

Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Services Community Development Strategy 2015 – 2017

Preamble: All key decisions impacting our community will be made with regard to:

- **The perspective of our community members**
- **The best interests and mandate of the clinic.**

A. Principles

1. There are clear lines of responsibility for Board and staff:
 - It is the Board's responsibility to provide general policy direction to staff
 - It is the Board's responsibility to consult with the community and staff when deciding strategic priorities for Community Development and organizing work
 - It is the Board's responsibility to consult with the Community Initiatives and Communications Worker to ensure we have community membership involvement in governance to the fullest extent possible
 - It is the staff's responsibility to implement policy and to keep the Board informed
 - It is the Community Initiatives and Communications Worker's responsibility to plan and implement day-to-day Community Development work in consultation with the Coordinating Committee and the Board.
2. While our legal services are provided to individuals and groups who meet our case selection criteria as approved by Legal Aid Ontario, our Community Development work is meant to:
 - promote social justice in our society and our community
 - advocate for and promote social and legal policies that will improve the quality of life of our clients and community
 - promote the legal welfare of our whole community including, but not limited to, our legal service clients and prospective clients.
3. Our Community Development activities must be
 - relevant to the areas of law and social implications flowing from those laws in which we provide legal services
 - conducted in a way that encourages the fullest possible engagement with our clients and prospective clients.
4. Our Community Development activities should:
 - involve our local community partners and other general service and/or specialty legal clinics
 - contribute to the development of our membership base
 - contribute to the recruitment of new Board members that reflect both our client base and the broader community that we serve
 - contribute to the community's ability to advocate for itself.

5. In addition to Public Legal Education and general community outreach, our Community Development activities should include:
- social and legal research
 - community dialogue, surveys and public forums
 - community organizing for social policy and law reform that is carried out in partnership with other legal clinics and community organizations
 - engaging our community in our governance either through Board involvement or other means

B. Goals and Objectives

1. Over the course of the next two years, we will initiate at least one forum and/or campaign in each of the following general areas:
 - a. Tenants' Rights
 - b. Workers' Rights
 - c. Income Maintenance
 - d. Immigration
 - e. Access to Justice
 - f. Civic Engagement
 - g. Social and Economic Justice

Through the Community Initiatives and Communications Worker, the Co-ordinating Committee will provide the Board of Directors with recommendations for the specific subject matter, themes, content and forms of each community development initiative.

2. We will continue to accommodate requests for Public Legal Education sessions according to our operational capacity and policy priorities.
3. We will engage KB Members in our Community Development work as participants and as volunteers with the goal of developing at least 2 new Board Members each year.