Cooperative Legal Service Delivery (CLSD) Program 
e-update 
SEPTEMBER 2015

CLSD PROGRAM UNIT

CLSD Program Unit

The CLSD Program Unit’s recent and upcoming activities include:

- presenting a paper at the National Association of Community Legal Centres Annual Conference on “Collaboration for impact on outreach”
- recruiting a temporary Project Officer to assist us to scope expansion into a new region (stay tuned!)
- working with the Central Coast CLSD partners and Corrective Services NSW on providing services in the newly repurposed Kariong Correctional Centre near Gosford
- participating in a three day joint service outreach to Walgett in September with the Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS), Thiyama-li Family Violence Prevention Legal Service, State Debt Recovery (fines), Legal Aid Dubbo, Western NSW Community Legal Centre, the Work & Development Order Service (Legal Aid NSW and ALS), Ashurst lawyers (wills), and Birth, Deaths & Marriages (free birth certificates).

What kind of issues are we seeing across NSW?

The CLSD Program Unit provides quarterly reports on systemic issues to the New South Wales Legal Assistance Forum (NLAF), which can be found here: http://www.nlaf.org.au. The most recent report highlighted the following systemic issues:

- Access to identity documents, an ongoing issue that requires further work. Flow on effects of not having identity documents include barriers to legal driving, employment, access to bank accounts and school attendance. Persistent unauthorised traffic offences are a big driver of custodial sentences in Aboriginal communities.
- “Ice” use and its pervasive impact across services
- Housing, including: rent arrears, repairs & maintenance and evictions; the impact of proposed legislation on anti-social behaviour and potential rise in homelessness; ongoing systemic issues in Aboriginal communities with Aboriginal housing repairs, maintenance and rent arrears
- Consumer issues, including: training colleges who offer incentives such as laptops etc, particularly in Aboriginal communities; and funeral products
- Ongoing demand for wills in Aboriginal communities
- The exploitation of migrant workers in regional communities (particularly Albury, Wagga, Orange, Bathurst, Lithgow).
- Significant drop in LawAccess NSW statistics resulting from a drop in call centre operations due to funding cuts. There is concern about where people are getting assistance if they can’t get through to LawAccess NSW.

If you have any comments or contributions to make on these issues, please contact Jenny Lovric, CLSD Program Manager on jenny.lovric@legalaid.nsw.gov.au or (02) 9219 5102.
Financial Hardship Working Group (FHWG)

- The FHWG group was formed as a project of the Legal & Information Referral Forum (LIRF) at the Law & Justice Foundation, in collaboration with the CLSD program at Legal Aid NSW. Membership is drawn from Community Legal Centres, programs within Legal Aid NSW, Community Legal Centres, LawAccess NSW, many of the Ombudsman services and financial counsellors.
- The FHWG is working towards finding collaborative solutions and workarounds to some of the issues facing disadvantaged people in NSW, with some focus on CALD, remote and Aboriginal communities.
- To commence, we are looking at:
  - Facilitating easier access and sign-ups to the Do Not Call Register, so that disadvantaged people are not so vulnerable to being signed up dodgy contracts over the phone
  - Facilitating easier access to and expanding the reach of external dispute resolution schemes and Ombudsman services.
- If you would like more information, please contact Jane Kenny, Grants and Legal Information Manager, Law and Justice Foundation of NSW on 8227 3210 or at jkenny@lawfoundation.net.au

Some recent CLSD Program projects - selected

ICE in our Community workshops in Taree & Forster

The Taree CLSD partnership convened community worker and community Ice Education sessions in the Taree region. Ice in the Community workshops were held in the Taree region in July and August. Presenters included representatives from Legal Aid NSW Port Macquarie, the Taree Aboriginal Legal Service, the Mid North Coast Community Legal Centre and importantly mainstream and Aboriginal health services. Over 250 people attended the workshops. Congratulations to Jane O’Dwyer, our CLSD Program Regional Coordinator based at Manning Valley Neighbourhood Service for her hard work on formulating the Program and organising the sessions.

