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International

Final report:

Court Support pilot evaluation Auckland HELP

July 2019



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Executive summary

The Court Support pilot service

In 2018, the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) initiated a 12-month Court Support pilot service to provide psychosocial support to address emotional, mental, spiritual and social needs for victims of sexual violence going through the criminal justice system.

The Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP Foundation Charitable Trust (Auckland HELP) delivered the pilot, which aimed to reduce the psychological and emotional impacts experienced by victims/survivors of sexual violence as a result of their case going through the criminal justice system.

The pilot involved one Court Support Counsellor (CSC) with specialist trauma-care expertise and knowledge of the Court's operations and systems. The CSC supported clients by providing client centred-care, emotional support and psychoeducation, holistic support and advocacy throughout the entire Court process.

The evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to inform ongoing service development by understanding the Auckland HELP Court Support service model and providing information about how the pilot is delivered.

A logic model was co-designed with Auckland HELP to provide a theoretical foundation for the development of evaluation questions and measures. An evaluation framework was developed based on the logic model to detail key evaluation questions and information sources.

Information sources included:

- Document review
- Analysis of de-identified client administrative data for 157 clients
- Analysis of de-identified client wellbeing survey data for 16 clients
- In-depth interviews with five justice sector stakeholders, three Auckland HELP staff and 17 clients.

Delivering the Court Support pilot

- Court Support clients were mostly female, younger than 39 years old, and 40% were New Zealand European. The proportion of Māori clients (16%) was slightly higher than the total Māori population in Auckland (12%). Pacific

clients (14%) were comparable to the total population of Pacific Peoples in Auckland (15%). Asian clients (12%) were under-represented compared to the total Auckland Asian population (23%). Although Auckland HELP is based in central Auckland, the Court Support pilot services extended to clients living across and outside of the region.

- Most clients (69%) were referred to the Court Support service through the New Zealand Police. The CSC contacted clients within 24 hours of referral.
- The pilot delivered a range of service components for clients throughout all stages of the criminal justice process (referral, preparation for trial, trial – Court Support, verdict and follow-up). The CSC engaged, on average, 18 times with each client.
- The delivery of service components and client pathways can be complex and nonlinear, with clients experiencing trial complications like delays, mistrials and appeals.
- The CSC largely engaged with clients through email (32% of all client activities), telephone (31% of client activities) and text (23% of client activities).
- Although there were lower numbers of Court Support-specific activities delivered (11% of the number of client activities), they accounted for over two-thirds of the CSC's time (69% - 761.1 hours). These activities typically began a few weeks before trial and involved preparation sessions, assisting clients to write Victim Impact Statements and attending evidence-viewings and the trial itself with clients.
- Non-face-to-face client preparation activities over email, phone and text took up most of the remaining time the CSC spent on activities (30% - 329.8 hours). The remaining 1% of activities were administrative activities like client/file management.
- Most clients for whom data were available (90%) were supported throughout their trial process, although in some cases, the CSC was only involved for part of the process. For example, she assisted two clients with their Victim Impact Statements, provided information/prep sessions only for three clients, and for one client was only present for the offender sentencing process.
- Besides engaging directly with clients, the CSC engaged with a range of other stakeholders such as the New Zealand Police (34%), the Court Victim Advisors (3%) and Crown prosecutors (3%) and also provided support to clients' family/whānau members (5%), particularly parents, siblings and partners.
- The CSC also liaised with other health/social services to connect clients with appropriate support services and to work collaboratively with clients'

existing support services. These services included youth and adult service providers, emergency housing, family support services, ACC, sexual health services, counsellors, therapists and support/youth workers.

- Client service completion dates were not available from the pilot as clients were at different stages in the criminal justice process at the start of the evaluation. While 57% of clients in the pilot were engaged with the Court Support pilot for up to three months, for some clients the trial process was long (i.e., due to complications, delays, mistrials or appeals) and Court Support was required for one to two years.

The Court Support pilot benefitted clients

- As a result of the CSC's commitment and focus on their needs and wellbeing, clients said they felt supported, heard, believed and validated, empowered and comforted to persevere through the Court process.
- Clients worked with the CSC before their trial and said they were well-informed about the criminal justice process, prepared to enter the system with realistic expectations about Court procedures and reassured that their families were well-informed and cared for during trial preparation.
- Clients felt more able to physically and mentally cope with Court processes before, during and after their trials. Clients highlighted many positive impacts on their emotional and mental wellbeing and said they learned about and used psychosocial strategies to manage anxiety, depression and negative thoughts, connected with appropriate ongoing support services, learned about strategies to manage ongoing life and experiences after Court.

The Court Support pilot also benefitted justice sector stakeholders

- The Court Support pilot provided a valuable service within the context of the criminal justice sector. Interviewed justice sector stakeholders noted the service took the pressure away from them and enabled them to work better and focus on their tasks at hand.

The key elements of an effective Court Support service

Auckland HELP's service model reflected effective practice due to:

- Holistic, client-centred support that included an educational component and offered clients the type of support they required. Clients had different support needs with some wanting support throughout the whole Court process and others wanting support for specific aspects.

- Service integration and collaboration with Police and Court officials. The pilot established and maintained strong relationships and networks with stakeholders across the criminal justice system, other providers and agencies.
- Clients appreciated how the CSC and other justice sector stakeholders worked collaboratively to keep them safe.

The Auckland HELP CSC:

- The CSC was a skilled counsellor with specialist expertise and experience, and extensive knowledge about the criminal justice sector.
- The CSC's empowering approach and ability to build positive, trusting relationships with clients were essential to the effectiveness of the support.

Embedding the pilot within an existing service provider:

- The pilot was integrated within an independent specialist sexual harm service provider. Auckland HELP provided an independent and neutral agency within the specialist sexual harm and criminal justice sectors with established policies, protocols and processes that prioritise client and practitioner safety.
- Embedding the pilot within Auckland HELP facilitated access to wider and holistic sources of support for clients.

Overview – expansion and transferability of the Court Support pilot

The Court Support pilot model provided support that helped the clients manage the justice process: The Court Support pilot filled a gap in client service provision within the criminal justice system. The pilot provided trauma-care and client-focused support alongside tools and strategies to help clients manage at times of heightened anxiety, depression and low levels of wellbeing.

Pathways through the justice system were complex. Clients required support before, during and after trial. Adequate preparation with the CSC for trial, sentencing and beyond made a positive difference for clients and helped them cope within a system they saw as '*demoralising*'. The length of the support required needs to be considered in developing any future service funding model.

Overall, the evaluation findings provide evidence to support the continuation of the Court Support pilot. Expansion of the service is recommended as demand over the course of the year exceeded the availability of the CSC.

Evaluation insights have been used to inform the following key considerations about the expansion of the service and transferability to other providers.

- **The criminal justice system context:** The current criminal justice system is difficult for clients. Pilot delivery and client administration data highlighted that components of the criminal justice system are often complex, rather than linear. Clients require support to navigate the complexities of this system.
- **Promoting Court Support services:** Awareness of the Court Support pilot was limited to stakeholders that had existing relationships with Auckland HELP. Awareness-raising with other stakeholders was limited by high volumes of new staff within stakeholder organisations and the CSC's capacity. Limited awareness meant some clients were referred late to the Court Support pilot. The limited evidence base and recognition of Court Support inhibits the provider's persistent efforts to raise the profile and awareness of the service with justice sector stakeholders. Expansion of a Court Support service would benefit from an associated communication strategy.
- **Establishing Court Support services as a usual part of the process:** Some clients continue to arrive at Court with no or inappropriate support. Expansion of the Court Support service provides the opportunity to make the service a default part of the trial process.
- **Developing a skilled workforce:** A CSC needs to be qualified and experienced in trauma-care and have extensive knowledge about all components of the criminal justice sector. These skills and experience are required to build meaningful and trusting relationships and confidence to advocate for and support clients as they journey through the system. Expanding the Court Support pilot is likely to require a focus on workforce development. The pilot workforce capacity did not meet demand. There also remains a lack of appropriate services for Māori, Pacific and other client groups.

Expanded services require funding that allow them to compete for qualified and experienced staff. Expansion of Court Support services also requires development and growth within kaupapa Māori and Pacific services, as well as a need to strengthen cultural capacity/capability within mainstream organisations.
- **Embedding the Court Support service within an existing specialist sexual harm service:** Integration within a wider service provided the necessary backbone infrastructure, ethical and conduct guidelines, networks and professional accountability needed to ensure quality service provision.
- **Expansion and transferability of the service needs to be adequately funded:** The duration of support required, the holistic nature of support and the need for a skilled workforce need to be considered in developing a

funding model for Court Support services. Providers require support to establish systems to monitor the support they provide to clients. Ways to support provider IT infrastructure should be considered in expanding the pilot as it would enable effective tracking of the clients who are supported, and the types of support provided.

1. Background

The Law Commission's 2015 report "The Justice Response to Victims of Sexual Violence"¹ identified a gap in the provision of psychosocial support for victims/survivors of sexual violence as they journeyed through the criminal justice system. Psychosocial support aims to address emotional, mental, spiritual and social needs by:

- Supporting and promoting human capacity
- Improving social connections and support through relationships and support systems
- Understanding how culture, value systems, individual and social expectations influence people².

In 2018, MSD initiated a 12-month Court Support pilot service in response to a recommendation in the Law Commission's report and provided victims/survivors psychosocial support through the criminal justice system.

Auckland HELP delivered the pilot, which aimed to reduce the psychological and emotional impacts experienced by victims/survivors of sexual violence as a result of their case going through the criminal justice system. The pilot was based on the support Auckland HELP already provided to their clients going through the Court system. Auckland HELP has provided a Court Support service for nearly ten years. The current CSC has been in the role for almost three years.

The pilot service involved:

- Listening to victims of sexual violence
- Identifying and meeting clients' immediate practical needs and psychosocial needs as they navigated the criminal justice system
- Providing clients with psychosocial education and the development of skills to prepare them to manage psychological and physiological responses leading to, during and immediately after the Court process
- Being the bridge between clients and the Court system and translating different roles and conversations.

The pilot sat within the broader suite of services that MSD funded for victims of sexual violence. Support through the criminal justice system is an important component of the range of services that victims of sexual violence can access. However, there is limited information in the literature about psychosocial support

¹ The Justice Response to Victims of Sexual Violence, Law Commission, 2015. (Recommendation 9)

² Framework for Psychosocial Support in Emergencies, Ministry of Health, 2016.

for survivors of sexual assault throughout criminal justice processes. At the start of the pilot, there was no other government funding for a psychosocial support service for sexual violence survivors undergoing criminal justice processes.

1.1. The purpose of the evaluation

Through piloting the Court Support service (coupled with a robust independent evaluation), MSD intended to gain information about specific inputs and activities of service provision for different client cohorts/case complexities.

The purpose of the independent evaluation was to provide information about the pilot and how it was delivered to inform its ongoing development and any future service development.

