

Canadian Bar Association Legal Health Check User Survey Results

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The Canadian Bar Association Alberta conducted a public review of Legal Health Checks prepared by the Canadian Bar Association and the CBA Alberta on Law Day 2015. The LHCs are intended to increase people's legal awareness and address a variety of legal issues. The two provincial LHCs addressed the issues involved in renting an apartment for owners and for renters. The national LHCs reviewed were titled:

- Breaking up: without court
- Spousal support
- Non-unionized employees
- Common-law property
- Hiring for your small business
- Preparing a will
- 5 steps to legal wellness
- On your own – youth
- Avoid surprises
- Breaking up
- Breaking up: parenting
- Before you buy

Volunteers conducted the review at the CBA Alberta's Law Day event at the Calgary Courts Centre on 18 April 2015. Volunteers approached members of the public attending the Law Day event and asked them to select and read a Health Check on a subject they were interested in, following which the volunteer administered a survey prepared by the Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family. The survey, attached as Appendix A, was intended to gather data on the usefulness of the LHCs developed by the CBA to guide the Alberta branch's development of similar materials specific to Alberta.

One hundred and one participants completed the survey. Each survey was intended for the review of one LHC, however nine respondents reviewed multiple LHCs on their surveys. The survey had 16 questions including two control questions, three demographic questions, seven Likert Scale questions, and four open-ended questions. Nine surveys were discarded due to multiple LHC responses, yielding a data pool of 92 surveys. All questions were voluntary and no surveys were discarded from the data pool due to being incomplete. The paper surveys were then entered into Fluid Surveys and the data exported to SPSS Statistics for qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Findings

When asked which LHC participants read, 91 respondents answered the question, with one respondent not answering. The majority of respondents (n = 70; 76.9%) read one of

the national LHCs, compared to 23.1% (n = 21) who read one of the two provincial LHCs; see Table 1. Almost 21% of participants reviewed the national LHCs “On your own – youth” and almost 20% read “Preparing a will.” Eleven participants read the provincial LHC on renting apartments for land owners and 10 read the LHC for renters.

Table 1: Legal Health Checks Read by Participants

LHC	N	%
National LHC	70	76.9%
On your own – youth	19	20.8%
Preparing a will	18	19.8%
5 steps to legal wellness	10	11.0%
Avoid surprises	4	4.4%
Breaking up	4	4.4%
Before you buy	3	3.3%
Non-unionized employees	3	3.3%
Breaking up: parenting	3	3.3%
Spousal support	2	2.2%
Common-law property	2	2.2%
Hiring for your small business	2	2.2%
Breaking up: without court	0	0%
Provincial LHC	21	23.1%
Renting an apartment: Land Owners	11	12.1%
Renting an apartment: Renters	10	11.0%
Total	91	100%

N = 91; Missing cases = 1

The majority of respondents (n = 75; 82.4%) had English as their first language, while 17.6% (n = 16) had a different first language and one person did not answer. More than one-half of respondents were presently employed or self-employed (n = 56; 61.5%), with 38.5% of respondents not employed (n = 35). One person did not answer the question. When asked about what age they were, 87 respondents answered the question; the majority of respondents were in their 40s (n = 22; 25.3%).

Table 2: Age of Respondents

Age	N	%
10 to 14	11	12.6%
15 to 19	9	10.3%
20 to 29	11	12.6%
30 to 39	10	11.5%
40 to 49	22	25.3%

Age	N	%
50 to 59	10	11.5%
60 to 69	7	8.0%
Over 70	7	8.0%
Total	87	100.0%

N = 87; Missing cases = 5

Table 3, and the charts that follow, show the responses to the Likert Scale questions for the provincial and national LHCs. It is worthwhile to note that, while the majority of respondents neither disagreed nor agreed about having too much or too little information, there were many comments made requesting more information and resources be made available on the LHCs.