Law for Community workers in Northern Rivers

Law for Community Workers training was held in Lismore, Ballina and Tweed heads in June was well attended with 230 participants.

Training was delivered by Legal Aid NSW, Aboriginal Legal Services and the Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre and covered Law Check-up, work & development orders, consumer law and care and protection.

Feedback was positive and Legal Aid Lismore now offer Law check-up training to agencies where they hold outreach. This is to ensure workers who were unable to attend the sessions in June don’t miss out.

New joint service clinics in Ashmont and Tolland (Wagga CLSD) and Finley (Albury CLSD) have commenced

Two new joint-service outreach clinics have commenced in Wagga Wagga. The “Help at the Hubs” clinics were launched in Wagga Wagga at the Ashmont Ngurra Hub in July and at the Tolland Community Centre in August. “Ngurra” is a Wiradjuri word that means “side by side”. The new services are a partnership between Legal Aid NSW, Wagga Wagga City Council, Fair Trading NSW, Disability Advocacy Network, Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service, Wagga Wagga Family Support Services and Anglicare. The clinics have been well received with around 50 people attending the Ngurra Ashmont launch and a similar number braved the freezing conditions to attend the Tolland launch.

A new joint legal and advocacy service clinic has also started in the Albury CLSD region in Finley, as part of a partnership between Hume Riverina Legal Service and Intereach.

Aboriginal Access Support Worker commences on the Central Coast

Bobbi Murray has commenced 2 days a week as the Aboriginal Access Worker at the Central Coast Community Legal Centre. The aim of the role is to facilitate better engagement between the legal service providers and the aboriginal communities on the Central Coast.
Bobbi is currently organising 2 wills days for Aboriginal people to be held in October. Participating services include Ashurst, Legal Aid Gosford and the Central Coast Community Legal Centre.

**CLSD partners work in Correctional Centres**

Partners in three CLSD regions have been working, or a planning work, in Correctional Centres (CCs):

**Central Coast CLSD: Kariong CC**
- Legal Aid Gosford and Central Coast Community Legal Centre are looking at opportunities to join other services to provide joint outreach at the newly re-opened and re-purposed “assessment centre”.

**Kempsey CLSD: Mid North Coast CC**
- Will provide pre-release and post-release legal services at Mid North Coast CC. A working group has been formed including Corrective Services NSW, ALS, Legal Aid NSW, Mid North Coast CLC, Kempsey Neighbourhood Centre, and Community Corrections.

**South Coast CLSD: South Coast CC**
- Legal Aid Nowra Civil law division and Lifeline’s financial counselling service continue to provide joint weekly outreach to the South Coast CC. They run *Back on Track* workshops, topics include: debts, fines, and housing issues. These sessions also provide inmates a chance to see the solicitor and/or financial counsellor for one on one assistance.

**LEGAL AID NSW NEWS**

**Changes to the means test**

Legal Aid NSW has increased the means test to make more appropriate allowance for living expenses, and to improve access to justice for people on moderate incomes.

While the means test income limit is 60.1 percent of the national minimum weekly wage, the calculations of eligibility also take into account certain expenditures, such as rent and child care costs. These allowances have now been adjusted, taking account of rising living costs, especially in rental expenses.

Since 2007, the means test has only been increased once in August 2014. The latest adjustments will go a small way towards addressing the justice gap for working people on moderate incomes who have not previously been eligible for legal aid, but are unable to afford a private lawyer.

The Legal Aid NSW website features a means test indicator – an online test which gives people seeking legal representation a good indication of whether they might be eligible. This is a useful tool helping potential clients decide whether to lodge an application for aid. See the means test indicator at: [http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/get-legal-help/applying-for-legal-aid/means-test-indicator](http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/get-legal-help/applying-for-legal-aid/means-test-indicator)

Financial criteria are, however, not the only criteria assessed in determining whether Legal Aid NSW grant legal aid. The type of case must be within their guidelines of the types of legal matters they cover, and its merit is also reviewed. If a client is eligible for a grant of aid, they may be required to pay a contribution to the cost of running the case for certain matters.

**Inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs**

The Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues inquiry into service coordination in communities with high social needs will examine the extent to which government and non-government service providers are identifying the needs of clients and providing a coordinated response that ensures access to services. The inquiry will also examine barriers to effective coordination, including lack of client awareness of services. Further information can be found at: [http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/committee.nsf/0/2E27EF1838701526CA257E6F0028CBBC](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/committee.nsf/0/2E27EF1838701526CA257E6F0028CBBC)


Submissions closed in August. The final report is due on 11 December 2015.
Early guilty pleas

Securing appropriate guilty pleas early is necessary for the effective and efficient operation of the criminal justice system. Obtaining that plea early is more efficient, often better for the defendant, and certainly better for the victim and witnesses.

The report proposes changes to indictable proceedings, including early charge advice, greater disclosure of evidence in the Local Court, Local Court case management, mandatory case conference in the Local Court, and a scheme of clear sentence discounts.

These measures should significantly reduce the number of matters that are listed for trial in the District Court but resolved by way of a plea. This will in turn free up court resources.

Legal help for older people
The Legal Pathways for Older People project is a partnership between Legal Aid NSW, Council on the Ageing (COTA) NSW and the Law Society of NSW. Older people who receive the Age Pension or hold a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card are eligible. They can call COTA NSW and are either booked in for a face-to-face consultation or are referred to an appropriate legal service.

The project has been extended to older people in some regional areas, with private lawyers working in Temora, Wagga Wagga, Narrandera, Toukley and the Lake Macquarie, Newcastle and Lower Hunter areas agreeing to provide these services to clients in their areas.

All appointments must be booked through COTA NSW by calling 02 9286 3860 or 1800 449 102 (free call for NSW regional callers). For more information see http://www.cotansw.com.au/council-on-the-ageing-nsw-programs-and-initiatives-legal-pathways

SECTOR NEWS
Register for class action on behalf of falsely imprisoned young people by 9 October 2015
PIAC and Maurice Blackburn, who are jointly acting in a class action on behalf of young people allegedly wrongfully arrested by police, have reached an in principle settlement agreement with the State of NSW. The class action, called Amom v State of NSW, is in the Supreme Court of NSW. The notice of proposed settlement can be found in the link below.

The class action was brought on behalf of young people who were allegedly unlawfully arrested for breach of bail, due to incorrect information on the COPS database. The settlement is still subject to final approval by the Supreme Court of NSW.

Individuals may be eligible for compensation as part of the class action if they:
1. Faced charges in the Children’s Court of NSW; and
2. Were arrested before 20 May 2014 for a breach of bail conditions by NSW police; and
3. The individual was not actually on bail at the time or was not subject to the condition for which they were arrested.

If individuals have not already contacted PIAC or Maurice Blackburn and are not already group members, they need to register for the class action before 9 October 2015. Failure to register by this date will mean they are bound by the class action outcome but will not be entitled to receive any compensation.

To register call PIAC on 8898 6527 or complete a registration form which can be downloaded at: http://www.piac.asn.au/news/2015/08/register-class-action-behalf-falsely-imprisoned-young-people and return it to PIAC, 7/173 - 175 Phillip St Sydney NSW 2000 or to Maurice Blackburn, CIDnAP Class Action, Maurice Blackburn Pty Ltd, PO Box A266 Sydney South NSW 1235.

Cost of consumer leases for household goods: new ASIC Report

The Australian Securities & Investment Commission (ASIC) has released a report that found that consumer leases can be a very expensive option for consumers seeking to access common household goods, and that the market for consumer leases is failing many low income consumers.

ASIC compared the cost of leases from two sources: the advertised prices of nine lessors, collected by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in April 2015 on behalf of ASIC; and a review by ASIC of 69 leases provided by two lessors since 2014 to consumers in receipt of Centrelink payments.

ASIC found the market for consumer leases is delivering poor outcomes for many consumers. For similar household goods, ASIC found large price variations both across different lessors and within individual lessors for different consumer segments. In both cases the consumers that are more likely to be charged higher amounts are Centrelink recipients, despite being on lower incomes.