The evaluation focused on describing:

- The support clients needed and received
- The resources required to deliver the service and the service efficacy
- The interface with other related services (for example, MSD-funded Specialist Sexual Harm Services (SSHS))
- How the programme increased access to, and improved the journey through, the criminal justice system
- What was working well and what challenges had been encountered
- Client preparation for the Court processes and their experiences and outcomes of the process
- The interface between the Court Support pilot, the criminal justice system and Court roles such as Victim Advisors, and other services available to victims of sexual violence (for example, sexual harm crisis support services).

Ethics approval for the evaluation was obtained from the iMSD ethics assessment panel. A privacy risk assessment was also completed and approved by MSD.

1.1.1. Out-of-scope for the evaluation

A description of other services provided by Auckland HELP. A description of MSD-funded Specialist Sexual Harm Services, including those provided through Auckland HELP, is documented in the 'Formative evaluation report: Specialist Sexual Harm Services' (2018)³.

³ <https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/initiatives/family-and-sexual-violence/specialist-services/formative-evaluation-final-2019-01-30.pdf>

A comparative study with other Specialist Sexual Harm Services. The evaluation was not commissioned to provide comparative outcomes with clients who did not receive support from the pilot or with any other groups of clients. However, the ‘Improving the justice response to victims of sexual violence: Victims’ experiences’ report⁴ clearly articulates and contextualises the difficulties and challenges that victims experience in the criminal justice system and in the absence of adequate court support services.

1.2. Logic model and evaluation framework

An evaluation logic model was co-designed with Auckland HELP to outline the activities and outputs across the pilot and how they contribute to the intended outcomes (Figure 1). The logic model provided a theoretical foundation for the development of evaluation questions and measures. An evaluation framework was also developed based on the logic model to set out the key evaluation questions and information sources for the evaluation.

⁴ Gravitas (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/Improving-the-justice-response-to-victims-of-sexual-violence-victims-experiences.pdf>

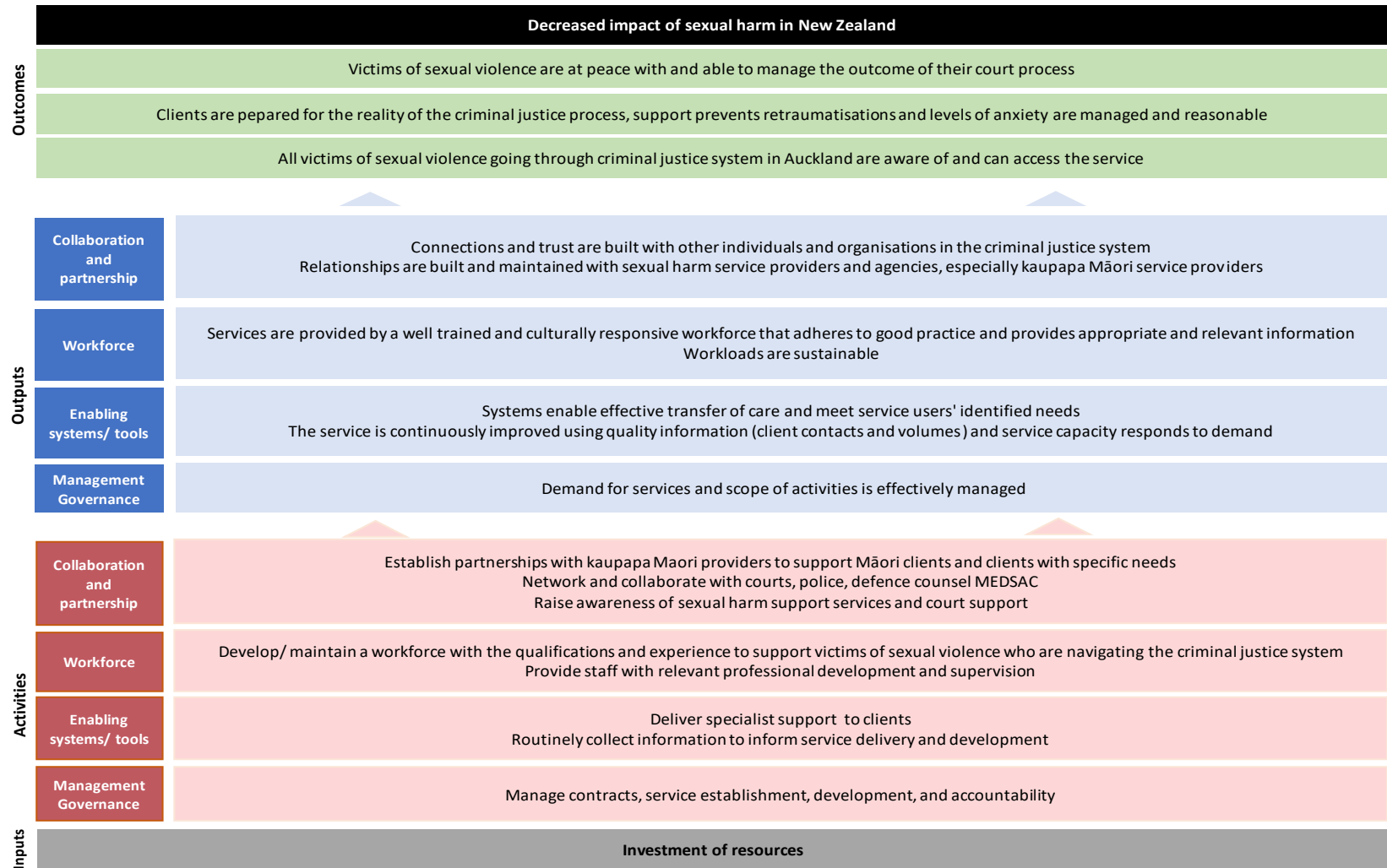


Figure 1: Logic model

1.3. Information sources

Mixed methods were used to gather information for the evaluation:

- **Document review:** A review of the information brochures and other communications about the service that Auckland HELP provides to clients and justice sector stakeholders.
- **Client administrative data**⁵: Auckland HELP provided de-identified data extracted from Penelope (their client management system) to the evaluation team.

Five datasets were provided and matched by client ID number. Client ID numbers could not be identified by anyone outside of Auckland HELP and the client ID numbers were not used for any other purpose.

Data were provided by Auckland HELP for a total of 157 clients who received support through the Court Support pilot. Some clients were at the start of their journey through the Court process and others had been supported by Auckland HELP prior to the start of the pilot. Data provided included:

- Client demographic information (gender, age, ethnicity and location) from July 2018 to May 2019
- Client referral information from July 2018 to May 2019
- A history of service interactions and activities from May 2016 to April 2019⁶
- A breakdown of specific 'Court Support' activities from December 2018 to May 2019, showing sub-categories of Court Support activities
- Case management data from October 2016 to April 2019, documenting the various trial stages for clients included in the pilot.

⁵ The justice process lasted longer than the pilot evaluation. To increase the insights of the evaluation, all active clients at the start of the pilot were included in the pilot. Some clients were new, and others had been supported previously.

⁶ Service interaction history was backdated to May 2016 to include full histories for clients being supported in the pilot who had already entered the service.

- **Client wellbeing questionnaire:** (this was a modified version of the pre- and post-assessment tool, Hua Oranga⁷, and general feedback questions about the Court Support service). The questionnaire was used to assess wellbeing measures across the four domains of wellbeing defined in Te Whare Tapa Wha⁸: taha tinana (physical wellbeing), taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing), taha whānau (family/relationship wellbeing) and taha hinengaro (mental wellbeing).

Auckland HELP distributed information sheets, consent forms and wellbeing forms to clients, collected any completed forms and forwarded this information to the evaluation team. The forms included the client's unique Auckland HELP ID number.

- Forms were received from 16 clients (one form from 10 clients, two forms from three clients and three forms from three clients). Forms were received from clients at different stages of their Court process.
- **In-depth interviews with:**
 - **Justice sector stakeholders (5) and Auckland HELP staff (3):** To examine their views about opportunities, challenges and benefits in delivering the Court Support pilot, what worked well, what could be improved, and any changes they had observed for clients
 - **Clients (17 initial and two follow-up interviews):** To examine their experiences as service users and what differences Court Support services made for them. Clients were not asked about their experiences of the events that led to their inclusion in the pilot.

⁷ Hua Oranga was developed by Te Kani Kingi and Mason Durie as a Māori measure of holistic mental health outcomes (Durie, M. & Kingi, T. K. (1999). *Hua Oranga: A Māori measure of mental health outcomes*. Palmerston North, NZ: Massey University). Since its development it has been used as a measure of mental health and wellbeing outcomes by other researchers in different settings. The original version comprised five-point rating scales for each question to provide scores out of 20 for each domain. Versions of Hua Oranga have been developed for self-reporting, whānau reporting and clinician/counsellor reporting. Clinicians report use of Hua Oranga also encourages a holistic approach to assessment because conversations cover the four domains of health. Although Hua Oranga was developed for Māori, the holistic approach is consistent with the holistic approach of the support provided by Auckland HELP. We consulted with Te Kani Kingi about the potential to modify questions and format and the conclusion was that the value of Hua Oranga was the holistic approach encompassing the four domains of wellbeing. In the absence of validated New Zealand measures of wellbeing we considered a modified Hua Oranga met the needs of the pilot – including minimising respondent burden.

⁸ Durie, M. (1994). *Whaiora Māori health development* (2nd ed). Auckland: Oxford University Press

Clients were at different stages of their Court processes. Some had only had initial contact with the CSC (n = 5), some were in the middle of the trial process and had multiple engagements (face-to-face and over the phone) (n = 2) and others had completed the criminal justice process (n = 10).

The evaluation team and Auckland HELP co-designed an information sheet and consent-to-interview form for Court Support clients. The information sheet was in an 'easy to read' format. It clearly explained what the evaluation was, how taking part in an interview was optional and how clients could decline to take part in the evaluation and/or withdraw any information at any time.

Auckland HELP staff disseminated the information sheets and consent forms to clients, collected completed forms and forwarded this information to the evaluation team to follow-up and arrange interviews.

1.4. Analysis

An analysis framework developed from the logic model was used to guide the analysis of information from the anonymised client data and interviews.

Qualitative data gathered through client interviews were analysed using a general thematic approach guided by the evaluation framework. Dominant, consistent and inconsistent themes in the data were identified to provide in-depth understandings and information.

Client wellbeing forms and administrative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). More details about how quantitative data were analysed are provided in Appendix 1.

Case studies (see section 3.4) were developed for three of the 17 interviewed clients, to show example journeys through the Court Support pilot and changes in wellbeing over time. Case studies synthesised all available data for clients (including interviews and wellbeing and admin data).