Table 3: Statement of Agreement

	Completely agree		Somewhat agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat disagree		Completely disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The Legal Health Check was easy for me to read. ^{1,4}	20	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	56	80	11	15.7	0	0	2	2.9	1	1.4
The Legal Health Check used words I am familiar with. ^{1,4}	19	95	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0
	56	81.2	9	13	0	0	3	4.3	1	1.4
The Legal Health Check gave me too much information. ^{1,5}	3	15	0	0	8	40	2	10	7	35
	5	7.4	10	14.7	21	30.9	13	19.1	19	27.9
The Legal Health Check gave me too little information. ^{1,5}	1	5	2	10	11	55	2	10	4	20
	8	11.8	4	5.9	24	35.3	14	20.6	18	26.5
I understand more about the law because of reading the Legal Health Check. ^{2, 6}	10	62.5	3	18.8	2	12.5	1	6.3	0	0
	22	34.4	21	32.8	8	12.5	8	12.5	5	7.8
I am likely to use the information in the Legal Health Check. ^{1,4}	18	90	2	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
	38	55.1	19	27.5	7	10.1	2	2.9	3	4.3

	Completely agree		Somewhat agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat disagree		Completely disagree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I liked the design of the Legal Health Check. ^{3,6}	17	94.4	1	5.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
	51	79.7	10	15.6	1	1.6	2	3.1	0	0

