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## **Consumers are shopping around more but pricing information needs to be monitored**

The 2020 Tracker Survey shows that more consumers of legal services are shopping around. We have recorded an all-time high of 30% of consumers shopping around compared to 25% in 2016 and 23% in 2012.

However, our research suggests that consumers are still struggling with pricing information and some, in vulnerable circumstances, are unclear about what a service will cost until they receive their bill. For example, 25% of consumers using legal services for family matters find out the cost of the service when they receive the bill. This is not acceptable for a modern service.

46% of consumers are still reporting that they do not understand or do not know how to make a complaint.

The use of online services has increased from 21% in 2012 to 34% in 2020. And consumer satisfaction with the outcome remains very high (88%).

### **Key findings:**

- When shopping around, 35% of consumers can recall seeing information on staff, services or timings for delivery, a fall from the 40% who saw this in 2019;
- 64% of consumers find out the price through talking to the provider rather than from a website or other means;
- 88% of consumers are satisfied with the outcome of their matter and 84% are satisfied with the legal service;
- The proportion of silent sufferers (those who are dissatisfied but do not complain) is steady at 36%;
- Consumers who find it difficult to find information about the cost report being presented with confusing prices when they shop around, 33% in 2020 compared with 25% in 2019;
- Consumers who find it difficult to find information about the cost report not being provided with upfront information on price when they shop around, 47% in 2020 compared with 42% in 2019.

Sarah Chambers, Chair of the Legal Services Consumer Panel, said:

*"I am pleased to see that more consumers are shopping around and raising their complaints formally with providers when things go wrong. These developments will improve competition and raise standards in the market.*

*We commend regulators for continuing to push the transparency agenda, but we are disappointed to see that consumers are still struggling to find adequate information on price*

*and services. We strongly encourage the regulators to continue to reinforce the current measures and monitor them closely to ensure that they translate to better outcomes.”*

**ENDS**

**For more information contact Lola Bello, Consumer Panel Manager, on 020 72710077.**

**Notes to editors**

1. The Legal Services Consumer Panel was established under the Legal Services Act 2007 to provide independent advice to the Legal Services Board about the interests of consumers of legal services in England and Wales. We investigate issues that affect consumers and use this information to influence decisions about the regulation of legal services.

2. For the last nine years the Panel has commissioned YouGov to conduct an annual survey in two parts on a sample of people who have used legal services in the last two years. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 3,623 adults who have used a legal service in the past 2 years. Fieldwork took place between 17 February and 18 March 2020 prior to the Government introducing the lockdown on 23 March 2020. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of legal service users by type of service used.

3. The full data set and the reports can be found on our website.

4. [The CMA Legal services market study, December 2016.](#)