ASIC found:

- the highest price charged by a lessor, expressed as an interest rate, was 884% (for a clothes dryer).
- that consumer leases can cost as much as five times the maximum amount permitted under a payday loan, where a cap on costs applies.
- that consumers receiving Centrelink payments are being charged much higher prices than the prices advertised by lessors.

ASIC has indicated it will continue its enforcement actions in this area against lessors for failure to comply with responsible lending requirements over the last few years, including banning directors, cancelling licences and obtaining refunds for customers. ASIC is also reviewing the conduct of some lessors for compliance with their responsible lending obligations under the Credit Act.


Family Law Council Interim Report into Family Law and Child Protection Systems


The interim report addresses the prospect of having a more streamlined, coherent and integrated approach to improve the overall safety of families and in particular children, when involved in the family law, child protection and family violence jurisdictions.

The final report is due in June 2016 and will cover issues concerning enhanced collaboration and information sharing between the family courts and family relationship services as well as other relevant support services such as child protection, mental health, family violence, drug and alcohol, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and migrant settlement services.
**Residential Tenancy Act review**

The *Residential Tenancies Act 2010* is now five years old, triggering a statutory review of the legislation - a standard check on how a law functioning. The government is expected to indicate how Fair Trading NSW will conduct its review. It’s a good time to prepare any contributions your organisation would like to make.


**New housing amendments: new evictions and anti-social behaviour provisions**

The *Residential Tenancies and Housing Legislation Amendment (Public Housing—Antisocial Behaviour) Bill 2015* was introduced to NSW parliament on 5 August 2015. Its proposed amendments include:

- one *strike*’ evictions where a person has committed certain serious offences;
- ‘three strikes’ termination proceedings for other breaches;
- ‘neighbour impact statements’ that allow anonymous information to be tendered in evidence; and
- *probationary* periods for some public housing tenancies.


**Boarding Houses Project**

People who live in boarding houses are considered to be homeless and include victims of family violence and/or family breakdown, refugees and asylum seekers, people who move around in their work or do casual work, people with mental health issues and people with addictions. One third of boarding house residents are women.

To assist residents of boarding houses and community workers the Tenants Union have produced the following resources:

- Factsheet 27 which explains the rights of residents of registrable boarding houses under the *Boarding Houses Act 2012* and *Occupancy Principles* which briefly explains the 12 occupancy principles that cover all residents of registrable boarding houses in NSW, both available at: [http://www.tenants.org.au/factsheet-27-boarding-houses-act](http://www.tenants.org.au/factsheet-27-boarding-houses-act)
- A wallet card listing boarding house residents’ rights and where to obtain legal assistance. Order cards from Margaret di Nicola at margaret_dinicola@clc.net.au

**Report released on workplace relations**

The Productivity Commission released its *Workplace Relations Framework Draft Report* on 4 August 2015. You are invited to examine the draft report and to make written submissions by Friday 18 September 2015

The draft report is a broad-ranging assessment of Australia’s workplace relations framework, considering current laws, institutions and practices.

Legislation to end the use of Centrepay for consumer leases

Legislation that will make consumer leases ‘excluded goods’ under the Centrepay third party payments system was introduced in the Senate in late-June. The Social Security (Administration) Act 1999 will be amended to remove the ability for consumer leasing businesses to use Centrepay to promote products that cause serious financial harm to Centrelink clients.

The Social Security (Administration) Amendment (Consumer Lease Exclusion) Bill 2015 can be found here: http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22legislation%2Fbills%2Fs1009_first_senate%2F0000%22;rec=0

Avoid a funeral rip-off campaign to protect indigenous consumers

NSW Fair Trading’s Avoid a funeral rip-off campaign, provides helpful advice for Indigenous Australians about their rights before buying a funeral plan or funeral cover under the Australian Consumer Law. The campaign was launched in July and will run until the end of October 2015.