Provincial LHCs (N = 21) in white row, National LHCs (N = 70) in blue row

¹ Provincial n = 20; Missing cases = 1

² Provincial n = 16; Missing cases = 5

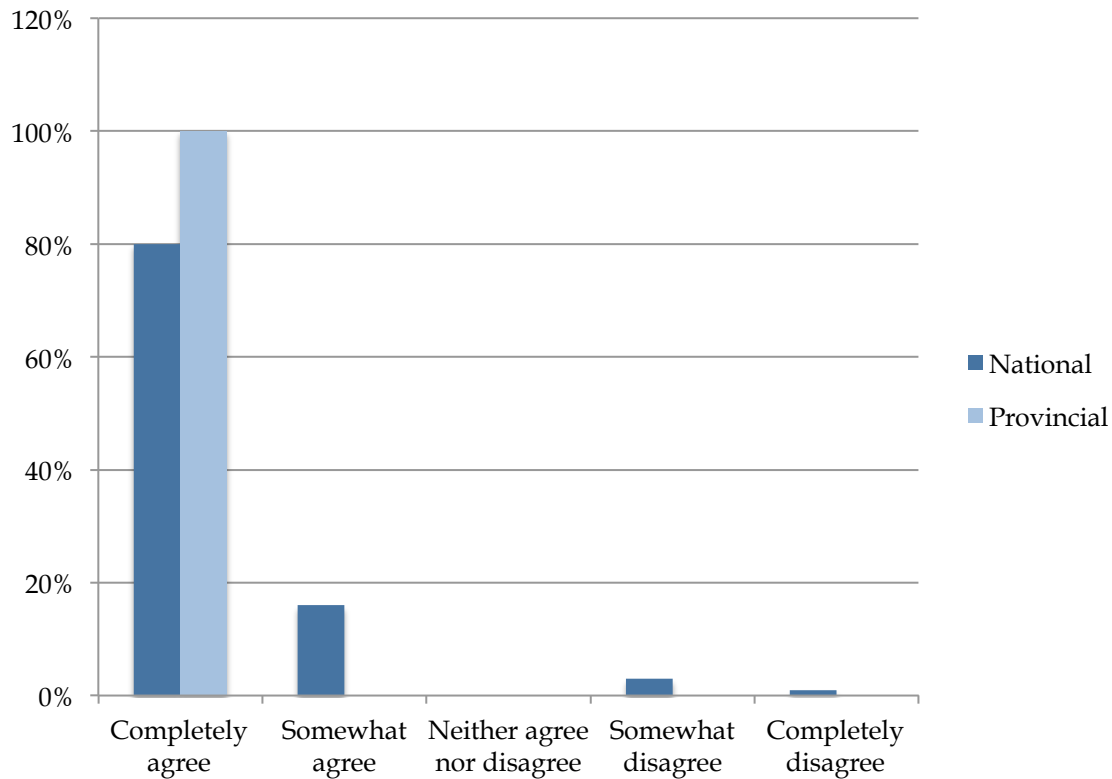
³ Provincial n = 18; Missing cases = 3

⁴ National n = 69; Missing cases = 1

⁵ National n = 68; Missing cases = 2

⁶ National n = 64; Missing cases = 6

Chart 1: Statement of Agreement
The LHC was easy for me to read



Provincial n = 20; Missing cases = 1

