

Summary of Feedback on Sex Trafficking Lethality Tool

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- All of the service providers for completing the online survey and for sharing their feedback on the tool.

Background

This is a collaborative project between the Research Shop, part of the Community Engaged Scholarship Institute (CESI) at the University of Guelph and the Sexual Assault Support Centre (SASC) of Waterloo Region. SASC offers a wide range of services and resources to support survivors of sexual violence.

The Sex Trafficking Lethality Tool (STLT) was designed to assess the risk of lethality for people experiencing sex trafficking. The tool was co-developed by the Anti-Human Trafficking Program counsellors at SASC and a graduate student at the University of Guelph. While it is still in its developmental stage, the tool aims to guide service providers in determining a service user's imminent risk of fatality within the context of trafficking. It can also be used to help with case management strategies and prioritizing resources in each service provider's area. In addition, the information collected through the use of the STLT could potentially serve to inform public policy and prevention strategies in the area of human trafficking.

The tool consists of a series of questions about service user demographics, familial and home support, non-familial support, drug use, hierarchy/process, trafficker, medical, and travel history. These categories of questions were included based on a review of the literature in this area and from other existing domestic violence risk assessment tools.

The purpose of this research is to further validate the STLT by gathering feedback on various aspects of the tool such as length, ease of use, uniqueness, usefulness and general recommendations for improvements from other anti-human trafficking service providers across the province who might use the tool.

Methods

SASC contacted community-based Sexual Assault Centres across Ontario via email to participate in an online survey. The service providers were mostly non-profit, grassroots feminist agencies, shelters, and victim services organizations. The survey was created using the Qualtrics software platform by a graduate student through the support of the Community Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) program at CESI and was distributed by SASC through their networks. Survey responses were completed between March 2021 and June 2021.

There were 15 surveys recorded on Qualtrics from service providers. The information was then analyzed by theme, the results of which are summarized in the report below.

Results

Service providers were asked a variety of questions to provide feedback on the STLT. General themes from their responses are recorded below.

Tool Similarity

Table 1 presents the responses to the following question: “As a service provider, have you been looking for a tool similar to this one?” Half¹ of the participants indicated they were looking for a similar tool, and just under half felt unsure whether they were. One participant mentioned they were not looking for a similar tool.

Table 1: Responses to Tool Similarity

Response Option	Percentage of Responses
Yes	50%
No	8%
Unsure	43%

Table 2 presents participant responses when asked about the last time they might have used a tool like this one. 54% of participants felt that it had been more than 6 months since they might have used a similar tool. 23% of participants responded that in the last week they have used a

¹ The percentages presented have been rounded, and therefore may not add up to exactly 100%. This applies to all tables and graphs throughout the report.

similar tool and 15% stated that they had used a similar tool in the past six months. 8% of participants reported that they had used a similar tool in the past month.

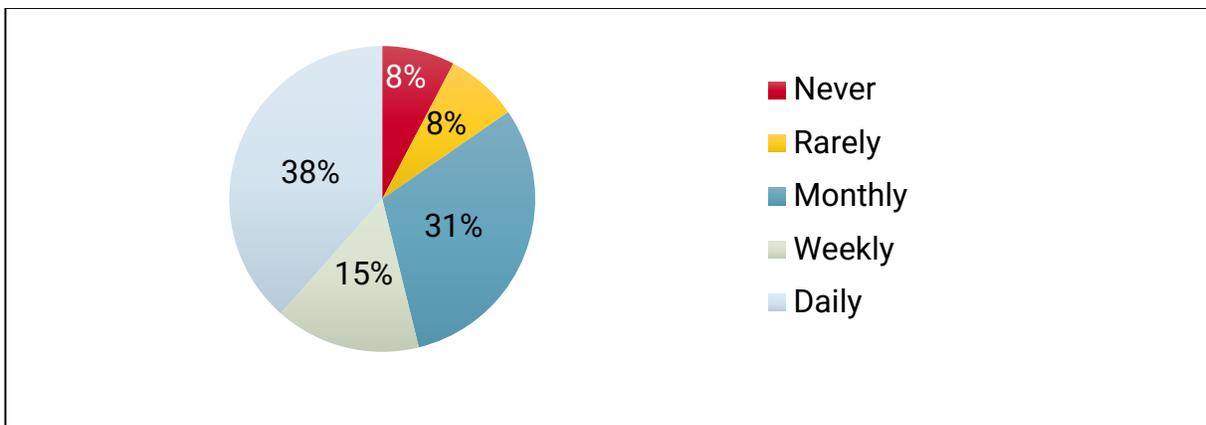
Table 2: Responses about Last Use of a Similar Tool

