



December 4, 2015

**Update Report  
TAG – The Action Group on Access to Justice**

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## **RECENT ACTIVITIES**

### **New Website**

TAG's newly designed website launched in mid-November ([www.theactiongroup](http://www.theactiongroup)). It features updates about new and in-progress clusters, a growing library with key access to justice reports and details about public engagement initiatives. This website has a responsive design so it can be viewed easily on mobile devices. A French version of the site will be available in early 2016.

### **Reference Group**

The eleventh meeting of the Reference Group of TAG partner organizations was held on November 18th. The meeting was an opportunity to receive updates on in-progress clusters, collect feedback on the new website and review operational processes. The next Reference Group meeting will be held in early 2016.

### **Family Dispute Resolution Week**

On November 24th TAG participated in public forums at North York Civic Centre and Northern District Library organized by the Family Dispute Resolution Institute of Ontario for Family Dispute Resolution Week (FDR Week). This was an opportunity to distribute a range of access to justice materials and administer the Law in Your Life survey originally piloted last summer at the Canadian National Exhibition. On November 27th TAG Manager Sabreena Delhon was a panelist at a #FDR Week event about access to justice in family law.

### **Maytree Foundation – Connecting for Change Conference**

On December 10th TAG will participate in the Connecting for Change Conference organized by the Maytree Foundation. TAG Manager Sabreena Delhon will be facilitating a breakout session that addresses the digital divide.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Digital divide" is a term used to describe a gap in access to information and communication technologies.

## **CLUSTERS**

### **Libraries and Justice: Innovative Access for Rural and Remote Communities**

On October 29th TAG with the Community Advocacy & Legal Centre, CLEO – Community Legal Education Ontario and the Rural and Remote Access to Justice Boldness Project hosted a day of discussion for library and justice professionals. The event had over 75 attendees from a range of communities including Belleville, Owen Sound, Stratford and Brantford. Presentations from Janet Freeman (Community Outreach Librarian at BC Courthouse Libraries) and Chris Bentley (Executive Director of Ryerson University's Legal Innovation Zone) provided great inspiration for the breakout sessions. A graphic recorder sketched throughout the day and ultimately produced an illustration that captures the rich discussion. Updates on new partnerships and programs that evolve from this event will be available in 2016. We are grateful to the Southern Ontario Library Service for featuring a summary of the event on their blog.<sup>2</sup>

### **Mental Health**

Opening Minds to Mental Health, a conference co-organized with the Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice took place on November 20<sup>th</sup> at the Law Society. In-person registration reached capacity and there were 128 webcast viewers. The program explored issues of access and ethics with emphasis on how justice system professionals can respond to the mental health challenges of justice system users and establish self-care habits in ethically challenging and emotionally demanding work environments. Dr. David Goldbloom from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health was the keynote speaker and the diverse panelists are listed below. This event was open to all justice system professionals and the archived webcast is available on the TAG website.<sup>3</sup>

#### Panel 1: Responding to Users' Mental Health Challenges: Ensuring Access to Justice

Justice Edward Kelly (Ontario Court of Justice)  
Dr. Graham Glancy (University of Toronto)  
Steve Lurie (Canadian Mental Health Association, Toronto Branch)  
Anita Szigeti (Anita Sziget Advocates)  
Moderator: David Wright (Law Society Tribunal)

#### Panel 2: Maintaining Mental Health for Justice System Professionals

Dr. Deborah Goodman (Children's Aid Society of Toronto)  
Nadia Liva (Nadia Liva, Barrister and Solicitor)  
Orlando da Silva (Ministry of the Attorney General)  
Jay Sengupta (Human Rights Tribunal Ontario)  
Moderator: Lucy McSweeney (Office of the Children's Lawyer)

### **Public Legal Education & Information**

The second meeting for the Public Legal Education & Information (PLEI) Cluster has been scheduled for December 15<sup>th</sup> at the Law Society. The key aims of this cluster are to enhance impact of existing PLEI resources and find ways to reduce duplication. Activities are guided by CLEO's Ontario's Mapping

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<sup>2</sup> Southern Ontario Library Service blog post about Libraries and Justice: Innovative Access for Rural and Remote Communities <http://buff.ly/1SijhGw>

<sup>3</sup> Find materials from Opening Minds to Mental Health Conference on the TAG website <http://buff.ly/1Sijlk7>

Public Legal Information in Ontario report which will be released in 2016. Membership in this cluster has expanded to include representatives from the Department of Justice Canada and speciality legal clinics.

### **Family Law**

Steps to Justice, an innovative digital family law resource that presents consistent, plain language information on numerous websites will launch in early 2016. Led by CLEO, this initiative brings together the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, the Ontario Court of Justice, Social Justice Tribunals of Ontario, the Ontario Bar Association, Legal Aid Ontario, The Law Society of Upper Canada, a number of community legal clinics and a growing list of community groups. TAG is currently assisting with building the Steps to Justice network and coordinating French translation.