National n = 69; Missing cases = 1

Chart 2: Statement of Agreement
The LHC used words I am familiar with

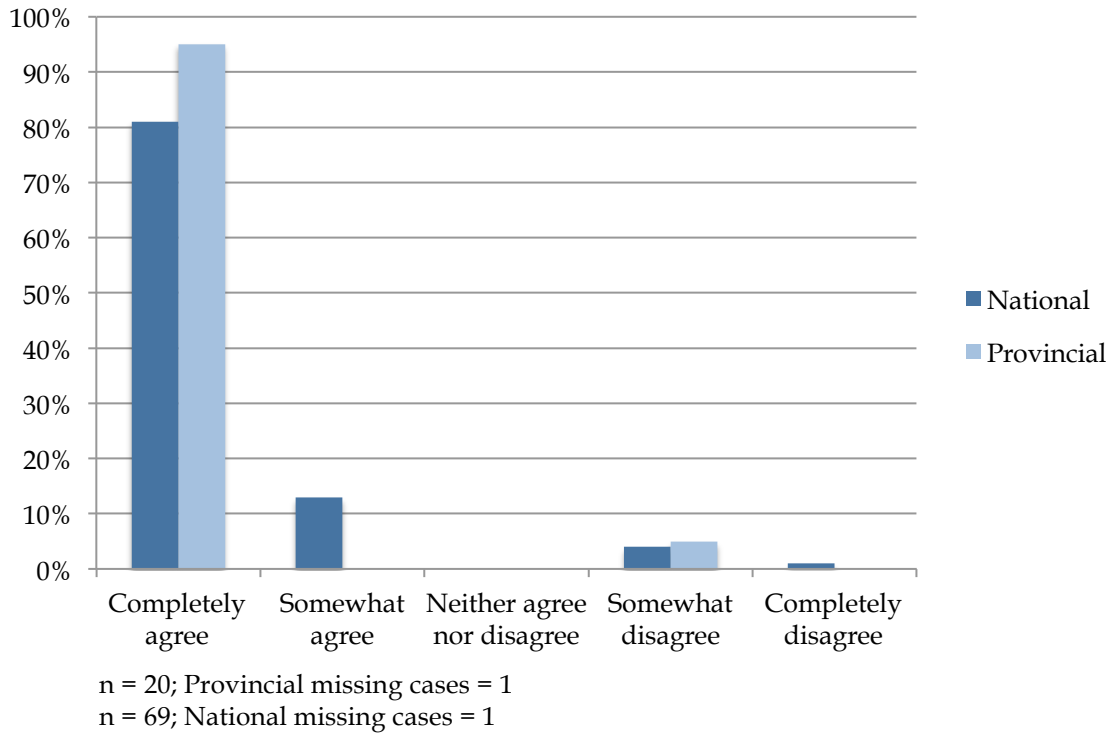


Chart 3: Statement of Agreement
The LHC gave me too much information

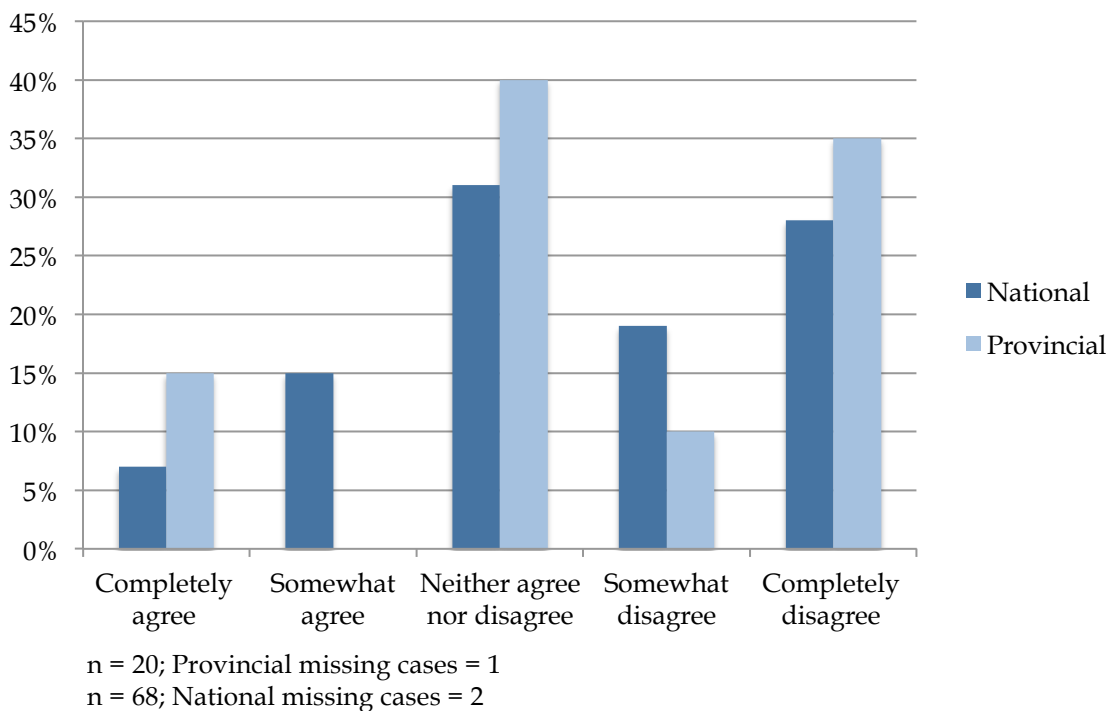


Chart 4: Statement of Agreement
The LHC gave me too little information

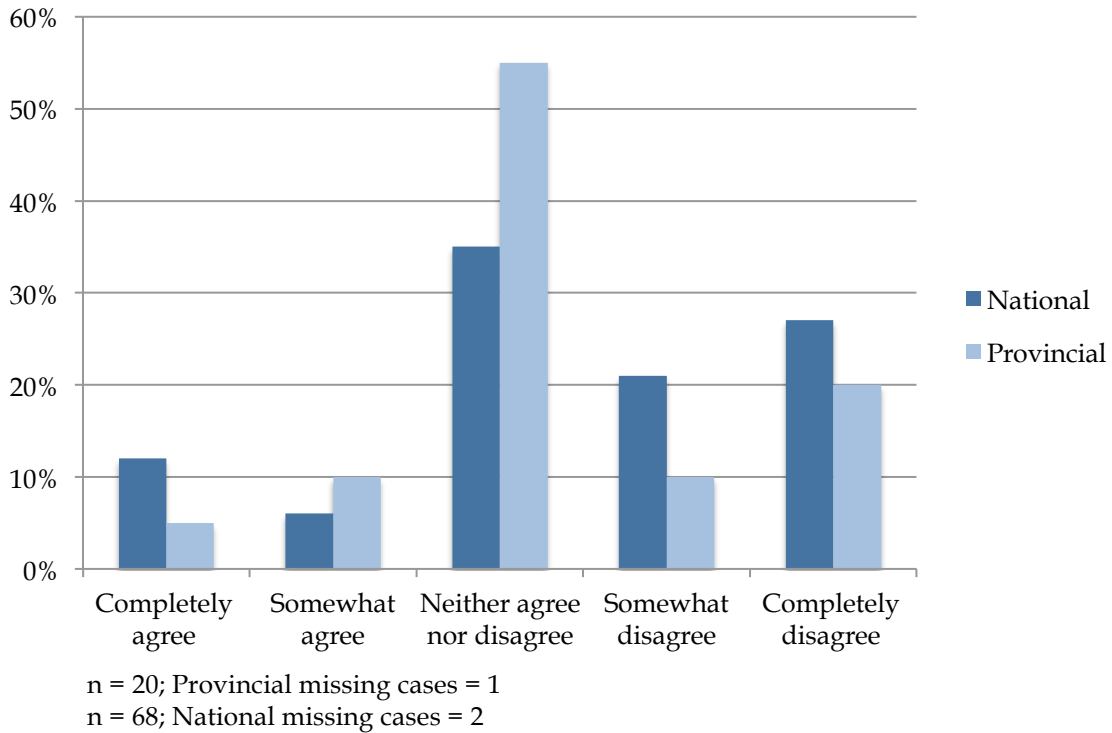


Chart 5: Statement of Agreement
I understand more about the law because of reading the LHC

