any, part of the referral process do you find works efficiently?**
    ☐ Portal was easy to use   ☐ Other (please explain):

    ☐ Quick response from VLNDC staff
    _____

    ☐ Timely processing of referral through
      the network
    _____

11. **How responsive is VLDNC staff to your needs during the referral process?**

1	2	3	4
○ **Not At All Responsive**	○ **Somewhat Responsive**	○ **Mostly Responsive**	○ **Always Responsive**

12. **Is there anything else you would like VLNDC to consider as they continue to develop the process?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. We appreciate your cooperation and

participation in the Network.

90% of the organizations responded to the survey. The following results are for the month of **December**.

1. **Approximately how many staff members at your organization generated a VLNDC referral last month?**
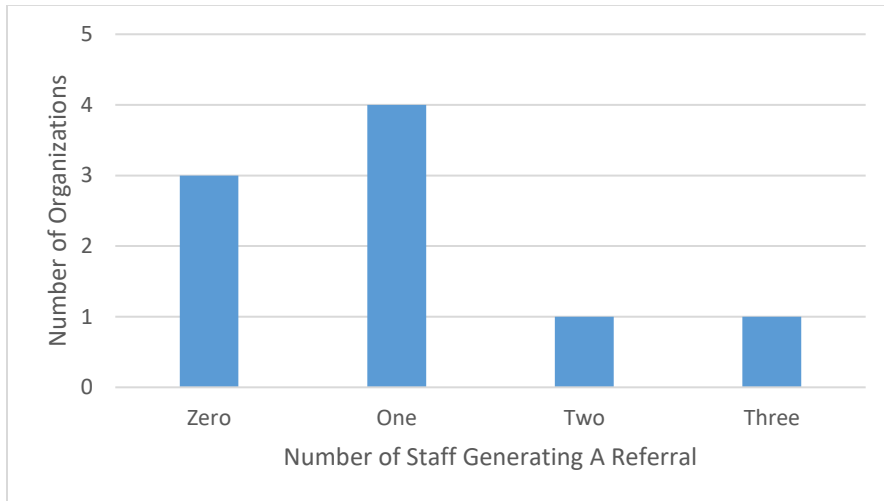

Approximately 33% (n=3) of the organizations did not have any staff members generate a VLNDC referral in the month of December. 44% of the organizations had one staff member generate a referral. The average number of staff generating referrals across the organizations is 1.

2. **Of all of the VLNDC referrals your organization submitted last month, approximately how many were completed (1) Directly on the Member Portal (2) Hard-Copy & later transferred to the Member Portal**

The number of direct member portal referrals ranged from 0 to 4, with an average of 2. Hard-copy referrals that were later transferred to the portal ranged from 0 to 1.

3. **Approximately how many victims did you discuss VLNDC services with last month?**

Approximately 67% of all organizations discussed VLNDC services with 3 or fewer victims throughout the month of December; one organization discussed VLDNC services with 10 – 12 victims.
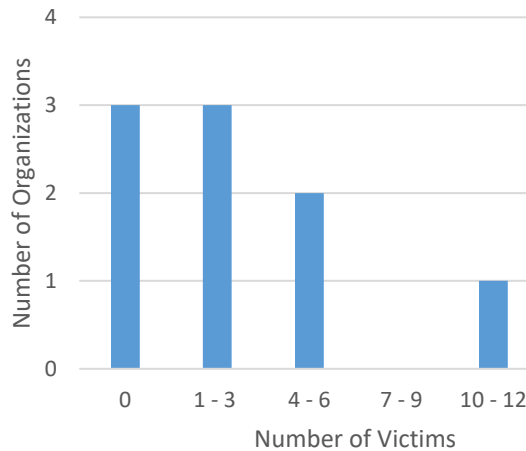
4. **If you discussed VLNDC services with a victim last month, do you believe the victim understood the VLNDC referral process?**

    Of the six organizations that answered this question, all believed the victim understood the VLNDC referral process.

5. **If you worked with a victim on completing a release form last month, do you believe the victim understood what they were consenting to?**

    Of the five organizations that answered this question, all believed the victim understood what they were consenting to.

6. **Is there anything else that we can provide that you believe might be helpful in explaining VLNDC services to a victim?**

    Two organizations responded that a resource sheet, a template conversation with examples, and an FAQ document would be helpful. All five organizations agreed that additional meetings would not be helpful. Only one organization thought additional trainings would be helpful, and they specifically noted trainings on how to best serve clients with mental conditions. Two organizations thought other resources would be helpful; (1) Brochure with graphic; (2) Simple checklist for staff.
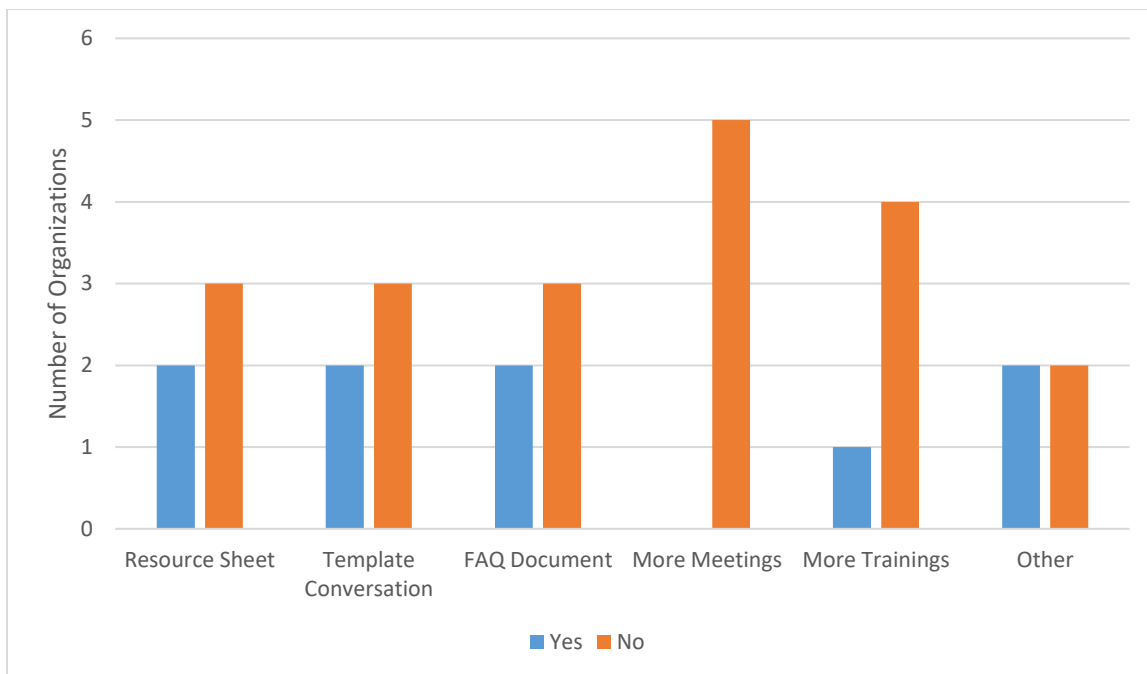
7. **Have you been able to use the portal to create or accept referrals?**

Four organizations said they have used the portal to create or accept referrals. Five organizations skipped this question.

8. **What, if any, difficulties do you face in submitting referrals?**
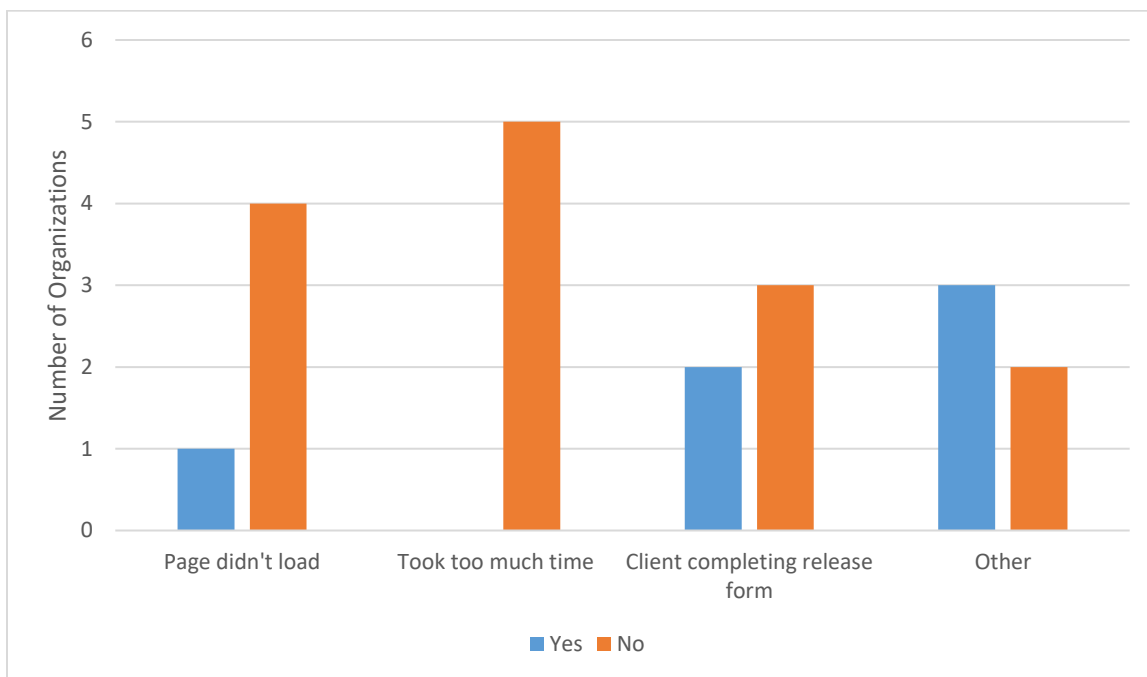
Three organizations noted that they experienced "other" difficulties in submitting referrals. Difficulties included: (1) Page layout is still not perfect; (2) Portal can be slow sometimes; and (3) It's a little

frustrating that you can't access the case file at all after sending it to the Navigator, even when the client gave the OK to share information with us.

9. **If you submitted referrals last month, did any clients reach out to you post submission for clarification about VLNDC services or for a status update on their VLNDC referral?**

Only 25% of the organizations (1 out of 4) had a client reach out to them post submission for clarification about VLNDC services or a status update. Three organizations responded that this question was "Not Applicable" and two organizations skipped this question.

10. **What, if any, part of the referral process do you find works efficiently?**

All organizations that responded to this question (n=6) reported that VLNDC staff responds quickly. Half thought the portal was easy to use; but the other half reported the opposite. Findings were also mixed regarding the timely processing of referrals.
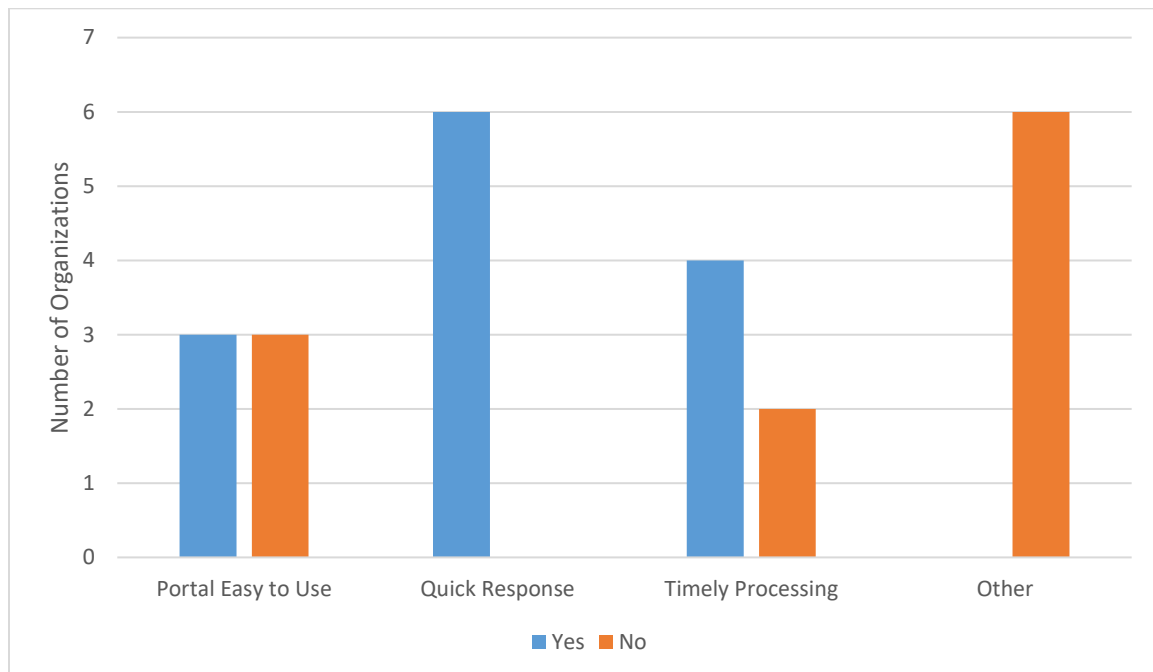
11. **How responsive is VLDNC staff to your needs during the referral process?**

All eight organizations that responded to this question believed that the VLNDC staff is always responsive to their needs during the referral process.

12. **Is there anything else you would like us to consider as we continue to develop our process?**

Organizations did not have any additional information for the month of December.

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Facilitator Feedback
January 2018

Description: Facilitators are staff members of Member organization that act as liaisons between the Navigator and the Member. In order to provide confidential real-time feedback about the functionality and ease of conducting referrals, one Facilitator from each Member organization completes a brief survey on behalf of their organization on a monthly basis. The survey is disseminated via email on the last business day of the month. Facilitators are given one week to complete it, followed by a reminder email and an additional 5 business days.

Response rate: 50%. Ten member organizations were invited to participate in the survey; five either partially or fully completed the survey. All five participants responded after the initial dissemination. There were no additional responses after followup.

The **findings** reflect the valid percent, or the proportion of the member organizations that answered each specific question. The total number of organizations that answered questions ranged from a low of 2 to a high of 5.

All **5** organizations that completed this survey think that VLNDC is **always responsive** to their needs during the referral process.

Referrals

Three organizations (33% of all member organizations) had at least one staff member generate a referral. The average number of staff generating referrals across the organizations is 1. Two organizations had one staff member generate a referral and one organization had 3 staff generate referrals.

Number of Staff Making Referrals
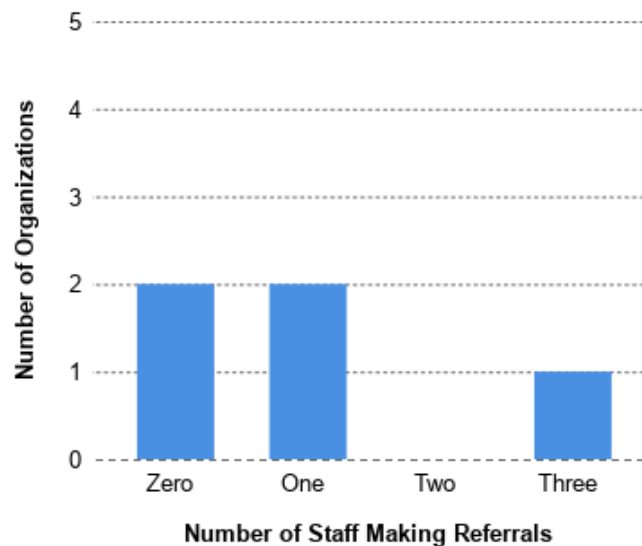
This past month a total of three organizations made five referrals. One organization made three referrals on the Portal. One organization made one Hard-Copy referral and one organization made one Portal referral.

Number of Referrals by Type

Hard-copy   Portal

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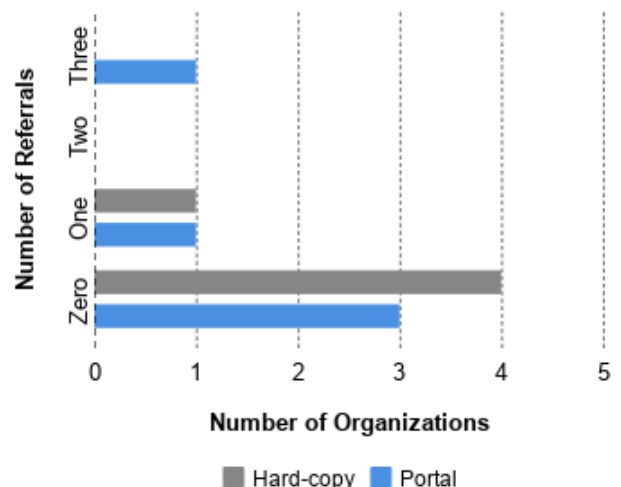
Requested Resources

Two organizations discussed VLNDC services with **4-6 victims** throughout the month of January; one organization discussed VLNDC services with **3 or fewer victims**. All organizations believed the victim understood VLNDC referral process (n=3) and understood what they were consenting to (n=3).

- -

Organizations were asked what additional
resources they would find helpful in explaining VLNDC services to victims:

67%
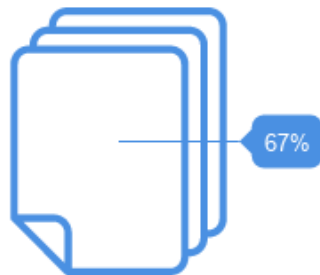
67% of organizations requested more
FAQ Documents and Templates

33%
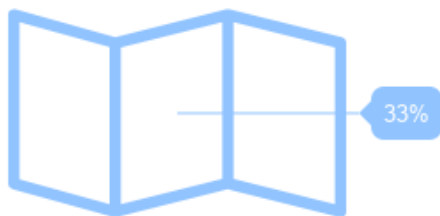
33% of organizations requested more
Resource Sheets and *Other* (e.g. Brochures)

0%

0% of organizations requested
More Meetings and *More Trainings*

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Referral Submissions

100% of organizations that returned the survey answered in the affirmative that they used the Portal to create or accept referrals.

Successes:

5 organizations reported efficiencies with using the Portal:

100% agreed that there was a *quick response*

100%

80% believe there is *timely processing*

80%

60% said the portal was *easy to use*

60%

Difficulties:

3 organizations reported difficulties with using the Portal:

67% reported challenges with *clients completing the release form*

67%

33% reported that the *page did not load*

33%

Other Challenges include:

- User interface of Portal
- Not getting notifications

67%

0% of the organizations had a client reach out to them post submission for clarification about VLNDC services for a status update.

Trends

Number of Staff Making Referrals by Month
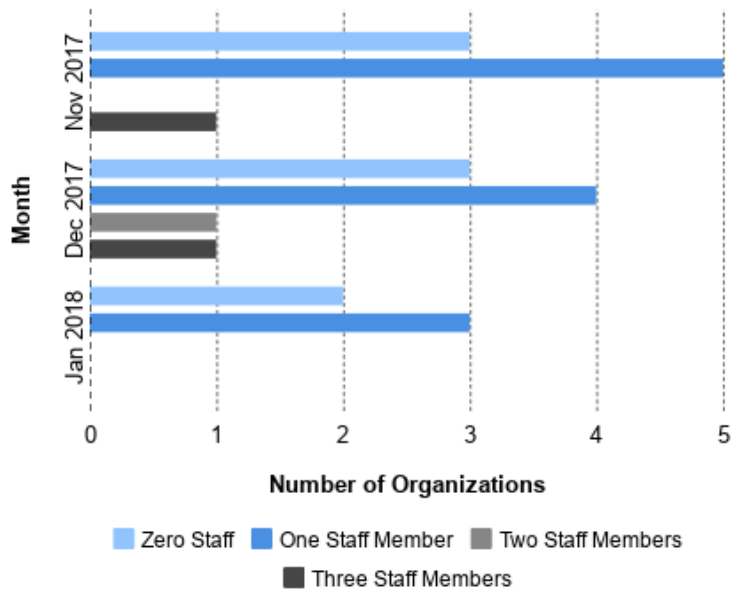
The total number of staff members making referrals across responding organizations:

- November 2017: 8 Staff
- December 2017: 9 Staff
- January 2018: 3 Staff

Types of Referral by Month
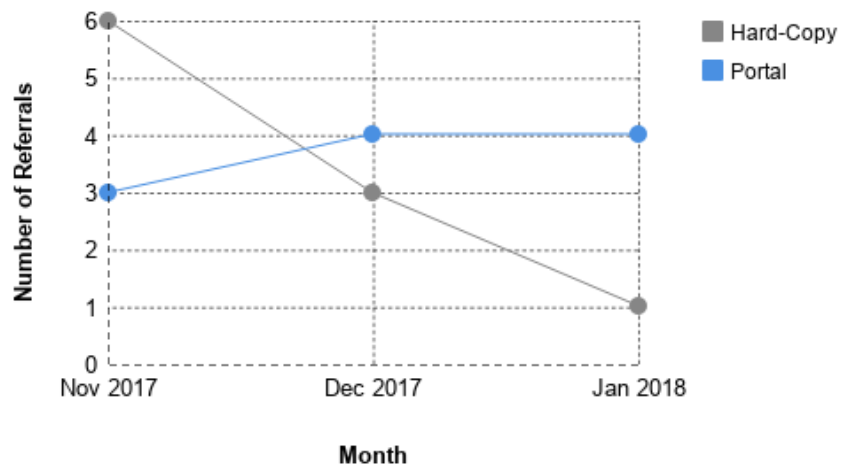
Over the past three months, the frequency of Portal referrals increased and the frequently of Hard-Copy referrals decreased.

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Most Requested Resource

1

2

5

Over the past three months, *a FAQ Sheet* has been the most requested resource (8 times).

■ November 2017 ■ December 2017
■ January 2018

Top Success and Top Difficulty

Over the past three months, the top reported success has been the *quick response of the VLNDC Staff* (100% of those that responded to the question).
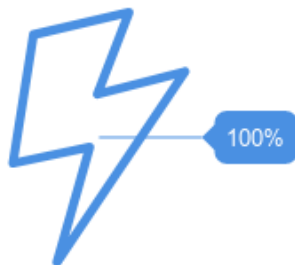
Over the past three months, the top reported difficulty has been the challenges with *clients completing the release form* (53% of those that responded to the question).

100%

53%

February Results

90% of the organizations responded to the survey.

1. **Approximately how many staff members at your organization generated a VLNDC referral last month? (n=9)**
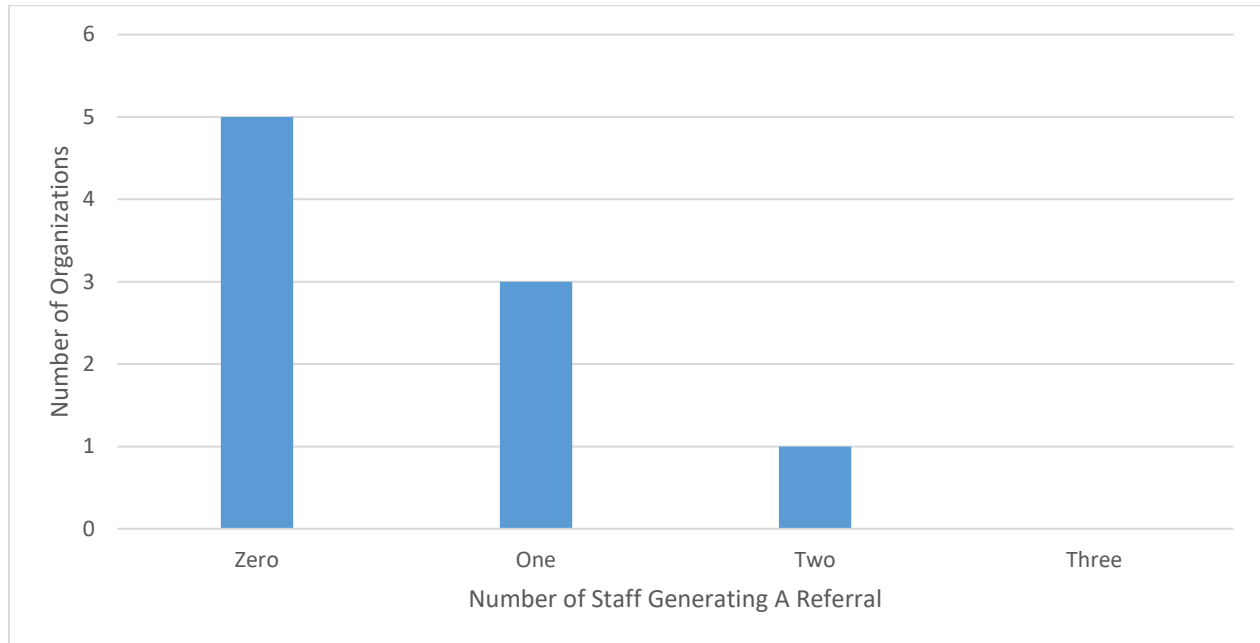
Five organizations (55.6%) of the organizations did not have any staff members generate a VLNDC referral in the month of December. Three of the organizations had one staff member generate a referral. One organization had two staff members generate a referral.

2. **How many VLNDC referrals did your organization submit this month? (n=9)**

67% (n=6) organizations did not submit any referrals this month. The number of referrals per organization ranged from a low of 0 to a high of 4.
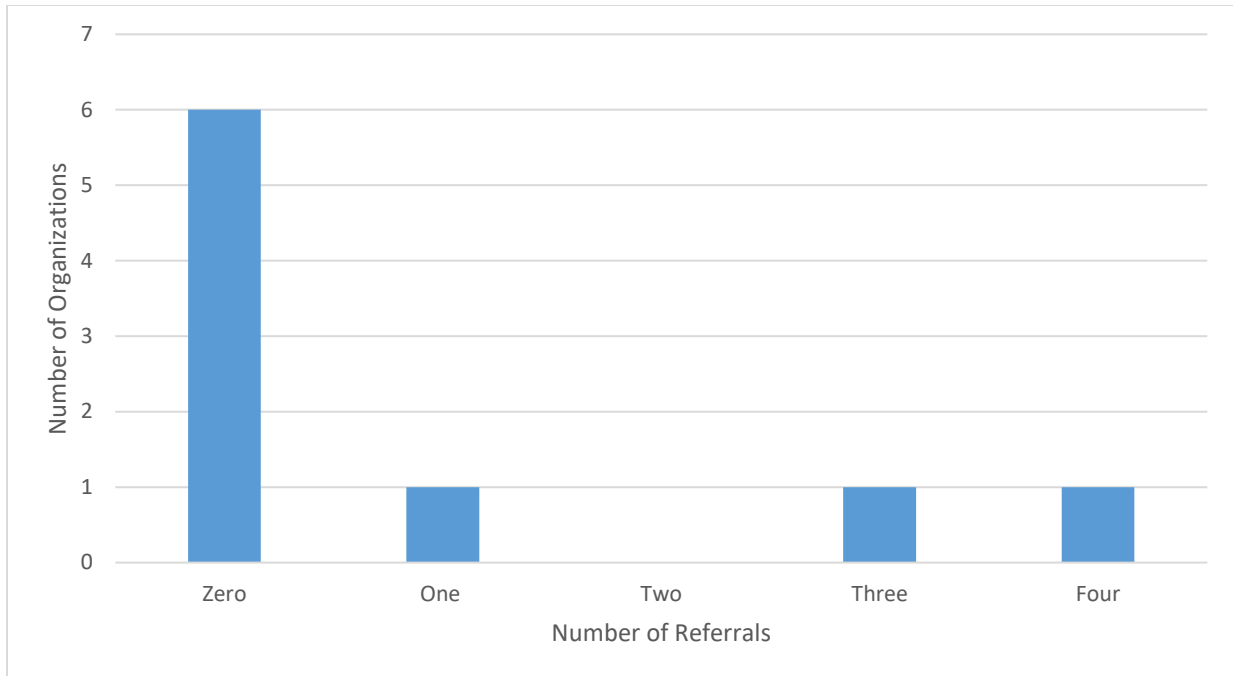
3. **How many VLNDC referrals were completed (1) Directly on the Member Portal (2) Hard-Copy to be later transferred to the Member Portal? (n=9)**
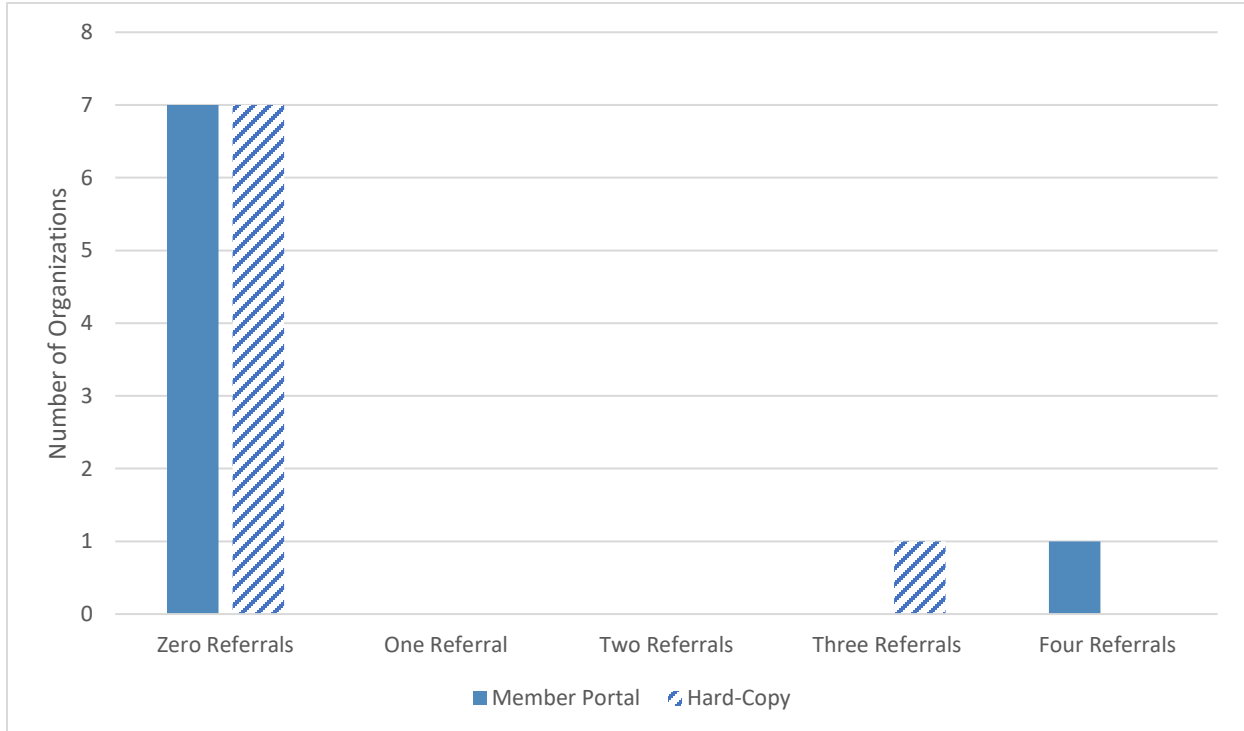
One organization made 4 referrals on the Member Portal and 0 Hard-Copy referrals. One organization made 3 Hard-Copy referrals and 0 Member Portal referrals. Five organizations made 0 referrals for both the Member Portal and Hard-Copy but one of these five organizations noted that they did make one referral by providing the victim with the VLNDC phone number. Two organizations wrote "Not Applicable" for these questions, so those two organizations made 0 referrals on the Member Portal and 0 Hard-Copy referrals as well.

The number of direct member portal referrals ranged from 0 to 4, with an average of .50. Hard-copy referrals that were later transferred to the portal ranged from 0 to 3, with an average of .38.

4. **Approximately how many victims did you discuss VLNDC services with last month? (n=9)**

   Two organizations discussed VLNDC services with no victims within the month of February. Four organizations (44%) discussed VLNDC services with 1-3 victims; two organizations (22%) discussed VLNDC services with 4-6 victims; one organization (11%) discussed VLNDC services with 7-9 victims.
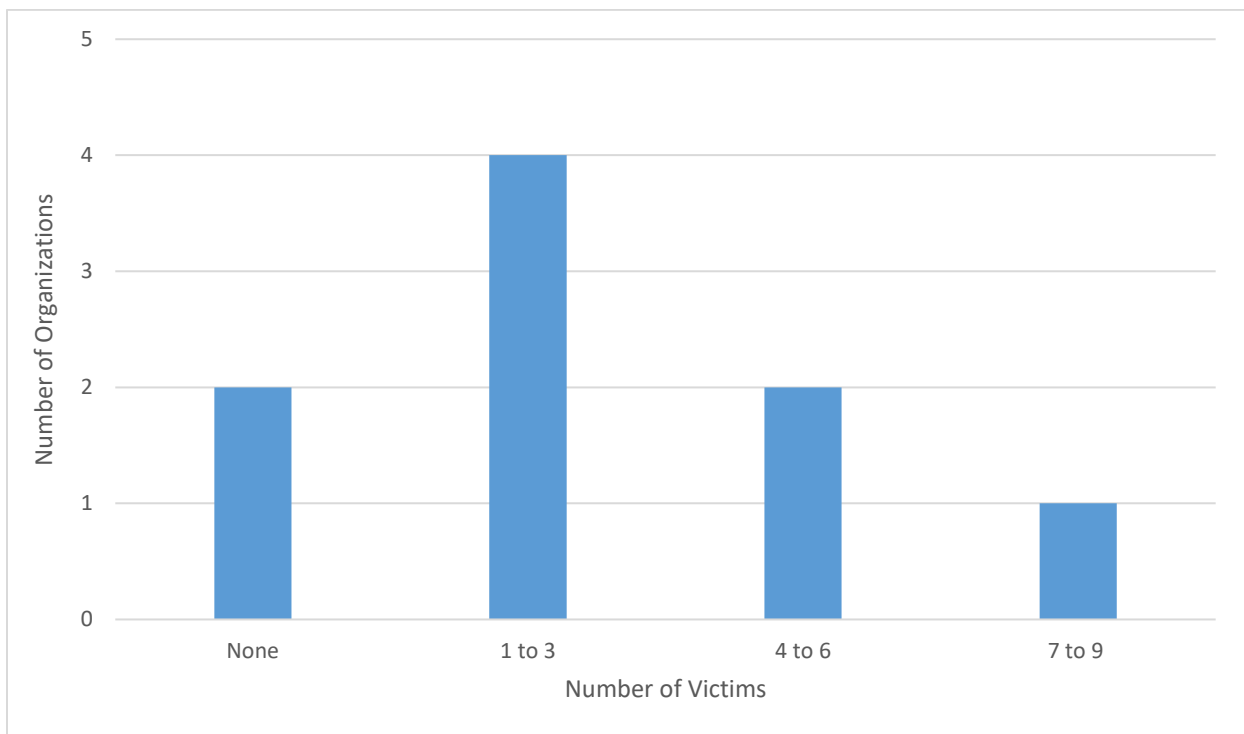
5. **If you discussed VLNDC services with a victim last month, do you believe the victim understood the VLNDC referral process? (n=6)**

   Five organizations believed the victim understood the VLNDC referral process. One organization responded that the victim did not understand VLNDC.

6. **If you worked with a victim on completing a release form last month, do you believe the victim understood what they were consenting to? (n=9)**

   Four organizations believed the victim understood what they were consenting to, whereas the other 5 indicated that this question was not applicable this month.