Response Option	Percentage of Responses
In the last week	23%
In the past month	8%
In the past 6 months	15%
More than 6 months ago	54%

Frequency of Contact

Figure 1 displays how often participants work with those experiencing human trafficking. Most participants had daily contact with people experiencing human trafficking (38%) or monthly contact (31%). 15% of the participants had 'weekly' contact and 8% expressed 'never' and 'rarely' having contact with those experiencing human trafficking.

Figure 1: Frequency of Contact



Ease of Use

Most participants found the tool easy to use. 54% of participants reported they found the tool extremely easy to use and 23% reported that it was moderately easy. 15% of participants said the tool was neither easy nor difficult to use and 8% said it was extremely difficult.

Table 3: Ease of Using Tool

Response Options	Percentage of Responses
Extremely Easy	54%
Moderately Easy	23%
Slightly Easy	0%
Neither Easy nor Difficult	15%
Slightly Difficult	0%
Moderately Difficult	0%
Extremely Difficult	8%

Accuracy of the Tool

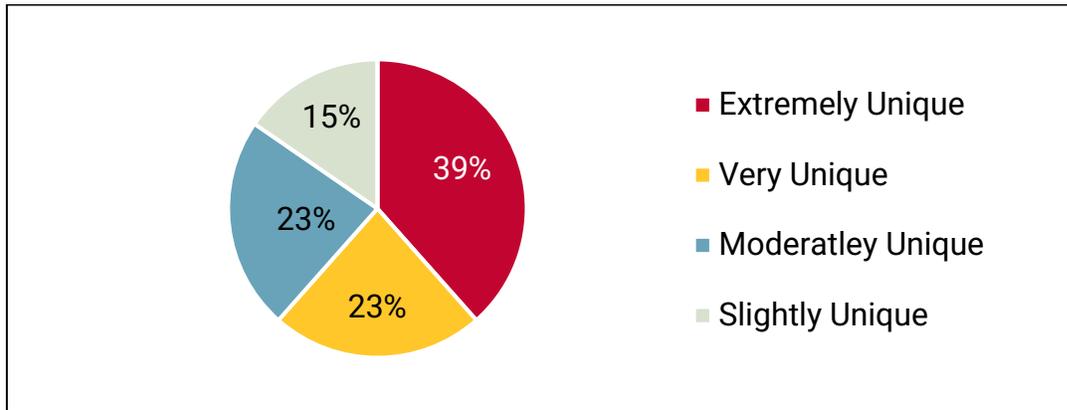
Participants were asked how well they thought this tool could help assess the lethality risk for people experiencing human trafficking. 62% of participants felt it worked very well, 8% of participants felt extremely well, 8% felt moderately well, 8% slightly well and 15% not well at all.

Table 4: Accuracy of Tool

Response Option	Percentage of Responses
Extremely Well	8%
Very Well	62%
Moderately Well	8%
Slightly Well	8%
Not well at all	15%

Figure 2 demonstrates how unique participants felt the tool was. Over one third (38%) of participants felt that this tool was extremely unique. Nearly one quarter (23%) felt that it was very unique or moderately unique and 15% felt that it was slightly unique.

