

# WEST SCARBOROUGH COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES



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**January 26,2015**

**via email**

**Co-Chairs Marjorie Hiley & Jack de Klerk**

**GTA Community Legal Clinics Transformation Project**

**Re: Decision of the Board of Directors of West Scarborough Community Legal Services on the GTA Community Legal Clinics Transformation Project Vision Report**

**Dear Marjorie and Jack**

**The following points outline the position of the Board of West Scarborough Community Legal Services on the GTA Legal Clinics Transformation Project Vision Report:**

- 1 WSCLS supports the principles set out in the Vision Report (Executive Summary, p 2).
- 2 Community legal clinic transformation in Scarborough must recognize that Scarborough is, and has historically been, under-resourced in services including legal services and relevant social services. Without addressing the complex growing needs and population pressures no meaningful transformation will be achieved in providing legal services in Scarborough.
- 3 Low income residents of Scarborough must have a full range of legal services provided in locations that are accessible to them. The geographic catchment area should not be increased

to include other parts of Toronto. Low income residents of Scarborough deserve additional staff resources to bring the level of poverty law services for our Low Income population closer to the provincial average.

4 WSCLS has serious concerns with the concept of “community access points”, that are already been raised by many legal clinics. The proposed transformation in the vision report rely heavily on these access points which cannot be materialized without clarity and thoughtful planning. From our experience on the ground and the complexities in Scarborough we propose this concept should be piloted, with appropriate resources and outreach support, so that its effectiveness can be proven before there is any further implementation of the Vision Report.

5. WSCLS will continue to participate in the GTA Transformation Project and is committed to working with Scarborough Community Legal Services to develop a made-in-Scarborough model of legal clinic transformation that works best for the low income marginalized residents of Scarborough.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Israt Ahmed". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Israt Ahmed

Chair