7. **Is there anything else that we can provide that you believe might be helpful in explaining VLNDC services to a victim? (n=4)**

One organization responded that a resource sheet and a template conversation with examples would be helpful. Three organizations responded that an FAQ document would be helpful. All four organizations agreed that additional meetings would not be helpful. Only one organization thought additional trainings would be helpful, and they specifically noted trainings on how to best serve clients with mental conditions or in distress. One organization thought other "brochures" would be helpful.
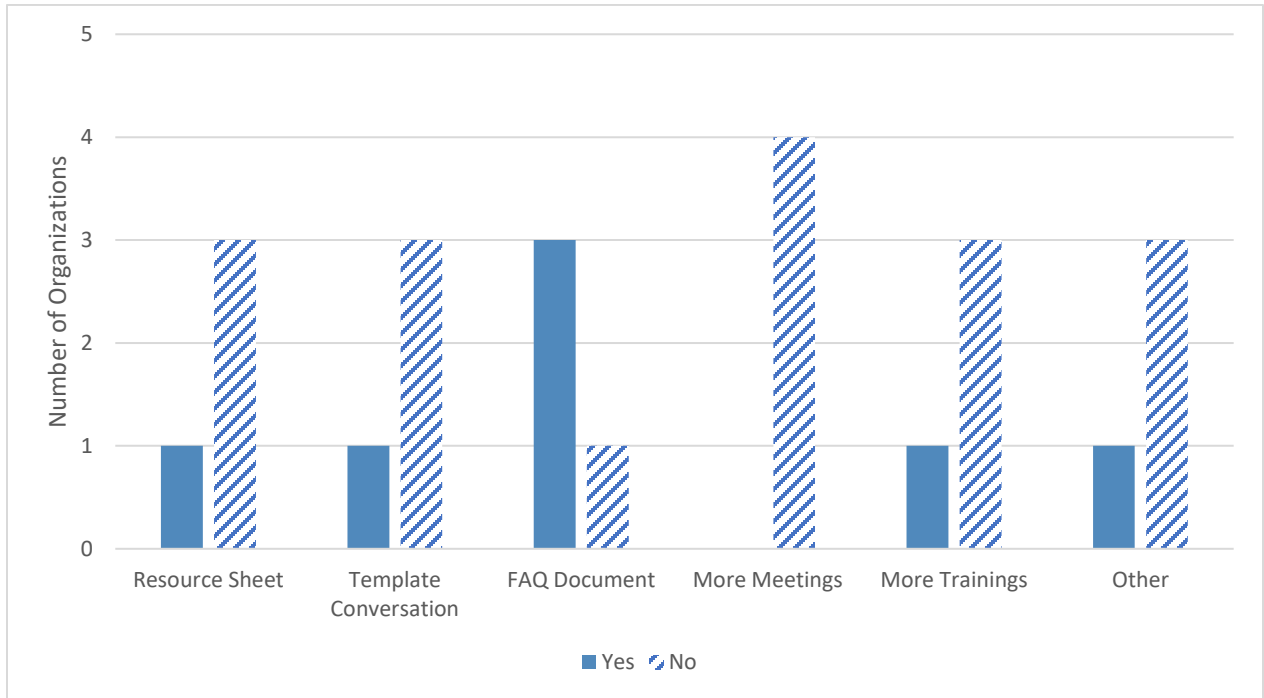
8. **Have you been able to use the portal to create or accept referrals? (n=6)**

Six organizations said they have used the portal to create or accept referrals. Three organizations wrote "Not Applicable" to this question.

9. **What, if any, difficulties do you face in submitting referrals? (n=4)**
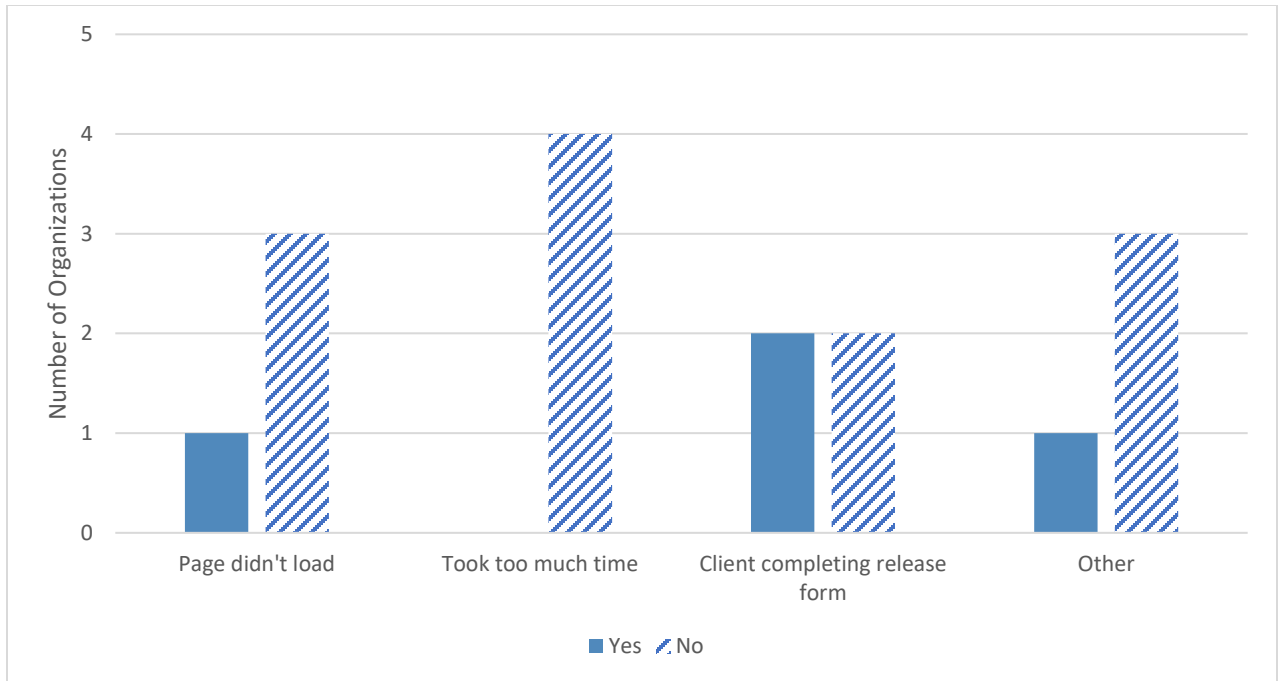
One organization noted that they experienced "other" difficulties in submitting referrals, the difficulty was the "portal website layout."

10. **If you submitted referrals last month, did any clients reach out to you post submission for clarification about VLNDC services or for a status update on their VLNDC referral? (n=3)**

Of three organizations that made a referral last month, only one had a client reach out to them post submission for clarification about VLNDC services or a status update.

11. **What, if any, part of the referral process do you find works efficiently? (n=5)**

All organizations that responded to this question reported that VLNDC staff responds quickly. Three organizations thought the portal was easy to use; but the other two reported the opposite. Four organizations found there was timely processing of referrals, though one organization did not.
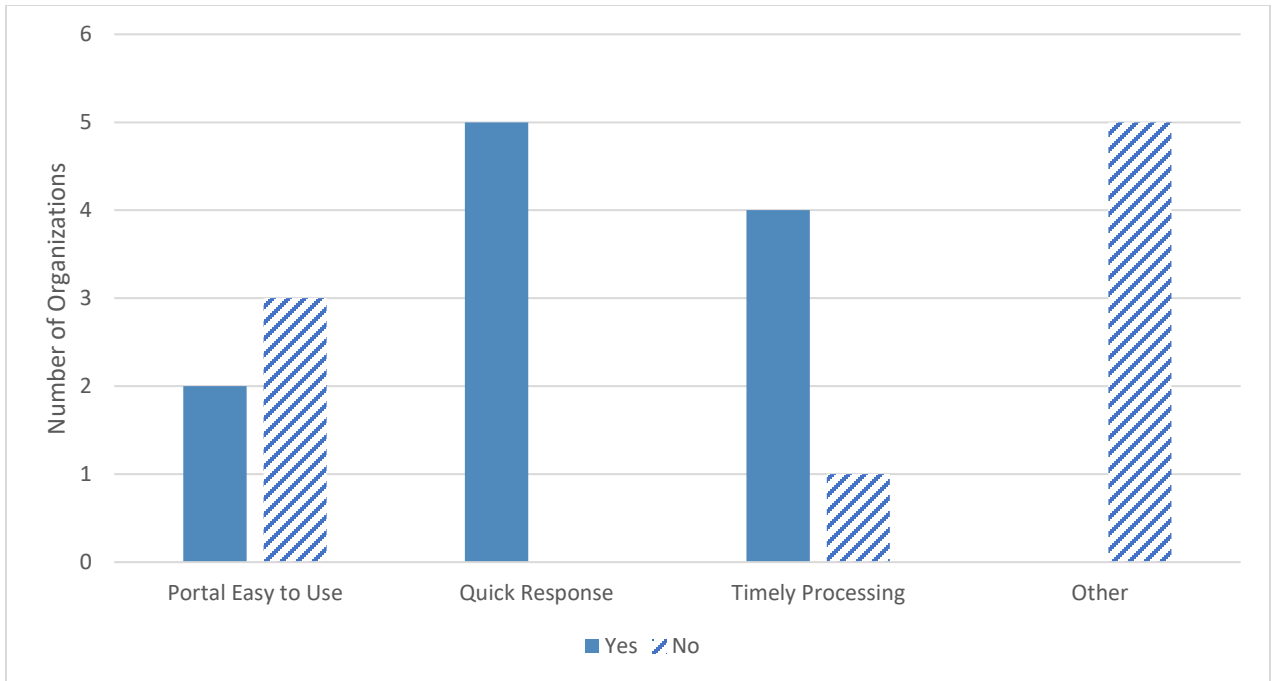
12. **How responsive is VLDNC staff to your needs during the referral process? (n=9)**

All organizations that responded to this question believed that the VLNDC staff is always responsive to their needs during the referral process.

13. **Is there anything else you would like us to consider as we continue to develop our process?**

Organizations did not have any additional information for the month of February.

Trend Results
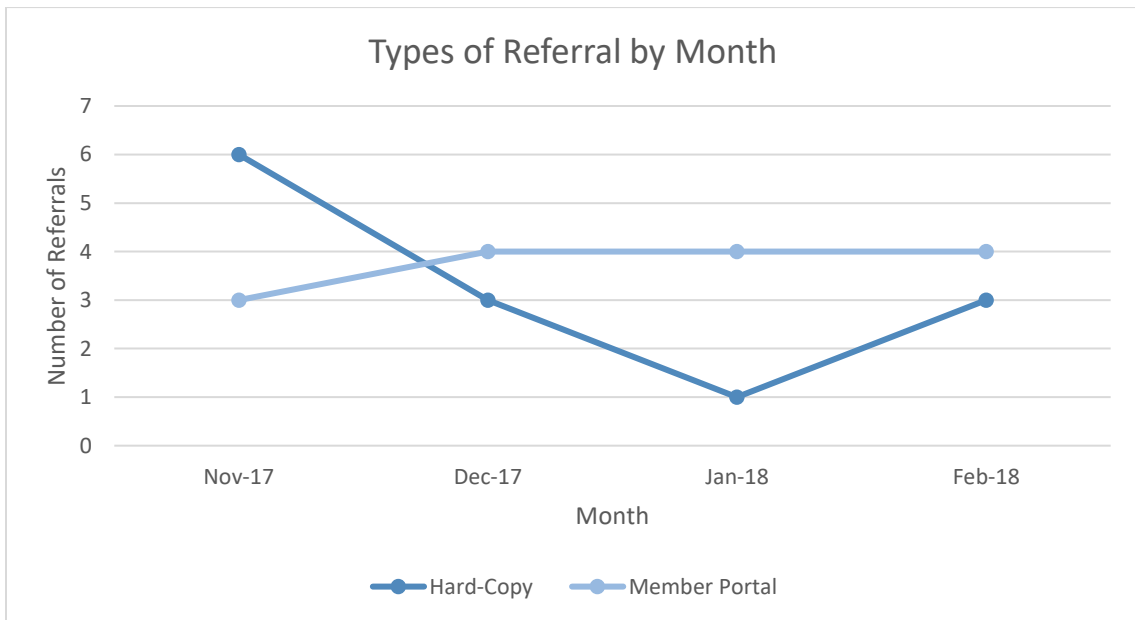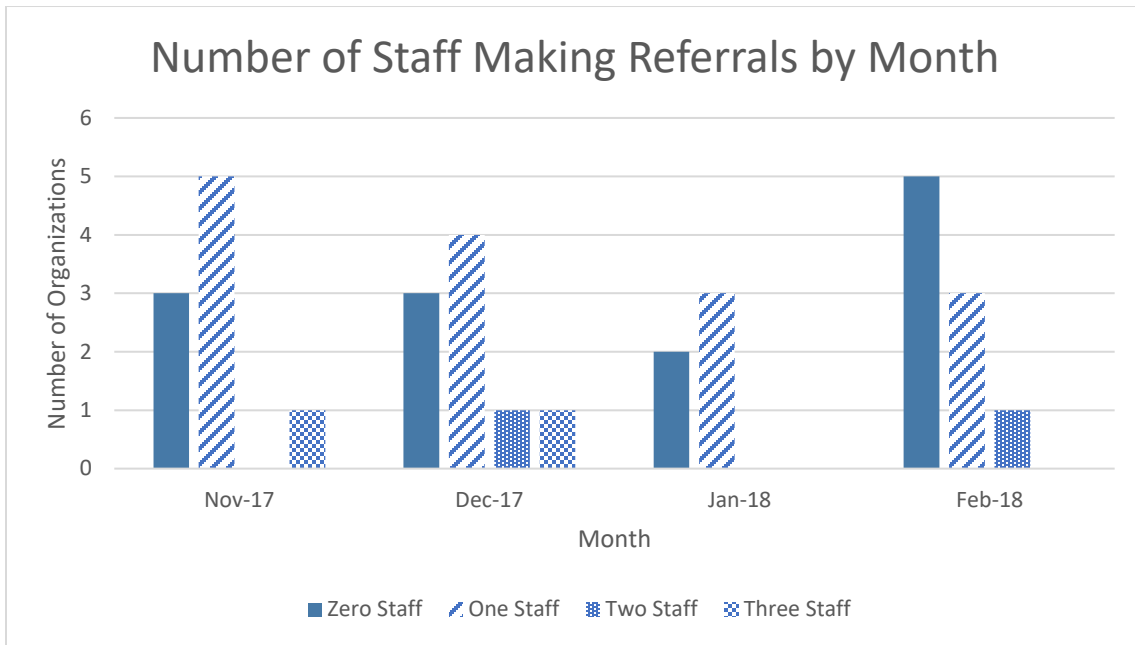
Number of Staff Making Referrals by Month

Types of Referral by Month

The most frequently requested resource over the last four months has been ***an FAQ Sheet,*** which has been requested a total of 14 times.

Top Success and Top Difficulty: Over the past four months, the top reported success has been the ***quick response of the VLNDC Staff*** (100% of those that responded to the question, n=22). Over the past four months, the top reported difficulty has been the challenges with ***clients completing the release form*** (50% of those that responded to the question, n=11).

March Results

80% of the organizations responded to the survey.

1. **Approximately how many staff members at your organization generated a VLNDC referral last month? (n=7)**
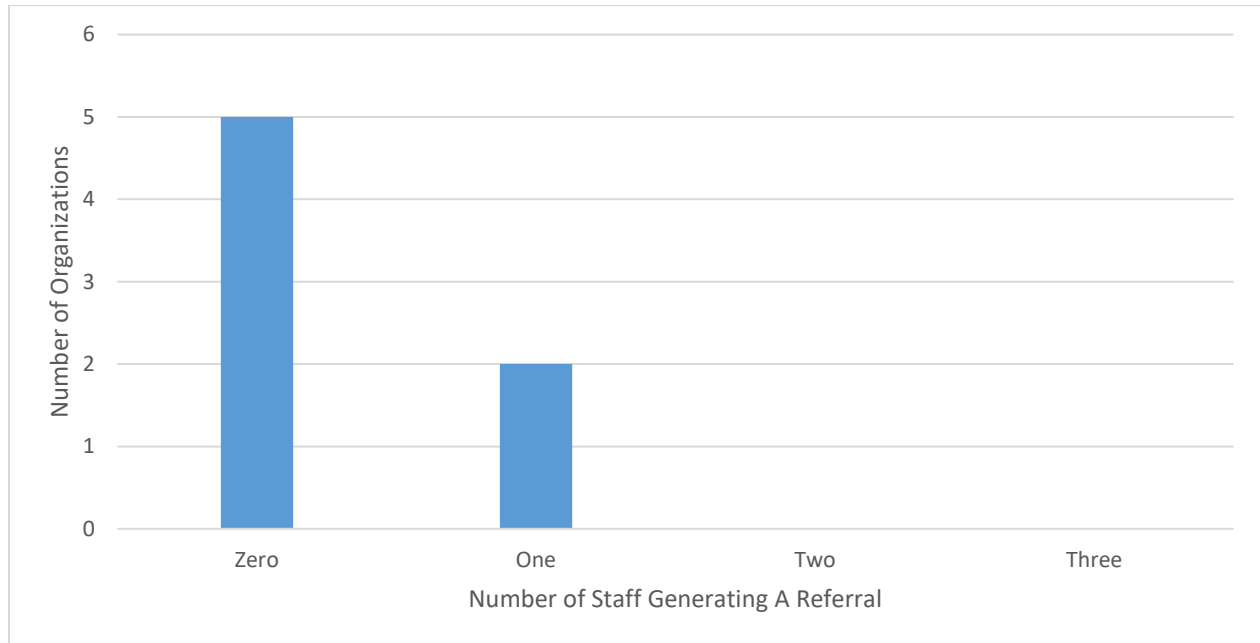
Five organizations (71%) of the organizations did not have any staff members generate a VLNDC referral in the month of March. Two of the organizations had one staff member generate a referral.

2. **How many VLNDC referrals did your organization submit this month? (n=8)**

63% (n=5) of the organizations did not submit any referrals this month. The number of referrals per organization ranged from a low of zero to a high of two.
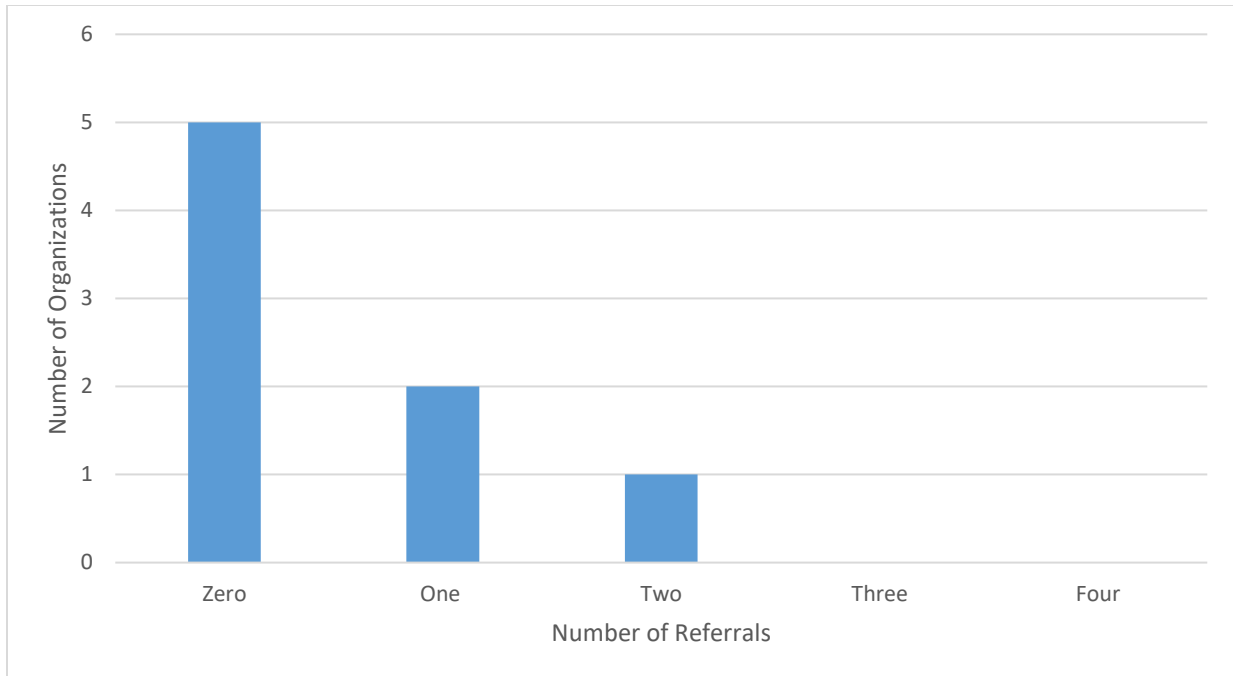
3. **How many VLNDC referrals were completed (1) Directly on the Member Portal (2) Hard-Copy to be later transferred to the Member Portal? (n=8)**
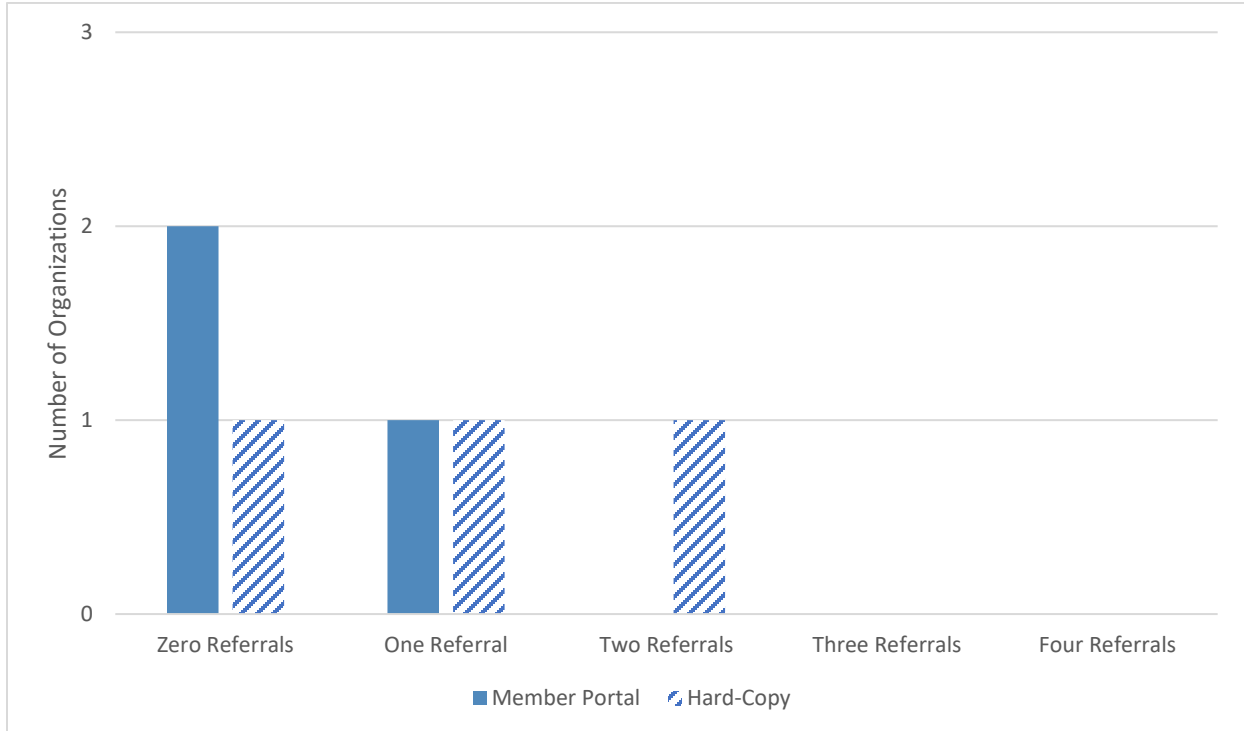
One organization made one referral on the Member Portal and zero Hard-Copy referrals. One organization made two Hard-Copy referrals. One organization made one Hard-Copy referral and zero Member portal referrals.

The number of direct member portal referrals ranged from zero to one, with an average of .25. Hard-copy referrals that were later transferred to the portal ranged from zero to two, with an average of .75.

Five organizations did not submit a referral for the month of March, so this question is not applicable to them.

4. **Approximately how many victims did you discuss VLNDC services with last month? (n=8)**

Three organizations discussed VLNDC services with no victims within the month of March. Four organizations (50%) discussed VLNDC services with 1-3 victims; one organization (13%) discussed VLNDC services with 4-6 victims.
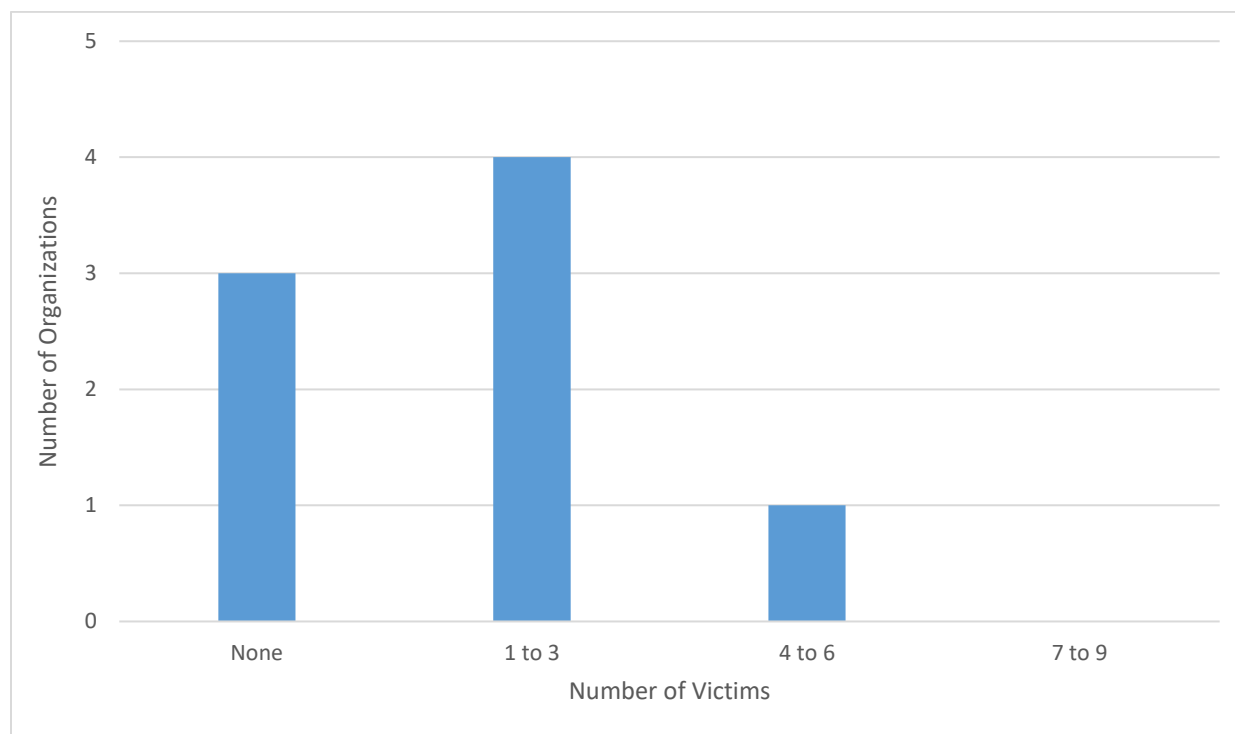
5. **If you discussed VLNDC services with a victim last month, do you believe the victim understood the VLNDC referral process? (n=8)**

Four organizations believed the victim understood the VLNDC referral process. Four organizations indicated that this question was not applicable this month.

6. **If you worked with a victim on completing a release form last month, do you believe the victim understood what they were consenting to? (n=8)**

Three organizations believed the victim understood what they were consenting to, whereas the other five indicated that this question was not applicable this month.

7. **Is there anything else that we can provide that you believe might be helpful in explaining VLNDC services to a victim? (n=2)**

One organization responded that a resource sheet would be helpful and another organization responded that a template conversation with examples would be helpful. Both organizations agreed that an FAQ document, additional meetings, additional trainings would not be helpful, and they did not have any other suggestions.
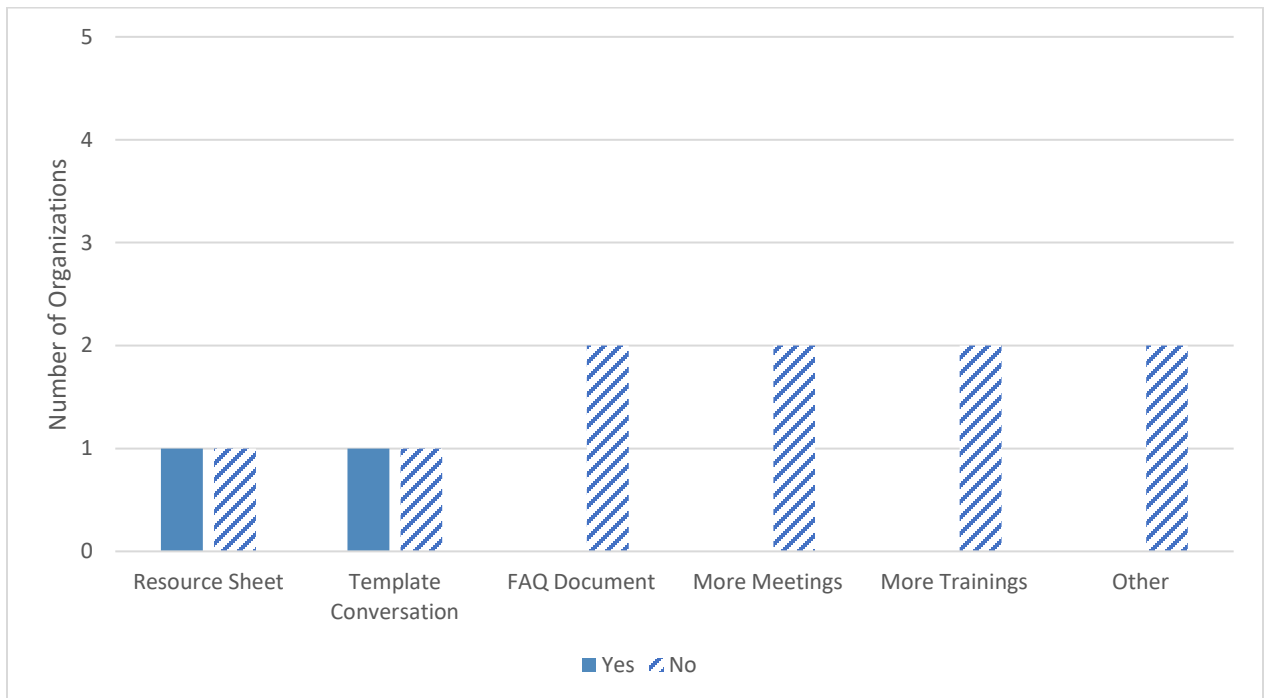
8. **Have you been able to use the portal to create or accept referrals? (n=8)**

Seven organizations said they have used the portal to create or accept referrals. One organization indicated that this question was not applicable this month.

9. **What, if any, difficulties do you face in submitting referrals? (n=4)**

One organization reported difficulty with the page loading whereas another organization encountered difficulties with the client completing the release form. Two organizations noted that they experienced "other" difficulties in submitting referrals. One organization wrote that the "legal issue [was] not handled by providers." One organization wrote, "we will do our first referral this month (April), prior to this we have only accepted referrals, not made them."
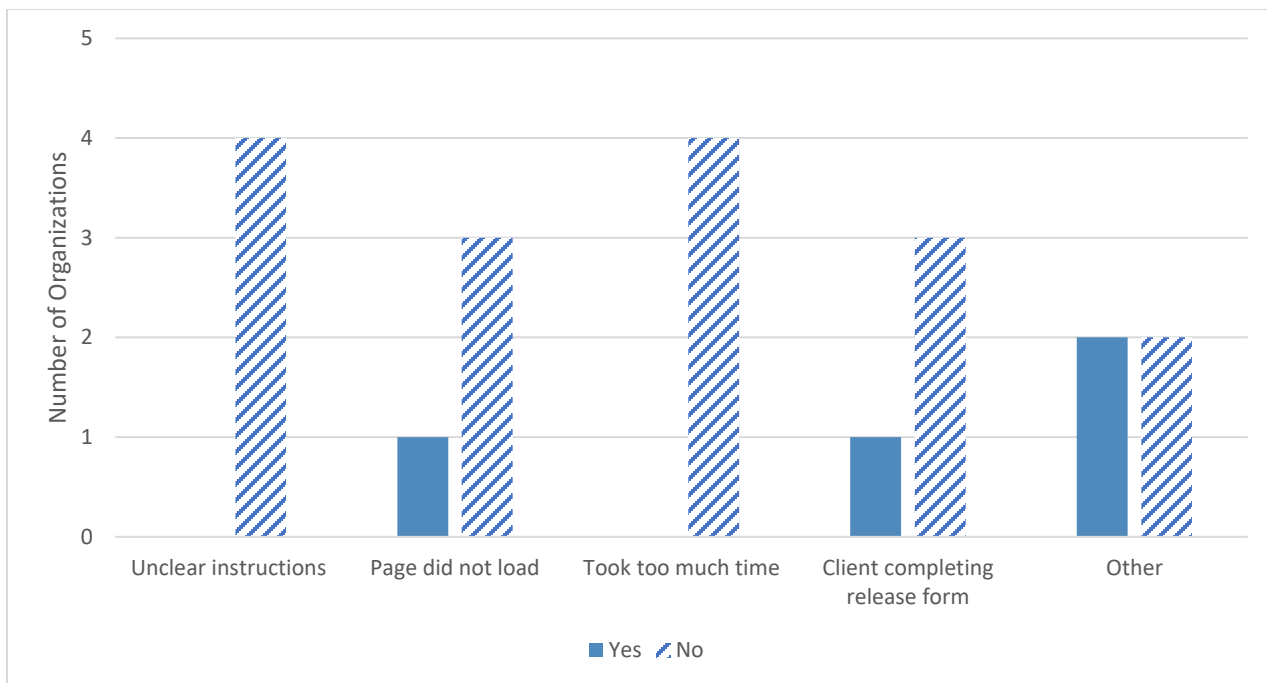
10. **If you submitted referrals last month, did any clients reach out to you post submission for clarification about VLNDC services or for a status update on their VLNDC referral? (n=3)**

Of three organizations that made a referral last month, only one had a client reach out to them post submission for clarification about VLNDC services or a status update.