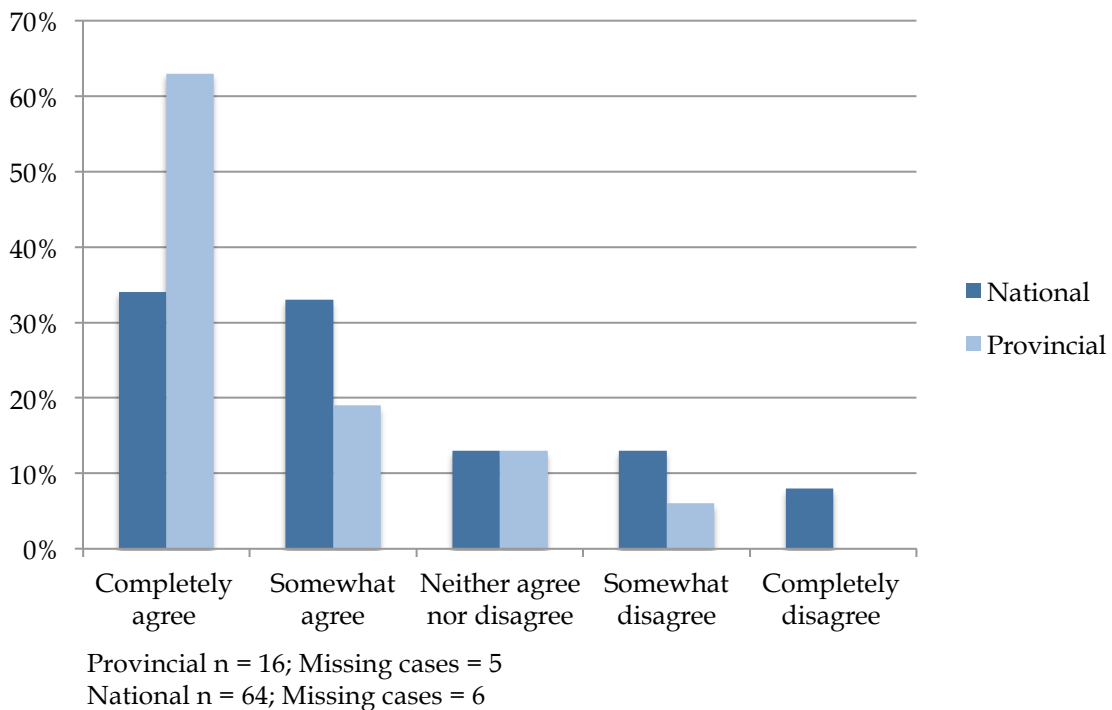


Chart 6: Statement of Agreement
I am likely to use the information in the LHC

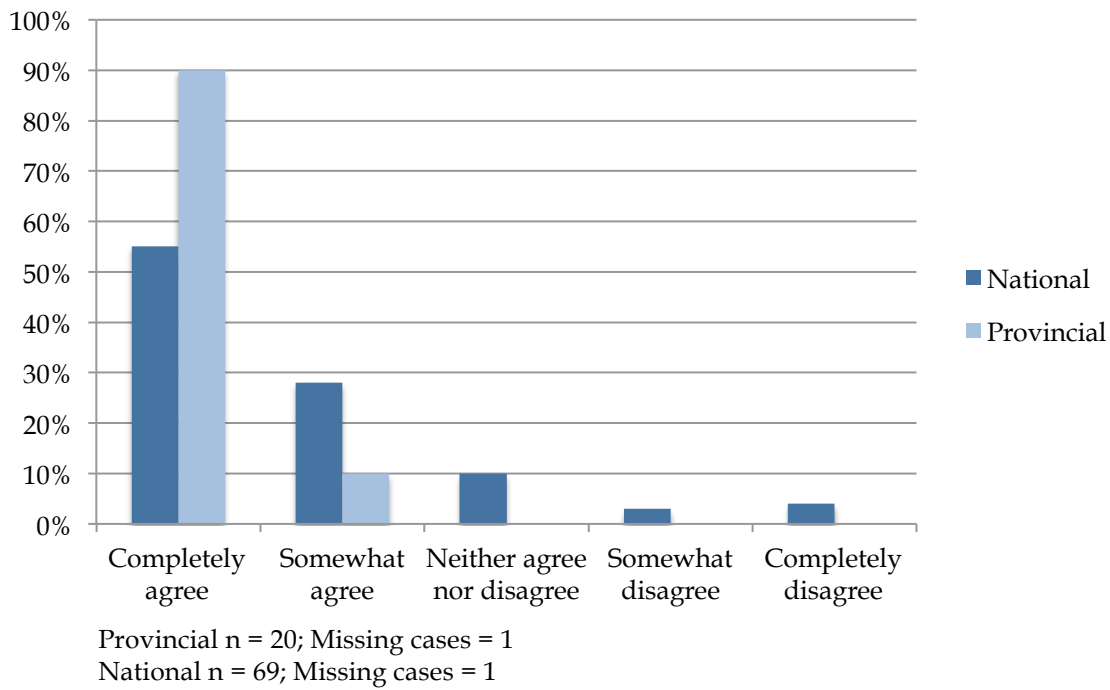
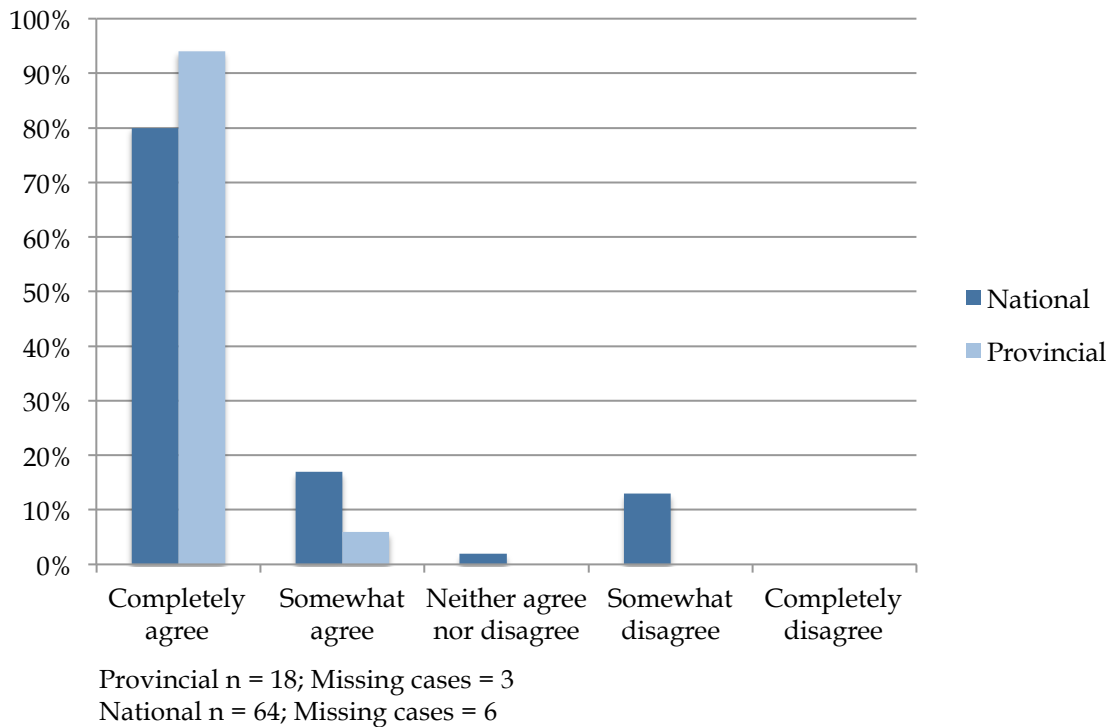


Chart 7: Statement of Agreement
I liked the design of the LHC



When asked what respondents liked *most* about the LHCs, the majority of respondents mentioned the general design and layout of the LHCs. Respondents had positive reactions to the colours, checklists, bullet points, size of font and use of white space. Other respondents said that the content of the LHC was comprehensive and easy to understand, a comment reflected by the large number of respondents (83.5%) who found the provincial and national LHCs easy to read. The following statements typify the comments of respondents who liked the design and content of the provincial LHCs:

Lays out information clearly without being overwhelming.

Tips were informed and easy; very good tips to go through; very clear; good defence terms.

Very well laid out; concise, short sentences.

Shows what a new Canadian needs when renting.

Bullet point and categories good and concise.

A number of the respondents who reviewed the national LHCs (31.4%) had similar comments:

Really good; everything you need for those who do not know procedure.

General info; easy to understand; covers a lot of good things.

Easy to read, design not overwhelming; clean; one site; quick read.

Format/layout; organized; makes me think about things would not have considered; raised awareness.

It is just enough info to get started.

Simple to read: free; user words [were] common [and] anyone can understand.

To the point; clear plain language; check list; covers basics; good.

When asked what respondents liked *least* about the LHCs, slightly less than one-quarter of provincial commenters (23.8%; n = 5) said that they needed more information, more

resources, and more specific information as to the next steps to deal with their legal issue:

FAQ: where you can contact for assistance; more info on next steps.

Overview of a bunch of items; link to more info should be at front for it to be more clear.

Header too long and doesn't stand out.

Of the 70 respondents who reviewed the national LHCs, 62.9% made specific suggestions for their improvement:

Design needs something more; search key words.

Doesn't give answers, needs future editing; glossy [and] not recyclable; too bright, draws too much attention.