1.5. Strengths and limitations of the evaluation

The evaluation was strengthened by:

- **The willingness of the Auckland HELP team to contribute**, including the administrative support provided to work with the evaluation team to identify and extract relevant anonymised client data
- **A close working relationship with MSD and Auckland HELP** and frequent workshops, progress reports and updates

- **Auckland HELP provided the first point of contact between clients and the evaluation team to ensure client safety and the clients informed consent.** Clients had the opportunity to read information about the evaluation and decide whether their contact details could be forwarded to the evaluation team.

The evaluation was limited by:

- **A limited number of clients chose to participate in an interview.** In-depth and rich qualitative data were collected from clients at different stages in the Court process and with different levels of wellbeing. Client experiences of the support they received through the justice process were very similar and data saturation was reached (i.e., no new themes emerged in analysis). However, the small number of clients must be considered in extrapolating the findings of the evaluation to a wider group of clients.
- **Clients were at different stages of their journey through the Court process.** At the start of the evaluation MSD and Auckland HELP agreed that all clients receiving support in the pilot period were eligible for inclusion in the evaluation. This enabled the support provided to be explored for clients at different stages of the process but meant that some clients had been supported prior to the start of the pilot.
- **Analysis of administrative data depended on the type of data collected by Auckland HELP.** Data about referral (including date of referral, referral source, etc.) and demographic information were unavailable for some clients recorded in service history between May 2016 to May 2019⁹. Additionally, nine of 157 clients lacked any activity information with the service¹⁰. However, collaboration with the HELP team strengthened their data collection processes and resulted in more accurate and detailed data being collected over the course of the evaluation (e.g., client demographic data, new case management data and specific breakdown of the 'Court Support' activity type).
- **Timeframes impacted on the consistent use of the client wellbeing forms.** The initial intent was for clients to complete feedback forms at first contact, before trial, during trial and after sentencing. However, as noted above, clients were at various stages of their trial process, which impacted the type of support received from Auckland HELP (phone contact only, phone support, phone and face-to-face support, support during trial, support after trial).

⁹ These missing data were not collected consistently prior to the start of the pilot. Ethnicity data were missing for 80 clients (51%) and age data were missing for 46 clients (29%).

¹⁰ No information was collected.

- **The small number of clients who completed a survey limited analysis of the data by trial stage**, we were unable to break down the results according to clients who were at the start, middle or towards the end of the criminal justice process. However, valuable data were gathered about the support and benefits provided by the service to clients.

2. Delivering the Court Support pilot

Key points:

- Court Support clients were mostly female, younger than 39 years, and 40% were New Zealand European. Although Auckland HELP is based in central Auckland, the Court Support pilot extended to clients living across and outside of the region.
- Most clients were referred to the Court Support pilot through the New Zealand Police and the CSC contacted clients within 24 hours of referral.
- The pilot involved one CSC who provided specialist trauma-care, expertise and support for clients.
- The pilot delivered a range of service components for clients throughout all stages of the criminal justice process.
- The delivery of service components and client pathways can be complex and nonlinear.
- The pilot provided holistic support to clients and family/whānau members.
- The duration of client engagement could be long-term.

2.1. The Court Support clients

Data were received for 157 Court Support clients:

- Gender (n = 121): Most were female (95%).
- Age (n = 111): The largest group were aged 20-29 years (35%) followed by those aged 30-39 (17%), 40-49 (15%) or under 18 (15%) years.
- Ethnicity (n = 77): New Zealand Europeans were the most common group (40%) followed by Māori (16%), Pacific (14%), Other European (13%), Asian (12%) and MELAA (5%). Pacific clients within the Court Support client reach were comparable to the total Auckland Pacific population (15%)¹¹ and Asian clients were under-represented in comparison to the total Auckland Asian population (23%).¹²
- Region (n = 102): Most lived in Central, North and West Auckland (87%). Small proportions lived in other parts of Auckland (South and East) and a small number lived outside of Auckland or overseas.

¹¹ <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/plans-projects-policies-reports-bylaws/our-plans-strategies/auckland-plan/about-the-auckland-plan/Pages/pacific-auckland.aspx>

¹² <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/plans-projects-policies-reports-bylaws/our-plans-strategies/auckland-plan/about-the-auckland-plan/Pages/aucklands-asian-population.aspx>

Court Support clients were at different stages in their engagement with the service and the criminal justice system.

2.2. Client referrals came mostly from the Police - CSC contact was made within 24 hours

Between July 2018 and May 2019, more than two-thirds of clients were referred to the service by the New Zealand Police, with the remainder referred from Crown prosecutors, health service providers or internally from other HELP services (Table 1). Only one client was a self-referral, having heard about the service through word-of-mouth.

Table 1: Court Support client referral sources (n = 68)¹³

Service	Count	Percentage
NZ Police	47	69%
HELP	12	18%
Crown	7	10%
Health service provider	1	1%
Self-referral	1	1%

Client referrals from the New Zealand Police were typically made by the Officer-in-Charge or main detective once an arrest had been made. Most clients noted that their detectives first checked with them if they would like support throughout the trial process and then passed their details onto the CSC. A few clients said they were referred to HELP as a wider organisation when they reported sexual assault to the Police or to a forensic health service provider. HELP then offered the Court Support pilot service for those undergoing the trial process.

A reasonable amount of referrals come from the Police and they either come from the Police through our interagency meeting with the Police, between HELP, Waitemata and Auckland Central Police, Te Puha and Family Action, or the Police will contact me directly. (HELP staff)

The CSC contacted clients within 24 hours of receiving a referral. Clients said this reduced the burden on them to make contact and access support, which was important due to the already challenging nature of the criminal justice process.

¹³ HELP started recording client referral sources at the start of the pilot (July 2018). Prior to this, client referral source had not been recorded so 89 clients were missing referral source.

I was speaking to the detective that was handling my case...He referred me to [CSC], who made contact immediately and we just discussed what I had been through... I found the detective very, very helpful by making that quick referral. Pretty much in 12 hours and then I had a phone call [from the CSC] the next day. (Client)

2.3. Clients were supported by one CSC providing specialist trauma-care and expertise

The CSC provided a range of services and supports to clients including:

- **Trauma-care expertise and knowledge of the Courts operations and systems** to guide and help clients prepare (emotionally, mentally and physically) for the Courts process and their trial.

We work directly with the trauma, that's the number one thing we are doing. Everything we do... is about minimising trauma for people. Helping the person manage the potential re-traumatisation is our core task...All about trauma and that's informed by the context of sexual violence... (HELP staff)

- **Client centred-care, emotional support and psychoeducation** to help clients cope with the trauma they presented with and minimise the risk of this escalating during the Court process. The CSC validated clients' experiences and educated them about coping skills and techniques to manage anxiety, depression and distress throughout the trial process. She also recognised signs of distress and used coping techniques to allow clients to regain control and remain calm in stressful situations.

It's not just about preparing them for [how] the trial is going to be...but also addressing...their experience, what they're feeling, what they're going through...Having someone that's validating and normalising that and also helping prepare them and give them some very tangible skills that they can use while they're at the Court... (HELP staff)

- **Holistic support and preparation for the criminal justice system** prioritising the needs of clients and their families and facilitating connections with appropriate supports.

It's about establishing and connecting them up with other services, for example if it's a parent and their children and they haven't got any therapy, I might do a referral to our therapy team. If it's a young person, the same, and with adults, I can do a therapy referral for the agencies but also figuring out all the things that might be in their environment. (HELP staff)

- **Client advocacy and dedicated support throughout the entire Court process.** At first contact, the CSC worked with clients to identify their needs and ensure access to the support networks clients required.

I'm their advocate and I can go and talk to the officer in charge or the Crown ...It's knowing that I'm looking out for [client] in every way possible, taking care of the

person going through the process, not the person just having to go there and talk about what happened. It's a whole lot more than that. (HELP staff)

2.4. The pilot delivered several service components for clients throughout all stages of the criminal justice process.

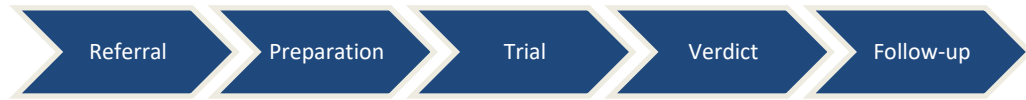


Figure 2: Court Support service client pathway

The Court Support service components (Figure 2) generally consisted of:

Referral: Clients were usually referred to the service once the offender had been arrested, pleaded not guilty and either a trial date had been set or both the client and alleged offender had agreed to restorative justice processes.

Preparation: Most clients experienced ongoing preparation support from the CSC leading up to the trial date through email, phone and text. Face-to-face meetings commonly occurred a few weeks before the trial.

Trial, verdict and follow-up: The CSC attended the Court trial and supported clients through the process until verdicts were read. There were three possible outcomes:

- Guilty verdict: This would then proceed to sentencing and the CSC supported clients to prepare their Victim Impact Statements and ensured they were receiving support from other professionals such as counsellors or therapists following sentencing.

She called me after the verdict, she checked up to see how I was...we talked about how I will need to do my Victim Impact Statement as well closer to the sentencing date so we both know we'll get in touch at some point. (Client)

If the defence counsel made an appeal, the CSC provided ongoing client support in case of retrial.

- Not-guilty verdict: The CSC provided follow-up support for clients via face-to-face or phone contact to ensure they understood the trial outcome and to identify any ongoing needs and support. Following the trial, clients were often referred to the crisis team or for therapy and were encouraged to contact the CSC if they required additional support.

I've had a few things come up with regards to the Police and the media...I went to [CSC]... Which has been really good because I didn't know who to talk to [after the trial]...I had some questions about what [sentence] meant... so she could answer that. (Client)

- Mistrial: The trial was rescheduled to start again later, extending client engagement with the CSC and Court Support service.

Client administrative data showed that the CSC typically supported clients throughout the entire Court process, engaging, approximately 18 times with each client through multiple mediums and platforms (Table 2).

Table 2: Overall client activities (activities n = 2,624; client n = 148)¹⁴

	Count	Percentage
Email	835	32%
Telephone	819	31%
Texting	613	23%
Court Support¹⁵	286	11%
File Management	27	1%
Client Management	24	1%
Client Sessions	9	<1%
On-site Meetings	5	<1%
Off-site Meetings	4	<1%
Support Sessions	2	<1%

The ‘**Court Support**’-specific activities provided by the CSC included attending trial alongside clients for psychosocial support. She also delivered preparation sessions, helped clients write their Victim Impact Statements and attended evidence-viewings with clients (Table 3). Table 3 has been divided into support received prior to the start of the pilot and support received during the pilot¹⁶.

¹⁴ Activity data were missing for nine clients.

¹⁵ Detail provided in Table 3.

¹⁶ The justice process lasted longer than the pilot evaluation. To increase the insights of the evaluation, all active clients at the start of the pilot were included in the pilot. Some clients were new referrals for Court Support and others had been supported previously by Auckland HELP.