11. **What, if any, part of the referral process do you find works efficiently? (n=4)**

All organizations that responded to this question reported that VLNDC staff responds quickly. Three organizations found there was timely processing of referrals, though one organization did not. Three organizations did **not** feel that the portal was easy to use; but one organization reported the opposite.
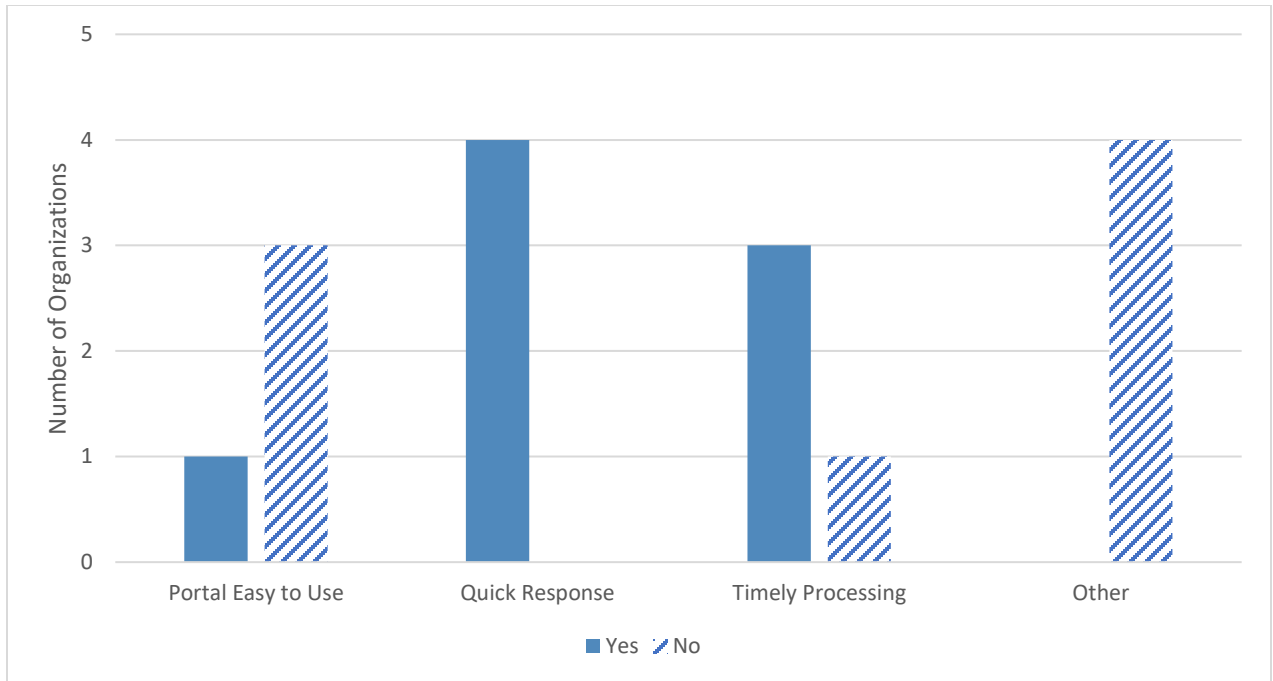
12. **How responsive is VLDNC staff to your needs during the referral process? (n=8)**

   Seven organizations believed that the VLNDC staff is always responsive to their needs during the referral process. One organization believed that VLNDC staff was mostly responsive to their needs during the referral process.

13. **Is there anything else you would like us to consider as we continue to develop our process?**

   One organization added that, "It would be great to get a notification when a client completes the release online. Right now there's no way to confirm this."

Trend Results
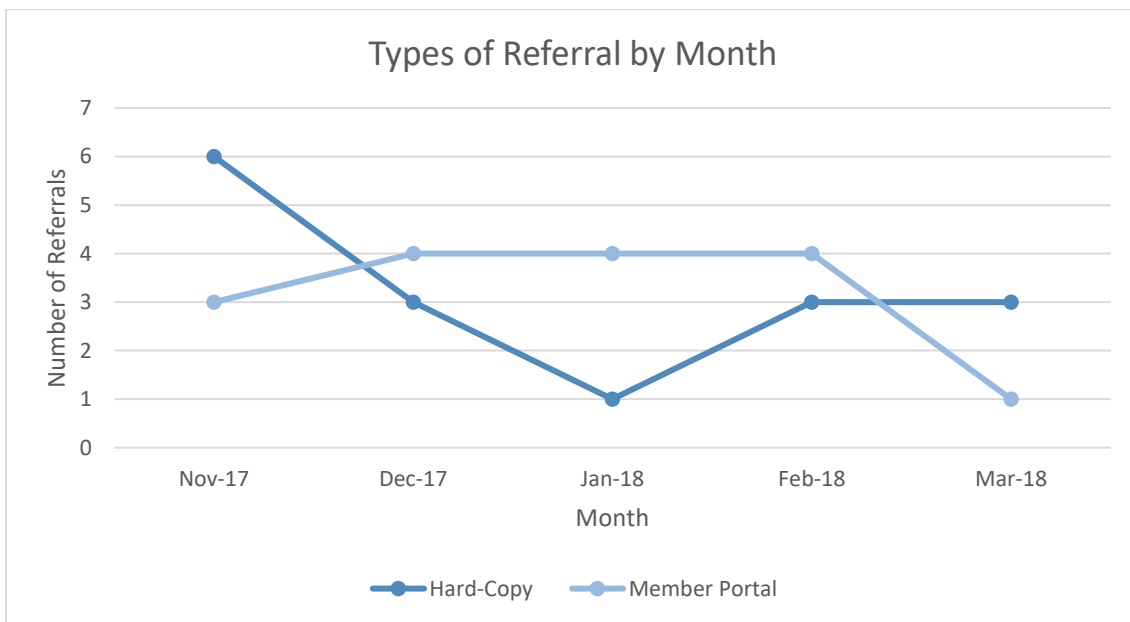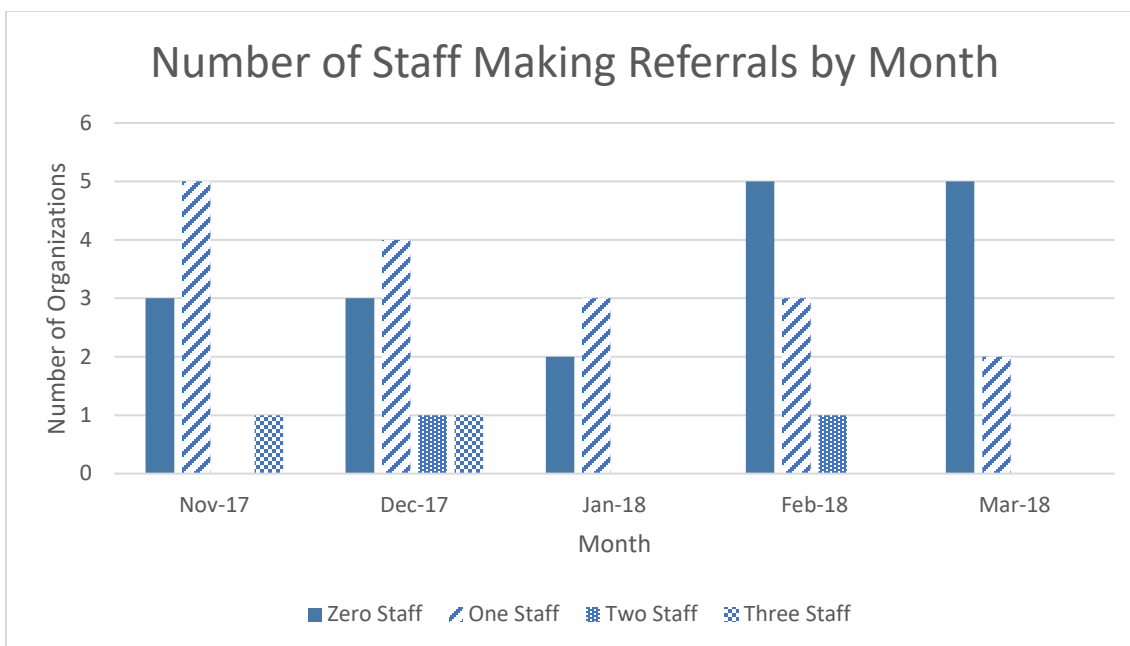
Number of Staff Making Referrals by Month

Number of Organizations (y-axis), Month (x-axis)

Legend: ■ Zero Staff ▨ One Staff ▦ Two Staff ⊠ Three Staff

Types of Referral by Month

Number of Referrals (y-axis), Month (x-axis)

Legend: ● Hard-Copy ● Member Portal

The most frequently requested resource over the last four months has been *an FAQ Sheet,* which has been requested a total of 14 times.

Top Success and Top Difficulty: Over the past five months, the top reported success has been the *quick response of the VLNDC Staff* (100% of those that responded to the question, n=31). Over the past five months, the top reported difficulty has been the challenges with *clients completing the release form* (46% of those that responded to the question, n=26).

APPENDIX G: MEMBER ORGANIZATION FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL AND REPORT

I.   Structure of Network

1. How has the structure of the network impacted the referral process?
   a. How do you keep track of network referrals?
   b. What processes could help you refer clients into the network?
   c. What are some of the benefits of having one Navigator coordinate the referral process?
      i. What are some weaknesses?

2. What are some of the benefits of having one (or a few) facilitators at each member organization as the point of contact for the network?
   a. Do you feel that other staff are equally knowledgeable about the network and able to step into the facilitator role if needed?
   b. How are your organization's internal processes being integrated into the network referral process?

3. What about the network structure makes it efficient?
   a. Is using the portal an effective means for the referral process?
   b. Is there another way to structure the network to make it:
      i. More efficient
      ii. Better align with the needs of DC crime victims?
   c. Are the network meetings efficient?
      iii. What would make the network meetings more efficient?

4. How should client or victim feedback be effectively integrated into improving the network?
   a. If another organization receives negative, or positive, feedback about your services, how would you want to be informed?
   b. If your organization receives negative, or positive, feedback about another organization's services, how would you handle this information?

5. What network resources do you find helpful? (i.e., user guide, navigator available for questions

6. What is the ideal size of a network?
   c. How many member organizations should be involved?
   d. What types of legal member organizations should be involved?
   e. What are the benefits of expanding the network?
   f. What are the trade-offs in expanding the network?

7. Looking back how would you suggest that other legal partners be integrated into the network?

8. What do you think would incentive organizations to participant in this network?
   a. What non-financial incentives would motivate an organization to join the network?

9. What non- financial incentives would keep you motivated and active in the network?

II. Participation in the Network

10. How would you describe your overall experience being a member organization in the network?

11. Describe the benefits that you or your organization has experienced from participating in the network.

12. Describe any challenges that you or your organization has faced participating in the network.

13. How has participation in the network impacted your collaboration with other legal service providers in the DC area?

14. For those of you from organizations that have multiple departments but only one is involved in the network: Are there any barriers to expanding VLNDC screening beyond existing programs within your organization?
    a. What are the challenges with that?

III. Sustainability and Future of the Network

15. (*Reference the flipchart with areas that need improvement*). Moving forward, what are some ways that VLNDC can address these areas you identified as needing improvement?

16. (*Hand out note cards*). I'd like each of you to take a few minutes and think about two key successes of the network from your organization's perspective. Please write them on the notecards provided. We will then ask anybody that wants to share what they wrote to do so. We will be collecting the cards to include in our findings, so please write legibly. Be as specific as possible.

17. [*Hand out note cards – different* color] Now we are going to repeat the same exercise. This time, please write down to key hurdles facing the network. We will collect them, write the responses on the whiteboard, and then brainstorm possible solutions. We will not link responses with participants, so please be honest.
    a. Brainstorm possible solutions to identified hurdles

If there is additional time:

IV. DC Legal Community

18. What are the primary legal needs that DC crime victims have?

19. What are some of the best or strongest legal services offered in the DC legal community?

     a.   What are some of the areas that need improvement?
           i.   How has VLNDC addressed any of these areas (either in part or whole)?

20. How has VLNDC affected legal services provided to DC crime victims?

I. Network Structure and Processes

1. How has the structure of the network impacted the referral process?
    a. What would make the portal a more effective means for the referral process?
    b. What processes could help you refer clients into the network?
    c. What are some of the benefits of having a Navigator coordinate the referral process?
        i. What are some weaknesses?

2. Are the network meetings valuable to the development of the network?
        i. What would make the network meetings more valuable?

3. How are your organization's internal processes being integrated into the network referral process?
    a. What are some of the benefits of having one (or a few) facilitators at each member organization as the point of contact for the network?
    b. How do you keep track of network referrals sent to your organization after the initial intake is conducted by your organization?

4. How should client or victim feedback be effectively integrated into improving the network?
    a. If another organization receives negative, or positive, feedback about your services, how would you want to be informed?
    b. If your organization receives negative, or positive, feedback about another organization's services, how would you handle this information?

5. What resources would you find helpful in your participation with the network? (i.e., user guide, navigator available for questions)
    a. What resources provided to you have you already used and how did you use them?

6. Looking back how would you suggest that other legal partners be integrated into the network?

II. Participation in the Network

7. How would you describe your overall experience being a member organization in the network?

8. Describe the benefits that you or your organization has experienced from participating in the network.

9. Describe any challenges that you or your organization has faced participating in the network.

10. How has participation in the network impacted your collaboration with other legal service providers in the DC area?

11. What non-financial incentives would keep you motivated and active in the network?

12. For those of you from organizations that have multiple departments but only one is involved in the network: Are there any barriers to expanding VLNDC screening beyond existing programs within your organization?
    a. What are the challenges with that?

III. Network Impact on the DC Legal Community

13. How has VLNDC affected legal services provided to DC crime victims?
    a. Please share one or two stories – without divulging private information – about how the Network has positively impacted your clients.

14. What aspects of the Network align well with the needs of DC crime victims?
    a. What improvements can be made to the Network to better align with the needs of DC crime victims?

IV. Sustainability and Future of the Network

15. (*Hand out note cards).* I'd like each of you to take a few minutes and think about two key successes of the network from your organization's perspective. Please write them on the notecards provided. We will then ask anybody that wants to share what they wrote to do so. We will be collecting the cards to include in our findings, so please write legibly. Be as specific as possible.

16. [*Hand out note cards – different* color] Now we are going to repeat the same exercise. This time, please write down to key hurdles facing the network. We will collect them, write the responses on the whiteboard, and then brainstorm possible solutions. We will not link responses with participants, so please be honest.
    a. Brainstorm possible solutions to identified hurdles

March 2018

Victim Legal Network of DC Local Evaluation: Findings from the Member Organization Focus Group

FOCUS GROUP OVERVIEW

This issue brief is the result of an Office for Victims Service Justice Grants funded local evaluation of the Victim Legal Network of DC (VLNDC). Funded in summer 2017, the purpose of the local evaluation is to understand the experiences of crime victims in Washington, D.C. and improve the VLNDC to better meet the needs of its members and crime victims.

This issue brief provides findings on the experiences and perspectives of member organizations about their participation in the Network. To capture the experiences of member organizations, researchers hosted a focus group with member organization facilitators and stakeholders to gather their feedback in being a part of the Network and the Network's processes.

METHODOLOGY

Information presented in this brief was collected through a focus group consisting of nine respondents from the member organizations of the VLNDC. Participants were recruited via email sent to each facilitator housed within the member organizations. Facilitators were invited to participate in the focus group themselves and/or invite other staff with them that are involved with the daily processes of the VLNDC. Participants covered a range of positions including attorneys, assistants, and directors. This focus group was a one-hour semi-structured discussion facilitated by the local researcher, ICF. Findings from the focus group were analyzed using qualitative coding to provide information regarding the experiences of member organizations within the Network.

FINDINGS

The focus group discussion centered on the structure of the Network, successes and challenges of the Network, and expanding the Network past the original ten member organizations. Findings from this discussion fell into five categories: (1) Referrals, (2) Network Expansion, (3) Portal Use and Technology, (4) Network Collaboration, and (5) Client Feedback.

Referrals

When asked what benefits the member organizations experience by being a part of the Network, multiple participants cited the ease and convenience of making referrals within the Network. Participants stated that the referrals within the Network were easy and convenient and reduced the burden on the participants themselves as they did not have to find the organization that best fit their clients' needs, this was done by the Navigator. This was especially helpful when the clients had a complicated legal need outside of the organization's expertise. Participants felt confident that when entering a client into the Network that client would receive assistance somewhere and not fall through the cracks. Participants also mentioned the benefit of the referral process in that an organization would be contacting the client and the client would not have to reach out themselves for assistance.

A challenge with referrals was mentioned in relation to clients with time sensitive or immediate needs. Participants recommended a pre-approved script that the Navigator can use in situations where the client will be in court within 24-48 hours and an organization is not able to meet that need. This script, reviewed by the member organizations, should alert clients to the potential that they will have to represent themselves in court, and make sure that the client is aware that they may be required to spend an extended amount of time in court or have to go multiple times. This is especially true for CPO

and housing cases. These clients should also be made aware of all of the documents they should bring to court for the attorney to review.

Another challenge surrounding referrals is client response to phone calls. Participants brainstormed that clients might be more likely to answer the phone from an unknown number if the Navigator let them know what phone number will be calling them. It was also suggested that the Navigator should collect detailed information from the client about leaving a message and the content of that message. This included ascertaining whether the number provided would be safe to leave a voicemail message that may include details about the case and whether information could be shared with anyone answering the phone that was not the client themselves. The same information should be gathered if the client leaves an email address as the contact method.

Network Expansion

Part of the focus group discussion surrounded the participants' thoughts on Network expansion. This included expanding the Network within their own organizations as well as expanding out past the original ten member organizations. Participants that were from larger organizations indicated a desire and attempts to expand the Network past their own department. This had so far been met with resistance as it was hard to find other staff that had the time and expertise to take on a facilitator role. While the actual amount of time a facilitator spent in this role was relatively short, estimated at about two hours each week, the burden came with onboarding a new staff member and the training that would need to be involved.

In terms of expanding the Network beyond the original ten organizations, one participant mentioned that they had already received inquiries from organizations about how they could join. Organizations that should be invited to join the Network include organizations with the capacity to address immigration and civil issues including malpractice, employment, civil rights, personal injury, and other civil suits. Participants

acknowledged that with current funding it was not possible to broaden the Network to these more civilly focused organizations but that it would be worth finding additional funding for them.

VLNDC would also benefit from the addition of organizations that covered multiple jurisdictions (e.g., Virginia and Maryland) for clients that have victimizations that cross borders. While not covered by current funding, participants suggested that it may increase buy-in with these organizations if they could join as an "approved out of Network organization." This would allow easier referrals, however, the outside organization would not have the additional reporting requirements of OVSJG funding. Additional incentives to entice outside organizations – particularly law firms and pro-bono organizations – included offering CLE credits for trainings and emphasizing the ease and low burden of using the Network. This would include discussing the Navigators role and the warm handoffs that occur with referrals. Participants were quick to mention that if the Network were to expand there would need to be an additional Navigator role added to manage the increased work.

Portal Use and Technology

Overall, participants found that the portal was easy to use and an efficient referral process. Participants also mentioned the benefit of clients being able to access Network information on their own, which is helpful when the client may not disclose all of their needs in the initial contact with an organization. That being said, there were some suggested improvements to the portal. These changes revolved around information regarding capacity, demographics, organization information, referral outcome, and portal access.

Participants agreed that it was helpful to have capacity information listed for each member organization; however, when organizations enter changes to their capacity, the prior entry is not deleted, which causes some confusion when organizations receive referrals for legal needs that they cannot currently address. This lead to delays in appropriate referrals as the facilitator would

need to confirm with other staff before rejecting the case and sending it back to the Network. The previous capacity post should be overwritten with the new organizational updates.

Information collected during the intake process on client demographics should include additional response options. This is particularly important when referencing a client's gender, there need to be more gender options and an "other" option included as well. In addition to the preferred name question, there should be an option to record preferred pronoun.

In the portal there is a section for additional client information. This section is meant to be populated with any additional information that specific organizations receiving the referral will need (ex: birthdays or addresses). However, participants find it difficult to remember which organizations require what information. Moving forward it would be beneficial and more efficient for the facilitators if there was a list of member organizations and the additional information they need included near that entry location.

Participants mentioned the desire to receive notification when a client completes their release form. At the moment, facilitators are not able to send a referral until the release form is completed in its entirety; however, they are not informed when this occurs and instead are relying on self-reports from the client which may not be entirely accurate. It is recommended that an email notification be sent once the form is completed.

Participants also want to know the outcome of their referral. This would help the participants see the impact that the Network had.

Multiple participants mentioned the increased efficiency that would happen if there was a modified portal account for staff other than the facilitators. This account would simply act as a place where these additional staff members could input the required VLNDC intake information that could be reviewed by the facilitator and, if approved, immediately sent into the Network. This discussion arose due to the internal processes of some organizations whose staff turn in the

VLNDC form to facilitators in hard-copy which is more time consuming for the facilitators and not as secure. This would require more staff to be trained on that section of the portal however participants felt that it would not be difficult and the benefit of a more streamlined process would outweigh any additional trainings.

Network Collaboration

Participants mentioned that being a part of the Network has had a positive effect on their collaboration with other member organizations. Cross-trainings to inform members of each other's eligibility requirements, referral process, and services were considered very helpful. It was also helpful for collaboration that the organizations were able to see each other's capacity. This was specifically mentioned as a burden lifted from members, as the capacity information was kept up to date by the Navigator eliminating the need for members to reach out to each other to ascertain that information.

Client Feedback

Focus group participants were asked how to best incorporate client feedback into the Network. Participants reporting wanting two different policies for sharing client feedback based on the type of feedback received. First and foremost any member organization that receives feedback from a client should pass that information on to the Navigator regardless of the type of feedback (i.e., positive or negative). If a client shared with a member organization or with the Navigator that they did not like their lawyer/staff assisting them due to personal reasons or very case specific reasons that information should be shared back to the specific staff member it is in relation to. If a client provides negative feedback on a Network policy, such as they were not contacted quickly enough that information should be shared back to the Network as a whole in a Network meeting so that a new policy can be developed to address the issue. Positive feedback only needs to be shared with the organization it is in reference to so as to ensure the Network meetings remain time efficient.

NETWORK SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

At the conclusion of the focus group, participants were asked to record their top two perceived Network successes and challenges. Many of these successes and challenges were already discussed during the duration of the focus group, however, the full list of responses is below:

Network Successes

- Increased access to services for client population (n=4)
- Central place to refer cases to (n=2)
- Easy to use portal/access referrals (n=2)
- Wide variety of member organizations (n=2)
- Clients do not get lost (n=1)
- Helpful guest presentation from DOJ (n=1)
- Member organizations collaborating to create revised release form (n=1)
- Networking (n=1)
- Simplified process for helping clients find legal services (n=1)
- VLNDC staff responding quickly to and prioritizing VLNDC cases (n=1)

Network Challenges

- Getting organizational buy-in/expanding to other departments (n=3)
- Gaps in the legal issues covered by the Network (n=2)
- Clients unaware of whether their case is accepted (n=1)
- It's difficult to quickly locate the type of legal assistance because of the way the categories are grouped, the headers are not highlighted, and it goes across columns (n=1)
- Getting the release form completed for phone intakes (n=1)
- Integrating VLNDC into existing organization policies (n=1)
- Lack of notification of clients completing the consent form (n=1)
- Lack of referral options outside of criminal victimization (n=1)
- Lack of referral options outside of DC (n=1)
- Receiving referrals outside of practice area (n=1)
- Receiving referrals with urgent court dates in 48 hours (n=1)
- Time commitment to onboard a facilitator (n=1)

IMPORTANT QUOTES

- "A lot of people like the idea of being a part of the Network, but not doing any type of reporting back is really nice. I think when you realize you have to submit numbers or do all of this…this is just more work and they don't know if the benefits will outweigh the actual work it takes."

- "Giving referrals has been a lot easier. Just in general…Especially if it's a legal issue that I'm not familiar with, I don't have to try and figure out which organization is the best fit for them."

- "I don't ever know what people's capacity is, so it's nice that [the Navigator] can keep track of that because then I'm not making multiple calls and annoying everyone."

- "I haven't felt like clients are getting lost or falling through the cracks."

- "I think it's so much better than handing someone a list of phone numbers to call, that they have to call on their own. It feels very much like when the person goes into the Network, that they are going to get help versus 'here's a bunch of numbers, call all of these'."

- "I think just the ease of making referrals is great, I think it's the biggest selling point."

- "I think one thing I would find helpful is that if we had some sort of account for staff. So that they could enter someone that potentially wanted to be referred and as the facilitator I could approve it.

- "I think that is the best buy-in, the idea of having a central location, one person handling this… this is a really great central thing, because it's nice to be able to do that for your clients. You can't help them with this issue but like 'oh this where you can go.' I think that most lawyers who do our type of work would be interested in something like that… because we want to help out with as many issues as possible."

- "I think that it would be really beneficial for our organization to expand [the Network], but that's one of the challenges of organizational buy-in. Being a facilitator takes a lot of time and so finding someone who is able to take on the role is difficult."

- "It's been helpful for our clients that have multiple complicated legal issues."

- "The portal is really easy to use and it's very comprehensive."

- "When someone isn't in our client population I feel very comfortable putting them in the Network and knowing they'll get assistance elsewhere, and that's been really great."

MEMBER ORGANIZATION FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

This report provides findings on the experiences and perspectives of member organizations in relation to their participation in VLNDC. To capture the experiences of member organizations, researchers hosted a focus group with member organization facilitators and stakeholders to gather their feedback in being a part of VLNDC and its processes. The focus group was held on June 27, 2019 and lasted for approximately 1 hour.

The focus group discussion centered on the: structure of VLNDC, successes and challenges, and impact VLNDC has had on member organizations and crime victims. Findings from this discussion fell into five categories, which are discussed in greater detail below, including (1) recommendations for improving VLNDC, (2) how member organizations are using VLNDC and their experiences, (3) non-financial incentives to attract new members and encourage participation, (4) positive experiences with VLNDC, and (5) VLNDC challenges that member organizations have experienced.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for enhancing VLNDC center around the portal, sharing information, and non-financial incentives.

PARTICIPATION

Six participants from six different member organizations attended the focus group and two participants from one member organization participated in a phone interview to accommodate their desire to participate in this data collection activity but inability to attend the focus group.

Participants were staff attorneys, managing attorneys, coordinators, and directors.

The Portal

- Allow multiple staff within a member organization to have portal logins to enter in their own referrals/intakes
- Include an option for additional staff, in addition to the facilitator, to receive email notifications about a referral

Information Sharing

- Have VLNDC staff attend member organization staff meetings more often to remind (or inform new) staff of VLNDC and the process
- Develop a handout about VLNDC, who is involved, and services available
- Provide up-to-date information on member organizations' capacity level
- Provide information on national resources and if possible, expand connections/collaboration to national resources
- Provide an opportunity for member organizations to share success stories during VLNDC meetings

Non-Financial Incentives

Provide training opportunities for new lawyers and interns on what VLNDC is and how to become involved

Host cross Trainings/Clinics/Opportunities to work together and learn

Provide online manuals with hyperlinks to additional information on trainings that were held

Develop a guidebook of VLNDC services

II.   FINDINGS

VLNDC Usage and Experience

Participants discussed how they interact, and their experiences interacting, with VLNDC. All the participants are connected to VLNDC in some fashion. Most of the participants indicated they receive referrals from VLNDC via the portal; two participants use the portal to both send and receive cases; and one participant mentioned their involvement included connecting crime victims to VLNDC through the portal that they do not have the capacity to serve.

A participant from one member organization currently uses VLNDC for networking and provides crime victims with VLNDC information; however, they do not receive or send referrals because their organization's current referral and case acceptance structure is not compatible. Another organization is still working on how to integrate VLNDC into their process.

Two participants mentioned that the portal can be a little "buggy" with pages taking a long time to load.

Navigator

Participants discussed the benefits and challenges with having a navigator coordinate the referral system. The main benefits of having a navigator coordinating the referral system is having a dedicated person available to answer questions and having someone send reminders about deadlines for conflict checks and referral acceptance. The navigator reduces the need for member organizations to identify the referring organization and contact them when they need additional information.

One weakness of the navigator system was having someone in place that did not have a deep understanding of the legal system. Citing that more relevant referrals were made when the navigator was an attorney and had a better understanding of jurisdiction and the differences between legal

"I would say for us it's been a really great experience having the resource to be able to refer out. Letting clients know that although we don't handle that kind of law or if we're at capacity for whatever issues that it's a pretty quick turnaround being able to tell them you should hear back something in a week. We can also contact, reach out, see where that follow up is. I think that provides us with some closure that it's not just going into a black hole and they're not actually being assisted."

"I think it's positive because anytime you can take a step out of someone who's experienced a crime, someone who's experienced a trauma, a step out of what they have to take to get services is a good thing. Just any time you can remove that, even if it's just saving one or two phone calls it's a step in a positive direction."

"I would say that [VLNDC] has made a huge impact on our organization when we are either at capacity for certain types of cases or don't do those types of cases, being able to refer out has been huge in being able to provide the next step to clients that come in."

"The [VLNDC] administrators are amazing, and they are so helpful and they're a pleasure to work with."

"We are small so it's easy to reach capacity really quickly and it's much more convenient for our clients to do one VLN referral instead of having to bounce around from all the organizations in there, so it helps me build a relationship with the client. Also, because of the population we serve, they usually have a wide variety of legal needs. We try to do as many as we can, but we can't do them all. And so, that is another great way that we can have trusted partners that we feel comfortable referring to in that system."

needs. Having a navigator with a stronger legal background would also allow for a more in-depth screening and referral process and would reduce the number of referrals made when a client identifies a legal need that does not exist or are referred for a legal need that they don't actually want assistance with.

Impact of VLNDC on Referrals

Participants had mixed opinions when asked to discuss how the structure of VLNDC has impacted their referral process. Some participants said their organization was unchanged because they already had processes in place to handle referrals but appreciated the collaboration and information about organizations to share with crime victims. Others felt there was a positive impact given the ability to refer crime victims to VLNDC for services not provided by their organization or when faced with capacity constraints.

Some participants felt VLNDC had not impacted their referral process because they were still integrating the process into their organization or had not yet taken full advantage of the system. Two participants found integrating the VLNDC referral process a bit challenging due to a shift from conducting intakes in person to over the phone, making it more difficult to gather the necessary information. However, they did feel that referring crime victims to VLNDC was helpful and easy.

Impact on Legal Services

According to the participants, VLNDC has impacted the legal services provided to victims in the Washington, DC area by reducing the burden on the victim seeking services, expanding the definition of crime victims, and increasing service provider awareness. The impact most frequently mentioned by the participants was the reduction in the burden on crime victims. VLNDC allows member organizations to easily identify when their clients had been previously seen by a different member organization. As a result, the serving organizations can share information therefore reducing the need for the victim to retell their story. VLNDC also reduces the burden on the crime victim by reducing the steps required to get services, such as calling multiple organizations themselves, and providing them with their options up front. VLNDC has also helped to expand the definition of crime victim to include populations that previously may have only been considered perpetrators and therefore allows a broader range of victims to become aware of and receive services. Through participating in VLNDC, member organizations feel better equipped with connecting their client's victimization to potential legal needs and can explain legal options to their clients.

Non-Financial Incentives

Participants were asked what types of non-financial incentives VLNDC could provide to keep member organizations engaged and to encourage new organizations to join. The top two non-financial incentives were (1) provide cross-trainings and (2) provide networking opportunities. Cross trainings and networking are useful non-financial incentives because they allow staff to view the crime victim as a whole, inform them of the services available within VLNDC, and learn from each other what is happening within the DC community.

Additional recommendations included hosting a "summer series" event to inform interns and new attorneys about the big picture behind the development of VLNDC, to include (1) the extent and nature of victimization (e.g., who are crime victims and what does victimization look like), and (2) information

about VLNDC and its goals. Interns and new attorneys could pass this information to their next placement or use to develop their own networks in new locations.

Written materials were also discussed as a potential incentive. These materials included descriptions of member organization services similar to the Public Defender Service guidebook of civil legal services and online manuals following trainings so that information is retained and easily referenced.

In addition to non-financial incentives, participants also discussed ways of integrating new members. This involved making sure they are aware of the other members and the services they provide and informing the existing partners about the new organization and what they do. This is especially important when integrating member organizations that may serve a new or unique population of crime victims.

Positive VLNDC Experiences

Participants mentioned some of the positive experiences they have had being part of VLNDC which included meetings and referrals.

Meetings

Participants spoke positively about the VLNDC member meetings. Cross trainings, for example, provided great opportunities to learn how to see the crime victims as a whole and learn how to better serve them. Networking opportunities during meetings were perceived as beneficial because it allowed members to learn more about each organization, what was happening in the community, and trouble shoot problems. Participants particularly enjoyed when meetings highlighted specific member organizations and allowed them to inform the group about the services they provide and the types of clients they serve. Participants also mentioned the National Crime Victim Law Institute training that VLNDC hosted last year as being "awesome" and a good training geared toward attorneys and staff working with VLNDC. It was recommended that more success stories be shared during member organization meetings to highlight the positive work organizations are doing and the impact of VLNDC.

Referrals

One positive aspect of being a part of VLNDC was having a place to refer crime victims that they were not able to help and feeling confident in the knowledge that the victim would be contacted by a provider.

Successes

The focus group participants were asked to write down two VLNDC successes. These successes covered a range of topics including providing the crime victims with holistic services, the collaboration that occurs amongst members, being able to make referrals, and more. The successes are provided below verbatim:

Holistic Services

- Categorizing legal issues to efficiently split up a victim's needs so they can all be addressed simultaneously even if unrelated

"We have a client that we could do several of their legal needs but we couldn't do their [specific legal issue], we don't do that [kind of] law so we did a referral to VLN rather than calling everybody we know and they got somebody within 48 hours and it was real easy to work with the organization doing that piece while we were doing the other pieces."

- Client centered representation within a multi-disciplinary practice is infinitely easier with VLNDC; they serve all the legal needs of a client with each referral
- Client receiving long term assistance in addition to our services
- Greater access to justice is achieved for our clients thanks to the VLNDC network
- Holistic and complete services

Collaboration

- Building a community in terms of the network and collaboration between organizations
- Increased collaboration
- Increased collaboration with other organizations
- Ability to coordinate with other organizations

Referrals

- Being able to refer out and the follow up to make sure the client receives services and does not fall through the cracks
- Giving people VLNDC business cards when they are not fully ready to commit to an intake gives me the knowledge that they have the tools they need
- Having somewhere to refer clients that are outside the scope of our organization

Other

- Acknowledging that being a victim is so commonplace has been both alarming and helpful to our staff when you think about all that our clients have gone through
- Implementing and following through with being a member of VLNDC
- Removing the need to understand what every member organization does by offering the navigator as a central hub

VLNDC Challenges

Focus group and interview participants discussed some of the challenges they've experienced in being a member organization in VLNDC. These challenges include issues with integrating staff to VLNDC processes, identify crime victims and victimization, and completing paperwork.

Integrating Staff

One of the challenges member organizations discussed was how to integrate VLNDC into the processes of their organization and staff. One participant talked about how each attorney within their organization does their own intake and that there is a struggle to train everyone on the VLNDC process and make it part of their repertoire. Another participant mentioned how it can be difficult to integrate staff that may not deal directly with VLNDC but could be interacting with crime victims that would benefit from a VLNDC referral. In response a participant who has successfully integrated VLNDC into their organization's processes talked about having a shared intake manual that includes the VLNDC process. This allows for each separate staff member that is conducting an intake to follow the same procedures. Another participant discussed bringing up VLNDC and the available resources in each team meeting. And a third participant mentioned having copies of the VLNDC form at their clinics for a crime victim to fill out while they are in person.

Identifying Crime Victims

Participants discussed struggles with figuring out how to identify if a client is also suffering from a victimization that may be related, however distantly, to their legal need. Participants that already include questions in their process about victimization discussed instead of directly asking if the client is a victim of crime asking instead about harm or if they ever had to call emergency services. Ways to integrate questions about victimization and how to phrase them could be a worthwhile training topic for VLNDC.

