10 Highlights from the 2012 Tracker Survey

The Panel commissioned YouGov to conduct our second annual tracker omnibus survey. Fieldwork took place during February and March 2012.

There were two parts to the survey:

- Part 1 – A 1,796 sample of the general population
- Part 2 – A 1,435 sample of recent users of legal services.

The survey included booster samples for Wales and six BME groups to allow deeper analysis of the data. Results were post-weighted to be nationally representative.

The Tracker Survey forms part of the evidence base for the Panel’s annual Consumer Impact Report. The second edition of this report will be published in July.
1. Usage of legal services in the last two years has fallen across most areas of law

In the 2012 survey, 27% of the population reported using at least one legal service during the last two years, compared to 31% of people in the 2011 survey.
2. Trust in lawyers among the general public has fallen further – now just 43% – although trust in other economic sectors has also fallen since 2011.

In addition, there is wide variation among BME groups concerning trust in lawyers.
3. People’s confidence that their consumer rights will be protected when using lawyers has also dropped slightly, from 51% in 2011 to 49% in 2012
4. There is evidence that more consumers are shopping around, rising from 19% in 2011 to 22% in 2012

And more people are finding it easier to compare providers – up to 57% in 2012 from 51% in 2011
5. Previous use and referrals remain the most important influences on choice of providers
6. Fixed fees are a key feature of the market – 58% of those paying privately said they were quoted on price this way

Satisfaction with value for money has risen – 58% in 2012 compared to 56% in 2011
7. Less than half – 42% – of legal services are delivered face to face, with wide variations across areas of law.
8. Satisfaction with the outcome of legal work has stayed steady overall and risen in most areas of law
9. Levels of service satisfaction have slightly fallen

There are variations across areas of law
10. Confidence in complaining about lawyers has fallen slightly, but this is also true in other sectors

There has been a big increase in numbers of people who do nothing when dissatisfied – from 35% to 42% – but also more formal complaints – from 13% to 21%