Table 3: Breakdown of activities of the 'Court Support' activity type (previous data activities n = 195; new data activities n = 76)¹⁷

	Previous data (client n = 37) (May 2016-Dec 2018)	New data (client n = 26) (Dec 2018-May 2019)
In/At Court Support	65	34
Preparation	47	18
Victim Impact Statement	13	10
Evidence	10	-
Meeting	-	14
Other	60	-

A breakdown of data for the 'In/At Court' and 'Preparation' activities between December 2018 and May 2019 shows that the CSC attended 29 In/At Court sessions and did not attend three sessions. The three preparation sessions were either cancelled or not attended. The reasons for not attending were due to the CSC's limited capacity. Reasons for cancellation were not recorded but may reflect uncertain Court/trial progression and outcomes (Table 4).

Table 4: Breakdown of 'In/At Court Support' and 'Preparation' activity types in new dataset (Dec 2018-May 2019) (client n = 26)

	Attended	Not attended	Cancelled
In/At Court Support ¹⁸	29	3	-
Preparation	15	1	2

Data were not available to determine how much time the CSC spent waiting at Court compared to being in a Court session. However, staff noted the CSC spent at least 0.2 FTE of her time (usually on a Monday) at Court, which involved more time waiting with and supporting clients compared to being in Court sessions. In future, it would be useful to separate in-Court and at-Court Support and record the amount of time the CSC spends on each activity.

The overall Court Support pilot interaction history recorded the duration of all activity types that the CSC undertook. The duration of all activities covered 72% of 1 FTE (9am-5pm) between July 2018 and April 2019 (Table 5). However, it is important

¹⁷ Please refer to Appendix 1 for further information about analysis of these data.

¹⁸ Although 34 'In/At Court Support' activities were recorded (Table 3), only 32 activities contained information about whether the CSC attended Court.

to note there may be other activities that were not recorded in the administrative data (e.g., travel to and from Court and other meetings). In future, it may be useful to record these activities in the administrative data to offer a more accurate reflection of the types of CSC activities and capacity.

Court Support activities accounted for over two-thirds of the CSC’s time, while non-face-to-face client preparation activities (telephone, email and texting) accounted for almost one-third of her time (Table 5).

Table 5: Duration of all activities undertaken by CSC from July 2018 to April 2019¹⁹

	Duration of activities (in hours)	Percentage of all hours	Percentage of 1 FTE ²⁰
Court Support	761.1	69%	49%
Telephone	130.4	12%	8%
Email	118.5	11%	8%
Texting	80.9	7%	5%
File Management	8.6	<1%	<1%
Client Management	5.9	<1%	<1%
Client Sessions	3.1	<1%	<1%
Off-site Meetings	0.7	<1%	<1%
Support Sessions	0.3	<1%	<1%
On-site Meetings	0.0	0%	0%
Total	1109.4	100%	72%

Although most clients were supported throughout their trial process, in some cases, the CSC was only involved for part of the process. For the 59 clients for whom data were recorded from December 2018 onwards:

- Fifty-three (90%) requested full Court Support
- Two clients requested assistance with their Victim Impact Statements
- Three wanted information/prep sessions only
- One client requested the CSC for the offender sentencing process.

¹⁹ This calculated to 206 working days (excluding weekends, public holidays and the two-week closedown period over Christmas).

²⁰ This calculation is based on a 37.5 hour working week (1,545 hours).

At the end of the trial and Court process, the CSC provided follow-up support to all clients (regardless of the verdict) to ensure they had ongoing support if needed and that they were ready and safe to exit the Court Support pilot. Sometimes this meant assessing clients' ongoing needs and transitioning them to another service within HELP, like the crisis or the therapy team. Other times, follow-up support provided adequate and appropriate closure for the in-depth and emotionally charged therapeutic work the CSC had done with clients. For some clients going through an appeal, ongoing follow up support was required.

I always do follow-up support...Always face-to-face. If I'm very, very, very time-poor, maybe it will be a phone call, but I try to see them face-to-face. I think it's important for them to have that, and it's also an opportunity to talk about what their needs are going to be from here... they do go back to the crisis team or into therapy. (HELP staff)

We've been working together for however long, working up to this trial, and [so it's important that I] then don't just drop off and disappear. (HELP staff)

2.5. The delivery of service components and pathways for clients can be complex

Although Figure 2 above shows a linear pathway for the pilot service components, in reality, the pilot is delivered within many issues and contexts (Figure 3).

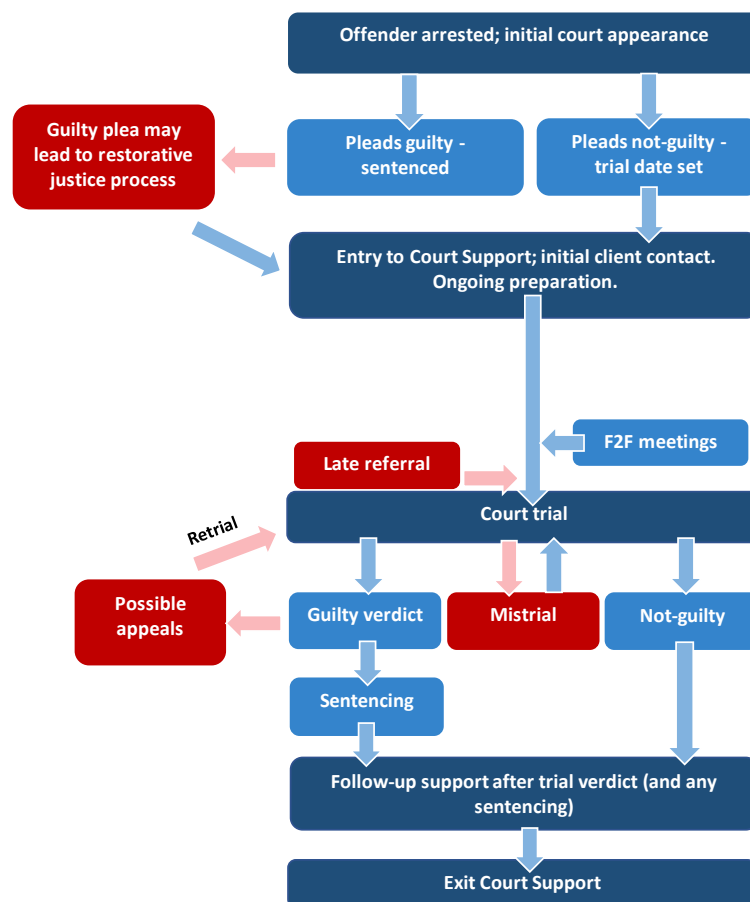


Figure 3: Court Support client pathways through the criminal justice system

Case management administrative data for 69 clients over a five-month period²¹ offered insights into the sometimes nonlinear stages in the Court process and the delays in the trial process, which extended the length of time clients engaged with the pilot (Table 6):

- Three clients had trials adjourned once, and one client’s trial was adjourned twice
- Ten clients had a case review hearing; one client had this scheduled three times
- Twenty-one clients completed the trial
- Seven clients had trials rescheduled once; one client’s trial was rescheduled twice and another three times
- One client’s trial was delayed once, while another had theirs delayed twice
- One client had all charges (and the trial) withdrawn.

Table 6: Number of Court Support clients and occurrence of trial stages (client n = 69)

	None	Once	Twice	3+ times
Trial adjourned	65	3	1	0
Callover	59	10	0	0
Case review hearing	42	24	2	1
Trial completed	48	21	0	0
Firm fixture trial	18	43	6	2
Held	44	25	0	0
Resolution	66	3	0	0
Retrial	68	1	0	0
Sentence indication hearing	68	1	0	0
Sentencing	51	13	4	1
Trial delayed	67	1	1	0
Trial rescheduled	60	7	1	1
Trial standby	64	4	1	0
Trial withdrawn	68	1	0	0

²¹ Data are available from December 2018 onwards only for 69 clients (44% of all clients), as Auckland HELP developed a new way to capture client case data.

2.6. Client support was holistic

Administrative data also highlighted that, other than engaging with clients, the CSC interacted mostly with the New Zealand Police, and offered support to family/whānau members, like clients' parents, siblings and partners (Table 7).

Table 7: Breakdown of Court Support service interactions (interactions n = 2,365, client n = 146)²²

	Count	Percentage
Clients	1,098	46%
NZ Police	808	34%
Other	165	7%
Family/whānau	128	5%
Victim Advisors	67	3%
Other services	72	3%
Crown	27	1%

A small proportion of the CSC's interactions included liaising and working with other social services engaged with clients (3%). These services included youth and adult service providers, emergency housing and family support services (e.g., Family Action), ACC, sexual health services, as well as with clients' existing supports, like counsellors, therapists and support/youth workers. Client's permission was sought prior to the CSC's engagement with other sources of support. Data from 64 clients showed that 57 (89%) gave the CSC permission to liaise with other support services they were accessing.

I asked her to get information from my psychologist, about what medicines I'm taking so she would continue helping with that during the trial...She met with my social workers as well and they discussed how to support me. (Client)

2.7. The duration of client engagement could be long-term

Most clients included in the pilot were supported by the CSC between one and three months. However, clients were at different stages in the process at the start of the evaluation and client service completion dates were not available. For some clients the trial process was long (i.e., due to complications, delays, mistrials or appeals) and

²² Some activities are caught by more than one interaction category, so the rows are not mutually exclusive and do not add up to 100% (see Appendix 1: Statistical data analysis process).

the length of support required was extended over one to two years (Figure 4). The client data presented included those who may still be engaging with the service.

The thing is, for my case, it has already lasted for more than two years... For many women, this will take forever. What if the woman doesn't have a job? And they have a family to support? They will never call the Police. (Client)

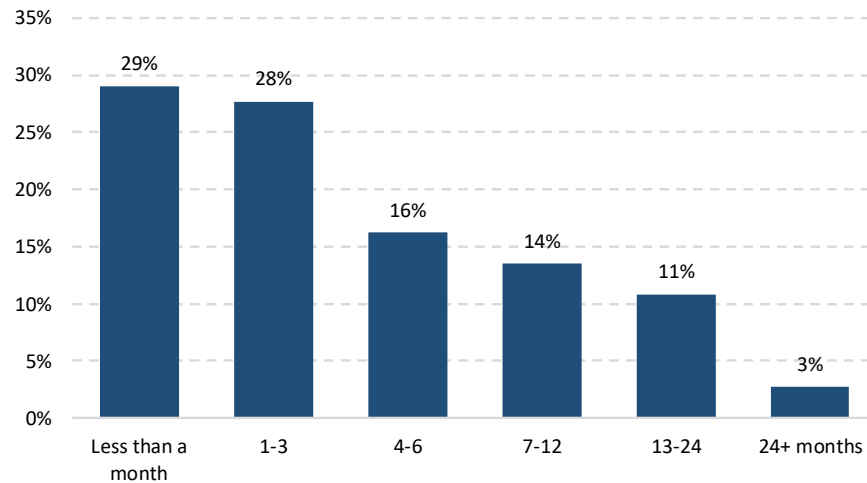


Figure 4: Total months engaged per clients for all clients with at least one activity recorded (n = 148) and includes clients who are still being supported

Client data showing the pattern of client activities over time from their point of entry into the pilot (Figure 5) highlighted that:

- On average, clients engaged in a higher number of activities with the CSC on their entry point to the service (mean overall activities = 4.87)
- Client activities declined between service entry point and the first three months however, there was a slight increase in activities between three and twelve months, which likely shows ongoing trial preparation and attendance.