Paperwork

Two more challenges that participants faced involved the release form and conflict checks. One participant talked about struggles with getting crime victims to sign the release form, stating that because most intakes were conducted over the phone or online, they would not want to come in person to sign the form. Two participants shared their solution which was to email the release form, however, this only works if the crime victim has access to the internet.

VLNDC Hurdles

Participants were asked to write down two challenges or hurdles that VLNDC faced. The responses covered the topical areas of crime victims and cases such as getting in touch with the crime victim or eligibility, integrating VLNDC into their organization's processes, and collecting or filling out required paperwork. The challenges are provided below verbatim:

Crime Victims and Cases

- Increased volume of referrals and decreased staff capacity
- Location eligibility – some organizations provide services and we are not sure if we should refer using VLNDC when Maryland or Virginia is more appropriate
- Simply getting in touch with the client; letting them know who we are/different from others
- We are sad when we cannot take criminal referrals due to the lack of ability to do so with active criminal cases
- What to do when we know that it is a meritless case, but we do not actually handle/are not experts in that area

VLNDC Integration

- Educating staff at member organizations that do not work closely with the network on when and how to make a VLNDC referral
- Getting people, both referring organizations and clients to recognize the status of a victim of crime but also realize the value of a coordinated entry point rather than trying to make a referral to a known associate
- Logging onto the portal and deciding who does this as well as who uploads referrals; what process should we use
- Receiving referrals
- Remembering to refer and that this is another tool

Paperwork

- Conflicts checks can be involved and take longer than the allotted 48 hours
- Obtaining consent
- Take the release form offline for phone access

VLNDC Awareness Survey

Please tell us about yourself. You can complete the survey without answering these items if that is your preference.

Name: _____

Position/Title: _____

Organization: _____

For the following questions, we are interested in learning more about your organization and its services. Please select all answers that may apply.

1. What professional category does your organization fall into?
   a. Community
   b. Education
   c. Medical
   d. Social Services
   e. Other: _____

2. What zip code is your organization located in: _____

3. What type of services does your organization primarily provide? (Select all that apply)

   a. Advocacy
   b. Case Management
   c. Childcare
   d. Community Center
   e. Counseling/Mental Health Services
   f. Employment Assistance
   g. Forensic Services
   h. Healthcare
   i. Hotline/Crisis Intervention
   j. Housing Services
   k. Information/Referrals
   l. Language Access Services
   m. Legal Services
   n. Material/Financial Assistance
   o. Religious Center
   p. TANF/SNAP
   q. All of the Above
   r. Other: _____

4. How do you describe your primary role in your current position:
   a. Reception / greeter
   b. Administration
   c. Direct delivery / front line staff
   d. Management
   e. Volunteer
   f. Peer educator
   g. Other (please specify):_____

5. What types of specific populations do you serve? (Select all that apply)
   a. Men
   b. Women
   c. Transgender Men
   d. Transgender Women
   e. Children
   f. Adolescents

g. Adults
h. Elderly
i. Foreign Born
j. American Indians/Alaskan Natives
k. Asian/Pacific Islander
l. Black/African American
m. Hispanic/Latinx
n. White, Non-Latino/Caucasian
o. Multi-Racial/Multi-Ethnic
p. Homeless

q. Deaf/Hard of Hearing
r. Mentally Disabled
s. Physically Disabled
t. Limited English Proficient
u. LGBTQA+
v. Substance Abuse
w. HIV+ Status
x. IPV Survivors
y. All of the Above
z. Other:_____

6. In the past month, how many victims of crime did you see that were looking for an attorney or lawyer? Please provide your best estimate: _____

7. What steps would/do you take if a victim of crime requests your help in finding legal assistance?
   _____
   _____

8. What are the most common barriers that your organization has faced when trying to connect a victim to an attorney?
   _____
   _____
   _____

For the following questions, we are interested in learning more about your knowledge of the Victim Legal Network of DC (VLNDC) and its services.

9. Are you aware of VLNDC?
   a. I am not at all aware of VLNDC
   b. I am slightly aware, but I don't know enough to feel comfortable referring a client
   c. I am moderately aware of what VLNDC does
   d. I am moderately aware of what VLNDC does, and feel comfortable referring a client
   e. I am extremely aware of VLNDC
   f. I am extremely aware of VLNDC, and I've referred a client

10. How did you become aware of VLNDC? (Select all that apply)
    a. Brown bag trainings
    b. Community meetings
    c. A colleague at my organization
    d. A colleague at:
       _____
    e. VLNDC Launch Event on April 10th

    f. Social media
    g. Tabling event
    h. VLNDC flyer
    i. VLNDC open house
    j. VLNDC website
    k. Other:
       _____

11. How often do you refer clients with legal needs to VLNDC?
    a. Never
    b. Almost never
    c. Occasionally
    d. A moderate amount
    e. A great deal

12. What would you like to learn about VLNDC? (Select all that apply)
    a. Eligibility requirements
    b. How to refer a client
    c. What communities they serve
    d. What type of legal services they provide
    e. Other:_____

13. How would you prefer to learn more about VLNDC services? (Select all that apply)
    a. Contact me directly (list contact information)
    b. Pamphlet
    c. Social Media
    d. VLNDC Website
    e. VLNDC Listserv
    f. Other:_____

VLNDC Awareness Survey

o   I understand the above statements and agree to continue
o   I do not wish to continue

Name: _____

Position/Title: _____

Organization: _____

For the following questions, we are interested in learning more about your organization and its services. Please select all answers that may apply.

1. What professional category does your organization fall into?
    a. Community
    b. Education
    c. Medical
    d. Social Services
    e. Other: _____

2. Does your organization provide legal services?
    a. Yes
    b. No
        (*If Yes skip to Awareness questions Q 10)*

3. What zip code is your organization located in: _____

4. What types of services does your organization primarily provide? (Select all that apply)

    a. Advocacy
    b. Case Management
    c. Childcare
    d. Community Center
    e. Counseling/Mental Health Services
    f. Employment Assistance
    g. Forensic Services
    h. Healthcare
    i. Hotline/Crisis Intervention
    j. Housing Services
    k. Information/Referrals
    l. Language Access Services
    m. Legal Services
    n. Material/Financial Assistance
    o. Religious Center
    p. TANF/SNAP
    q. All of the Above
    r. Other: _____

5. How do you describe your primary role in your current position:
    a. Reception / greeter
    b. Administration
    c. Direct delivery / front line staff
    d. Management
    e. Volunteer
    f. Peer educator
    g. Other (please specify):_____

6. What types of specific populations do you serve? (Select all that apply)
   a. Men
   b. Women
   c. Transgender Men
   d. Transgender Women
   e. Children
   f. Adolescents
   g. Adults
   h. Elderly
   i. Foreign Born
   j. American Indians/Alaskan Natives
   k. Asian/Pacific Islander
   l. Black/African American
   m. Hispanic/Latinx
   n. White, Non-Latino/Caucasian
   o. Multi-Racial/Multi-Ethnic
   p. Homeless
   q. Deaf/Hard of Hearing
   r. Mentally Disabled
   s. Physically Disabled
   t. Limited English Proficient
   u. LGBTQA+
   v. Substance Abuse
   w. HIV+ Status
   x. IPV Survivors
   y. All of the Above
   z. Other:_____

7. In the past month, how many victims of crime did you see that were looking for an attorney or lawyer?
   a. 0-5 victims
   b. 5-10 victims
   c. 10-20 victims
   d. 20-30 victims
   e. 30 or more victims

8. What steps would/do you take if a victim of crime requests your help in finding legal assistance?
   a. Google it
   b. Ask a colleague
   c. Tell the victim I don't know
   d. Refer to an organization I already know (Please list organization)
   e. Other (please explain):

9. What are the most common barriers that your organization has faced when trying to connect a victim to an attorney?
   a. I do not know any attorneys
   b. The attorney is too busy
   c. The victim does not want to contact an attorney themselves
   d. The victim is scared to seek help
   d. The victim does not speak English
   e. The victim cannot afford an attorney
   f. Other (please explain): _____

For the following questions, we are interested in learning more about your knowledge of the Victim Legal Network of DC (VLNDC) and its services.

10. Are you aware of VLNDC?
  a. Not at all aware
  b. Slightly aware
  c. Moderately aware
  d. Extremely aware
  (*If not at all, skip to Q13)*

11. How did you become aware of VLNDC? (Select all that apply)
  a. Brown bag trainings
  b. Community meetings
  c. A colleague at my organization
  d. A colleague at:
  _____
  e. VLNDC Launch Event on April 10th

  f. Social media
  g. Tabling event
  h. VLNDC flyer
  i. VLNDC open house
  j. VLNDC website
  k. Other:
  _____

12. How often do you refer clients with legal needs to VLNDC?
  a. Never
  b. Almost never
  c. Occasionally
  d. A moderate amount
  e. A great deal
  (*If Never go to Q 13, If anything else skip to Q14)*

13. Would you feel comfortable referring a client to VLNDC?
  a. Yes
  b. No

14. What would you like to learn about VLNDC? (Select all that apply)
  a. Eligibility requirements
  b. How to refer a client
  c. What communities they serve
  d. What type of legal services they provide
  e. Other:_____

15. How would you prefer to learn more about VLNDC services? (Select all that apply)
  a. Contact me directly
  b. Pamphlet
  c. Social Media
  d. VLNDC Website
  e. VLNDC Listserv
  f. Other:_____

16. If you would like to receive more information about VLNDC services please leave your contact information here:

_____

SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDER AWARENESS SURVEY TIME 2

4/15/2019 TO 5/31/2019

The purpose of the social service provider awareness survey was to measure social providers' awareness of the Victim Legal Network of DC (VLNDC) and gather information on how they refer crime victims to legal services. This information was solicited via an online survey (SurveyMonkey) and included **three areas of questioning: (1) demographics on the organization and clients seen; (2) legal services, referrals, and barriers, and; (3) awareness of VLNDC.** Armed with this information, VLNDC can tailor outreach efforts to social service providers in the DC area to increase awareness and utilization of VLNDC as a referral source for crime victims seeking legal services.

ICF research staff composed a list of social service providers in the DC and added additional organizations provided from an NVRDC list serv. **In total, contact information was derived for 550 individuals from over 85 organizations**. Criteria for participation in the survey required that respondents be staff members at social service organizations that did not provide legal services[1] and could potentially come into contact with crime victims.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OUTREACH

Based on the findings from the survey, there are several recommendations for developing an outreach plan to increase the awareness and use of VLNDC services amongst social service provider.

VLNDC should share information on:

What legal services are provided with a strong focus on pro-bono or low-cost services to address the main barrier of victims not being able to afford an attorney or lawyer

What the eligibility requirements are and how to refer a client

What communities are served by VLNDC include information about how they can help specific populations including: transgender clients, adults, LGBTQIA+, limited English proficient, and individuals who are homeless

Information should be shared via:

Community meetings as participants frequently became aware of the network through this avenue

Direct contact to social service providing organizations

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[1] Through the NVRDC list serve, some legal organizations received a link to complete the survey. We excluded staff from VLDNC Member Organizations from the findings presented here. Staff from other legal organizations completed a select number of questions about their awareness of VLNDC. These results are included in this report.

More attention should be paid to:

Advertising the VLNDC website. Participants want to learn about VLNDC most often through a website, but this was also one of the least frequent ways they became aware of VLNDC.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL AND CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

In total there were 69 responses to the survey. Of the 69, 2 participants declined to participate; 3 people completed the survey twice; and 12 participants were from VLNDC Member Organizations and removed from analysis. **This resulted in 52 surveys for analysis.** A response rate was not calculated because participants were encouraged to forward the survey link to colleagues to also complete the survey.

Organization Category
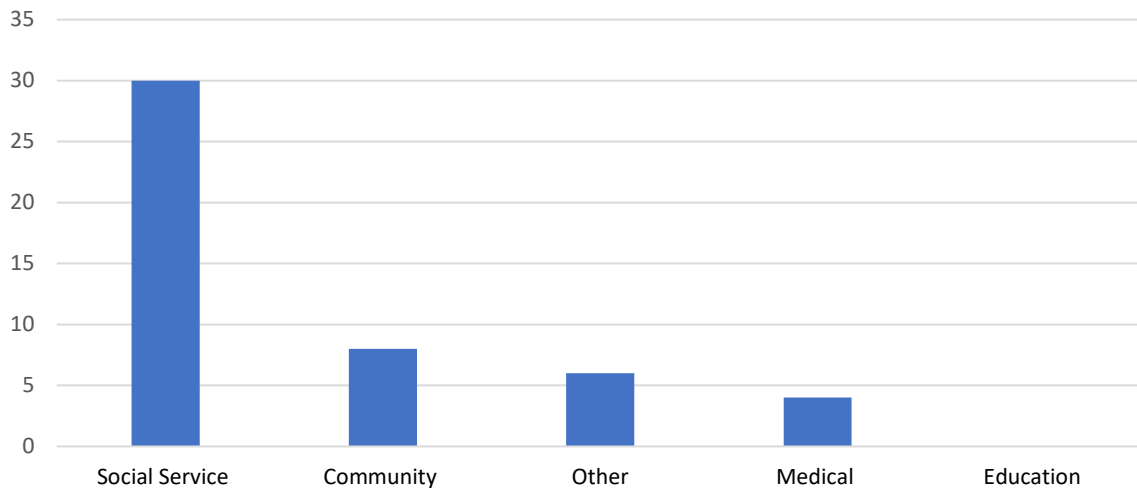
48 participants indicated their type of organization. Of those, **62.5% (n=30) said their organization type was primarily social services,** 16.7% (n=8) as community organizations, 8.3% as medical organizations and the remaining 12.5% indicated other. Other responses included: "legal services", "mental health," "mostly clinical mental health…we also provide community workshops on various topics," "psychotherapy & coaching," "religious," and "safe housing/shelter."

18.9% (n=10) of the participants indicated that their organization provides legal services. These participants followed a skip logic built into the survey that allowed them to the section on awareness. They did not respond to any of the other questions to ensure that the focus was on social service providers.

Participants Primary Role

A majority of the participants are in a management position (46%, n=17), followed by direct delivery/front line staff (37.8%, n=14), and administration (10.8%, n=4). Two participants are in roles that crossed multiple categories: "half of my time is providing direct care and the other half is program management," and "therapist and owner."

- Management
- Direct Delivery/Front Line Staff
- Administration
- Other
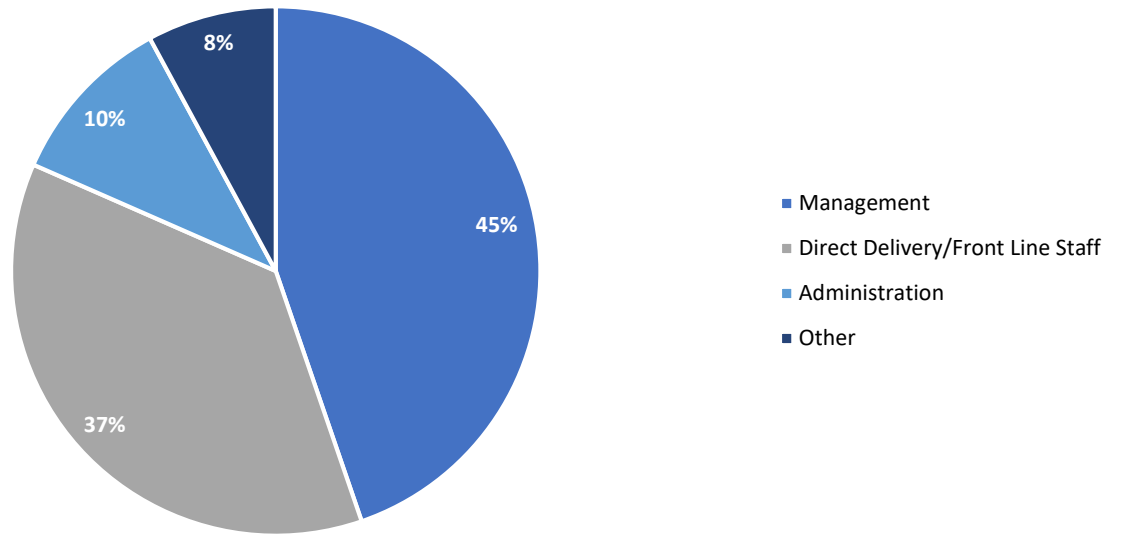
Organization Zip Code
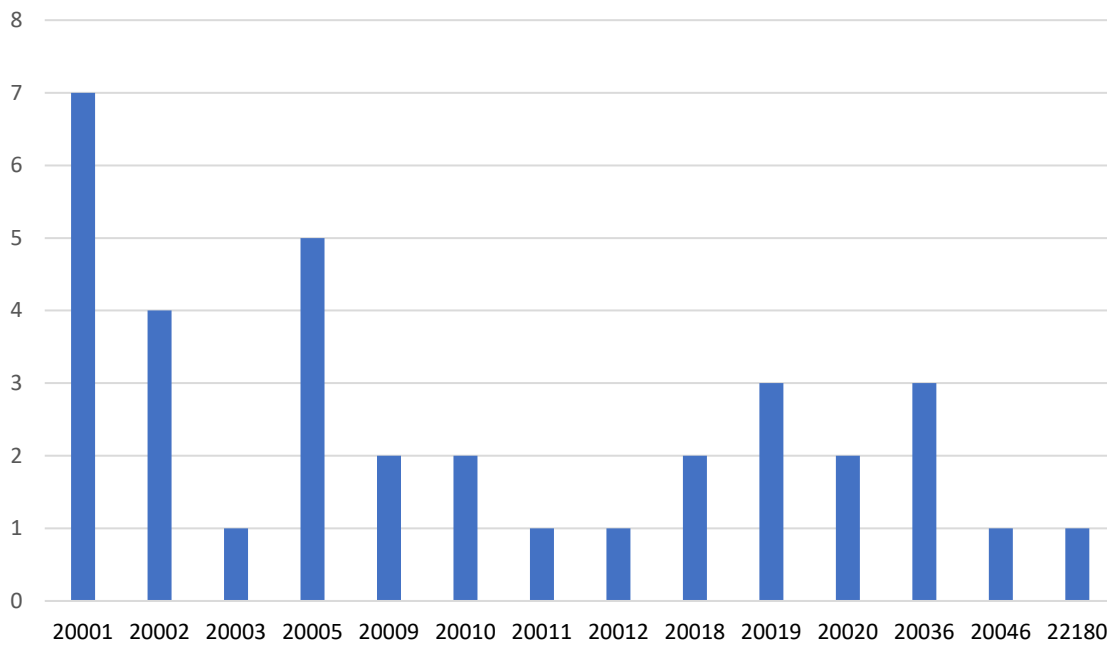
Most often organizations are located in the 20001 zip code (n=7), followed by 20005 (n=5), and 20002 (n=4). Four organizations listed that their organizations covered two zip codes: 20001 and 20019, 20003 and 22046, 20009 and 20010, and 22180 and 20005[2]. One participant indicated that a

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[2] If a participant indicated that their organization was located in multiple zip codes, each individual zip code was counted in the bar graph.

zip code was not applicable for their organization, one participant wrote "throughout DC" and another wrote "various, my location is 20005."

Services Provided

Participants were asked to select the services their organization provides from a list of services, with an option to add in additional services not included in the list. 37 participants indicated the services the organizations primarily provide are **Information and Referrals (70.3%, n=26)**, followed by Case Management (62.2%, n=23), and Advocacy (42.3%, n=22). None of the organizations provided all of the services listed.
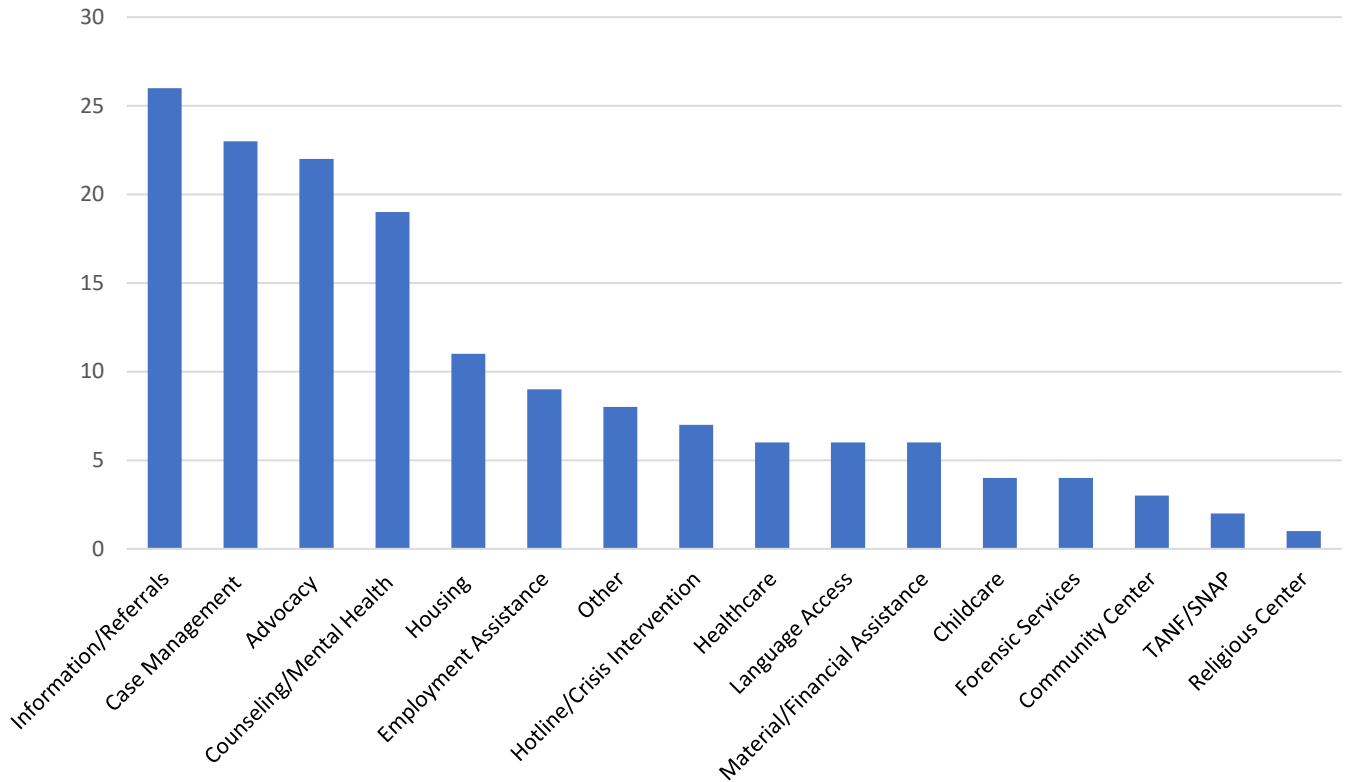
Client Demographics

When looking at the types of clients these organizations serve it was found that **their frequently served client populations are women, adults, White, LGBTQIA, and limited English Proficient.** 10 (27.8%) organizations indicated they serve clients in all categories provided.

Client Gender
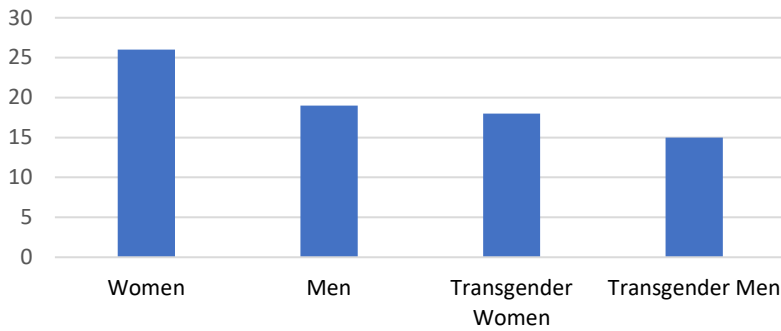
While most organizations serve women and men, 15 (41.7%) participants work at organizations that serve transgender men and 18 (50%) serve transgender women.

Client Age
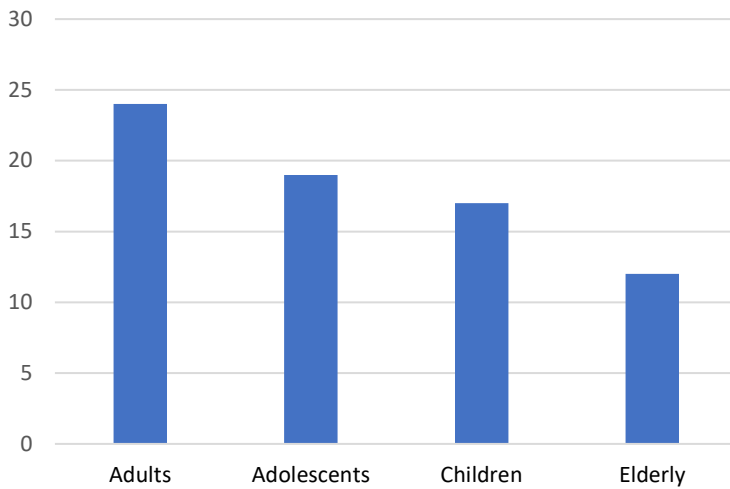
A majority of participants worked at organizations that **serve adult clients (66.7%, n=24),** the elderly population was the least common age group that is served (33.3%, n=12).

Client Ethnicity
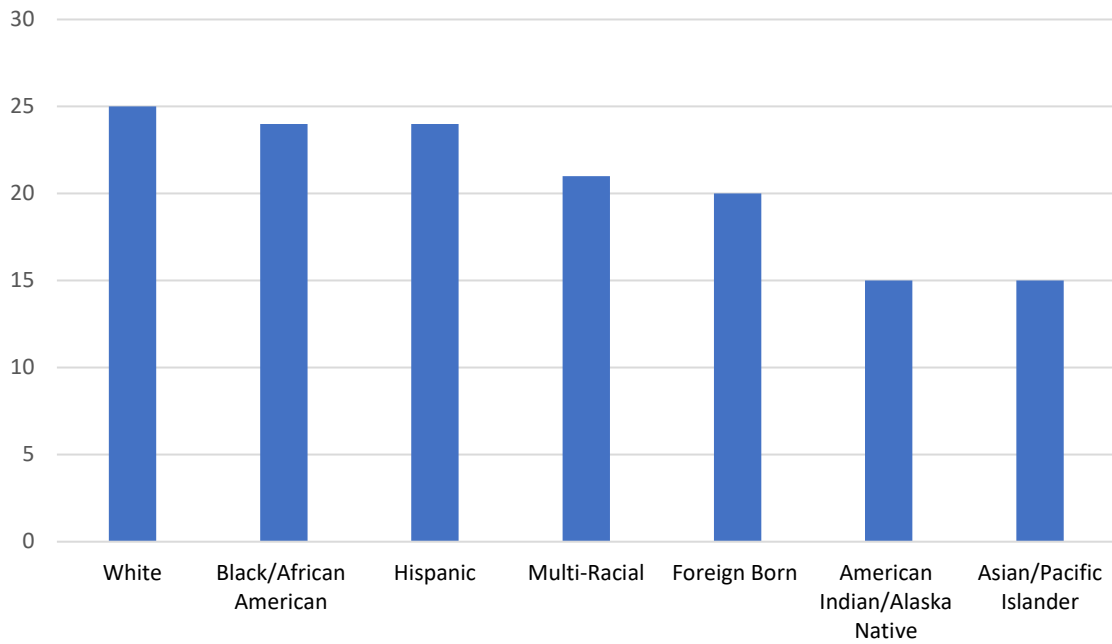
The majority of participants serve clients that are **White, Non-Latinx Caucasian (69.4%),** followed by Black/African American (66.7%) and Hispanic/Latinx (66.7%). The ethnicity least often served is a tie between American Indian/Alaska Native and Asian/Pacific Islander (41.7% each).

Vulnerable Client Populations
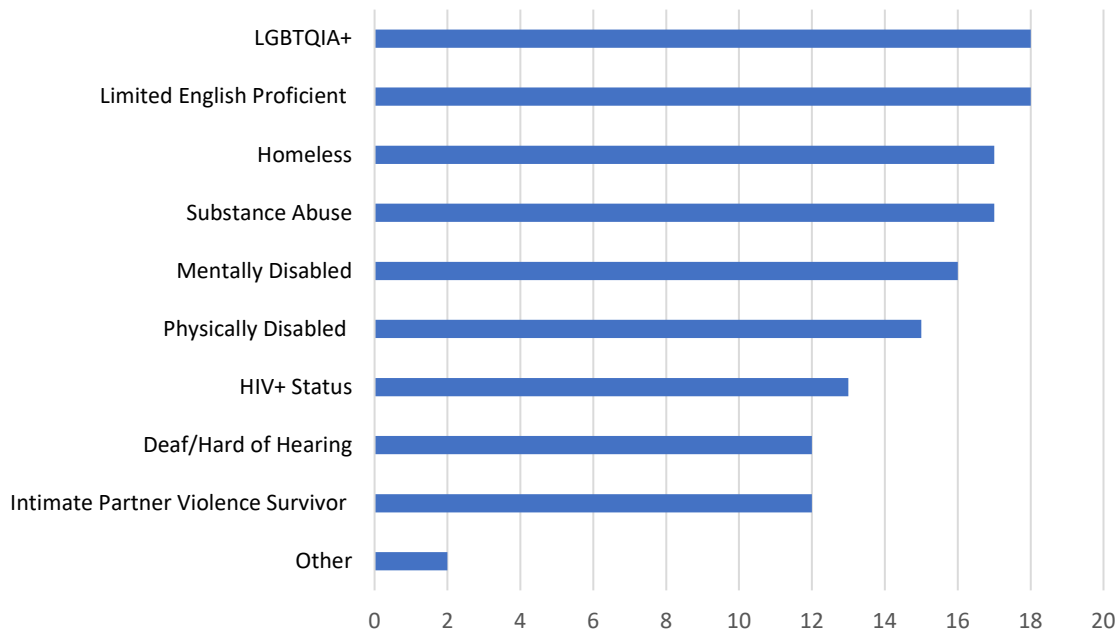
Participants work for organizations that serve a variety of vulnerable populations including **LGBTQA+ (50%, n=18), Limited English Proficient (50%, n=18), and homeless (47.2%, n=17)**. Other populations serve include parents and caregivers (n=1) and focusing on sexual trauma (n=1).

III. LEGAL REFERRALS AND BARRIERS

Legal Referral Process

When asked what steps participants take if a victim of crime requested their help in finding legal assistance, the **most common step was to refer to an organization that they already knew (77.8%, n=28),** followed by asking a colleague for help (44.4%, n=16), and Googling the information (41.7%, n=15).
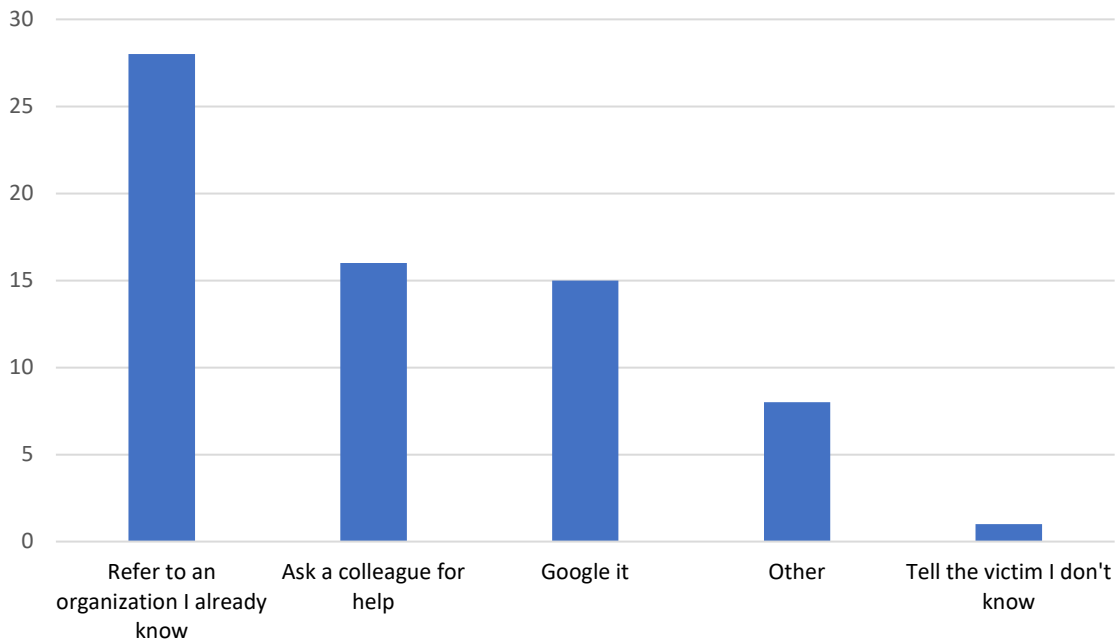
Participants also included the following responses regarding their process for referrals to legal services:

- ❖ Call 311
- ❖ Connect them to VLNDC
- ❖ Look for support networks
- ❖ Look in our referral book or do more research
- ❖ Partner with law firms
- ❖ Refer to our pro bono listserv
- ❖ University legal services, consult agency attorney

Participants listed the name of several organizations that they are aware of that provide legal services. The **most frequently cited organizations** are presented below with the number of times they were mentioned.
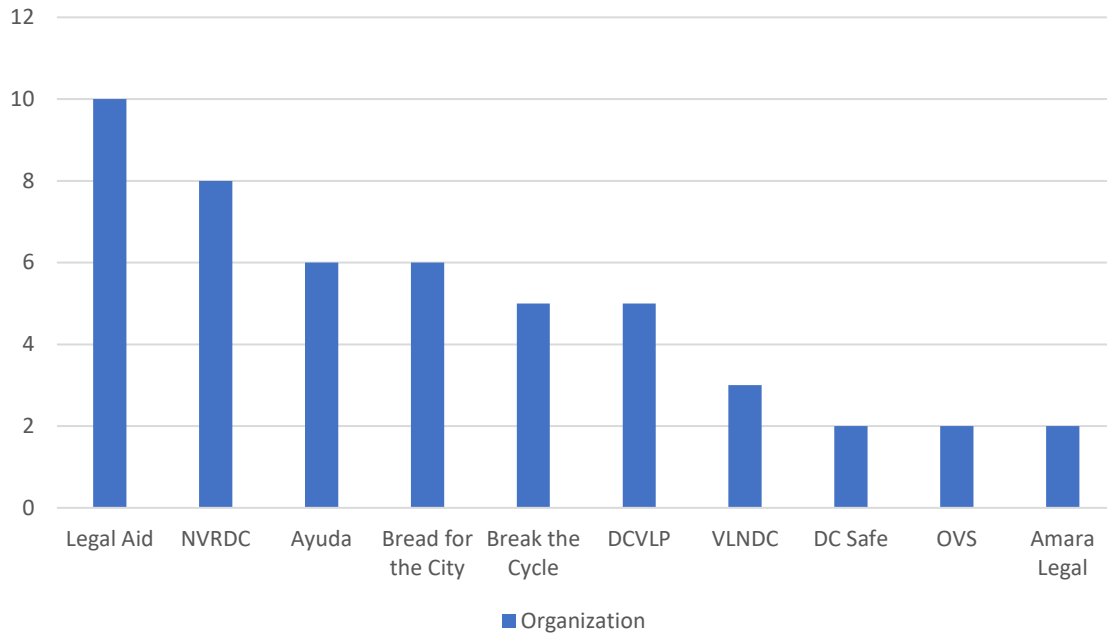
Other organizations that participants know and refer to include:

- 6 District Police Station
- Advocates for Justice and Education
- American Bar Association
- Catholic Charities
- Children's Law Center
- Crime Victim Center
- Crime Victims at DC Superior Court
- CVCP
- DASH
- DC Leap
- Lambda
- NLS

- DC Volunteer Lawyer Project
- DV Intake Ctr.-S.E.
- House of Ruth Maryland
- JUST NEIGHBORS MINISTRY
- Justice for Our Neighbors
- Legal Counsel for the Elderly
- Legal Resource Center on Violence Against Women
- Local Free Legal Clinics

- MIL MUJERES
- Natl. Law Ctr. on Homelessness
- Office of Attorney General
- PDS
- TAHIRIH
- The Neighbor
- The Sister Place
- Victim Legal Services
- Washington Legal Clinic for Homelessness
- WLRC

Legal Referral Barriers

The **most common barriers participants face when connecting a victim to an attorney is the victim not being able to afford an attorney (58.3%, n=21)** followed by the victim being too scared to seek help (41.7%, n=15), and the victim not wanting to contact an attorney themselves (33.3%, n=12).
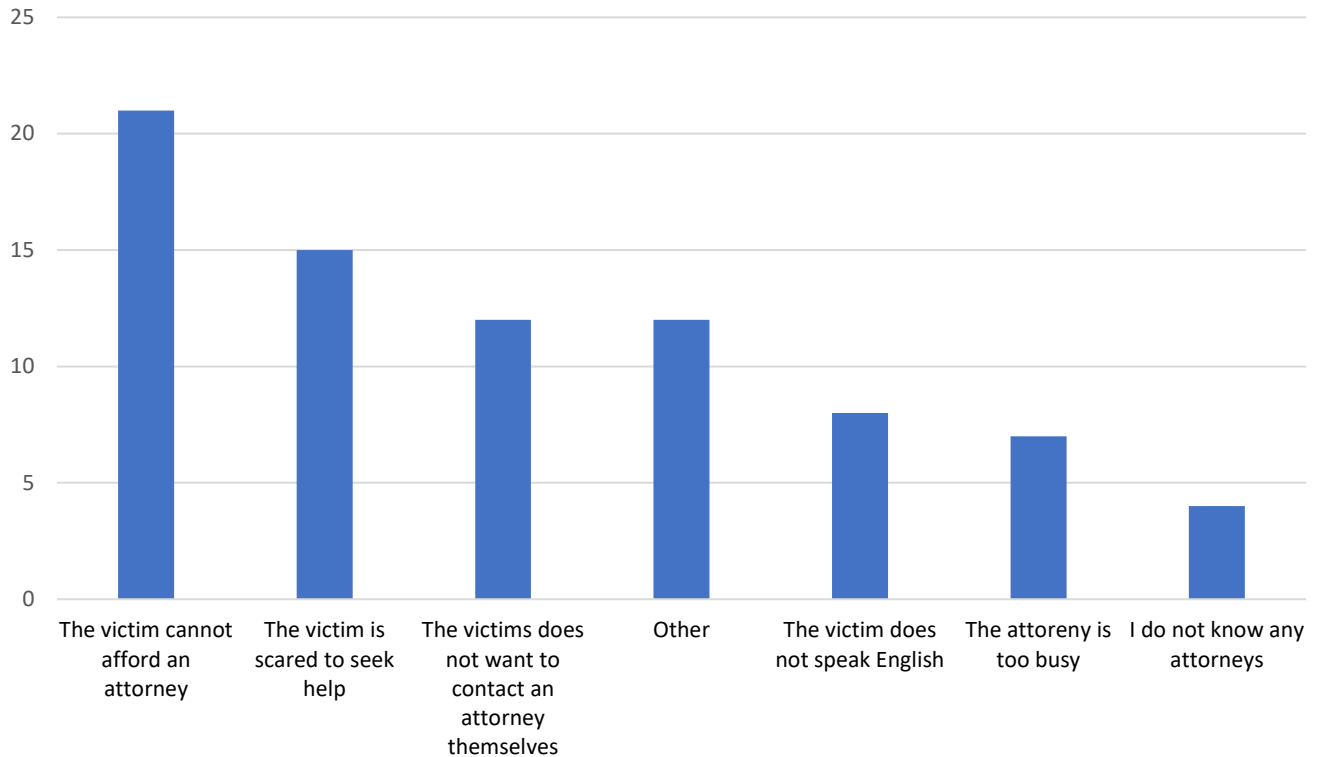
Other barriers noted by participants include:

❖ An attorney refused to provide an American Sign Language Interpreter
❖ Attorneys not able to assist with particular cases
❖ Client is too overwhelmed to contact an attorney themselves
❖ Expensive if there is a fee outside the referrals we have
❖ Organizations pass on cases leaving some clients unrepresented who wished to have an attorney
❖ The attorney's services or hours are too narrow for the victim to qualify
❖ The survivors don't know the attorneys well enough
❖ Victim decides not to complete the process, drop charges
❖ Youth are assigned an attorney (GAL) through the courts

IV. AWARENESS OF VLNDC

All participants, including legal service providers, were asked about their awareness of VLNDC. **Overall, 68.2% (n=30) of participants are slightly to extremely aware of VLNDC**, with 13.6% (n=6) extremely aware of VLNDC. Approximately 32% (n=14) of participants are not aware of VLNDC.