Figure 2: How Unique is the Tool



Length of the Tool

Table 5 demonstrates how participants felt about the length of the tool. Most participants neither agreed nor disagreed that the tool was long compared to other tools. 23% of participants somewhat disagreed, 15% somewhat agreed, 15% strongly disagreed and 8% strongly agreed.

Table 5: How Participants Felt About Length of the Tool

Response Options	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	8%
Somewhat Agree	15%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	38%
Somewhat Disagree	23%
Strongly Disagree	15%

Satisfaction with the Tool

Overall, participants were satisfied with the tool. 75% of participants answered that they were extremely satisfied or somewhat satisfied. 16% of participants were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. 8% of participants were dissatisfied. Only 12 out of the 15 participants responded to this question.

Table 6: Satisfaction with the Tool

Response Options	Percentage of Responses
Extremely satisfied	33%
Somewhat satisfied	42%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	16%
Somewhat dissatisfied	8%
Extremely Dissatisfied	0%

Strength of the Tool

Participants were asked about what they felt were the strengths of this tool. Participants responded with the following.

Easy to Follow and Comprehensive

Participants felt that the information was easy to follow and comprehensive. They noted there were a variety of questions asked and a comprehensive list of options. The tool offers insight into a variety of topics, key risk factors and encompasses a variety of trafficking situations.

Suggestions

Service providers were asked if there was anything they would change about the tool or if they had suggestions for improving the tool. Some of the suggestions or comments are as follows.

Substance Abuse Questions

A couple of participants felt that the substance abuse question was not comprehensive enough and may cause some judgement. One participant suggested considering the order of questions, given that asking about substance use support early on may cause survivors to feel guilt or shame. In addition, when the questions ask if the service user is currently using drugs, another



participant suggested that it might be beneficial to ask if they are concerned with their current substance use, or if they are on any replacement therapies like Suboxone or Methadone.

Difficultly Gathering Information on the Trafficker

Some participants noted it can be difficult to gather information on sex traffickers from the victim. Some noted discussing the trafficker with the victim/client can cause trauma.

Information on Trafficker's Weapons

One participant thought it may also be useful to gather information on the trafficker's access to firearms.

Information on Mental Health and More Gender Identity Options

One participant felt that there should be more risk assessment questions in regard to mental health. They noted that there is a section on trauma, but they felt that mental health diagnosis' or conditions should be assessed as well. In addition, one participant felt that more gender identities should be included such as trans man, trans woman, non binary, and two spirit.

Language and Editing Suggestions

One participant felt that there should be a review of the tool to ensure proper language for the audience. There were some questions that a participant felt should have more response categories and that an option for "unsure" should be included for some questions. This participant also suggested ensuring that all the font is the same size.

Income Supports Section

One participant pointed out that in the income supports section of the tool, it includes CERB and the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit which are the same support.

Other Threats

One participant thought it would be useful to assess the risk to the friends of family of the survivor. This relates to an individual's safety concerns as well as concerns those around them.

Individualized Comments

One participant felt that the section that discusses the service user's control and access to their identification should also include "canvassing" their access to a phone, social media, family and friends. This would help to determine the level of control and isolation of the service user. They also felt that this section should discuss potential duties of service users in trafficking situations such as "enforcement/control over others being trafficked", "posting advertisements for others", and "arranging calls for other girls".

Outstanding Questions

Some service providers had questions about how the tool is used after the information is collected. These questions are as follows:

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- “Is there a way for the program [tool] to categorize the severity of this person’s safety or does it just provide responses?”
 - “Could the tool calculate or highlight the higher risk factors? Or sort the results into a category of risk?”

Additional Comments

Participants were thankful for having the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the tool. Several participants noted that this was a great tool that comprehensively assists in gaining access to information and resources.

Next Steps

Participants provided a variety of positive and constructive feedback on the Sex Trafficking Lethality Tool. Given the variety of responses, we would recommend reviewing participants feedback and suggestions in finalizing the tool in the future.