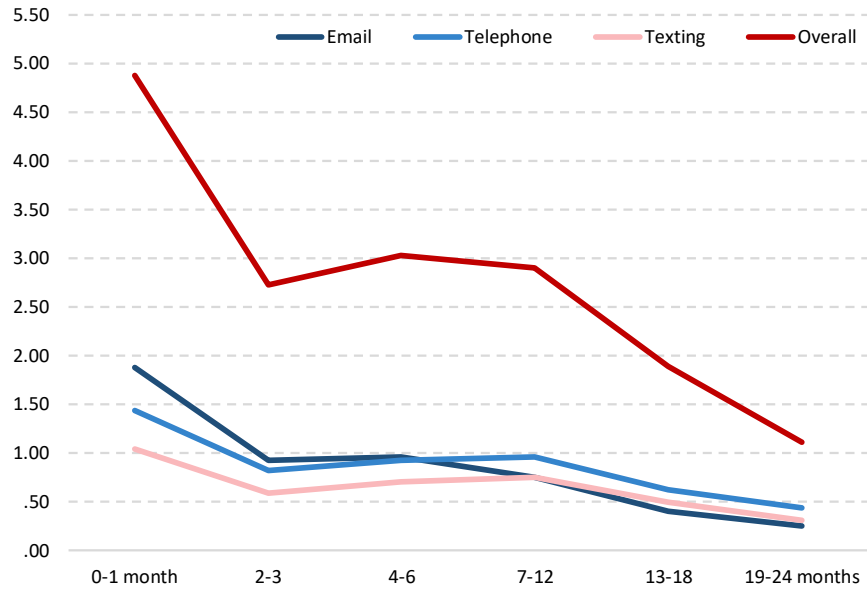


Figure 5: Mean number of client activities over time from point of entry into Court Support (n = 148)

Barriers to ongoing access to the Court Support service: Clients involved in the Court process for an extended time noted challenges to ongoing access to the Court Support service, such as the cost of travel, taking time off work and arranging appointment times.

The only inconvenient part is, I have to take time off [to see the CSC] ...I already used all my annual leave for this [due to the length of the Court process]. (Client)

3. Benefits of the Court Support pilot for clients

Key points:

- As a result of the CSC's commitment and focus on their needs and wellbeing, clients said they felt supported, heard, believed and validated, empowered and comforted to persevere through the Court process.
- Clients worked with the CSC before their trial and said they were well-informed about the criminal justice process, prepared to enter the system with realistic expectations about Court procedures and reassured that their families were well-informed and cared for during trial preparation.
- Clients felt more able to cope before, during and after Court processes. Clients highlighted many positive impacts on their emotional and mental wellbeing and said they learned about and used psychosocial strategies to manage anxiety, depression and negative thoughts, connected with appropriate ongoing support services, learned strategies to manage ongoing life and experiences after Court.
- Clients' wellbeing varied throughout the Court process.

3.1. The pilot gave clients a sense of empowerment and of being believed

Interviewed clients said the CSC was committed to and focused on their needs and wellbeing and as a result they felt:

- **Supported and heard:** Clients described the CSC as an important and constant source of emotional support throughout the Court process. When they needed someone to talk to, they felt the CSC listened to them in a non-judgemental way. Some clients noted that having someone present with them during the trials meant they had someone on their side, which eased the pressure of having their family members in Court with them.

She went out of her way to make sure that she was available for me. She was amazing if I'm being honest, she made me feel very comfortable, very relaxed, very safe and secure, supported, yes. Believed and trusted and yeah, she's amazing.

(Client)

It's really good to have someone like that to help, otherwise you know nothing. You just go to the Court, and I would feel really nervous if she's not there. I can't bring my [child] there with me as a support person. At least I have someone to go with me and she can even talk to me on my break, like help me release my stress. (Client)

- **Empowered and reassured to persevere through the Court process:** Some clients highlighted that the CSC had a positive impact on their self-esteem and self-efficacy during the Court process. Clients shared that the support

and reassurance from the CSC and supporting services empowered them to persevere with the Court process to make life-changing decisions.

Before meeting her, I thought there was no purpose of fighting. I thought there was even no purpose of waking up and I just gave up everything. I thought that even the trial was for nothing. But when I met her she made me strong and she supported me to continue. She didn't really push me, she was just saying it was my decision and I could do whatever I felt was best for my future. But because of her I could continue. (Client)

I don't think I could have gotten through it without her and my detective...The whole experience [is] demoralising, it's horrible...they tried to make sure I was as empowered as possible. (Client)

- **Believed, validated and safe:** Clients said they felt they had dedicated support throughout the Court process, which comforted them and made them feel safe and motivated to improve circumstances for themselves and their families.

After [CSC's] phone call, I really did get that confidence that it was time for us to settle down so since her phone call, I have really been working hard on getting us a stable home, instead of moving. That's only because she said, don't be scared anymore, we've got you. She made me feel safe and heard, which is the most important thing to me. (Client)

3.2. Clients were adequately prepared for the Court system and trial

Interviewed clients emphasised that the CSC helped them prepare for trial and they were:

- **Well-informed about the criminal justice system process:** Clients mentioned that the CSC provided information about what to expect during the trial process, their rights, different ways they could give evidence during the trial (such as their right to give evidence via CCTV) and the layout of the Courtroom.

[CSC] told me...that we have a choice of [giving evidence in] the Courtroom or the TV. (Client)

It has been a huge help for what to expect. Before I felt very alone and isolated and I was very anxious because I had no idea what was coming... I found that having that support there was one of the best things that could have happened for me. (Client)

- **Prepared to enter the Court system with realistic expectations about Court procedures:** Being well-informed and prepared was particularly important when it came to cross-examination by the defence counsel. Clients described harrowing experiences of cross-examination and said that this would have negatively impacted on their wellbeing if the CSC had not prepared them for the experience.

[CSC] was like telling me about how...[offender's] lawyer would be saying things that would obviously be really hard to hear and basically just kind of, rewriting my story, which is really what happened when I went to Court. (Client)

A small number of clients who engaged with the CSC close to their trial noted that she did the best she could within a small timeframe to provide them with all the information and support they needed.

No [I didn't have enough preparation time] because [I met CSC] two days before the trial... [The support] from [CSC] was amazing...she was just really great for me. Everything I needed when I needed it, and given the circumstances and everything, it was handled the best way possible that she could, given everything (Client)

- **Reassured that their families were informed and cared for during trial preparation:** Clients who were involved in both the criminal Court and the family Court became more anxious because their children were involved in the Court process. One client shared that her children were unsettled and scared about the criminal Court justice process, but the CSC reassured them by involving them in discussions and answering all their questions.

[CSC] answered all our questions, the kids have settled down a lot after talking to [CSC], in terms of what's going to happen and things like that. It didn't take too long and then the kids started feeling comfortable once we started talking and then they started asking questions themselves. (Client)

3.3. Clients felt more able to cope before, during and after Court processes

Interviewed clients highlighted emotional and mental wellbeing and said that as a result of engaging with the CSC they had:

- **Learned about and used psychosocial strategies to manage anxiety, depression and negative feelings:** The CSC educated clients about coping strategies to manage their emotions and feelings both in and out of Court.
- **Connected with appropriate ongoing support services:** All clients said the CSC recommended additional support services leading up to and after the trial. They acknowledged the value of the wraparound support they received from the CSC, alongside the Police, psychologists, prosecutors and so on. As a result, clients felt cared for and at the forefront of the process.

I was really impressed with the support from the beginning to the end. And the speed and the people listened to me. They didn't just push me aside, they took what I said, they just tried to help me get through everything as best as possible. I'm grateful for

*that because it's easier for me now after the trial to actually get back into my life.
(Client)*

- **Learned about strategies and support to manage ongoing life and experiences after Court:** One client noted how important it was that the CSC helped her cope with life beyond the trial process.

[CSC] helped me walk the streets in my area without feeling scared. (Client)

3.4. Clients' wellbeing varied throughout the process

Clients assessed their wellbeing by rating the four dimensions of their wellbeing on a scale from 0 to 10 (highest level of wellbeing). The aim of assessing wellbeing was to understand clients' perceptions of different aspects of their lives and the effects of the court process on wellbeing²³.

Overall, the case studies highlighted the influence of factors external to the CSC and Court Support pilot on clients' wellbeing. However, it is important to note that despite external influences, clients said that the CSC helped them as best she could.

Things that I needed extra support with were out of your control. I felt supported with what you could control. (Client wellbeing form)

²³ The small number of clients completing the forms and fluctuations over time in response to different aspects of the justice process meant that it was not possible to draw conclusions about changes in overall client wellbeing.

Client 1 case study

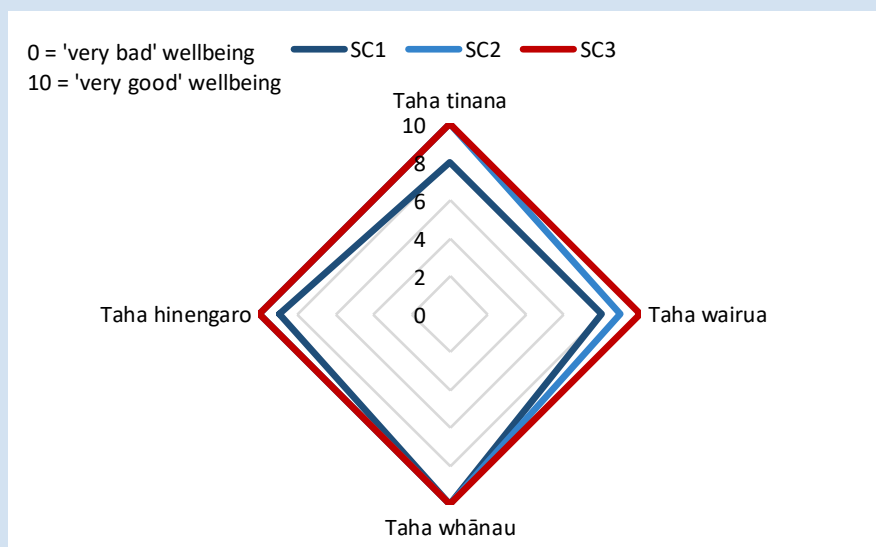


Figure 6: Wellbeing for Client 1 at three survey collection (SC) timepoints²⁴

Over time, Client 1 experienced slight improvements in wellbeing across all four Hua Oranga domains with larger improvements in taha tinana (physical wellbeing) (Figure 6). The client had engaged with the CSC for over 20 hours and had received multiple supports from her, both over the phone and face-to-face.