40% of social service providers are not aware of VLNDC, compared to 11.1% of legal providers. 88.9% of legal providers are aware of VLNDC ranging from slightly aware to extremely aware.

Most participants were aware of VLNDC through other means, followed by community meetings (25%, n=7), and a colleague at their organization (25%, n=7). **Community meetings is the most**

commonly cited reason (33.3%) social service providers knowing about VLNDC whereas legal providers learned about VLNDC through a colleague at their organization (50%).
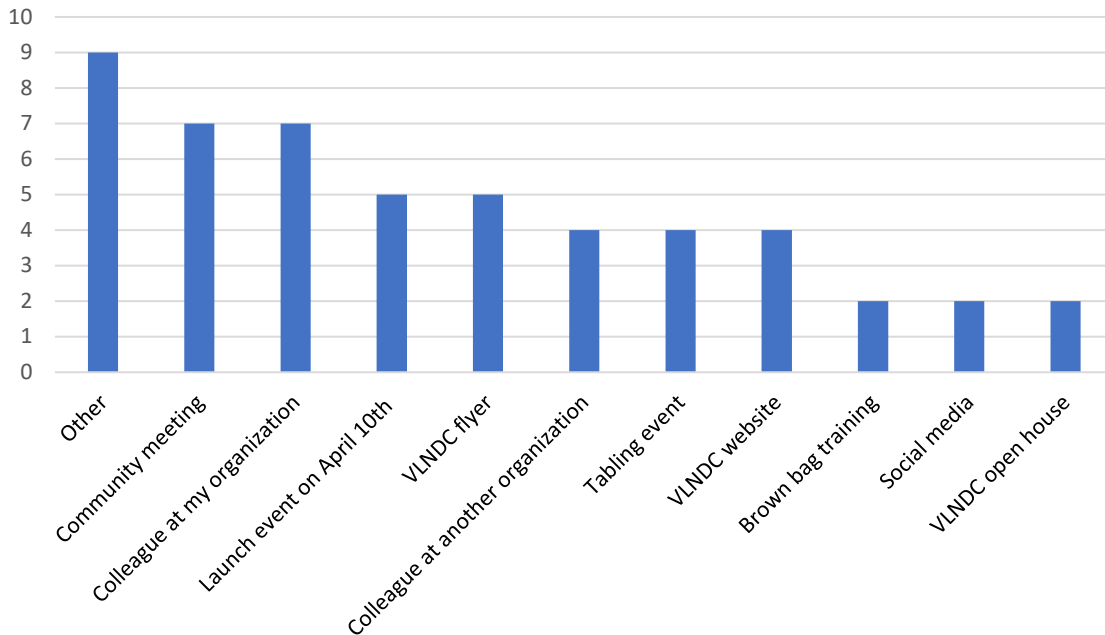
Other ways participants became aware of VLNDC included:

❖ DC Victims Assistance Network
❖ Heard directly from VLNDC
❖ I used to work at NVRDC when they began developing it
❖ OVSJG
❖ Previous job
❖ Research for a client and used your services
❖ Survey sent to me
❖ VAN meeting

Participants are also aware of VLNDC through work colleagues external to their organization who are located at:

❖ Amara Legal Center
❖ Ayuda
❖ DC Volunteer Lawyers Project
❖ VAN/NVRDC

Referrals to VLNDC

55.2% (n=16) of participants never or almost never refer clients to VLNDC, while 34.8% (n=13) refer occasionally or a moderate amount. None of the participants indicated that they refer to VLNDC a great deal. 62.5% of social service providers and 71.5% of legal providers never or almost never refer clients to VLNDC.
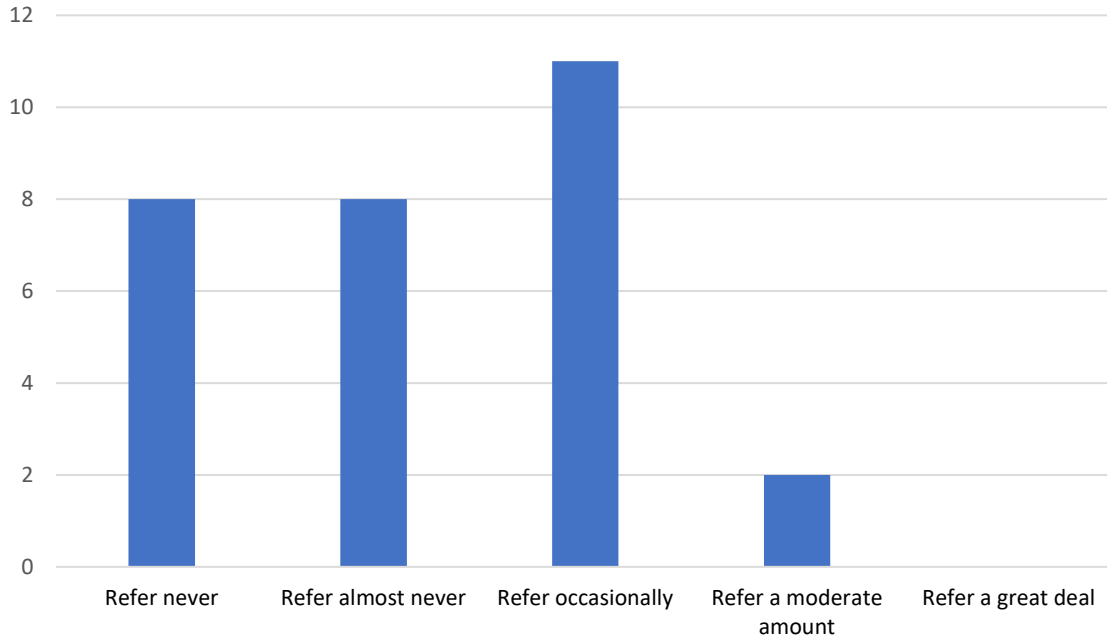
18 participants responded to a question about whether they would be comfortable referring a client to VLNDC and 66.7% (n=12) said yes. Social service providers were almost evenly split with 53.8% saying they would feel comfortable referring a client and 46.2% saying they would not. At a slightly higher percentage, 66.7% of legal providers said they would be comfortable.

6 out of 7 of the participants that have not referred a client to VLNDC said they would be comfortable referring a client to VLNDC.

Information Requested about VLNDC

A majority of the participants both social and legal service providers want to learn about each aspect of VLNDC including what legal services are provided (86.8%, n=33), what the eligibility requirements are (84.2%, n=32), how to refer a client (81.6%, n=31), and about what communities are served by VLNDC (68.4%, n=26). Additionally, participants want to learn about whether VLNDC works with youth, if they have linguistic access, and where most clients end up being referred and for what types of needs.
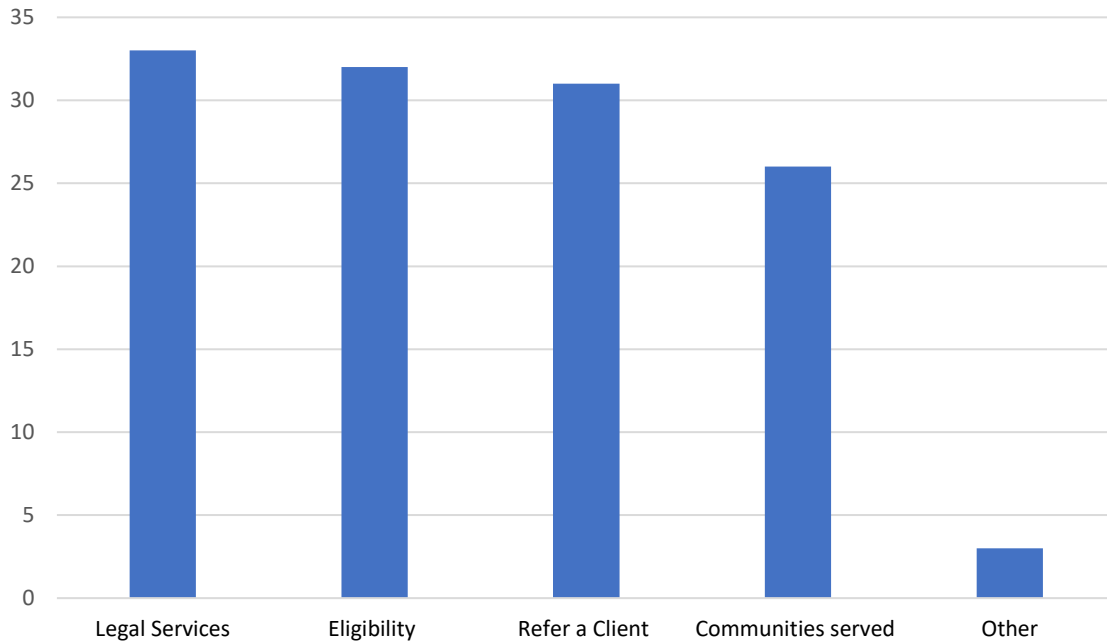
An overwhelming **majority of participants, both social and legal providers, wanted to learn about VLNDC via a website (84.2%, n=32),** this was followed by learning about VLNDC via a pamphlet or the VLNDC listserv. Social service providers had more interest in being contacted directly (30.4%) than legal service providers (12.5%).
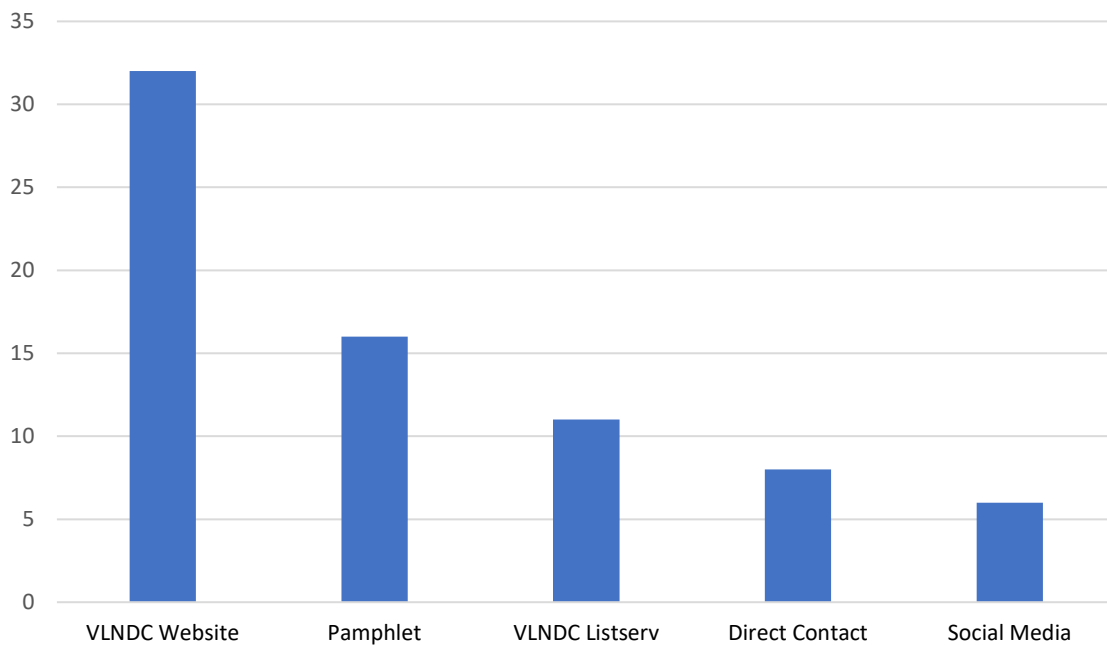
Additionally, participants want to learn about VLNDC at community events and through announcements during VAN meetings, via email, and by visiting the VLNDC offices.

Those that want to learn about VLNDC via direct contact provided contact information below:

Name	Position	Organization	Contact Information
Angela Brown	Director of HIV services	Casa Ruby	abrown@casaruby.org
Ashley Harrell	Director of Family Advocacy, Prevention & Outreach	Safe Shores - The DC Children's Advocacy Center	aharrell@safeshores.org
Candace Wheeler, LPC, CDBT, NCC	Founder/Executive Director, Therapist	Restoration 1:99 (R1:99)	Candace@R199.org
Cara Morro	Child and Adolescent Therapist	Safe Shores	cmorro@safeshores.org
Charlotte Blutstein	Director/Psychotherapist	Rock Creek Therapy, PLLC	Charlotte Blutstein 1350 Connecticut Ave, NW Suite 611 Washington, DC 20036
Dilcia Molina	Gender & Health Program Manager	La Clínica del Pueblo	dmolina@lcdp.org 202 448-2851
Gabriela Deleon	Outreach Coordinator/Latino Liaison	My Sister's Place INC	202-540-1054 1436 U Street Suite 303 Washington DC 20009 gdeleon@mysistersplacedc.org
Gerald De Leon	Prevention and Outreach Coordinator	Safe Shores - The DC CAC	gdeleon@safeshores.org
Irwin Royster	Director for Community Engagement and Partnerships	East River Family Strengthening Collaborative	iroyster@refsc.org 202-489-1167
Jason Williams	Family Support Coordinator	DC127	Jason@dc127.org
Jennifer grace	BHS Program Director	SOME	jgrace@some.org
Jessa Llewellyn	Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Program Manager	The Women's Center	Jllewellyn@thewomenscenter.org
Julie Pennington-Russell	Senior Pastor	First Baptist Church of the City of Washington, DC	jpr@firstbaptistdc.org
Kenyatta T Brunson	Director of Programs	N Street Village	KBrunson@nstreetvillage.org
Latasha Tomlin	PEER Supervisor	DC Child and Family Services Agency	Latasha.tomlin@dc.gov
Laura Rankin	Director of Operations	Global Resources & Supports	Lrankin@globalrs.org
Lisa Dominguez	Director of Clinical Services	Safe Shores-The DC Children's Advocacy Center	ldominguez@safeshores.org
Najma Johnson	Executive Director	Deaf DAWN	najma@deafdawn.org
Patricia Ferrell	Lead Case Manager	House of Ruth	pferrell@houseofruth.org (202) 667-7001 ext. 234
Shelia Dashiell	Program Coordinator	House of Ruth	sdashiell@houseofruth.org
Tanya Thomas	Women's Program Case Manager/Case Manager	Thrive DC	tanya@thrivedc.org
Tashana Pulliam	Transitional Youth CASA Supervisor	CASA for Children of DC	tpulliam@casadc.org

APPENDIX J: PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT INDICATOR REPORT

Victim Legal Network of DC Local Evaluation: Client Profile Summary Report

VLNDC
Victim Legal Network of DC

This report summarizes demographics and other characteristics of clients that received services through the Victim Legal Network of DC (VLNDC). This information was sourced from client intake data collected shortly after entry into the Network from July 2017 through July 2018 (N = 186). In order to better understand VLNDC's clients' representation of crime victims in DC at large, the VLDNC client profile was compared to all crime victims that received services from service providers funded in Fiscal Year 2017 by the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants (OVSJG) (N = 55,848). This data was sourced from Performance Measure Indicators that grantees submit to OVSJG on a quarterly basis as a condition of funding. VLNDC serves clients' legal needs; however, OVSJG-funded organizations serve clients in many capacities, including legal and social services. This means it is possible that some of the clients seen under OVSJG funded organizations are not clients that would normally seek legal services. Eight of the organizations that make up VLNDC are also OVSJG grantees, which may have caused overlapping clients between the two data sets. Select variables have been excluded from the data sets to improve the accuracy of the comparisons. Excluded data has been noted when applicable. All percentages, unless otherwise noted, are valid percentages (i.e., do not include missing responses).

Demographic Characteristics

Age

Legend: ■ OVSJG-Funded Clients ■ VLNDC Clients

Age	OVSJG-Funded Clients	VLNDC Clients
Under 18	11.9%	0.0%
18-24	19.0%	10.7%
25-30	20.2%	22.6%
31-34	12.8%	15.8%
35-59	31.3%	42.9%
60-65	2.9%	2.3%
66 and older	1.8%	5.6%
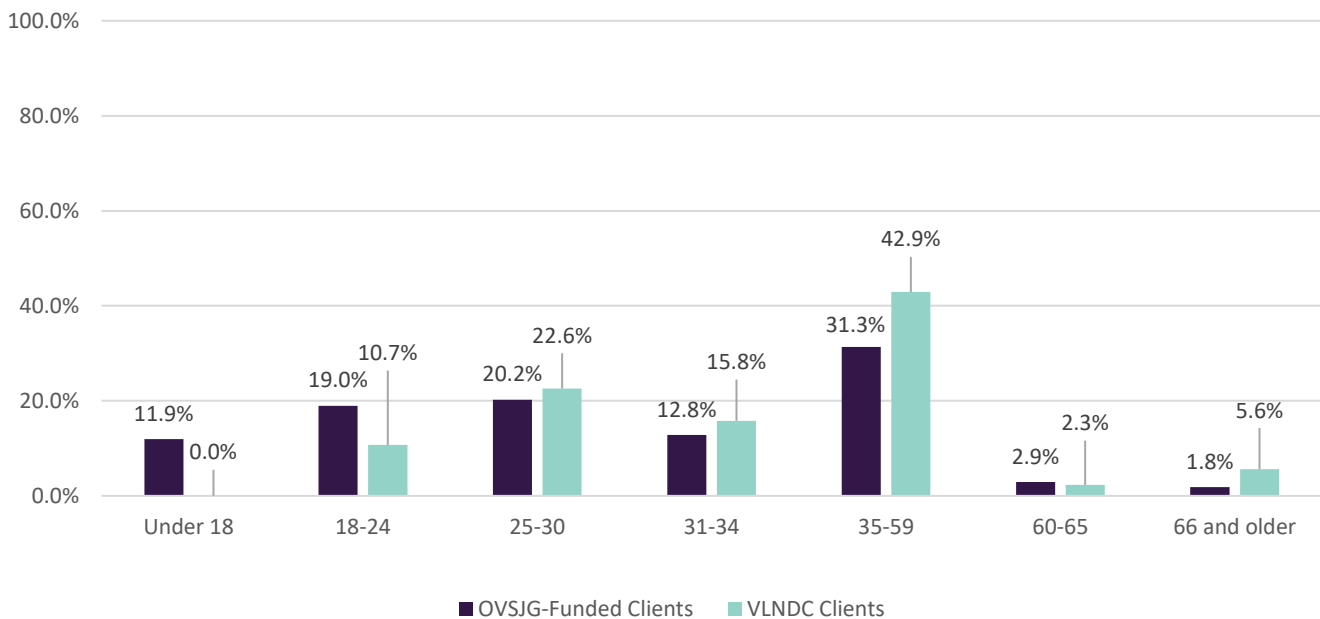
The most frequent age group served for both VLNDC clients and OVSJG-funded clients is **35-59 years of age** followed by 25-30 years of age. The third most frequent age group for VLNDC differs from OVSJG organizations where VLNDC serves more clients 31-34 years of age, while OVSJG serves more clients 18-24 years of age. VLNDC serves a statistically significant greater proportion of clients between 35-59 years of age. It is also statistically significant that OVSJG organizations serve clients under the age of 18 at a higher proportion than VLNDC.[1]

Gender

The most common gender served for both VLNDC and OVSJG-funded clients is **Female**. The differences in proportions of female clients between VLNDC and OVSJG-funded clients are statistically significant, with VLNDC serving a higher proportion of female clients.[2]

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[1] OVSJG-funded clients that were an unknown age (n=2,413) were excluded from the OVSJG client profile, and VLNDC clients that were missing information (n=9) were excluded from the VLNDC client profile.

[2] There were no OVSJG-funded clients excluded for this comparison, and VLNDC clients that were missing information (n=7) were excluded from the VLNDC client profile.

Race/Ethnicity
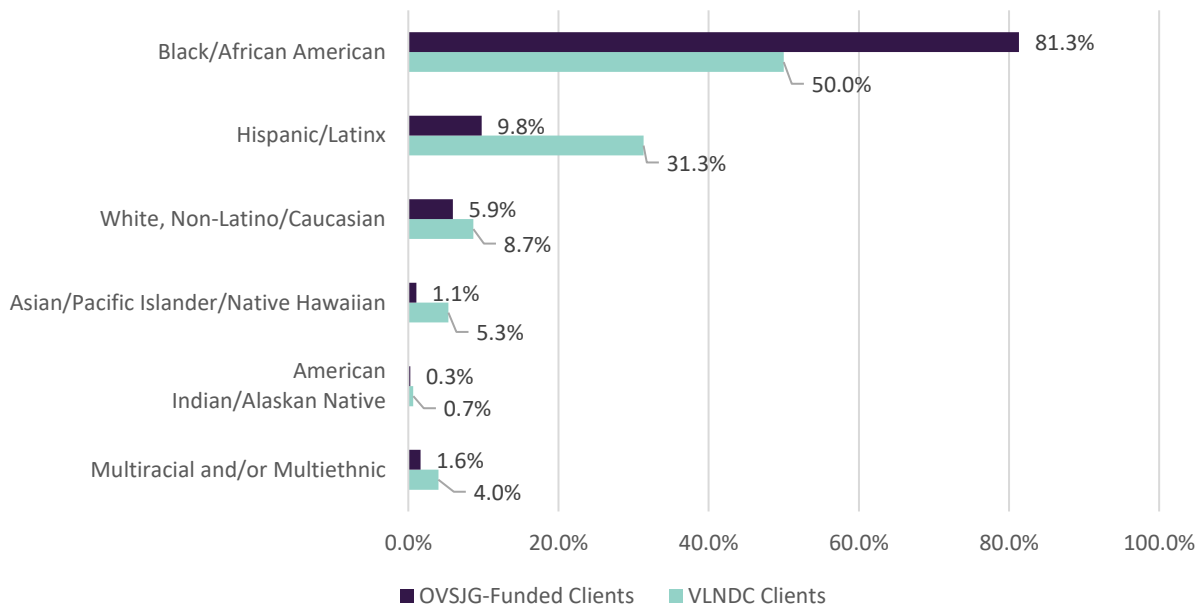
The most common Race/Ethnicity[3] served for both VLNDC clients and OVSJG-funded clients is **Black/African American**. Half of VLNDC's clients are Black/African American, and the majority of OVSJG-funded clients are Black/African American. The second top Race/Ethnicity served for VLNDC and OVSJG-funded clients is **Hispanic/Latinx**. About a third of VLNDC clients are Hispanic/Latinx, while 9.8% of OVSJG-funded clients are Hispanic/Latinx. When comparing the two client types together VLNDC serves Hispanic/Latinx clients at a higher proportion and OVSJG-funded organizations serve Black/African American clients at a higher proportion. These differences are statistically significant.

Language
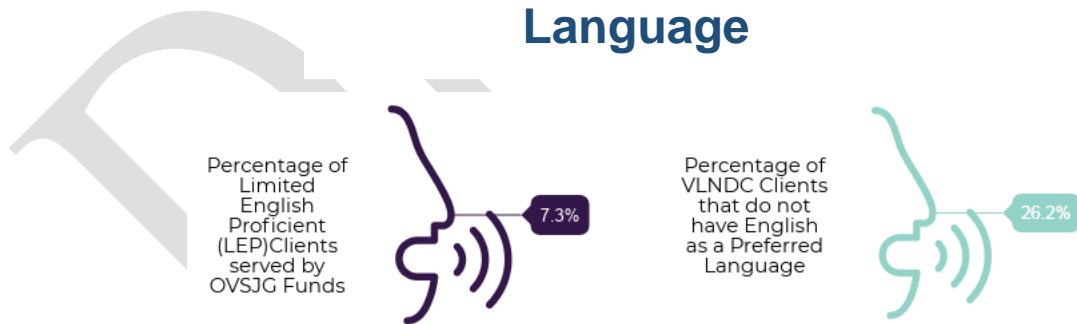
There is an **18.9%** difference between those who are **VLNDC clients that do not have English as a preferred language** and **LEP clients served by OVSJG funds**. Though these two datasets are not directly comparable, these percentages appear to suggest that VLNDC serves clients that prefer a language other than English at a higher rate than OVSJG-funded organizations. Additional data is warranted for a more in-depth analysis.

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[3] The following racial/ethnic categories were excluded (n = 8,745) from the OVSJG client profile because these categories are not collected in the VLNDC data: African, Other, and Unknown. VLNDC clients that were missing information (n=36) were excluded from the VLNDC client profile. Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian were combined for VLNDC clients since those three Races/Ethnicities are one category in the OVSJG client database.

Percentage of Clients Served by Crime Type

Crime Type	OVSJG-Funded Clients	VLNDC Clients
Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner...	54.2%	66.5%
Assault (non-sexual)	4.5%	26.6%
Sexual Assault	9.6%	19.7%
Stalking	2.6%	13.3%
Child Abuse or Neglect	13.3%	8.7%
Identity Theft	0.6%	2.9%
Homicide	2.5%	0.0%
Hate or Bias Crime	0.2%	1.2%
Elder Abuse	0.4%	1.2%
Robbery	0.6%	1.2%
Human Trafficking	1.6%	0.6%
Arson	0.1%	0.0%
DUI/DWI	0.0%	0.0%
Other	9.8%	1.2%

■ OVSJG-Funded Clients　■ VLNDC Clients

The top crime type served by both VLNDC (66.5%) and OVSJG funds (54.2%) is **Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence**. However, for VLNDC the next two top crime types served are **Assault (non-sexual) (26.6%)** and **Sexual Assault (19.7%)**. For OVSJG funded clients, the following top two crime types served are **Child Abuse or Neglect (13.3%)** and **Sexual Assault (9.6%).** This shows a potential difference in the type of crime victims served by VLNDC compared to OVSJG funded organizations.[4]

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[4] The following crime types were excluded (n = 5,765) from the OVSJG client database in order to make a comparison between the two datasets: Kidnapping, Terrorism, Bullying, Adult survivors of child abuse, Family violence or abuse. The following crime types were excluded (n = 36) from the VLNDC client database in order to make a comparison between the two datasets: Burglary, Financial Exploitation, Theft, Destruction of Property, and Threats. The crime type categories of Child exposed to violence, Child sexual abuse, and Child physical abuse from the OVSJG client database have been combined to compare to the Child Abuse and Neglect category of the VLNDC client database. The categories of Cyberstalking and Stalking have been combined to compare to the OVSJG client database crime type of Stalking. Statistics may be double-counted due to polyvictimization.

Client Location Map of Washington, D.C
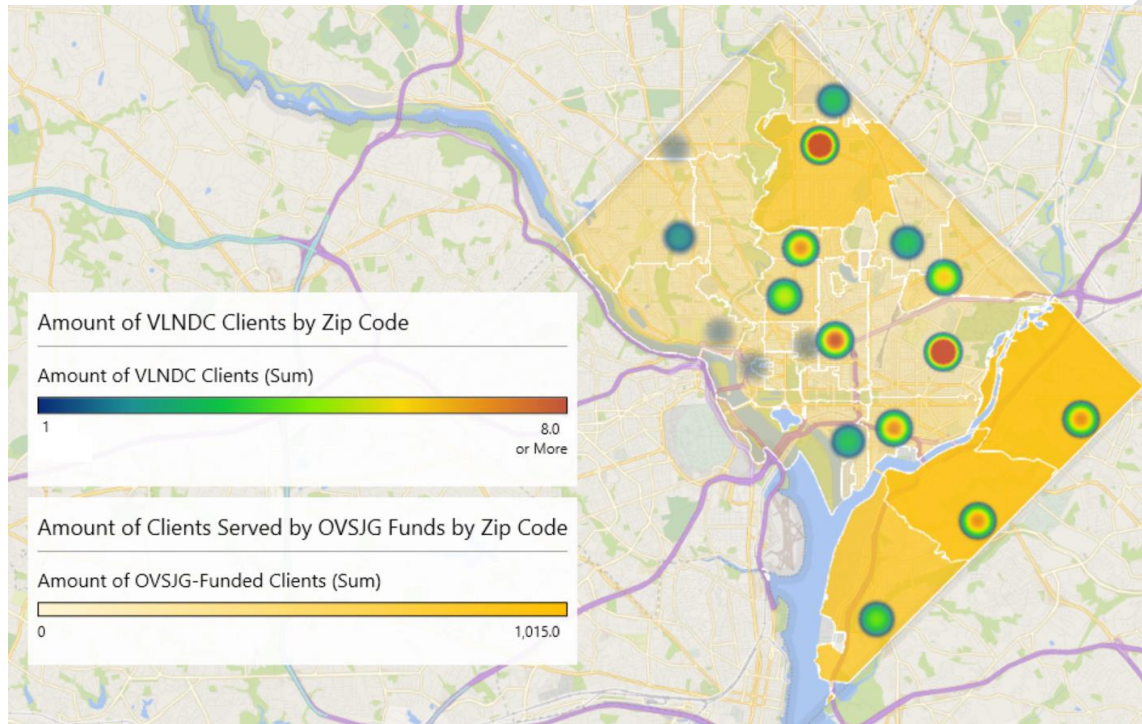
This map illustrates a heat comparison between number of OVSJG-funded clients and VLDNC clients utilizing zip codes. This information is not directly comparable as the OVSJG data covers the entire 2017 year, while VLNDC did not officially begin collecting zip code data until April 2018. VLNDC clients served are heavily represented in the **zip codes of 20002, 20011, and 20001,** seen in the heat-mapped dots. OVSJG-funded clients served are heavily represented in the **zip codes of 20019, 20020, 20032, and 20011**, seen in the darker yellow color. Overlap between high numbers of VLNDC and OVSJG clients can been seen in the zip code **20011**.[5] Caution is warranted in making comparisons in client locations. The collection of VLNDC zip code data began in April 2018 whereas OVSJG zip code data were collected the entire 2017 year. It is possible that client location changed across these time periods.

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[5] OVSJG-funded clients that were at an unknown zip code, no fixed address, out of the district, or other (n=17,193) were excluded from the OVSJG client profile, and VLNDC clients that were missing information or out of the district (n=95) were excluded from the VLNDC client profile.