Need more examples; need more substance; could be smaller.

Need to have more legal specific info.

Overview of a bunch of items; link to more info should be at front for it to be more clear.

Too far over [people's] head; won't relate to all people; [people] get lost by fifth bullet.

Respondents provided a wide range of answers when asked what topics they would like to see covered in future LHCs; these are summarized in Table 4. The topics suggested by more than one respondent were:

- Babysitting
- Child support
- Consumer protection
- Credit cards
- Conflict and dispute resolution between neighbours
- Identity theft
- Insurance
- Personal injury
- Prenuptial agreements

A number of respondents reviewing the national LHCs (29.6%; n = 8) suggested LHCs on wills and preparing for death, topics addressed in the national LHC “Preparing a will.”

Table 4: Other Topics

Topic	Provincial	National
Acclimating to life in Canada		X
Animal cruelty by-laws	X	
Babysitting (x 2)		X
Career ideas		X
Charities and beneficiaries		X
Child Support	X	X
Cohabitation	X	
Computer safety and encryption	X	
Consumer protection	X	X
Contracts		X
Credit cards (x 3)		X
Divorce	X	
Domestic violence and sexual assault		X
Email scams		X
Employment contracts		X
Encryption	X	
Having a baby		X
Hiring discrimination		X
How to support yourself		X
Identity theft	X	X
Immigrant employment in Canada		X
Insurance	X	X
Living wills		X
Mental health		X
More provinces	X	
Neighbour conflict dispute and resolution (x 3)		X
Non-disclosure agreements		X
Notice tenant needs to move out	X	
Personal injury	X	X
Prenuptial agreements	X	X
Public property		X
Raising children		X
Real estate buying and leasing out		X
Rental agreements		X
Social and legal impact of dropping out of school		X

Topic	Provincial	National
Social media and protecting security of children		X
Taxes		X
Youth with problems at home		X

When asked if respondents had any other comments about the LHCs, some commented that:

Put in social media; set it out that way; make LHCs accessible; want to make it interesting; target youth access point

Great idea; not enough info at schools; can pass to my kids

Young children who don't have a voice for themselves; education in schools

Helpful how to get it out there; link to website; great first step

Summary

A significant majority of respondents found the LHCs to be easy to read and well designed. Most respondents said that the LHCs provided neither too much nor too little information. Most said that the LHCs improved their understanding of the law and that they were likely to use the information found in the LHC.

Most respondents liked the design of the LHCs and commented favourably on their layout, use of checklists and short sentences, although a few respondents found the content to be overwhelming and said that the content could be compressed and that greater effort could be made to identify key words and concepts.

Respondents scored the LHCs prepared by CBA Alberta higher than the CBA's LHCs when asked whether the LHC was easy to read and used words the respondent is familiar with, and whether respondents understood more about the law as a result of reading the LHC and were likely to use the information contained in the LHC.

Respondents also preferred the design of the CBA Alberta's LHCs over the CBA's LHCs. These results should be interpreted with some caution because of the comparatively small number of respondents reviewing the provincial LHCs (N = 21) compared to those reviewing the national LHCs (N = 70).

Although the total number of responses to the survey is relatively small (N = 91), the degree of homogeneity among the views of respondents and the absence of significant outliers suggests that the findings drawn from this survey are likely to be reflective of the views of a larger sample size.

Appendix A

Which Legal Health Check did the participant read?

National	5 Steps to Legal Wellness	<input type="checkbox"/>
	On Your Own – Youth	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Avoid Surprises	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Breaking Up	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Breaking Up: Parenting	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Before You Buy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provincial	Renting an Apartment: Renters	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Renting an Apartment: Land Owners	<input type="checkbox"/>

About the participant.

	Yes	No
Is English your first language?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you presently employed or self-employed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
About how old are you? _____		

To what extent does the participant agree with these statements about the Legal Health Check?

	Completely agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Completely disagree
The Legal Health Check was easy for me to read.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Legal Health Check used words I am familiar with.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Legal Health Check gave me too much information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Legal Health Check gave me too little information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand more about the law because of reading the Legal Health Check.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I am likely to use the information in the Legal Health Check.

I liked the design of the Legal Health Check.

What did the participant like best about the Legal Health Check?

What did the participant like least about the Legal Health Check?

What other topics does the participant think should be covered in future Legal Health Checks?

Does the participant have any other comments about the Legal Health Check?