Trial stage at survey completion (SC) timepoints

SC1 (earliest timepoint): The client had just been referred to the Court Support service and had interacted with the CSC once over the phone. They noted that the CSC had provided them with a clear idea of what to expect in Court, which had been very helpful. The client said they felt apprehensive but also well-supported by the CSC.

SC2: The client was in the middle of their trial and had given evidence in Court, with the support of the CSC. In a follow-up interview, the client stated the CSC had provided excellent advice and was an authentic and genuine support person.

I very much trust [CSC]... She was really there with me in the moment, listening and understanding what my experience was and just guiding me through it beautifully. (Client 1)

SC3 (latest timepoint): The client had experienced mistrial and was awaiting trial at a later date. However, despite these trial complications, the support from the CSC had helped them cope with this challenging process.

²⁴ The lowest possible score in each domain was one and indicated 'very bad' wellbeing. The highest possible score was 10 and indicated 'very good' wellbeing.

I find the process of having to give evidence in this Court system stressful. To have to relive the experience of being assaulted wasn't easy and must be so hard for many people. However, [CSC] has been an invaluable part of making this easier, so supportive and so much clear and useful advice to get through it as best I could. (Client 1)

Client 2 case study

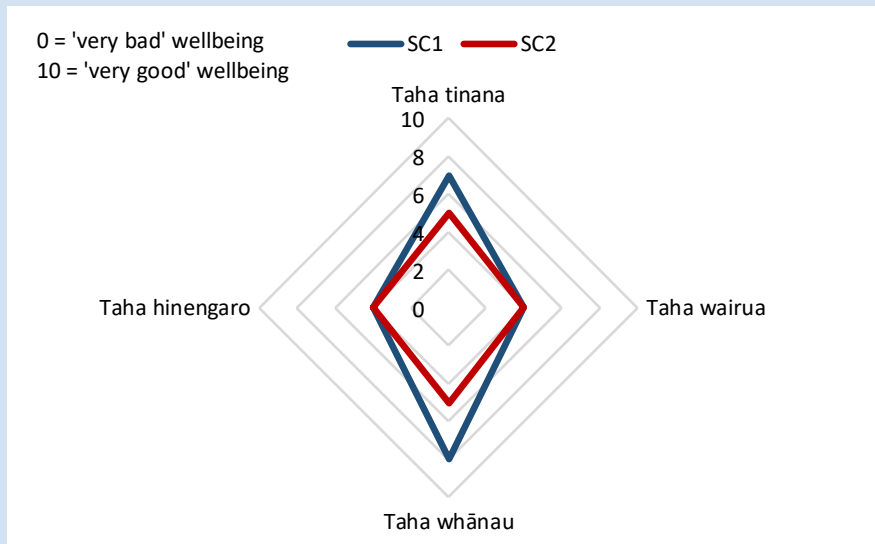


Figure 7: Wellbeing for Client 2 at two survey completion (SC) timepoints

Client 2 experienced decreases in physical and whānau wellbeing between survey completion timepoints (**Figure 7**). This client had only engaged with the CSC for just over five hours and was near the start of the Court process.

Trial stage at survey completion points:

SC1 (earliest timepoint): Interview data indicated this client had just been referred to the CSC and only had an initial phone conversation with her. The client appreciated the support the CSC had provided them with as it made them feel safe.

It's been really nice knowing that if I need it, I can just call [CSC] or send her an email. She's always there for me and that's quite nice to know and she doesn't make me feel like I'm harassing her... she really does care, which is really nice. (Client 2)

However, there were external factors that caused the client to experience a great deal of distress.

[The offender] breaches bail [continuously]... I have panic attacks and while they get better over time, things can still trigger it. (Client 2)

SC2 (latest timepoint): Administrative data showed the client was still awaiting trial.

Client 3 case study

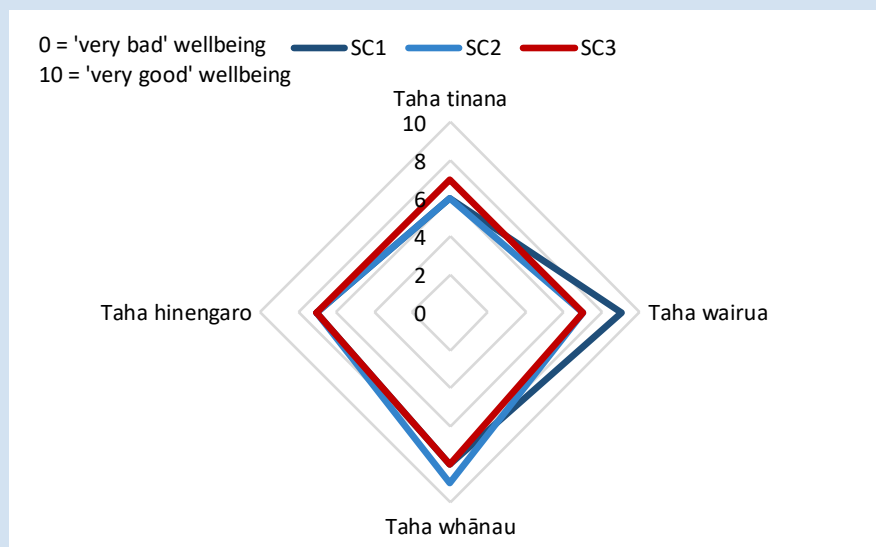


Figure 8: Wellbeing for Client 3 at three survey completion (SC) timepoints

Over time, Client 3 experienced slight fluctuations across the wellbeing domains (Figure 8). Although their Taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing) decreased between the first and second timepoints, their physical health improved slightly. This client had engaged with the CSC for close to 50 hours.

Trial stage at survey completion (SC) timepoints

SC1 (earliest timepoint) and SC2: The client awaited trial.

SC3 (latest timepoint): Administrative data showed this client had experienced two delays to starting their trial. However, the client had eventually completed the trial process, with the offender receiving a guilty verdict. The client was interviewed after they completed the trial and indicated they received a lot of support from the CSC before, during and after the trial. They commented on how much they valued the CSC's compassion and encouragement.

She was lovely, supportive, encouraging and she was caring. She didn't say something for the sake of it. She was also realistic about things, which is what I wanted to hear... I think it's great what she is doing... it's not easy to sit there, going through the whole process over and over again. (Client 3)

The client particularly valued the psychoeducation sessions and coping strategies, which helped them manage negative feelings and maintain a good sense of wellbeing through the trial, despite the disruptions to their everyday life.

She could see I was getting emotional... I told her I was zoning out and she said, yes it happens, it's because of the trauma, and made me do some grounding exercises... [it] helped a lot... it hasn't been easy at all... I actually quit my job because my mental health is not in the right place. (Client 3)

4. The key elements of an effective Court Support service

Key points:

HELP's service model reflected effective practice due to:

- Holistic, client-centred support that includes an educational component and offers clients the type of support they require. Clients had different support needs with some wanting support throughout the whole Court process and others wanting support for specific aspects.
- Service integration and collaboration with Police and Court officials. Strong relationships and networks were established and maintained with justice sector stakeholders and other providers and agencies, including a tripartite collaboration with other specialist sexual harm providers in Auckland²⁵.
- Clients appreciated how the CSC and other stakeholders worked collaboratively to keep them safe.
- Dedicated CSC support for clients enabled interviewed justice sector stakeholders to focus on their responsibilities.

The Auckland HELP CSC:

- The CSC was a skilled counsellor with specialist expertise and experience, and extensive knowledge about the criminal justice sector.
- The CSC's empowering approach, and ability to build positive and trusting relationships with clients was essential to the effectiveness of the support.

The benefit to embedding the pilot within an existing service provider:

- The pilot was integrated within an independent specialist sexual harm service provider. Auckland HELP provided an independent and neutral agency within the specialist sexual harm and criminal justice sectors with established policies, protocols and processes that prioritise client and practitioner safety.
- Embedding the pilot within Auckland HELP facilitated access to wider and holistic sources of support for clients.

²⁵ Auckland HELP collaborates with specialist sexual harm services in South and West Auckland to provide consistent and efficient services for clients across the region.

4.1. HELP's Court Support service model reflected effective practice

The pilot was client-centred and focused solely on identifying and supporting the clients' needs. Client wellbeing and safety were at the forefront of service delivery and interactions with other justice sector stakeholders and services. Clients had different needs for support and duration of support and the CSC was flexible in meeting clients' needs.

What makes HELP an effective service is our independence, our professionalism, our specialisation on subject matter and the strength of relationships means that we can advocate for the clients. We're supporting from behind, we're along the side and we lead and advocate to protect. (HELP staff)

The pilot established and maintained strong relationships and networks with justice sector stakeholders, other providers and agencies. The Court Support pilot was one of several stakeholders/organisations that victims of sexual violence engaged with within the criminal justice system.

The pilot was integrated and collaborative: Interviewed staff, justice sector stakeholders and clients highlighted that the Court Support pilot had established and maintained strong relationships, networks and partnerships with stakeholders through Court Support and other services. This included a tripartite collaboration with specialist sexual harm services in South and West Auckland.

I think we have a pretty good relationship at the moment... I do think that the HELP support...is a really positive thing. (Justice sector stakeholder)

The embeddedness in this tripartite relationship - we are doing that Court piece, but we have all those relationships around it to make that work and we are clearly independent. We have those embedded working relationships that Police and doctors aren't just about Court, they go beyond that...Our relationships are constant, so we have depth here. (HELP staff)

Multi-agency networks: With the likes of New Zealand Police, the forensic team from Pohutukawa, and kaupapa Māori specialist sexual harm services. Auckland HELP recently collaborated with the New Zealand Police to review systems, increase staff awareness about the Court Support pilot and ensure consistent referrals are made for all victims of sexual violence.

It's been really quite positive they are taking responsibility...Working with them...they're wanting to make it happen as well...A bit like crisis when someone reports sexual violence they are mandated to call us, so it's making it a part of their policy. (HELP staff)

This non-client-facing work was equally important to ensuring adequate support systems were in place for client safety and wellbeing throughout the criminal justice process.

The CSC liaised with stakeholders who were involved in providing additional support to the client. This included detectives, psychologists, sexual therapists, counsellors, social workers.

She was always reminding me about the strategies that I heard about from my psychologist to calm myself. (Client)

One client shared that justice sector stakeholders prioritised the safety of her and her children. Prompt communication and actions between the CSC, the Police and Victim Support ensured the client was updated about the offender's appearances and breaches in Court. Furthermore, the Police upheld a protection order against the offender.

As soon as [the offender] appeared in Court, even if he breaches, [CSC said] let me know immediately [and] said.... I can support, your situation is real, and it should be taken seriously. I felt cared for when she said that because the social worker, I was working with basically said, wave your protection order around and the Police will come...so, Victim Advisor, the Police, and the [CSC] took that very seriously. (Client)

Dedicated CSC support for clients enabled Police and justice sector stakeholders to focus on their responsibilities: Interviewed justice sector stakeholders mentioned they did not have the capacity to always be with clients during the trial, and their support could end abruptly following the trial. The CSC helped to manage the workload, and reassured justice sector stakeholders that follow-up contact would be made to clients and this would be ongoing or suited to clients' preferences.