Number of VLNDC Clients by Zip Code[6]

Zip Code	Number of Clients
20052	1
20032	4
20024	3
20020	7
20019	7
20018	6
20017	3
20016	2
20015	1
20012	3
20011	12
20010	7
20009	5
20007	1
20005	1
20003	7
20002	13
20001	8
Out of the District	8
Unknown or Missing	87

Number of Clients

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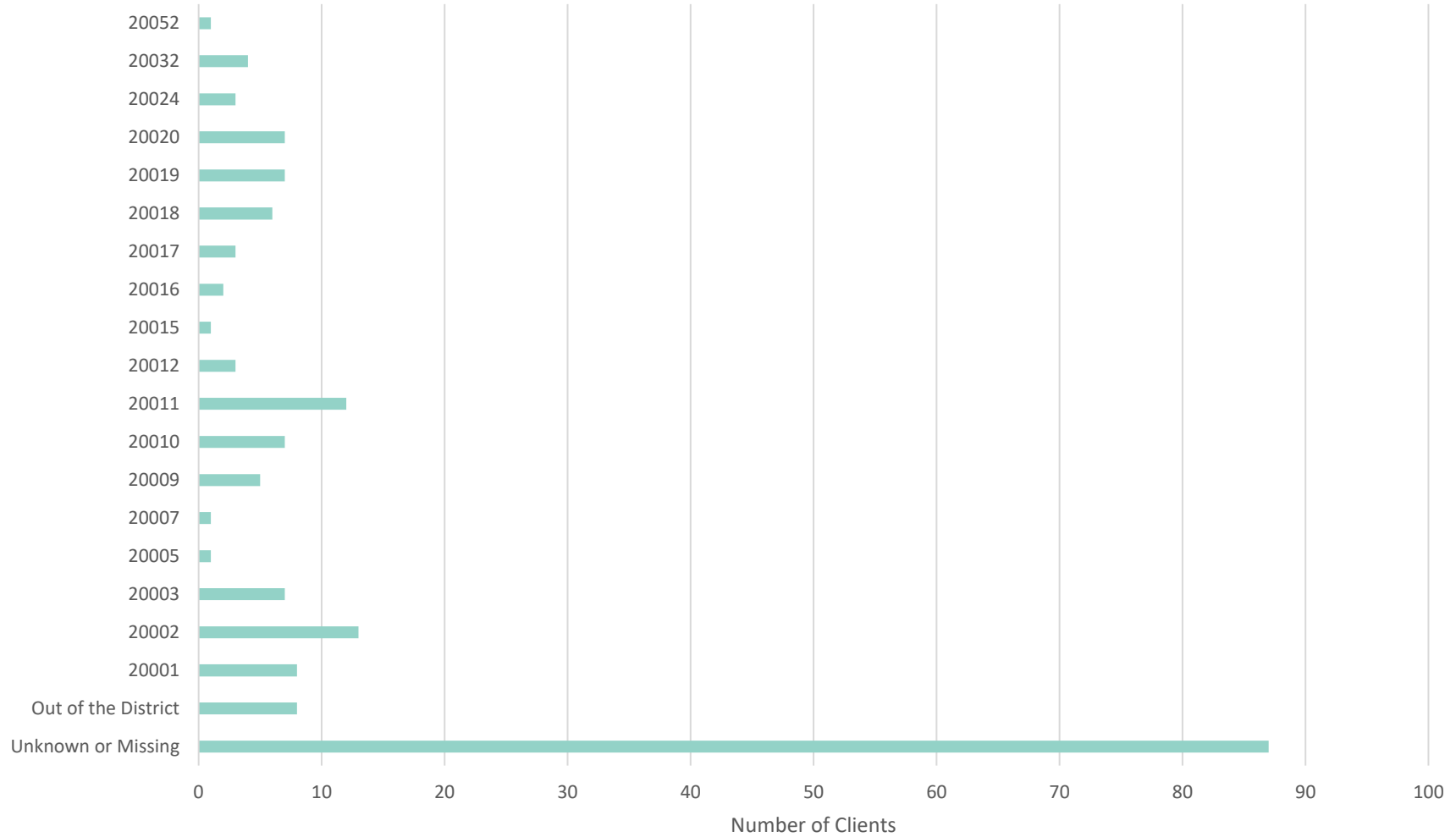
[6] Zip codes that had zero clients recorded were removed from VLNDC graph.

Number of OVSJG Clients by Zip Code[7]

Number of Clients

OVSJG and VLNDC Client Location Percentage Comparison[8]

Legend: OVSJG-Funded Clients, VLNDC Clients

Y-axis categories (top to bottom): 20722, 20052, 20037, 20036, 20032, 20024, 20020, 20019, 20018, 20017, 20016, 20015, 20012, 20011, 20010, 20009, 20008, 20007, 20005, 20003, 20002, 20001, No fixed address, Other (DC), Out of the…, Unknown…

X-axis: 0.0%, 10.0%, 20.0%, 30.0%, 40.0%, 50.0%, 60.0%, 70.0%
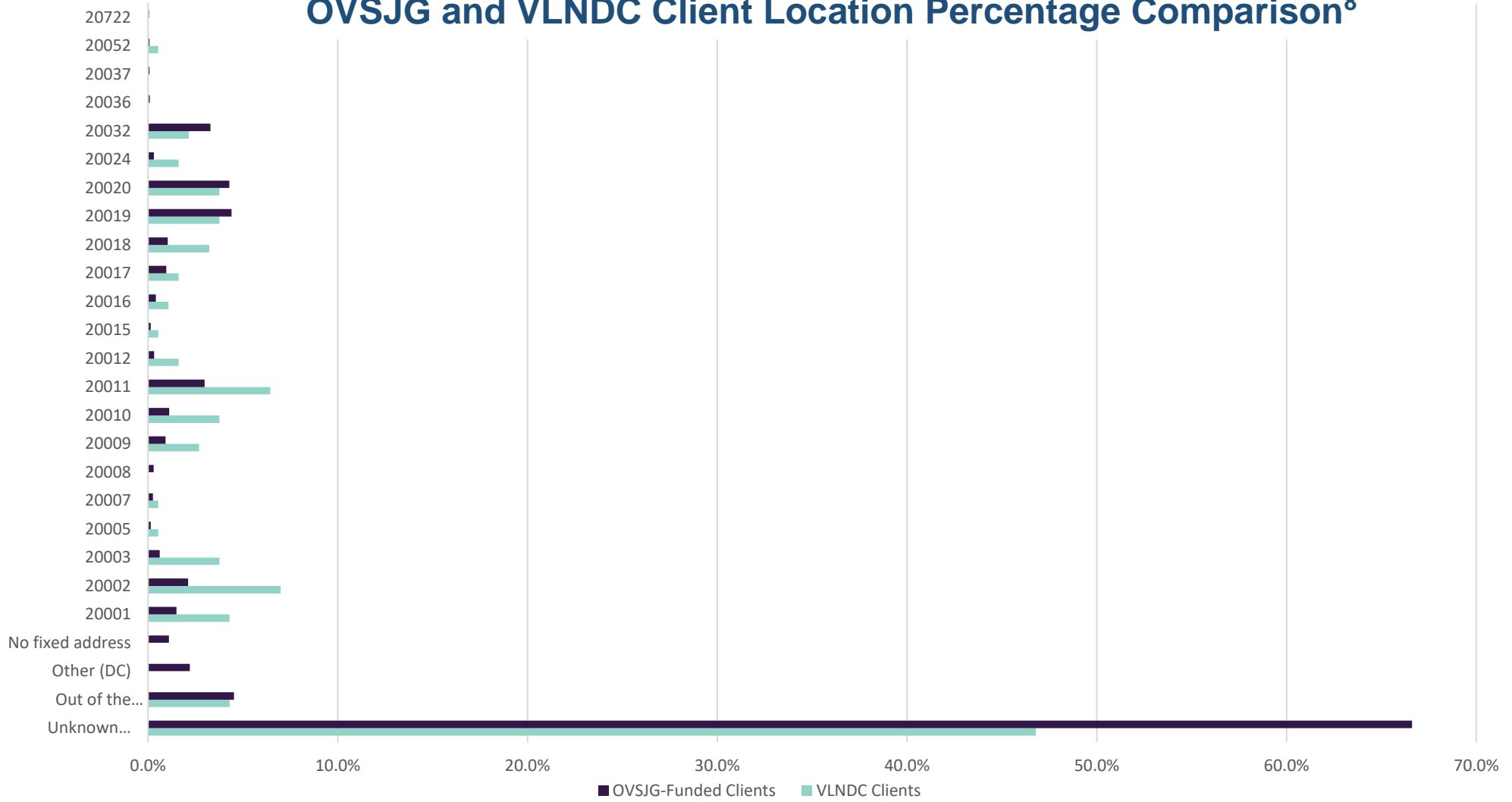
[8] Zip codes that had less than 0.1% clients recorded were removed from VLNDC and OVSJG graphs.

The Client Profile – Summary

<u>Age</u> –A majority of VLNDC clients are between the ages of **25 and 59**. A majority of clients from OVSJG funded organizations are under the age of 35. VLNDC serves a significantly higher proportion of clients between **35-59 years of age** compared to OVSJG-funded organizations. VLNDC has at the time of this report not served any youth clients; however, 11.9% of clients from OVSJG-funded organizations are under the age of 18.

<u>Gender</u> – A majority of clients from both VLNDC and OVSJG are **Female**. VLNDC serves a statistically significant higher proportion of female clients than OVSJG-funded organizations.

<u>Race</u> – Half of all VLNDC clients are **Black/African American**, and a majority of clients from OVSJG funded organizations are also Black/African American. VLNDC serves **Hispanic/Latinx** clients at a significantly greater proportion compared to clients served by OVSJG-funded organizations. OVSJG-funded organizations serve **Black/African American** clients at a significantly greater proportion compared to clients served by VLNDC. 41.9% of OVSJG-funded clients were excluded from the client profile as the races of those clients were not comparable to the information collected in the VLNDC data set.

<u>Language</u> – The preliminary data suggests VLNDC is seeing clients that have a preferred language other than English more often than OVSJG funded organizations are seeing clients that are limited English proficient, with an **18.9%** difference above the OVSJG-funded organizations.

<u>Crime type</u> – The top crime types seen by VLNDC include **Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence** followed by Assault (non-sexual), and Sexual Assault. The top crime types seen by OVSJG funded organizations include **Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence** followed by Child Abuse/Neglect, and Sexual Assault.

<u>Location</u> – Both VLNDC and OVSJG funded organizations saw large numbers of clients from the **20011 zip code**. A majority of VLNDC clients are from the **zip code 20002 (n=13**); however, only 2.1% of OVSJG-funded clients served were from that area. A majority of OVSJG-funded clients served were from the **zip code 20019 (n=1,015),** compared to 3.8% of VLNDC clients. Please note that a large percentage of data on zip codes – 74.5% of the OVSJG-funded clients and 59.0% of the VLNDC clients – is missing.

Victim Legal Network of DC Administrative Data

This report presents detailed findings[1] on VLNDC crime victims and cases October 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019. During this time period there were **184 crime victims**, 4 (2.2%) of which were repeat clients, and **301 cases**.

The primary questions addressed include:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of victims of crime that have contact with VLNDC?
2. How is the nature and timing of referrals?
3. What are the legal needs of crime victims referred to VLNDC?

From October through December 2018—Quarter 1—**90 crime victims** reached out to VLNDC for assistance with **152 legal cases**. These numbers stayed fairly consistent from January to March 2019—Quarter 2—with **94 crime victims** and **149 legal cases**.
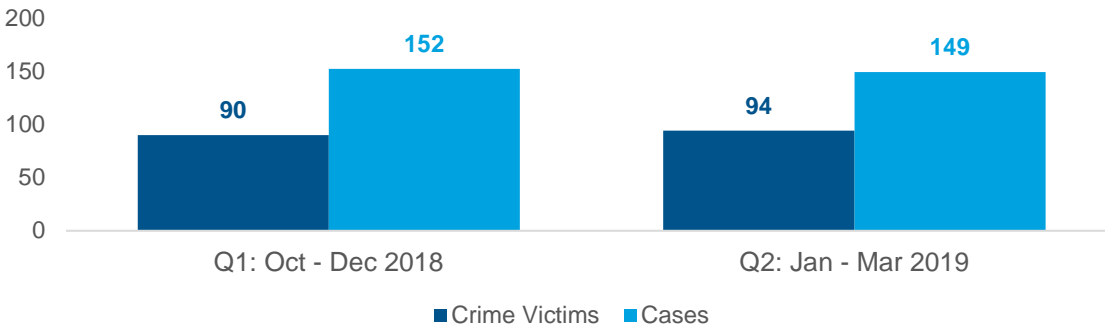
I. Demographics
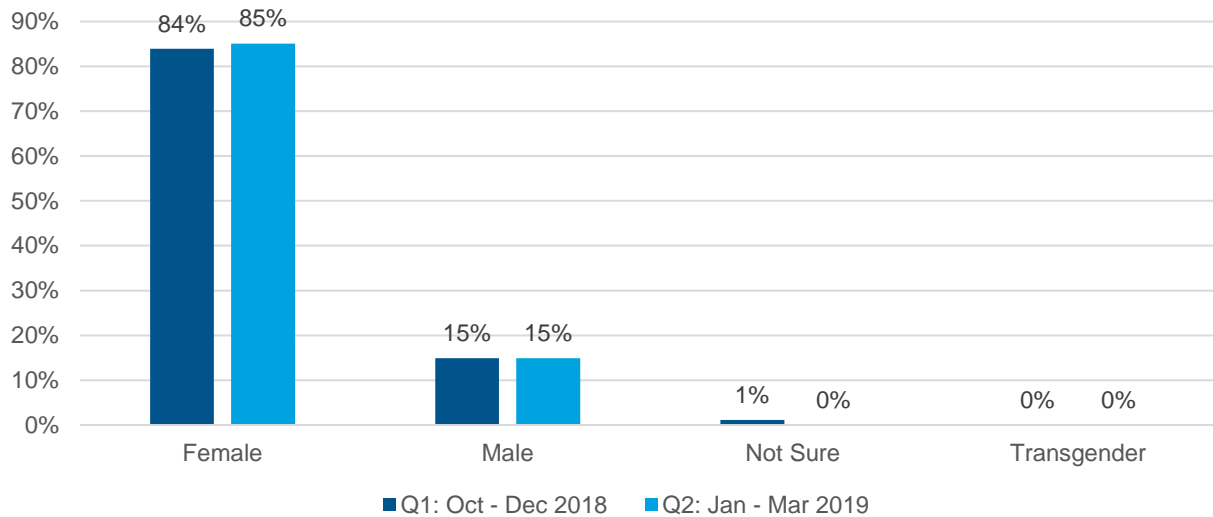
1. Gender

Across both Quarters 1 and 2, the majority of crime victims that entered VLNDC were female. In Quarter 1, **83.9% (n=73)** of VLNDC crime victims were female and **14.9% (n=13) were male**. These findings are similar to the gender breakdown in Quarter 2; **85.1% (n=80)** of VLNDC crime victims were female and **14.9% (n=14)** were male.

2. Age

Across both Quarters 1 and 2, 44.8% of the crime victims were between **35 and 59 years of age** and an additional 19.0% of crime victims were **between the ages 25 and 30**. Slightly less than half (45.4%) of the crime victims were 34 or younger.

In Quarter 1, crime victim age ranged from 17 to 81 with a mean age of **35** (mode is 26 and median is 33). In Quarter 2, crime victim age ranged from 18 to 83 with a mean age of **41** (mode is 35 and median is 38). The difference in mean age between Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 is significant, meaning the VLNDC crime victims in Quarter 2 were older in age compared to the VLNDC crime victims in Quarter 1.

Age Range bar chart legend: Q1: Oct - Dec 2018, Q2: Jan - Mar 2019
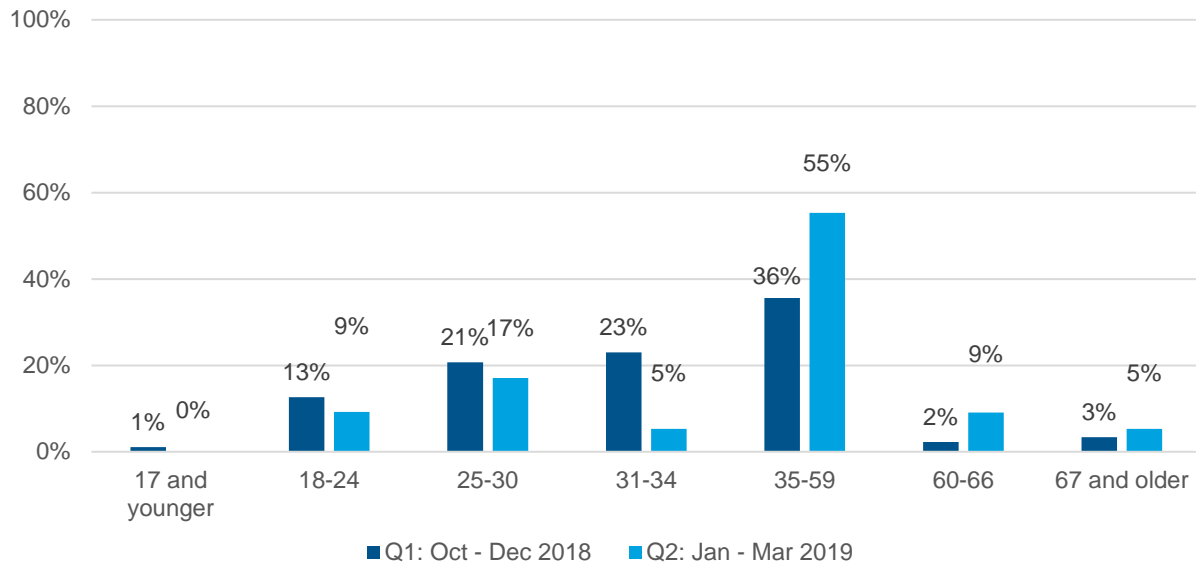
Age Range	Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	Q2: Jan – Mar 2019	Total
17 and younger	1	0	**1**
18-24	11	7	**18**
25-30	18	13	**31**
31-34	20	4	**24**
35-59	31	42	**73**
60-66	2	7	**9**
67 and older	3	4	**7**
Total	**86**	**77**	**163**

3. Sexual Orientation

Across both Quarters combined, the majority of VLNDC crime victims were **straight (84.0%, n=105**), followed by gay (5.6%, n=7), lesbian (4.8%, n=6), bisexual (2.4%, n=3), other (2.4%, n=3), and asexual (.8%, n=1).

Q1: Oct - Dec 2018   Q2: Jan - Mar 2019
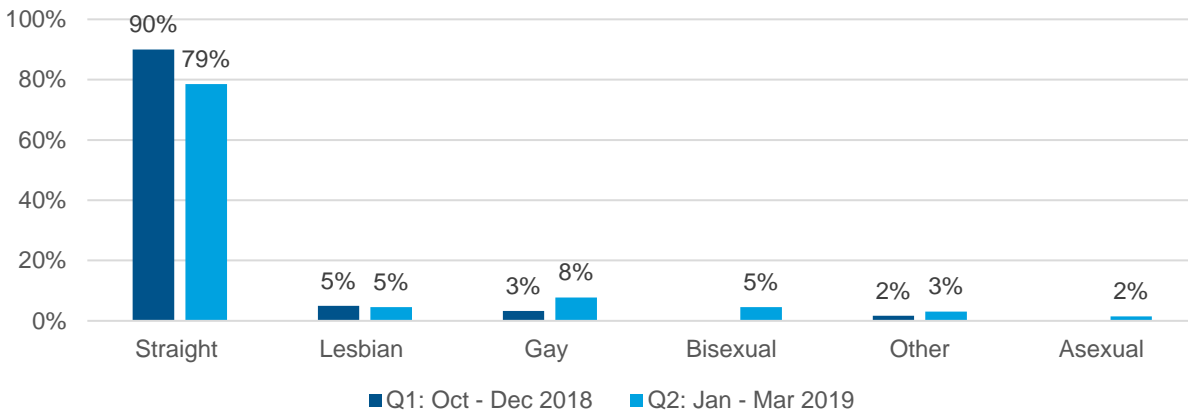
4. Preferred Language

The crime victims' preferred language across both quarters combined was English. The languages ranked from most to least requested in each quarter are as follows:

Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	Q2: Jan – Mar 2019
1. **English** (76.2%, n=64)	1. **English** (76.6%, n=72)
2. **Spanish** (22.6%, n=19)	2. **Spanish** (22.3%, n=21)
3. **ASL** (1.2%, n=1)	3. **ASL** (1.1%, n=1)

5. Race

Across Quarters 1 and 2, approximately **half of VLNDC crime victims were Black/African American (49.3%, n=72)**, followed by Hispanic/Latinx (30.8%, n=45), White/Caucasian (12.3%, n=18), multi-racial (4.8%, n=7), and Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (2.1%, n=3).

Legend: ■ Q1: Oct - Dec 2018 ■ Q2: Jan - Mar 2019
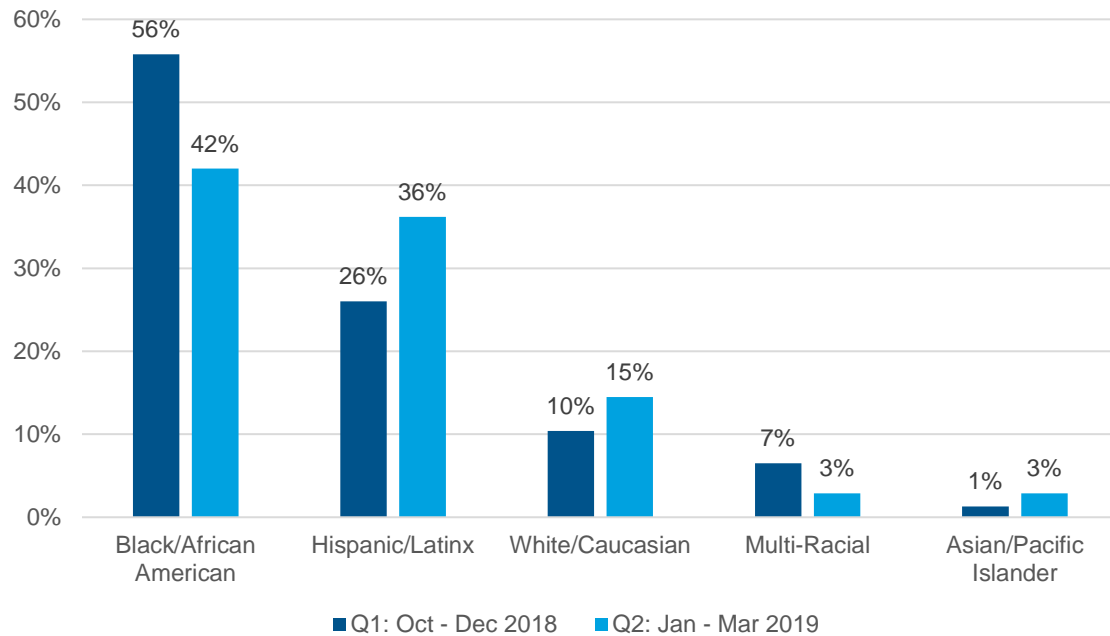
6. Ward

Across both quarters **Wards 4 and 8 were among the top three Wards where crime victims resided**. In Quarter 1 approximately 30% of the crime victims lived in **Ward 6 (15.2%, n=12) and Ward 8 (15.2%, n=12)**, followed by Ward 4 (13.9%, n=11). In Quarter 2 a majority of the crime victims lived in **Ward 4 (14.7%, n=11), followed closely by Ward 1 (13.3%, n=10),** and Ward 8 (12%, n=9).

Oct – Dec 2018

4
n=11
13.9%

3 n=2
   2.5%

n=7
1 8.9%

n=10
5 12.7%

n=2
2 2.5%

n=12 6
15.2%

7 n=10
   12.7%

n=12
8 15.2%

Other Responses:
DC: n=5, 6.3%
VA: n=5, 6.3%
MD: n=2, 2.5%
Other: n=1, 1.3%

Jan – Mar 2019

4
n=11
14.7%

3 n=2
   2.7%

n=10
1 13.3%

5 n=8
   10.7%

n=5
2 6.7%

n=6 6
8.0%

7 n=5
   6.7%

n=9
8 12%

Other Responses:
DC: n=5, 6.7%
VA: n=3, 6.3%
MD: n=5, 6.7%
Other: n=6, 8.0%
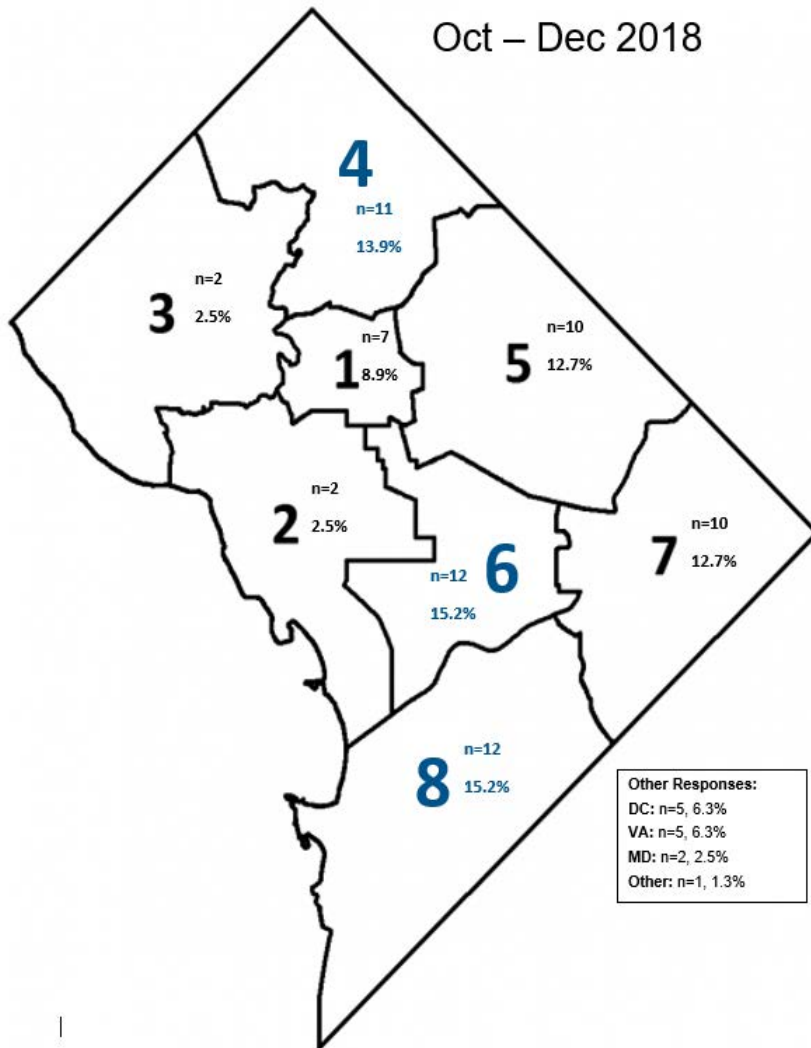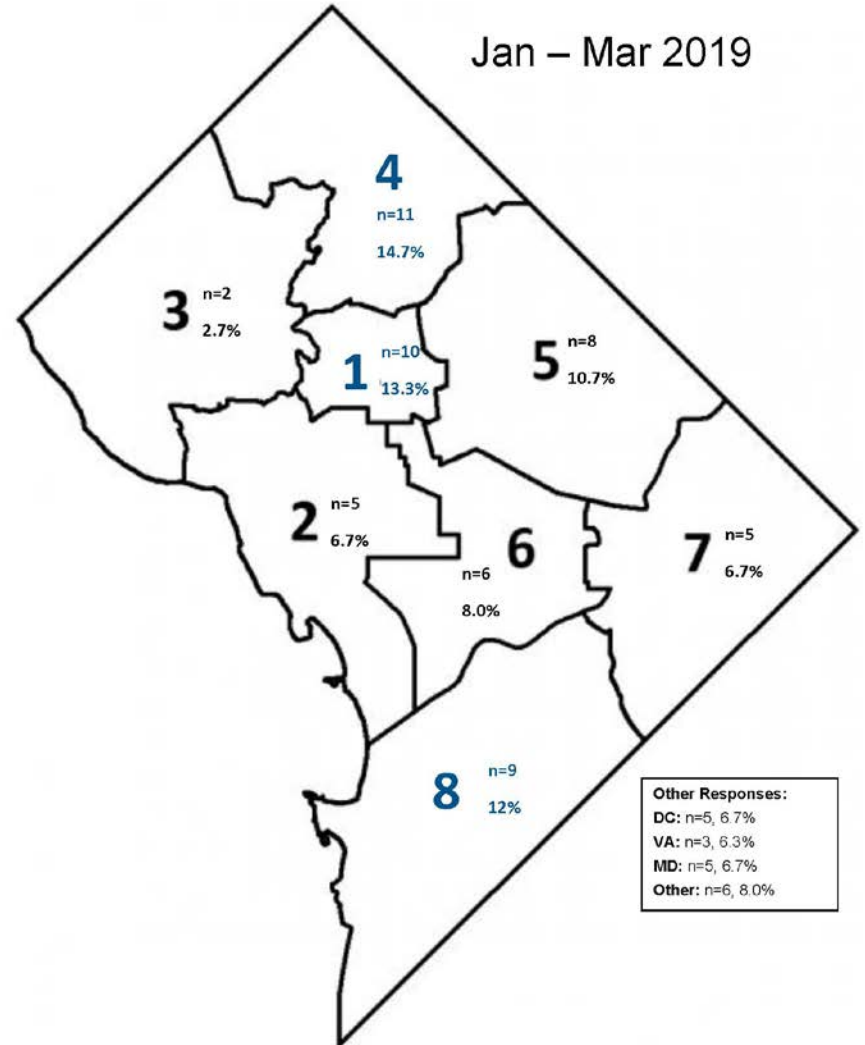
7. Number of Children

In Quarter 1, **62.2% (n=56) of the crime victims had children**, with a range of 1 to 7 children and a mean of 2 (median[2] was 2 and mode[3] was 1).

In Quarter 2, **44.7% (n=42) of the crime victims had children**, with a range of 1 to 7 and a mean of 2 (median was 1.5 and mode was 1).

8. Employment and Education Status

In Quarter 1, **46.8% of crime victims in VLNDC (n=36) were employed and 19.4% (n=14) were in school**. Approximately 10% (n=7) were both employed and in school.

Employed

47%
n=36

In School

19%
n=14

In Quarter 2, **42.9% of crime victims (n=30) were employed and 8.1% (n=5) were in school.** One crime victim (1.6%) was employed and in school.

Employed

43%
n=30

In School

8%
n=5

9. Income

In Quarter 1, the **average monthly income for crime victims in VLNDC was $986**. In Quarter 2, the **average monthly income was $957**. The difference is not significant.

The Percentage of Federal Poverty Level that crime victims fell into ranged from 0% to 691%. In Quarter 1, **71% of VLNDC crime victims (n=55) fell between 0-100%** of the Federal Poverty

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[2] The median a measure of central tendency. It is the value at the midpoint of a frequency distribution of observed values. It is sometimes used instead of (or in addition to) the mean (or average) when the frequency distribution is skewed.

[3] The mode is another measure of central tendency. It is the value that occurs most frequently in a set of observations. It is sometimes used to instead of (or in addition to) the mean when the frequency distribution is skewed.

Level. In Quarter 2, **64% of VLNDC crime victims (n=47) fell between 0-100%** of the Federal Poverty Level.

■ Q1: Oct - Dec 2018   ■ Q2: Jan - Mar 2019
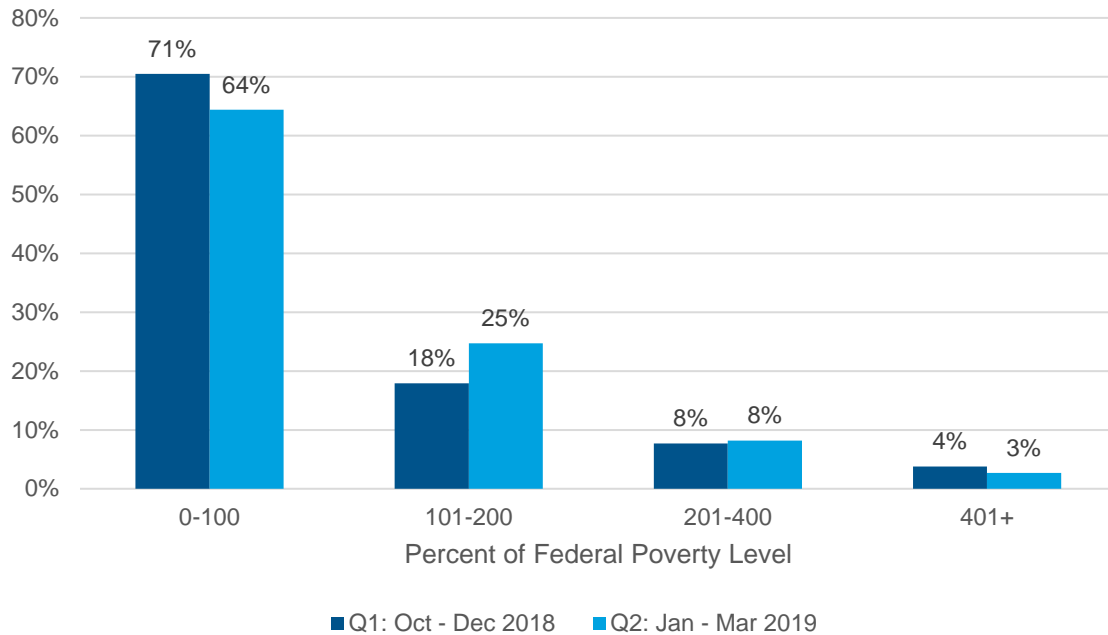
II. Legal Need

1. Point of Entry

Of the 184 crime victims that contacted VLNDC, **48.9% (n=90) entered the network through the navigator hotline,** 35.9% (n=66) through a Member Organization, and 15.2% (n=28) through the navigator website.

ENTRY POINT	FREQUENCY		Total
	Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	*Q2: Jan – Mar 2019*	
Navigator – Hotline	36	54	**90**
Ayuda	10	19	**29**
Navigator – Website	21	7	**28**
DCVLP	10	6	**16**
Legal Aid	5	5	**10**
NVRDC	6	0	**6**
Break the Cycle	2	0	**2**
Amara	0	1	**1**
LCE	0	1	**1**
Whitman-Walker	0	1	**1**
Total	**90**	**94**	**184**

2. Criminal Victimization

2.1 Victimization

When looking at the case level for VLNDC[4] across both Quarters, the **top two victimizations were the same: Domestic Violence and Non-Sexual Assault.** However, the percentages varied across Quarters. For example, in both Quarters the most frequently reported victimization was Domestic Violence. However, in Quarter 1 the percentage of VLNDC crime victims that were victims of Domestic Violence was 58%, compared to 61% in Quarter 2. Similar differences were found for Non-Sexual Assault: In Quarter 1 the percentage was 25% compared to 17% for Quarter 2.