A victim was on the stand for three days in the end, and the victim's mother was needing a lot of support as well and so [CSC] took care of all of that... she's valuable and really useful at trial...We had a lot going on ourselves, so it meant...we knew the victim and her family were taken care of and [CSC] did a fantastic job there. (Justice sector stakeholder)

Justice sector stakeholders said they trusted the CSC in her role and felt able to rely on her. They were reassured that clients would be well-informed of the Court processes, decisions and outcomes and that the CSC would fill any gaps that they missed when dealing with clients.

We have to make sure that our victims are fully informed of all the outcomes and if there needs to be debriefing after a trial for someone to understand what has happened and why the verdict might be like that... Having HELP on board I know [CSC] will have had that conversation...So that's a useful resource for us. (Justice sector stakeholder)

4.2. The Auckland HELP CSC

Clients were overwhelmingly positive about the support they received from the CSC and described her approach as being client-centred, caring, informative and non-judgemental.

I didn't feel like just another person that she's dealing with. I felt like I was the only person. And I think that made it easier knowing that, she made me feel I was the only one. (Client)

The CSC's expertise in trauma-care, client-centred practice: The CSC's training, qualifications and experience in trauma-informed and sensitive practice ensured her approach with clients validated their trauma, experiences and societal contexts, and recognised the significant potential for re-traumatisation and re-victimisation throughout the criminal trial processes.

I'm professionally trained to do this; I have a specialist skillset. I'm a lot more than just the person at the trial...This role is embedded to support people going through that [Court] process, giving them tools and skills and strategies to manage that. And to just be very supportive because re-traumatisation through the criminal justice system is very high... I'm a trained social worker so of course I have that focus on my work. (HELP staff)

Part of the CSC's practice included setting clear boundaries with clients. The CSC ensured that expectations regarding her role and time were managed from the outset of her engagement with clients. She also established contingency plans for when she was unavailable for clients.

When they first meet me, I do talk with them about how...these are my hours. This is when I'm available but remember that I am in Court sometimes and if you can't get a hold of me, please call the crisis line, call the crisis team... I do have contingency plans, as much as possible. (HELP staff)

The CSC built positive and trusting relationships with clients: Clients said this was a fundamental aspect of the service. They said the CSC worked hard to gain their trust and to make them feel like they had someone on their side throughout the process. Two clients commented that the CSC helped them as much as she could within the constraints of the criminal justice system and did what she could to help them feel a sense of control.

I find the process of having to give evidence in this Court system stressful: to have to relive the experience of being assaulted wasn't easy and must be so hard for many people. However [CSC] has been an invaluable part of making this easier, so supportive and so much clear and useful advice to get through it as best I could. (Client wellbeing form)

Additional client feedback on the helpfulness of the service reiterated how much clients valued the Court Support pilot. Table 8 presents clients' mean scores for a range of questions about the service and highlights that all respondents said the Court Support pilot was very helpful at the start and end of the Court process, the psychosocial education sessions were very useful, and they received high levels of support from the provided service. The responses also suggest that although the Court Support pilot helped minimise disruption to their everyday lives, there were systemic factors Auckland HELP could not influence that disrupted clients' lives.

Table 8: Client feedback and ratings of the Court Support service (Range of scores – 1 is the least positive score and 10 is the most positive score)

Question	Mean scores	Range of scores
How helpful did you find the support from the Auckland HELP team at the start of the Court process? (n = 13)	9.38	8-10
How useful are/were the psychosocial education sessions? (n = 12)	9.17	7-10
How helpful did you find the support from the Auckland HELP at the end of the Court process? (n = 8)	9.50	8-10
To what extent do you feel received all the support you needed through the Court process? (n = 9)	9.28	8-10
Overall, did support from Auckland HELP minimise disruption to your everyday life during the Court process? (n = 9)	7.06	1-10

4.3. The benefit of embedding the pilot within an existing service provider

The pilot was integrated within an independent specialist sexual harm service provider. Auckland HELP is a well-established specialist sexual harm provider with clear policies, protocols and processes that prioritise client and practitioner safety. Interviewed staff and justice sector stakeholders noted unique factors about Auckland HELP’s Court Support pilot that ensured an effective, holistic and quality service. The neutrality of the organisation ensures that clients’ needs remain at the forefront of service provision despite funding and sector insecurities.

HELP is neutral, we are just there for the survivor... Our focus is on reducing trauma, and also about recognising and valuing another person who’s going through this process...I don’t have an agenda. I don’t have to tick a box. (HELP staff)

Placement of the Court Support pilot within Auckland HELP provided the CSC with access to and support from a wider team of qualified professionals. This provided professional safety and boundaries and contributed to self-care. Established guidelines and ethical practices were already in place to enable greater accountability in practice, as well as client safety.

The job in itself can feel very isolated because I am out in the Court...So being able to come back to an environment that is a sexual violence [and] trauma agency is good for me too... It’s just professional, it’s very safe. (HELP staff)

Sitting within a larger agency meant the CSC was able to facilitate client access to a range of services and professionals in a timely manner.

We can't forget the relationship there too...I don't just drop off and disappear...They do go to the crisis team or into therapy. (HELP staff)

5. Overview – expansion and transferability of the Court Support pilot

5.1. The Court Support pilot model provided support that helped the clients manage the justice process

The Court Support pilot filled a gap in client service provision within the criminal justice system. The pilot provided trauma-care and client-focused support alongside tools and strategies to help clients manage at times of heightened anxiety, depression and low levels of wellbeing.

Pathways through the justice system were complex. Clients required support before, during and after trial. Although little time was spent supporting clients in Court, adequate preparation with the CSC for trial, sentencing and beyond made a positive difference for all clients and helped them cope within a system they saw as *'demoralising'*. The duration of client support required needs to be considered in developing any future service funding model.

Court stakeholders said the Court Support pilot took the pressure off them and enabled them to work better and focus on their tasks at hand.

The evaluation aimed to inform ongoing service development by understanding the Auckland HELP Court Support service model and providing information about how the pilot is delivered. Overall, the evaluation findings provide evidence to support the continuation of the Court Support pilot. Expansion of the Court Support service pilot is recommended. Further evaluation of any expansion of the Court Support service would continue to build the evidence about the effectiveness of different approaches to providing support and whether there are different outcomes for clients from different demographic and cultural groups.

Evaluation insights have been used to inform the following key considerations about the expansion of the service and transferability to other providers.

5.2. The criminal justice systems-level contexts

The current criminal justice system is difficult for clients. Client administration data highlighted that Court Support system components are often complex, rather than linear, and there are many issues and contexts that the pilot was delivered within. Clients require help to navigate these complexities.

A criminal justice system was not perceived by clients as supporting their needs: Despite support from the CSC and stakeholders, many clients felt that the criminal justice system was demoralising, disjointed and biased towards the offender. Additionally, stakeholders noted that both prosecution and defence teams often did

not understand and had little experience with the uniqueness and sensitivities of a sexual violence trial.

[The offender] still has the right to appeal...I just wish the Court could help us to solve all the problems...This makes me feel really unsafe...No one can tell me what to do next. (Client)

Every time I go into a sexual violence trial, I've got a lawyer who's never done one, despite if I've told them beforehand how to do it, they don't really understand, and often have to interrupt them and say you can't ask that question. You can't ask that question in that way. (Justice sector stakeholder)

Prolonged trials and processes: Most interviewed clients described the waiting period for a trial date (which ranged from months to years) as disruptive and detrimental to their wellbeing. Some clients said they had left their jobs, their communities and the country as a result.

That's the difficult thing about the Courts, you might secure things and you put time aside and then things change, get delayed. Then [CSC] might not have the next available date. Just constantly juggling. (HELP staff)

There has been a whole lot of drama in the community...It has been extremely hard for me and my family... I had to make the decision to leave this place and get a breather. I quit my job because my mental health is not in the right place. (Client)

Complexities of being involved in both the criminal and family Courts: Clients who were simultaneously involved in the criminal and family Courts spoke about the lack of communication and transparency in processes between the Courts, with one client noting this jeopardised her family's safety.

I need to explain myself all over again, and the family Court people...they don't understand my situation. When they contact me for the family issues, they show all my personal details to [person specified deleted], which I told them is unsafe. (Client)

5.3. Promoting Court Support services

Awareness of the Court Support pilot was limited to stakeholders that had existing relationships with Auckland HELP. Awareness-raising with other stakeholders was limited by high volumes of new staff within stakeholder organisations and the CSC's capacity to promote the service in addition to providing support for clients.

While we [need to] build up this awareness, I can only be at one trial at a time...There's new detectives all the time who come through but a lot of the time I feel like I'm having to re-introduce the service, because they get confused...So we're only visible to those people who have that repeat contact with us and actually know what we do. (HELP staff)

I was there for a meeting and our pamphlets weren't even there in the district Court. We're not easily available, unless we're offered to the person...they don't know to seek it, particularly when it's not on the Court website and things like that. (HELP staff)

Auckland HELP staff highlighted the limited evidence base and recognition of Court Support services inhibits their persistent efforts to raise the profile and awareness of their Court Support pilot with key stakeholders within the criminal justice system. Expansion of the Court Support pilot would benefit from an associated communication strategy.

There is the absence of specialist sexual violence services in all other literature...[This] means...every time we are in processes, we have to establish legitimacy again and again... I am fed up with the lack of recognition to the partnership that the community works in the justice system in the sexual violence space. It has got to change. (HELP staff)

Some stakeholders were also confused about different roles of support services for clients. Some interviewed stakeholders and clients said they were unsure of the role Court Victim Advisors had in supporting clients and how this differed to the role of the CSC, particularly when advice provided by Victim Advisors conflicted with trial preparation.

I was a little bit confused about [Victim Advisor's] role because I had heard about a Court Support person and then this person from the Court emailed me and I was really confused. (Client)

Limited awareness meant some clients were referred late to the Court Support service: Some stakeholders referred clients to Auckland HELP shortly before their trial commenced, which limited the amount of time and preparation work the CSC could provide.

No, I didn't feel that I had enough time with her, I mean it was only two days before the trial. (Client)

Occasionally I will get brought into a trial on a Monday and I have never met the person before. I do see the difference when they haven't had that preparation. I don't know what their support needs are. (HELP staff)

5.4. Establishing Court Support services as a usual part of the process

Clients and stakeholders suggested that referral to Court Support should be a default part of the trial process. Stakeholders noted that they often saw clients arrive at Court with no support person or a support person that may have been inappropriate.

We talk to people about support people and it's not uncommon for them to turn up there on the day of the trial and they've got nobody... And like a 16-year-old girl might turn up with her boyfriend who she met a few months ago and we talk to them about [how] that's actually really inappropriate. (Key stakeholder)

Expansion of the Court Support pilot provides the opportunity to make referral to a Court Support service part of the usual process.

It should be a routine thing that [clients] meet [CSC]...then they can decide. We don't give the patient a choice. It's routine. (Key stakeholder)

5.5. Developing a skilled workforce

A CSC needs to be qualified and experienced in trauma-care and have extensive knowledge about all components of the criminal justice sector. These skills and experience are required to build meaningful and trusting relationships and confidence to advocate for and support clients as they journey through the system.

Expanding the Court Support pilot is likely to require a focus on workforce development. Tertiary graduates and possible candidates for specialised trauma and crisis roles receive inadequate trauma training within tertiary institutions and speciality workforce development areas such as psychology and social work.

Trauma is no longer being taught in tertiary institutions...It means that we always have to train people more than the capacity that we have to provide training. (HELP staff)

Shortage of a skilled workforce and other factors, such as the increase in pay rates for social workers employed by the government and Auckland's higher living costs make recruitment of suitable staff difficult. Expanded services require funding that allows them to compete for qualified and experienced staff.

Expansion of Court Support services also requires development and growth within kaupapa Māori and Pacific services, as well as a need to strengthen cultural capacity/capability within mainstream organisations.

Interviewed justice sector stakeholders and HELP staff acknowledged the importance of providing cultural safety for all clients and highlighted this as a challenge during the pilot.

I do have other professionals in the agency who I consult with from different cultures as well... If I'm honest with myself...I feel like [I'm] doing at least a third of it... [I do] recognise that I'm a white person and there are really strong discourses that have controlled and suppressed other people's experiences...I do consult and also, I don't presume. (HELP staff)

Stakeholders noted that ensuring cultural safety within Court Support and across the wider specialist sexual harm services was paramount. Auckland HELP is committed to establishing and maintaining connections with Māori and Pacific providers to ensure clients access services that support their cultural needs.

Our gold standard is kaupapa Māori service provision is available for those that want it and services like us are culturally safe for people of cultures different to the mainstream... [HELP staff]

The loss of a Pacific sexual harm provider and the internal Pacific service within Auckland HELP without replacement in previous years had limited the ability for the pilot to provide cultural support that was comprehensive for clients.

5.6. Embedding the Court Support service within an existing specialist sexual harm service

Integration within a wider service provided the necessary backbone infrastructure, ethical and conduct guidelines, networks and professional accountability needed to ensure quality service provision.

The pilot provided Auckland HELP with an opportunity to review and strengthen internal processes:

- **Client data management systems were improved:** Implementing the pilot provided Auckland HELP with resources to review their internal systems and identify and address areas for improvement. As the pilot progressed, the organisation developed and strengthened the way they collected and reported client data and ensured consistency.
- **The CSC said the pilot and evaluation contributed to clarity, growth and continuous improvement of her role and practice:** The CSC highlighted the value of receiving formalised feedback about her practice, which provided her with greater opportunities for professional development, further growth and learning, as well as defining and clarifying her role.

It's been really great to be evaluated. It's always a bit nerve-wracking, but then also how am I supposed to improve if I'm not being evaluated? I have got feedback in the past and there has been that but having it [be] formalised has been... Yeah. I mean, anywhere I can grow and learn is just really important. (HELP staff)

5.7. Expansion and transferability of the service needs to be adequately funded

The duration of support required, the holistic nature of support and the need for a skilled workforce need to be considered in developing any future funding model for Court Support services.

Providers require support to establish systems to monitor the support they provide to clients. Ways to support provider IT infrastructure should be considered in expanding the pilot as it would enable effective tracking of the clients who are supported, and the types of support provided.

Appendix 1: Statistical data analysis process

Statistical data provided from Auckland HELP included client wellbeing forms and administrative data. Administrative data included various datasets encompassing different time periods (see section 1.3). This appendix describes how data were coded, grouped and analysed for this report.

Administrative data

Ethnicity

All clients had one recorded ethnicity. Due to the possibility of client identification, we recoded client ethnicity according to broad ethnic categorisations: New Zealand European, Māori, Pacific, Asian, MELAA (Middle Eastern, Latin American and African) and Other European. Clients with no stated ethnicity were coded as 'Not Stated'.

Age group

Age, where available, was used to group clients into banded age groups: 'Under 18', '18-19', '20-29', '30-39', '40-49', '50-59' and '60+'. Clients with no stated age were coded as 'Not Stated'.

Location

Most clients lived in Auckland. We grouped these clients into five main locations: North Auckland, South Auckland, Central Auckland, West Auckland and East Auckland. Other locations were recoded according to New Zealand's 16 regional territories, to hinder possible client identification. One client who did not live in New Zealand was recoded as living overseas.

Referral sources

Where referral source information was available, it was coded into the following categories:

- Police, including: Police, Officer-in-charge
- Self-referral, including: self, family member, friend
- Health service provider
- HELP, including: HELP, HELP crisis team
- Crown, including: Court, Crown, VA, Victim Advisor.

Duration of client engagement

We analysed client engagement by calculating the difference between their date of entry to the service and their most recent date of engagement. We calculated separate variables to show client engagement in days, weeks and months, but have only presented data on client engagement in months.

Number of client activities

We used the pre-existing activity categorisations in the administrative data to look at the number of activities the CSC had undertaken across all clients. These activity categorisations were:

- Client Management
- Client Session
- Court Support
- Email
- File Management
- On-site Meeting
- Off-site Meeting
- Support Session – one instance of ‘Support Session CT’ was detected, which was recoded to ‘Support Session’
- Telephone – one instance of ‘Telephone AH’ was detected, which was recoded to ‘Telephone’
- Texting.

Duration of client activities

The administrative data already recorded the duration of each activity in hours. We aggregated the total number of hours the CSC spent on each pre-existing activity categorisation (e.g., Court Support, Email, Telephone and Texting) in a selected time period: the start of the pilot (July 2018) to the final date in the administrative dataset (30 April 2019).

This initially amounted to 302 days. However, once we removed all weekends, public holidays and the two-week Christmas closedown period (24th December 2018 to 4th January 2019), this amounted to 206 working days. We calculated each activity type as a percentage of 1 FTE (37.5 working hours per week) and also calculated each activity type as a percentage of the total number of hours recorded in the time period (1109.4 hours) (Table 5).

Breakdown of the ‘Court Support’ activity type

Changes were made to how the breakdown of the ‘Court Support’ activity type was analysed due to changes in the quality of data provided. We combined analysis of this activity type in Table 3, but please note the below changes.

Previous administrative data extracts supplied by Auckland HELP (from July to October 2018) contained more detailed information about specific ‘Court Support’ activities in open-text data entry fields and sometimes contained multiple sub-activity types in one field. Therefore, to provide analysis of this information, we undertook a keyword search of these free-text fields, meaning that in some cases,

multiple activity types were captured, and the total proportion of activities did not equal 100%.

Auckland HELP developed a new way to record 'Court Support' specific activities from December 2018 onwards that was more accurate and only recorded one specific activity per row. Some categories captured in previous data were unavailable in the new dataset (e.g., 'Evidence'), while some categories in the new dataset were not found in keyword searches of the old dataset (e.g., 'Meeting').

Breakdown of CSC interactions with different stakeholders

We conducted a keyword search of a free-text field to analyse who the CSC interacted with in her everyday line of work (Table 7). Results are based on a keyword search of a free-text field and are dependent on the accuracy and completeness of this field. Note that some activities are caught by more than one interaction category, so the rows are not mutually exclusive.

Different stakeholder categories were grouped together for analysis:

- Clients, including: client, clients
- Police, including: Police, OIC, officer-in-charge
- Family, including: mum, mother, father, sister, aunt, partner, in-laws
- Victim Advisors, including: Victim Advisors, VA
- Other services, including: FA, Family Action, counsellor, therapist, ACC
- Crown, including: Crown, Court, Crown prosecutor.

Breakdown of trial stages

Auckland HELP developed a new method of collecting data that was implemented in December 2018, which collected case management data for clients (i.e., noting trial stages and upcoming Court obligations). The data showed that some clients experienced the same trial stage multiple times. We analysed the data to show the number of clients experiencing the same trial stage once, twice or more than three times (Table 6). We used the existing trial stages recorded in the dataset:

- Adjourned
- Callover
- Case review hearing
- Completed through to trial
- Firm fixture trial
- Held
- Resolution
- Retrial
- Sentence indication hearing
- Sentencing
- Delayed
- Rescheduled
- Standby
- Withdrawn.

Analysis of client activity timeframes

We analysed the data to examine whether there were any patterns in activity/service engagement during different timeframes after entry to the Court Support service. To achieve this, we created new variables during analysis to calculate overall client activities, as well as client activities by activity type, during different time intervals after referral. We initially created the following time intervals:

- Week 1, 2, 3 and 4
- Month 1, 2, 3... 24.

We analysed activity trends up until the two-year mark because client engagement dropped off over time – Figure 4 shows only 3% of clients continued engagement 24 months on from referral.

We then combined these into larger time intervals and calculated the mean number of overall activities (and activities by type, i.e., Email, Telephone and Texting) for each time interval:

- 0-1 month
- 2-3 months
- 4-6 months
- 7-12 months
- 13-18 months
- 19-24 months.

We presented these activity data for overall activities and the three largest activity groups only (Email, Telephone and Texting) in Figure 5.

Client wellbeing questionnaires

Sixteen clients completed a wellbeing/feedback form. The form asked for clients' unique Auckland HELP ID, the date they completed the survey, and 10 questions:

- How is your taha tinana or physical health?
- How is your taha wairua or spiritual health?
- How is your taha whānau or family health?
- How is your taha hinengaro or mental health?
- How helpful did you find the support from the Auckland HELP team at the start of the Court process?
- How useful are/were the psychosocial education sessions?
- How useful was the support from Auckland HELP at the end of the Court process?

- To what extent do you feel you received all the support you needed through the Court process?
- Overall, did support from Auckland HELP minimise disruption to your everyday life during the Court process?
- What could have been done better to support you?

The first nine questions were on 0-10 (1 indicated 'very bad' wellbeing and 10 indicated 'very good' wellbeing) scales, while the last question was an open-text field. Only two clients provided qualitative feedback on the form.

Due to the small number of client survey completion, we chose to report clients who only filled out one form separately to a matched sample of six clients who filled out forms at 2-3 timepoints. However, analysis of their responses was undertaken using the same approach. For questions 1-9, we grouped responses into three categories:

- Responses '1', '2' and '3' were categorised as 'low' (e.g., 'low wellbeing', 'not useful/helpful', 'low support')
- Responses '4', '5' and '6' were categorised as 'medium' (e.g., 'medium wellbeing', 'somewhat useful/helpful', 'medium support')
- Responses '7', '8', '9' and '10' were categorised as 'high' (e.g., 'high wellbeing', 'very useful/helpful', 'high support').