■ Q1: Oct - Dec 2018   ■ Q2: Jan - Mar 2019

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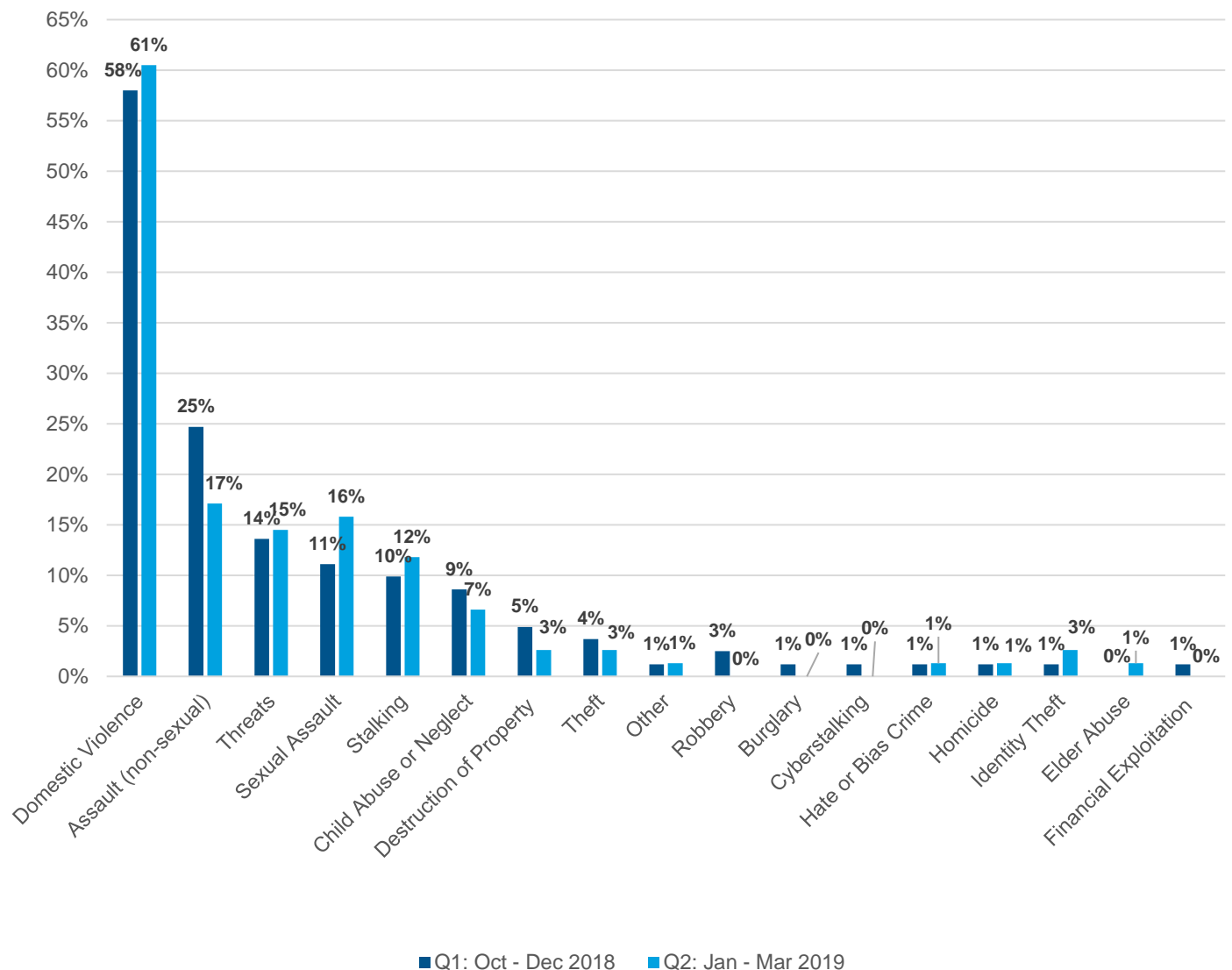
[4] This analysis is at the case-level. VLNDC crime victims might have more than one legal case. The majority of crime victims also experienced more than one type of victimization. Thus, the victimization percentages reported here duplicate across crime victims.

Across both Quarters, **104 crime victims (82.5%) experienced polyvictimization**. Of this, 68.3% of crime victims experienced polyvictimzation by the same person, 3.2% by a different person, and 11.1% by both the same person and a different person.

Polyvictimization	Frequency		Total
	Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	*Q2: Jan – Mar 2019*	
Yes, by the same person	41	45	**86**
No	13	9	**22**
Yes, by both	11	3	**14**
Yes, by a different person	1	3	**4**
Total	**66**	**60**	**126**

2.2   Relationship to Offender

Across Quarters 1 and 2, **the most frequent relationship VLNDC crime victims had with the offender was child in common (36.6%, n=30 for Quarter 1 and 37.5%, n=30 for Quarter 2).** Romantic or dating relationship was the second most frequent relationship to the offender in Quarter 1 (22%, n=18), followed by stranger (20.7%, n=17). In Quarter 2, the second most frequent relationship to offender was stranger (22.5%, n=18) followed by romantic or dating relationship (21.3%, n=17).
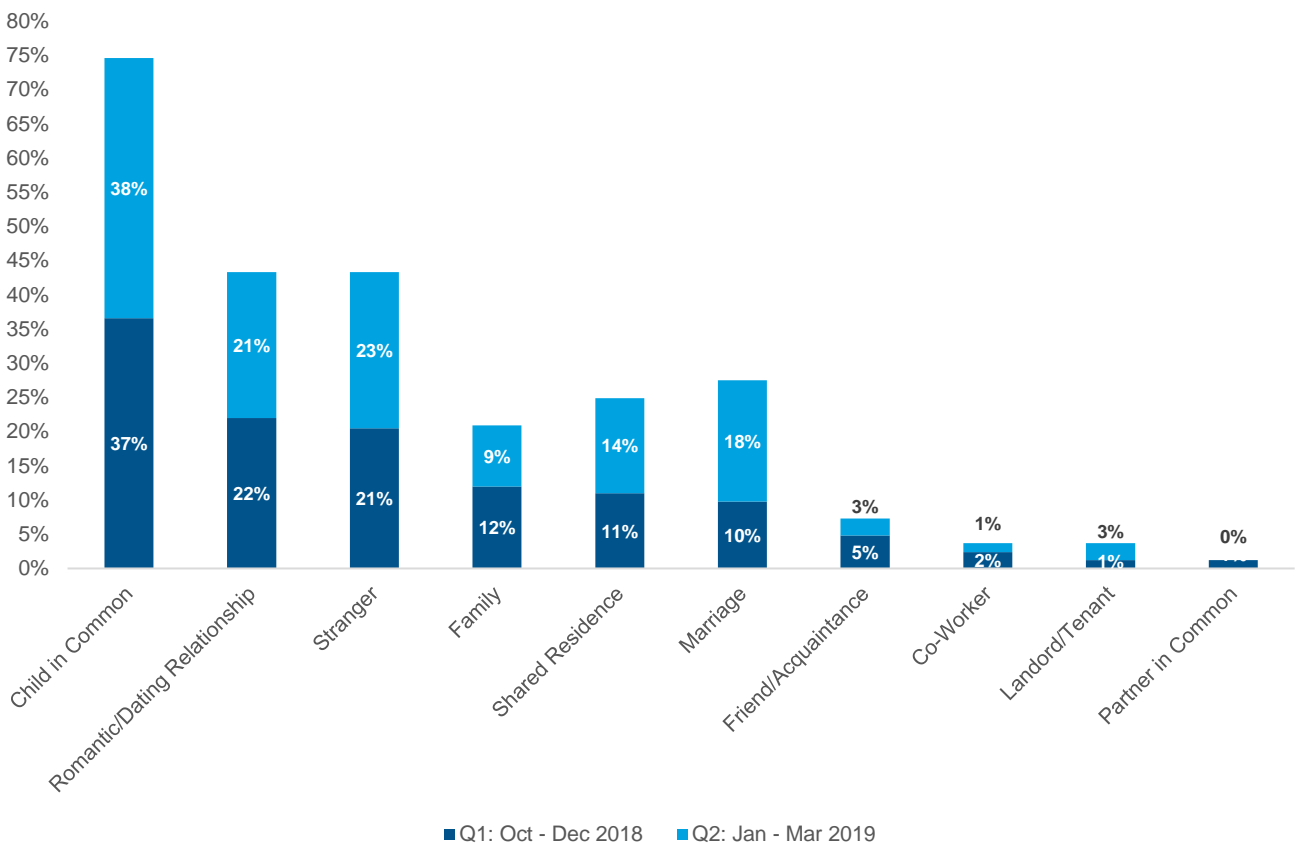
2.3   Urgent Case

In Quarter 1, **7% of VLNDC cases were urgent (n=11) this increased to 18.8% of cases in Quarter 2 (n=28).** This difference is significant (p=.003) and might be driven by the increased number of domestic violence cases in Quarter 2. There were 13 domestic violence victimization cases that were marked urgent in Quarter 2 compared to 7 domestic violence cases marked as urgent in Quarter 1.

3.   Legal Need

There were a total of 13 legal practice areas reflecting the legal needs of VLNDC crime victims during Quarters 1 and 2. The most frequent legal practice area across both Quarters is **Family (47.1%, n=144)**.

Legal Practice Area	Frequency		Total
	Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	*Q2: Jan – Mar 2019*	
Family	74	70	**144**
Crime Victims' Rights	21	20	**41**
Housing	17	12	**29**
Tort	14	12	**26**
Immigration	7	9	**16**
Consumer	5	5	**10**
Other	4	8	**12**
Criminal	2	2	**4**
Education	2	1	**3**
Health	1	1	**2**
Public Benefits	1	3	**4**
Employment	1	1	**2**
Civil Rights	1	0	**1**
Total	**150**	**144**	**294**

VLNDC crime victims had a number of legal needs, **ranging from 1 to 4 legal issues per victim**. In Quarter 1, the most frequent legal issue among VLNDC crime victims was **other (22.5%, n=32) followed closely by domestic violence/protective order (21.8%, n=31).** The second most frequent legal issue was child custody (16.9%, n=24) followed by child support (7.0%, n=10). During Quarter 2, the most frequent legal of VLNDC crime victims was **child custody (21.2%, n=29)**. The second most common legal issue was domestic violence/protective order (18.2%, n=25) and other representation needs (9.5%, n=13).

	0%	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%

Legend: ■ Q1: Oct - Dec 2018   ■ Q2: Jan - Mar 2019

Bar chart values:
- Other: 23% (Q1), 7% (Q2)
- Domestic Violence/Protective Order: 22% (Q1), 18% (Q2)
- Child Custody: 17% (Q1), 21% (Q2)
- Child Support: 7% (Q1), 4% (Q2)
- Divorce: 6% (Q1), 7% (Q2)
- Tort: 6% (Q1), 9% (Q2)
- Other Representation Needs: 5% (Q1), 10% (Q2)
- U Visa: 4% (Q1), 1% (Q2)
- Landlord/Tenant: 4% (Q1), 8% (Q2)
- Public/Subsidized Housing: 2% (Q1), 2% (Q2)
- Asylum: 1% (Q1), 1% (Q2)
- VAWA Petition: 1% (Q1), 1% (Q2)
- Title IX: 1% (Q1), 1% (Q2)
- Medicare/Medicaid: 1% (Q1), 2% (Q2)
- Defense: 1% (Q1), 1% (Q2)
- Creditor Harassment: 1% (Q1), 1% (Q2)
- Discrimination: 0% (Q1), 1% (Q2)
- Restitution: 0% (Q1), 1% (Q2)
- Social Security Disability: 0% (Q1), 2% (Q2)
- Employment Visa: 0% (Q1), 1% (Q2)
- Expungements: 0% (Q1), 2% (Q2)
- Debt: 0% (Q1), 1% (Q2)
- Non-Representation and Advocacy: 0% (Q1), 3% (Q2)

In looking at the intersection of urgent cases by legal issue, the most frequent legal issue with cases marked as urgent is **domestic violence/protective order (n=24).** The second most frequent legal issue with urgent cases was child custody (n=7). The distribution of urgent cases by legal issue is reflected below.

Legal Issue	Frequency of Urgent Cases		Total
	Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	Q2: Jan – Mar 2019	
Domestic Violence/Protective Order	9	15	**24**
Child Custody	2	5	**7**
Other	0	2	**2**

ICF

Child Support	0	1	**1**
Divorce	0	1	**1**
Landlord/Tenant	0	1	**1**
Medicare/Medicaid	0	1	**1**
Title IX	0	1	**1**
VAWA Petition	0	1	**1**
Total	**11**	**28**	**39**

4. Referrals

In Quarters 1 and 2, a total of **14 Member Organizations** <u>received</u> **a referral through VLNDC**. Two Member Organizations—DCVLP and NVRDC—received the highest number of referrals (83 and 62, respectively).
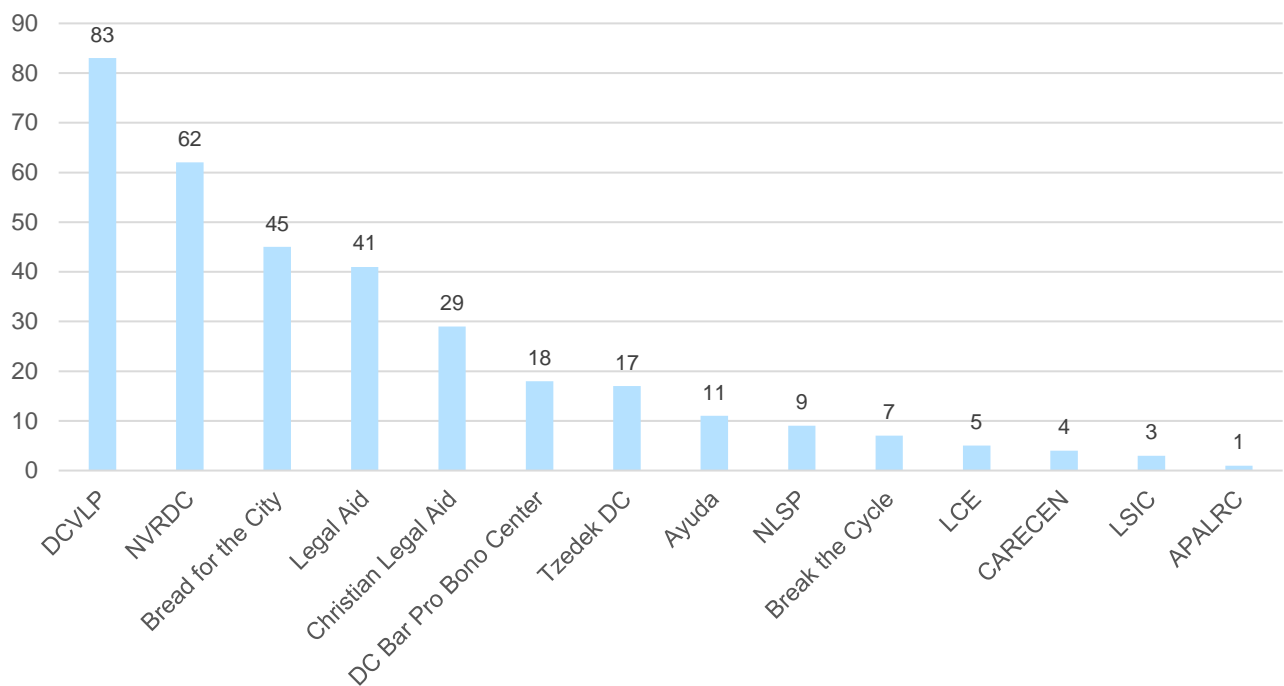
In Quarters 1 and 2, a total of **13 Member Organizations** <u>accepted</u> **referrals** through VLNDC.

Member Organization	Number of Accepted Referrals		Total
	Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	*Q2: Jan – Mar 2019*	
NVRDC	19	20	**39**
DCVLP	14	17	**31**
Legal Aid	6	7	**13**
DC Bar Pro Bono Center	3	8	**11**
Bread for the City	2	6	**8**
Tzedek DC	3	4	**7**

Ayuda	3	1	**4**
Christian Legal Aid	2	2	**4**
NLSP	0	4	**4**
Break the Cycle	1	1	**2**
LCE	0	2	**2**
LSIC	1	0	**1**
CARECEN	0	1	**1**
APALRC	0	0	0
Total	**54**	**73**	**127**

Of the 14 Member Organizations that received referrals in Quarters 1 or 2, **NVRDC and DC Bar Pro Bono Center had the highest case acceptance rate—62.9% and 61.1%**, respectively. APALRC had the lowest[5] case acceptance rate (0%).

Q1: Oct - Dec 2018   Q2: Jan - Mar 2019
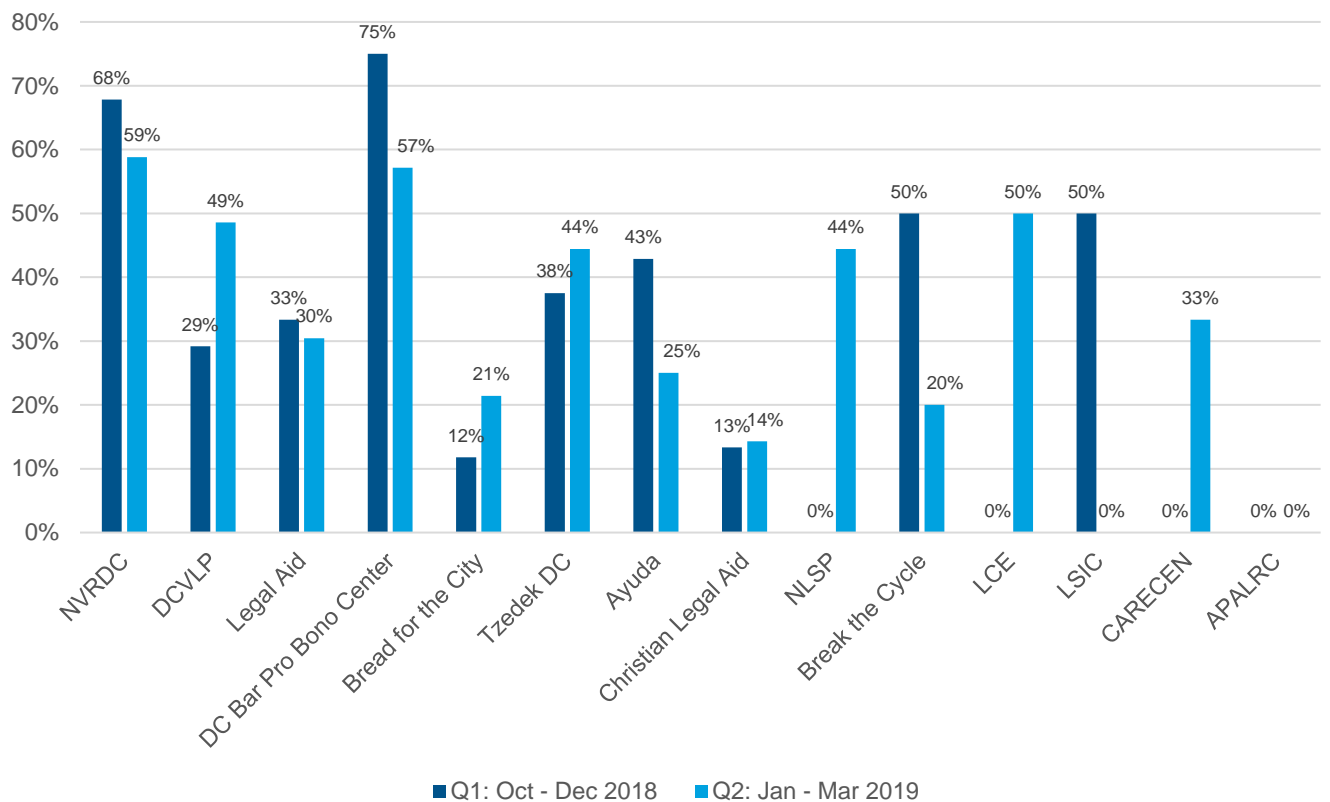
In Quarters 1 and 2, **14 Member Organizations rejected at least one referral** through VLNDC.

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[5] They also had the lowest number of referrals with only 1 referral during Quarter 2.

Member Organization	Number of Rejected Referrals		Total
	Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	Q2: Jan – Mar 2019	
DCVLP	34	18	**52**
Bread for the City	15	22	**37**
Legal Aid	12	16	**28**
Christian Legal Aid	13	12	**25**
NVRDC	9	14	**23**
Tzedek	5	5	**10**
Ayuda	4	3	**7**
DC Bar Pro Bono Center	1	6	**7**
NLSP	0	5	**5**
Break the Cycle	1	3	**4**
CARECEN	1	2	**3**
LCE	1	2	**3**
LSIC	1	1	**2**
APALRC	0	1	**1**
Total	**97**	**110**	**207**

Across both Quarters combined, four Member Organizations rejected at least 75% of referrals made to them: APALRC (100%), Christian Legal Aid (86%), Bread for the City (82%), and CARECEN (75%). The Member Organization with the lowest percentage of rejected referrals is NVRDC (37%). The graph below illustrates the Member Organizations by Quarter.
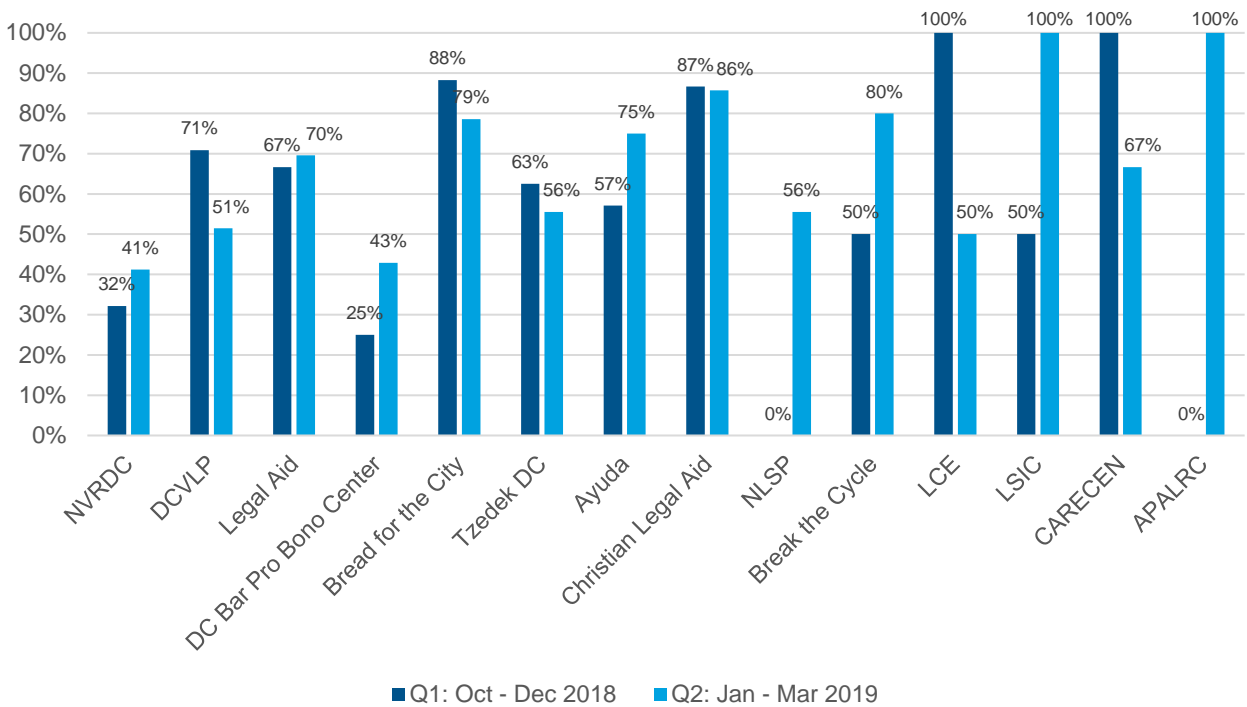
4.1   Referral Time

On average it took **1.08 days from the referral date to the date a conflict check was conducted** by the member organization, with a range of 0 to 12 business days during Quarters 1 and 2. **The large majority of cases (85.8%) were conducted within 2 business days,** with 54.5% of conflict checks occurring on the same day as the referral date.

During **Quarter 1, it took 1.17 days on average between the referral date and the conflict check date**, with a range from 0 to 12 days. Fifty-seven percent of conflict checks were completed by the Member Organization on the same day they received the referral and an additional 28% were completed within 2 business days.

During **Quarter 2, it took .99 days on average from the time of the referral to the conflict check date** by the receiving member organization, with a range of 0 to 8 business days. Slightly more than half (52.0%), were completed on the same day and 86.6% completed within 2 business days.

Across both Quarters, there were several cases that had more than a 5-business day time lapse, thus skewing the mean. When looking at other measures of central tendency (i.e., mode and median) the average is 0 days.

4.2   Referral-to-Conflict Time by Legal Need

The time between referral and conflict dates varied by legal need. The median[6] number of days by legal need is noted in the chart below. During **Quarter 1, the greatest median time lapse occurred for Title IX cases (8 business days)** whereas in **Quarter 2 the greatest median time lapse was 3 days (for Other legal need)**. Across both Quarters, 50% of the legal needs had a median of zero days in between the referral and conflict check dates. An additional 28% had a median time lapse of one day.

Legal Need	Time Lapse (In Business Days)		Overall Median
	Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	*Q2: Jan – Mar 2019*	
Title IX	8	2	**5**
U Visa	3	1	**2**
Asylum	1	0	**1**
Other	1	3	**1**
VAWA Petition	1	1	**1**
Child Custody	0	0	**0**
Child Support	0	0	**0**
Creditor Harassment	0	0	**0**
Divorce	0	0	**0**
Domestic Violence/Protective Order	0	0	**0**
Landlord/Tenant	0	0	**0**
Other Representation Needs	0	2	**2**
Public/Subsidized Housing	0	0	**0**

[6] The median is used here instead of the mean because the mean is skewed by outliers.

Debt	0	0	**0**
Medicare/Medicaid	0	1	**1**
Non-Representation and Advocacy	0	2	**2**
Restitution	0	0	**0**
Social Security Disability	0	1	**1**
Average Median	**0**	**1**	**.5**

4.3   Referral Outside of Network

A total of **38 VLNDC crime victims had at least one legal need referred outside of VLNDC in Quarter 1.** Twenty-five (31%) crime victims had all their legal needs referred to external organizations for service. **In Quarter 2, 36 VLNDC crime victims had at least one legal need referred outside of VLNDC** and 27% of crime victims had all their legal needs referred to external organizations.

The majority of external legal referrals were initiated by the Navigator. **In Quarter 1, 34% of the external referrals for legal needs were done by the Navigator**. Approximately 1% of external legal referrals were done by Member Organizations. **In Quarter 2, 29% of external referrals for legal services were made by the Navigator**, compared to 2% of external legal referrals from Member Organizations.

The most frequent reason cases were referred out of VLNDC was due to the **legal area not practiced by VLNDC Member Organizations (41.9%, n=39).** This was the most frequent reason cited for out of network referrals across both quarters. Examples of legal issues that were not provided[7] by VLNDC in Quarters 1 and 2 include: Immigration Asylum, Criminal Defense, Employment Discrimination, Employment Visa, Criminal Expungements, Social Security Disability.

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[7] There were 27 cases with missing information about the legal issue. It is possible that these services were provided by VLNDC but not captured in the data.
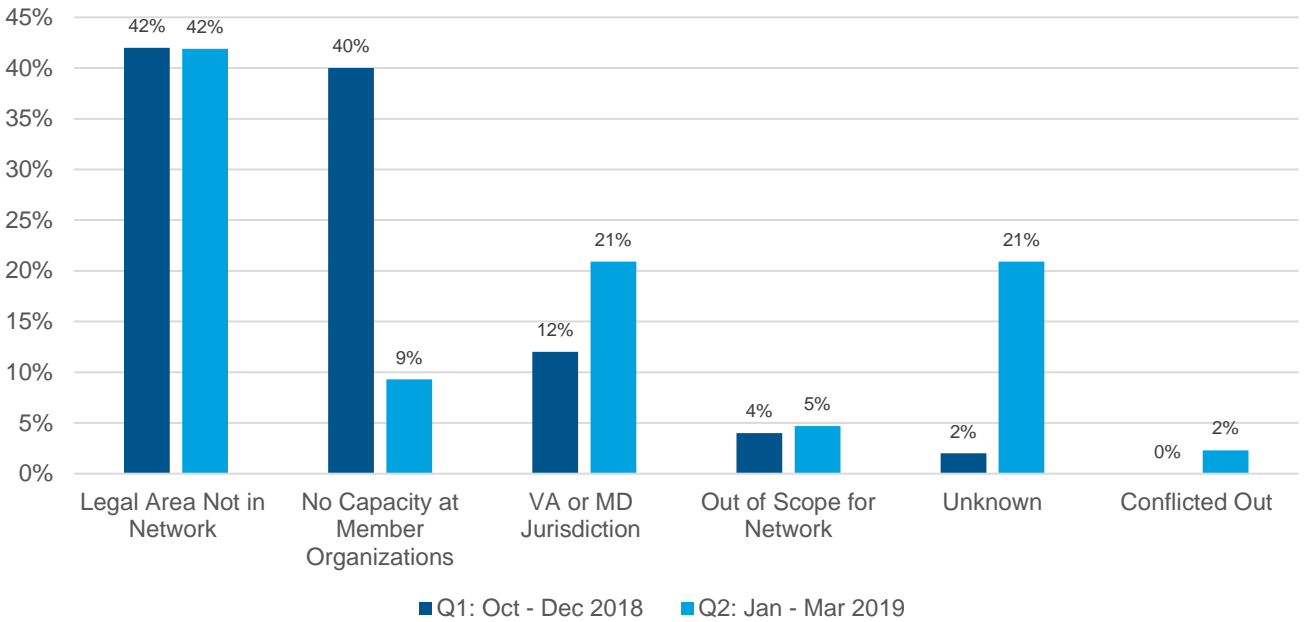
The distribution of legal issues by conflicted out or otherwise not addressed by VLNDC services during quarters 1 and 2 are provided below. **The top legal issues most frequently referred out to external organization are for Tort (22% of externally referred legal issues) and Other legal need** (21% of externally referred legal issues).

Legal Issue	Number of External Referrals		Total
	Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	Q2: Jan – Mar 2019	
Tort	8	11	**19**
Other	15	3	**18**
Domestic Violence/Protective Order	6	3	**9**
Landlord/Tenant	2	6	**8**
Other Representation Needs	5	2	**7**
Child Custody	3	3	**6**
U Visa	4	0	**4**
Divorce	2	2	**4**
Child Support	2	1	**3**
Expungements	0	1	**1**
Title IX	1	0	**1**
Non-Representation and Advocacy	0	1	**1**
Asylum	1	0	**1**
Discrimination	0	1	**1**
Employment Visa	0	1	**1**
Social Security Disability	0	1	**1**
Medicare/Medicaid	1	0	**1**
Defense	1	0	**1**
Total	**51**	**36**	**87**

VLNDC made external referrals to 18 organizations during Quarter 1 and Quarter 2. The DC Bar Pro Bono Clinic received the most referrals (n=23) followed by Jackson & Associates (n=13). Both the Northern VA Legal Services and the Landlord Tenant Resource Center each received 5 referrals. All other organizations received between 1 and 4 referrals. This distribution, by Quarter, is noted in the table below.

Organization	Number of External Referrals		Total
	Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	Q2: Jan – Mar 2019	
DC Bar Pro Bono Clinic	6	17	**23**
Jackson & Associates	8	5	**13**
DC Refers	3	4	**7**
Landlord Tenant Resource Center	1	4	**5**
Northern VA Legal Services	4	1	**5**
MD Legal Aid	2	3	**5**
DC Affordable Law Firm	2	2	**4**
Small Claims Resource Center	1	2	**3**
Wendt Center	3	0	**3**
Neighborhood Legal Services Program	1	1	**2**

Washington Lawyer's Workers Rights Clinic	2	1	**3**
Washington Lawyers' Committee	1	1	**2**
MD Crime Victims' Rights Resource Center	1	0	**1**
Family Court Self Help	0	1	**1**
Office for Police Complaints	0	1	**1**
George Washington Law Domestic Violence Clinic	1	0	**1**
SurvJustice	1	0	**1**
Total	**37**	**43**	**80**

III. Case Outcomes

1. Services Received

Across Quarters 1 and 2 combined, VLNDC provided a range of legal services. **The most frequent service provided during this time period was extended representation (26.5%, n=73)** followed by brief advice from a Member Organization. The distribution of services is presented below by Quarter.

■ Q1: Oct - Dec 2018   ■ Q2: Jan - Mar 2019
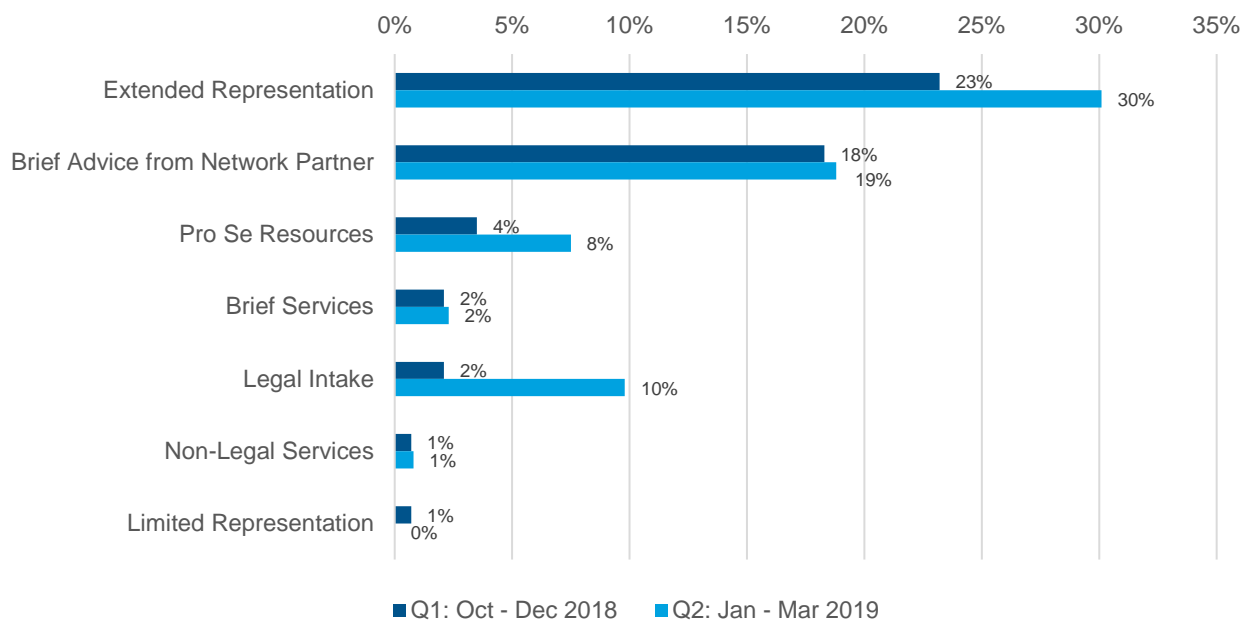
The VLNDC Navigator and Member Organizations also made Out-of-Network referrals for legal (32.4%, n=89) and non-legal (3.7%, n=10) services.

Q2: Jan - Mar 2019   Q1: Oct - Dec 2018
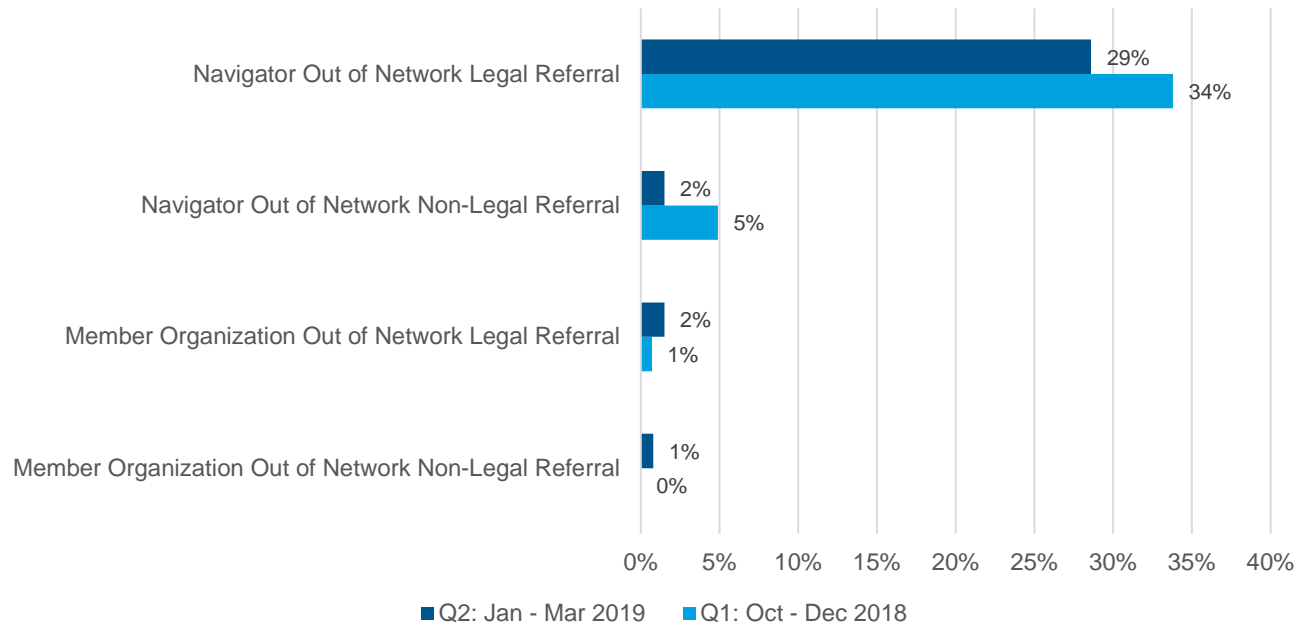
VLNDC did not provide services to 20% (n=54) of cases. In exploring these cases further, a few different reasons regarding the crime victim or case help provide context for no services provided. In 41% of these cases, VLNDC was unable to make contact with the individual. In an additional 41% of the cases, the individual was no longer seeking assistance.

Crime Victim or Case Issue	Frequency of Crime Victim or Case Reason		Total
	Q1: Oct – Dec 2018	Q2: Jan – Mar 2019	
No contact	10	6	16
No longer seeking assistance	12	4	16
Found representation	3	2	5
Confused about VLNDC	0	2	2
Reason not identified	8	7	15
Total	33	21	54

2. Intersection of Services Provided[8] and Victim Demographics

This section explores the differences in services provided by a number of victim demographics: country of origin, DC ward, language, housing status and urgent cases. The findings are not presented by quarter due to the low frequency counts across some variables.

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[8] In this section, services are only listed in the analyses if at least one crime victim received the service.

2.1   Service Received by Country of Origin

Of crime victims with data about their country of origin, the large majority were from the United States (55.2%, n=64). The top three origin countries other than the United States were El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico. **Out of Network referrals by the Navigator was the most frequently provided service for victims from both the U.S. and other countries followed by extended representation.** The frequency of services by country of origin is provided below.

Services Received	Country of Origin	
	Other Country	**U.S.**
Navigator Out of Network Legal Referral	13	24
Extended Representation	12	16
None	6	11
Brief Advice from Network Partner	10	8
Legal Intake	0	6
Navigator Out of Network Non-Legal Referral	0	3
Pro Se Resources	1	2
Brief Services	2	1
Limited Representation	0	1
Non-Legal Services	1	0
Organization Out of Network Legal Referral	1	1
Total[9]	**46**	**73**

2.2   Services Received by Location

When looking at services received by Ward, the **top services received in Ward 4, which had the highest number of crime victims across Quarters 1 and 2 (n=22) were extended representation**, out-of-network legal referral from the navigator, brief advice from a Network partner. The least frequent service received across all wards is non-legal services, which is expected given the Networks current emphasis on legal services.

Services Received	Ward							
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
None	0	3	0	3	4	2	6	5
Legal Intake	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Brief Advice from Network Partner	3	1	1	4	1	5	2	3
Brief Services	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1

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[9] These totals are based on the number of cases, not the number of crime victims. The totals presented in this table will be more than the number of individual crime victims country of origin because they may have more than one legal case.

Extended Representation	4	3	0	7	3	5	3	5
Non-Legal Services	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Pro Se Resources	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0
Navigator Out of Network Legal Referral	4	0	2	5	7	6	4	3
Navigator Out of Network Non Legal Referral	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Organization Out of Network Legal Referral	1	--	--	--	1	1	--	--

Services Received	Other Location			
	DC	MD	VA	Other
Legal Intake	0	0	2	3
Brief Advice from Network Partner	1	1	2	1
Limited Representation	1	0	0	0
Extended Representation	3	3	1	2
Pro Se Resources	1	0	2	0
Navigator Out of Network Legal Referral	3	2	5	4
Navigator Out of Network Non Legal Referral	0	0	1	0

2.3 Services Received by Preferred Language

The most common service received for crime victims whose preferred language was English or Spanish was an out-of-network legal referral by the Navigator. Additional data points are needed to determine if there are differences in services received by language preference.

Services Received	Language		
	ASL	English	Spanish
None	0	24	7
Legal Intake	0	9	1
Brief Advice from Network Partner	0	17	9
Brief Services	0	2	2
Limited Representation	0	1	0
Extended Representation	0	31	8
Non-Legal Services	0	0	1
Pro Se Resources	0	11	0
Navigator Out of Network Legal Referral	0	48	10
Navigator Out of Network Non-Legal Referral	0	4	0
Organization Out of Network Legal Referral	1	2	0

2.4   Services Received by Housing Status

The most frequent services received for crime victims with permanent housing status was an out of network legal referral by the Navigator, followed by extended representation, and brief advice from a Member Organization. **For crime victims with temporary housing this was also an out of network legal referral by the Navigator**, followed by extended representation, and no services.

Services Received	Housing Status	
	Temporary	**Permanent**
None	4	16
Legal Intake	1	7
Brief Advice from Network Partner	2	21
Brief Services	0	4
Extended Representation	4	28
Non-Legal Services	0	1
Pro Se Resources	3	2
Navigator Out of Network Legal Referral	7	34
Navigator Out of Network Non-Legal Referral	0	3
Organization Out of Network Legal Referral	0	2

2.5   Services Received by Urgent Case Status

The top three services provided for urgent cases were extended representation, brief advice from a Network Partner, and no services.

| Services Received	Urgent Case	
	No	**Yes**
None	47	7
Legal Intake	12	4
Brief Advice from Network Partner	44	7
Brief Services	6	0
Limited Representation	1	0
Extended Representation	60	13
Non-Legal Services	1	1
Pro Se Resources	9	6
Navigator Out of Network Legal Referral	83	3
Navigator Out of Network Non-Legal Referral	9	0

Organization Out of Network Legal Referral	2	1
Organization Out of Network Non-Legal Referral	0	1

IV. Trends

Summary findings regarding case and crime victim trends are provided, covering the time period from: July 2017 through March 31, 2019.
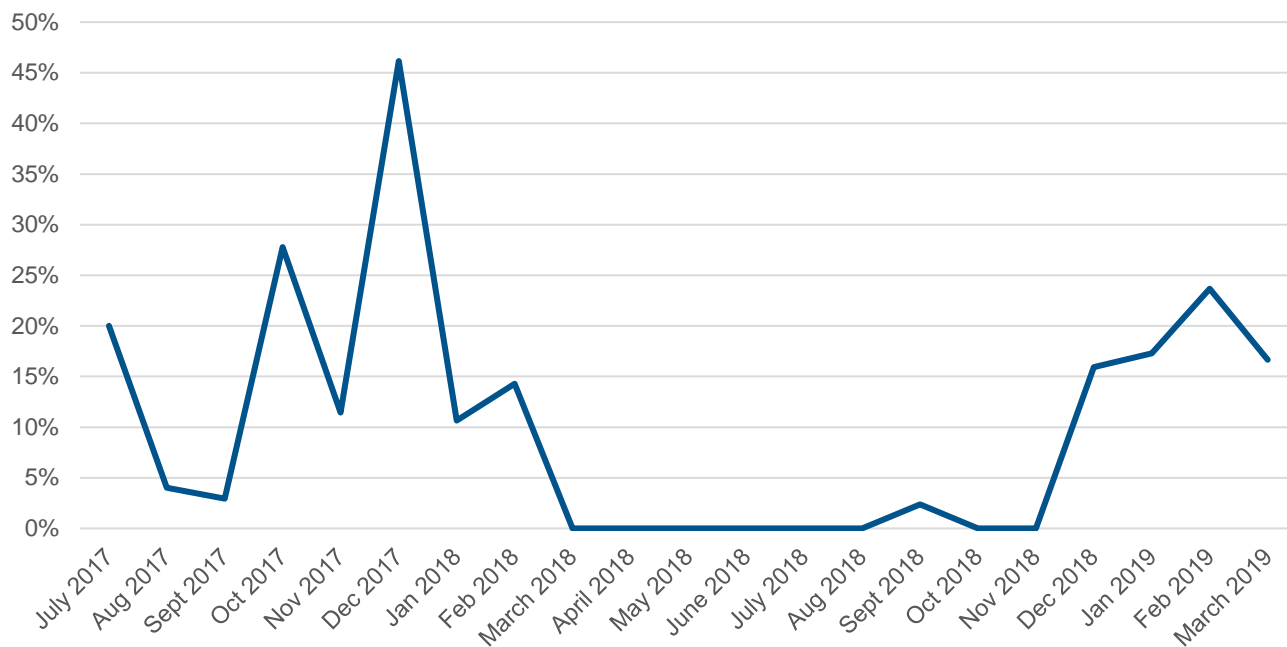
1. Number of Unduplicated Crime Victims

Overall, the number of unduplicated crime victims entering VLNDC has **increased**.
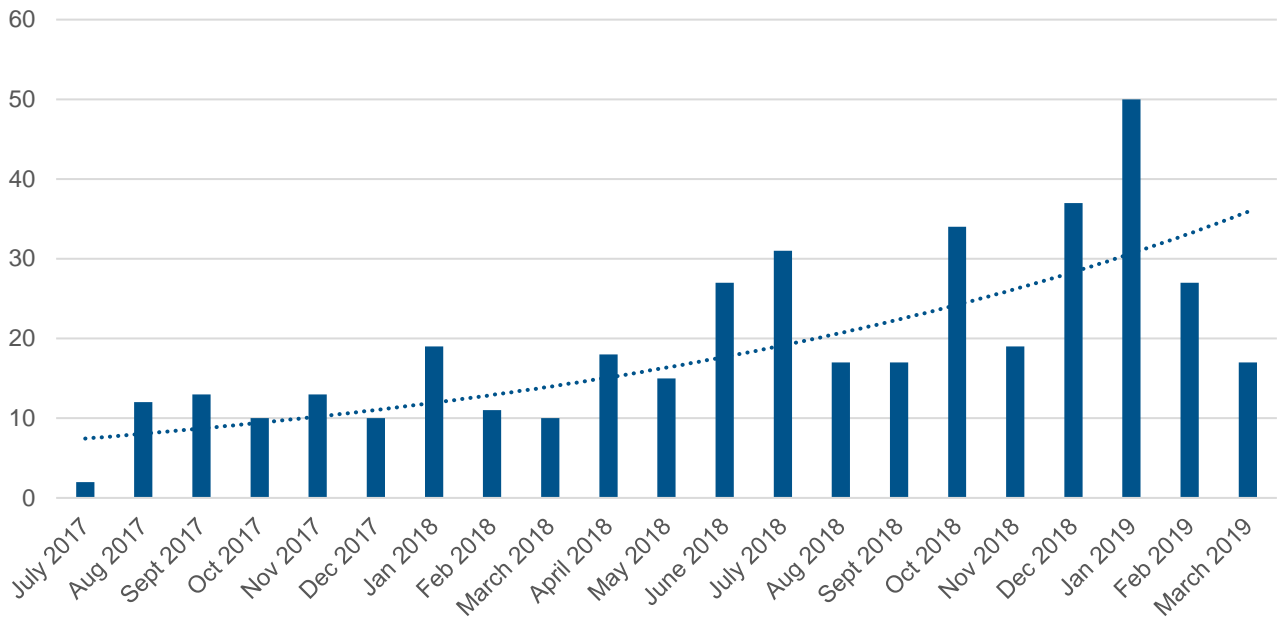
2. Number of Urgent Cases

When looking at the percent of urgent cases across each month, **there was a spike in percentage of urgent cases during the winter months**. Additional data points are needed to see if the pattern is continuous.

3. Number of Days from Referral to Conflict Check

When looking at the number of days from referral to conflict check across time, **a high percent of legal cases each month have the conflict check completed the same business day as the referral**. In the 21-months examined, there were two months with a same day conflict check for all referrals and an additional 7 months where conflict checks were completed the same day as the referral for at least 80% of the cases.

VLNDC Cases and Crime Victims

Same Day   Next Day   2 Days   More than 2 Days

APPENDIX L: ORIENTATION TRAINING
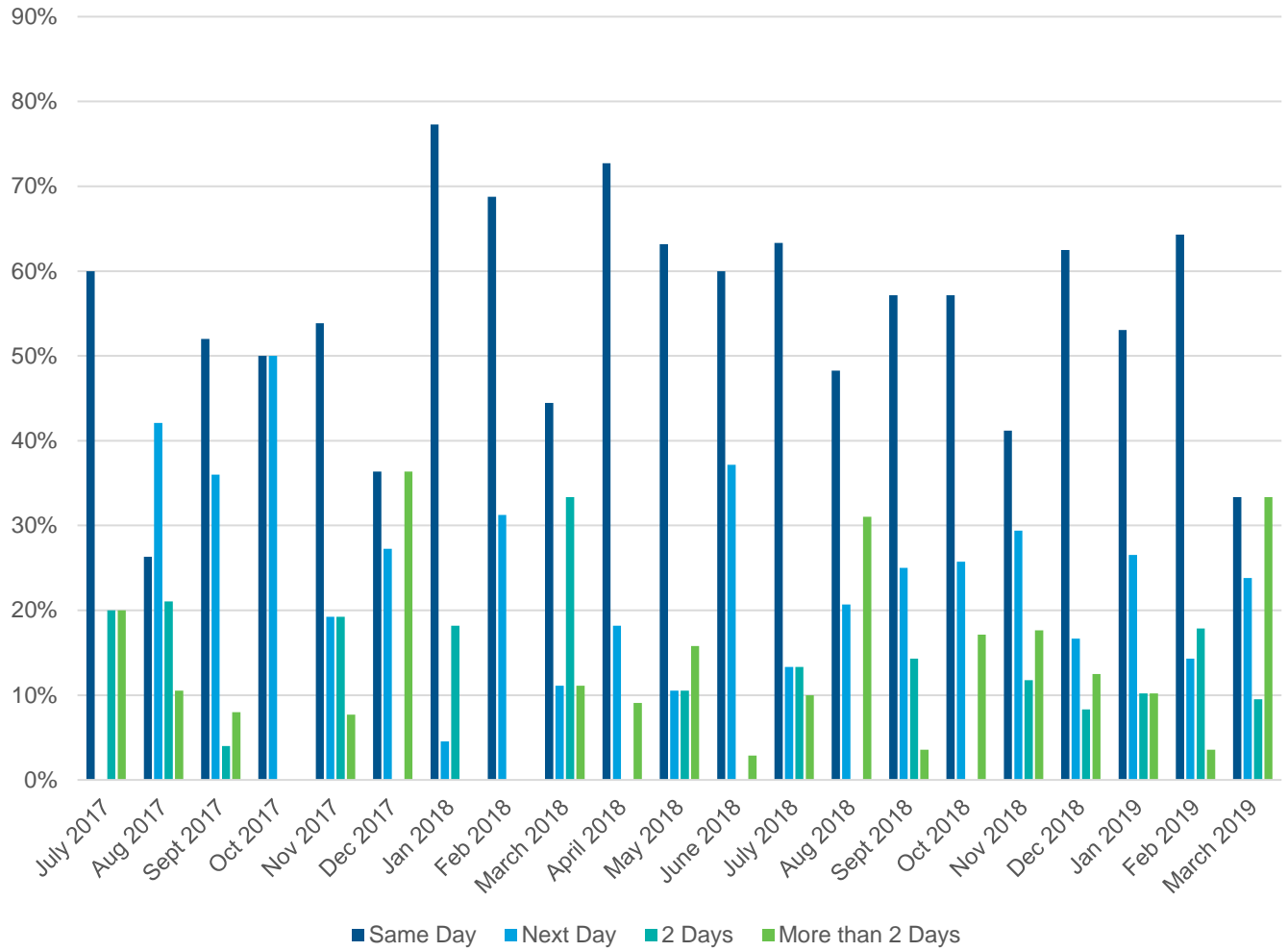
VLNDC ORIENTATION EVALUATION: JUNE 27, 2019

Thank you for participating in the VLNDC orientation meeting on June 27, 2019. Please complete the following survey to help VLNDC improve their orientation training program. Participation in this survey is voluntary; you may choose not to answer any questions or stop participating at any time. The information you provide is confidential.

I. FEEDBACK

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I know how to explain the VLNDC Informed Consent Release Form to a client seeking a referral.	1	2	3	4
2. I know how to refer a client through the VLNDC portal.	1	2	3	4
3. I know the role of the Navigator within VLNDC.	1	2	3	4
4. I know how to explain VLNDC services to clients who may be interested.	1	2	3	4
5. I feel comfortable explaining VLNDC services and its benefits to staff at my organization and other local service providers.	1	2	3	4
OVERALL FEEDBACK	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
6. The time allotted was adequate for the scope of material.	1	2	3	4
7. The orientation/training was well organized and clear.	1	2	3	4
8. The orientation/training increased my knowledge related to VLNDC.	1	2	3	4
9. This orientation/training met my professional needs.	1	2	3	4
10. I will be able to apply what I learned in my work.	1	2	3	4
11. I will share what I learned with my colleagues.	1	2	3	4

Please rate how useful each section of the orientation/training was.

ORIENTATION SESSIONS	Not Useful	Somewhat Useful	Very Useful
12. Project Orientation.	1	2	3
13. Intake and Referral Process.	1	2	3
14. Working Lunch – Informed Consent Release Form.	1	2	3
15. Portal Review.	1	2	3
16. VLNDC Jeopardy.	1	2	3

II. KNOWLEDGE

17. How long do you have to respond to a non-urgent conflict check?

_____

18. After working with a client to send a referral on their behalf to VLNDC, how would you describe the next steps to the client?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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19. Your organization does not currently have capacity to take on a certain type of case, but the Navigator continues to send you that type of case. What can you do in this situation?

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III.   RECOMMENDATIONS

20. What can VLNDC do differently to improve similar orientations/trainings in the future?

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21. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this form and helping to improve VLNDC orientation/training activities.

Victim Legal Network of DC Orientation Evaluation Report

This report summarizes the evaluation results of the VLNDC orientation meeting facilitated on **Thursday, January 31, 2019**. A total of **eight** legal service providers responded to the evaluation survey.

Orientation Objectives

Providers were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that the overall orientation objectives were met, using a scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (4). Among those who answered, **100%** of the participants **agreed or strongly agreed the learning objectives were met**, with an average of **3.675**. Figure 1 displays the percentage of agreement whereas Table 1 displays the raw frequencies by objective.
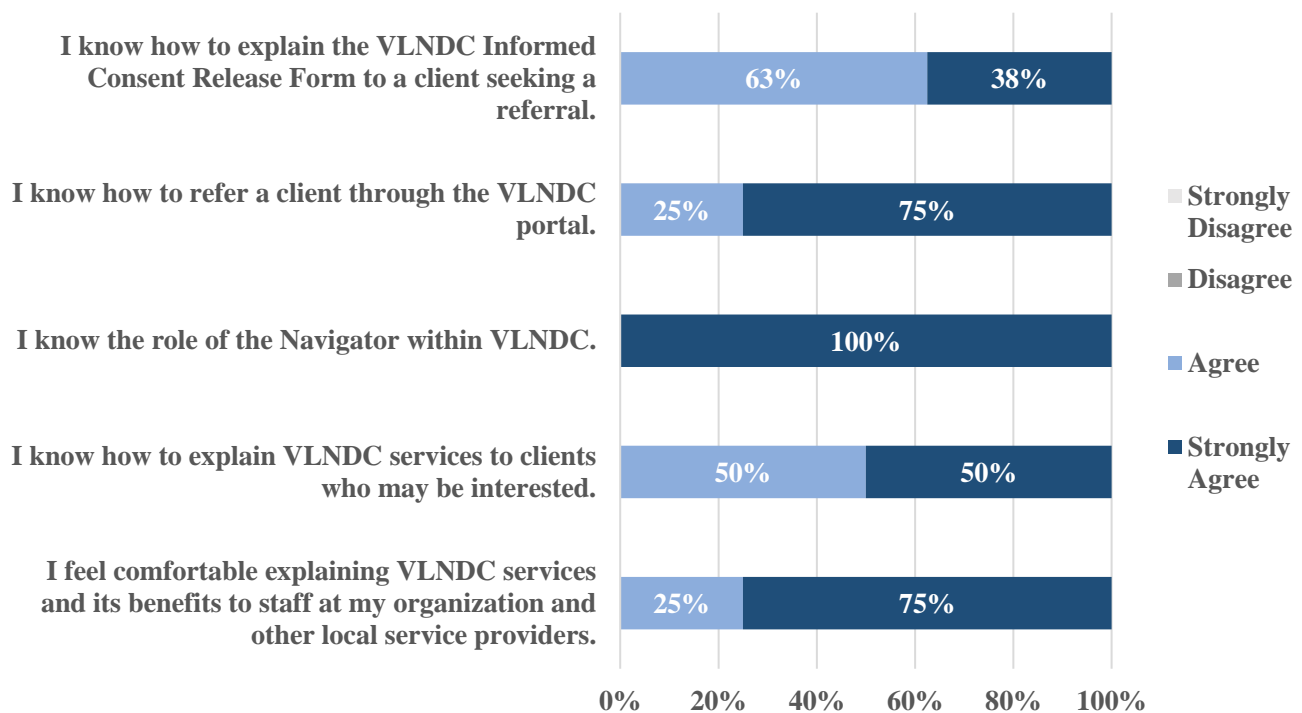
Figure 1: Orientation Objectives

Table 1: Orientation Objectives, Raw Frequencies

Overall Objectives					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
I know how to explain the VLNDC Informed Consent Release Form to a client seeking a referral.	0	0	5	3	**8**
I know how to refer a client through the VLNDC portal.	0	0	2	6	**8**
I know the role of the Navigator within VLNDC.	0	0	0	8	**8**
I know how to explain VLNDC services to clients who may be interested.	0	0	5	3	**8**
I feel comfortable explaining VLNDC services and its benefits to staff at my organization and other local service providers.	0	0	5	3	**8**

Overall Orientation Feedback

Using a scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (4), providers were asked for feedback on the orientation/training content, logistics, and what they would do with the knowledge they learned. The results are summarized below. Figure 2 shows the results by percentage and Table 2 provides the raw frequencies.

- **100%** agreed or strongly agreed that the **time allotted was adequate for the scope of material**.
- **100%** agreed or strongly agreed the orientation/training was **well organized and clear**.
- **100%** agreed or strongly agreed the orientation/training **increased their knowledge** related to VLNDC.
- **100%** agreed or strongly agreed the orientation/training **met their professional needs**.
- **100%** agreed or strongly agreed they will be able to **apply what they learned in their work**.
- **100%** agreed or strongly agreed they will **share what they learned with their colleagues**.
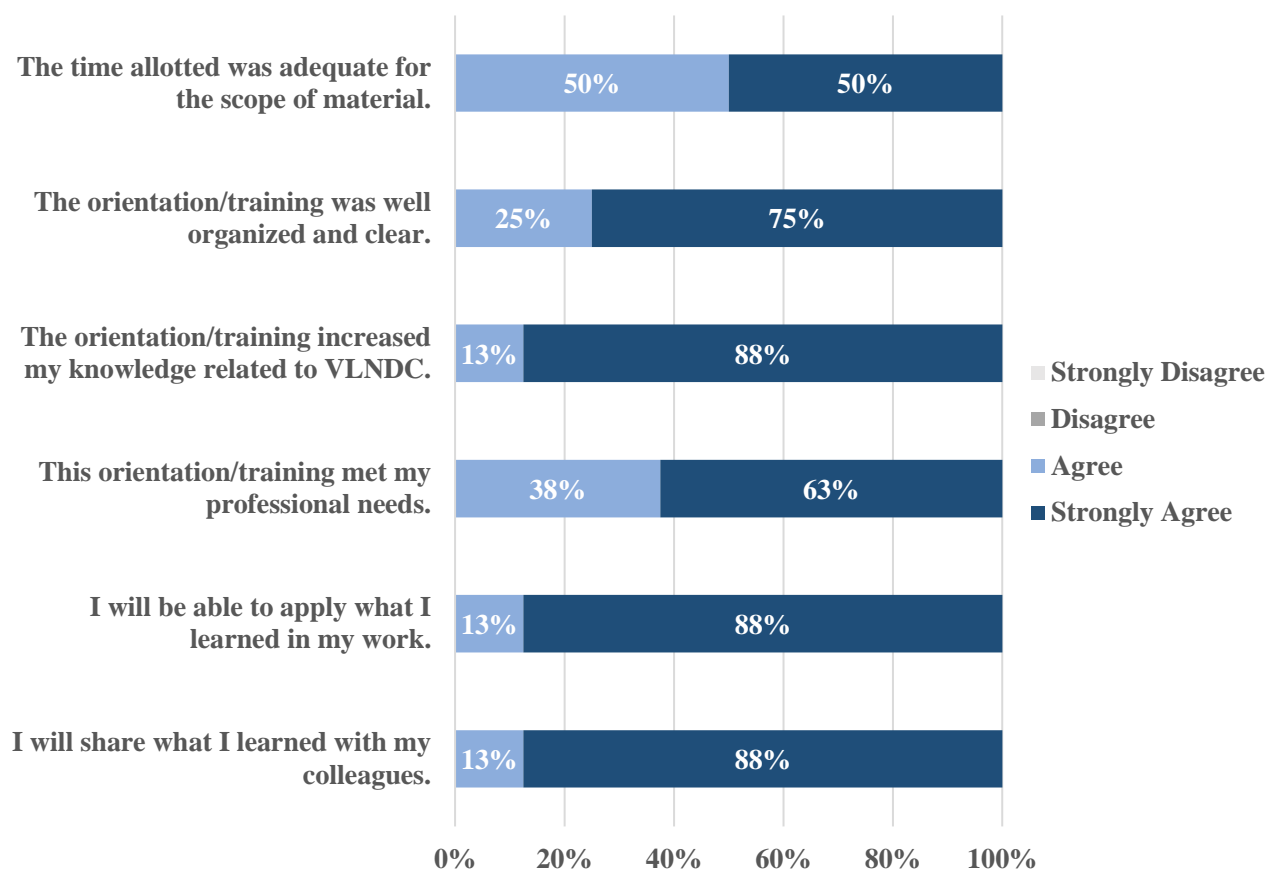
Figure 2: Overall Orientation Feedback

Table 2: Overall Feedback, Raw Frequencies

Overall Feedback					
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Total**
The time allotted was adequate for the scope of material.	0	0	4	4	**8**
The orientation/training was well organized and clear.	0	0	2	6	**8**
The orientation/training increased my knowledge related to VLNDC.	0	0	1	7	**8**
This orientation/training met my professional needs.	0	0	3	5	**8**
I will be able to apply what I learned in my work.	0	0	1	7	**8**
I will share what I learned with my colleagues.	0	0	1	7	**8**

Orientation Sessions

When asked to indicate the extent providers found the orientation sessions useful using a scale from Not Useful (1) to Very Useful (3), **100%** of the participants found the **training sessions to be either somewhat useful or very useful**. The overall training sessions was rated as a **2.875**. Figure 3 displays these findings using percentages whereas Table 3 displays the raw frequencies.
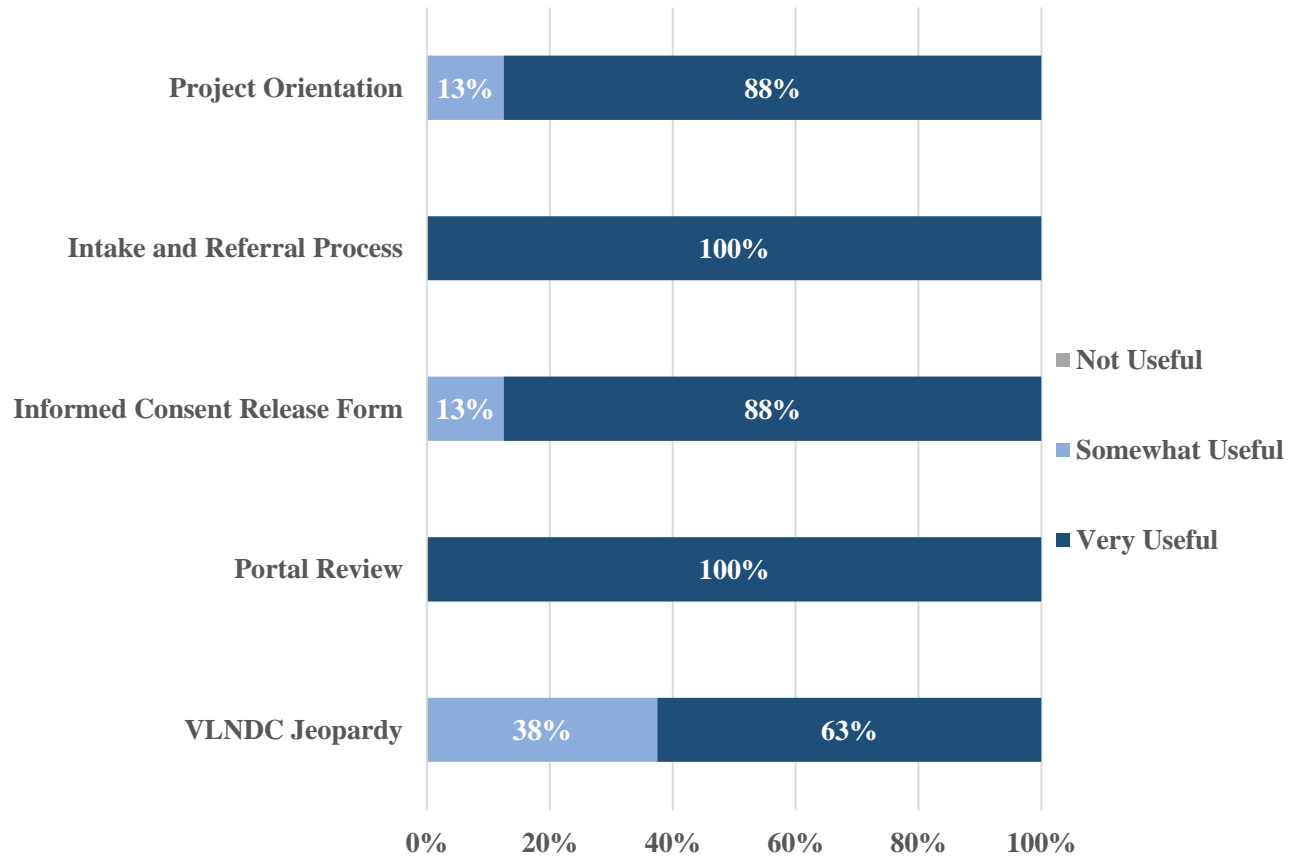
Figure 3: Orientation Sessions

Figure 4: Orientation Sessions, Raw Frequencies

Orientation Sessions				
	Not Useful	**Somewhat Useful**	**Very Useful**	**Total**
Project Orientation	0	1	7	**8**
Intake and Referral Process	0	0	8	**8**
Informed Consent Release Form	0	1	7	**8**
Portal Review	0	0	8	**8**
VLNDC Jeopardy	0	3	5	**8**

Open Feedback Findings

Knowledge – Feedback

When asked **how long do you have to respond to a non-urgent conflict check**, providers answered:

- 12 hours (1 comment)
- 48 Business Hours (5 comments)
- 3 days (1 comment)
- 2 weeks to 60 days of expiration date (1 comment)

When providers were asked how they would **describe to their clients the next steps in sending a referral to VLNDC**, participants gave a few examples including sharing the client's information, information review and conflict checks, and contact by a provider or the Navigator within a specified time frame.

- The organization submits the referral on the portal, where the navigator reviews the information and may call with follow up questions. The navigator sends the referral to most appropriate organization, and the organization runs conflict check and accepts or rejects the case. The organization will contact you if no conflict and can look at the case (1 comment).
- The client receives a phone call from the navigator with organizations that can help them. Different organizations have different regulations (1 comment).
- The referral goes to the navigator, who assesses the legal needs and sends referral to appropriate organizations. Organizations follow up within 1-2 weeks and will possibly call from a blocked number (1 comment).
- Navigator refers [case] to providers, and the provider will run a conflict check and accept or reject the case. If not accepted, navigator will re-refer to another provider. If accepted provider will reach out and begin representation (1 comment).
- The navigator submits referral to an organization for a conflict check, and organization response in approximately 1 week. Client should hear from organization taking their case (1 comment).
- Have client fill out and send the release form. Their information will be reviewed, a conflict check will be conducted. Following this, they will hear from either the organization who has accepted their case, from a blocked number, or the navigator depending on the outcome of the review (1 comment).
- The client's information will be shared with Member Organizations to see if an organization can provide full legal representation. The client will hear back from an organization or the navigator in 1-2 weeks (1 comment).
- The navigator will review case and send information to network organizations. If assistance is located, the client will be contacted – usually within 1-2 weeks. If no assistance is located, the navigator will contact client with out-of-network referral (1 comment).

When providers were asked what they would do if their organization **does not currently have capacity to take on a certain type of case, but the Navigator continues to send them that type of case**, participants offered the following answers:

- Contact navigator through email or messaging system in portal (8 comments)
- Update organizational profile in portal with capacity (7 comments)

Recommendations – Feedback

When asked **what can VLNDC do differently to improve similar orientations/trainings in the future**, providers suggested:

- **Interaction/Activities.** Make the session more interactive and provide a demonstration of the portal (3 comments).
- **No Suggestions.** The training was great (2 comments), and the presenters were informative and had great demeanors (1 comment).
- **Content.** Explain the network and the process with clients in a more detailed and clear manner (2 comments).
- **Timing/Schedule.** Cut out down time in training schedule (1 comment).
- **Materials.** Provide print-outs of slides for notetaking purposes (1 comment).
- **Evaluation.** Do not include a test in the evaluation survey (1 comment).

Other **comments or suggestions**, included:

- **Positive Comments.** The training was great (1 comment), the slides were visually appealing (1 comment), and the Jeopardy session was a positive experience (1 comment).
- **No Suggestions.** No suggestions for the training (2 comments).
- **Expansion.** Expand the legal network throughout Washington, D.C. and the country (1 comment).