The campaign, which covers both education and compliance, includes a video which highlights the pros and cons of the various options to pay for a funeral and helps consumers make informed choices when purchasing funeral products and services. View the Avoid a funeral rip-off video on the NSW Fair Trading YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o03qrVUnqo4

NSW Indigenous consumers who have funeral product concerns or enquiries should contact Aysha Kanuric on 9895 0208, Shirley Kirk on 6761 9003 or Des Smith on 6933 9502.

Legal Aid NSW’s Civil Law Service for Aboriginal Communities (CLSAC) delivers advice, casework and education services about Civil law issues, including funeral matters, to Aboriginal communities across NSW. See here for further information: http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/civil-law/civil-law-service-for-aboriginal-communities

How to help people with education course scams

Legal Services are seeing clients who have been offered incentives to or tricked into signing up for inappropriate and expensive student loans.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Division (ACCC) and NSW Fair Trading now have a joint task force to deal with the issue, which Legal Aid NSW lawyers can make a complaint directly to.

NSW Fair Trading provides useful information about what to check before signing up to a course here: http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ftw/Consumers/Buying_services/Education_and_training.page

If you have a client who has already entered into an inappropriate course you should:

- Act quickly, the consumer may have cooling-off rights - however it’s also never too late to seek help.
- Contact a legal service who will assist the client to remove themselves from the course and, in some cases, keep any goods (such as laptops etc) which may have been provided to them, or to get other compensation. Your nearest Legal Aid NSW advice service can be found here: http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/get-legal-help/find-a-service or call LawAccess on 1300 888 529.
- If the person is Aboriginal, contact Legal Aid NSW’s Civil Law Service for Aboriginal Communities (CLSAC) on 9219 5057 or email moneycounts@legalaid.nsw.gov.au.
**Dropping off the Edge 2015**

Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services have released *Dropping off the Edge 2015*, a report which identifies areas of disadvantage in every state and territory of Australia. The report shows that complex and entrenched disadvantage is experienced by a small but persistent number of locations in each state and territory across Australia.

In New South Wales 11 postcodes (1.8% of total) account for 21.4% of the most disadvantaged rank positions. Dominant factors in these postcodes include criminal convictions, unemployment, no internet access, domestic violence, lack of qualifications and young adults not fully engaged in work or study.

For more information about Dropping off the Edge go to: [http://www.dote.org.au/](http://www.dote.org.au/)

**Reassessment of Victims compensation claims**

Victims of violence who had lodged an application and were caught in the transition between the old Victims Compensation Scheme and the new Victims Support Scheme may be able to have their claim reassessed.


**NSW Custody Statistics: Quarterly update June 2015**

The NSW adult prison population grew by 2.3 per cent between April 2015 and June 2015, reaching a new record high in June this year of 11,624. This brings the total increase in the NSW adult population over the last financial year to 12.2 per cent, according to new statistics released by the Australian Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR).

Similarly, over the last financial year the number of juveniles in detention rose by 16.7 per cent.

According to BOCSAR, the increase is almost entirely attributable to a growth in prisoners on remand. Over the last financial year, the adult remand population has risen by nearly a third (32.7%), and the juvenile population by over a third (35.1%).


**The impact of the Bail Act 2013 on trends in bail and remand**

Reforms to the *NSW Bail Act 2013* (NSW) (including the 'show cause' amendments) have had no impact on the NSW remand population, according to a new report released today by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR).

For the full report go to: [www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au)

**Trial court delay in the NSW District Criminal Court**

BOCSAR has released a report finding that between 2007 and 2014 trial delay in the NSW District Criminal Court increased 34% for defendants on bail and 44% for those on remand. In 2014 the pending caseload had increased to 1716 trials. These reports found to be due to increases in the volume of matters coming into the District Court, the proportion of matters committed to trial that proceed to trial and the duration of trials (i.e. number of hearing days).

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Representing children in legal proceedings
Kylie Beckhouse, Director of Family Law at Legal Aid NSW, has published a report based on her recent Churchill Fellowship study tour of the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom - Legal representation schemes for children in the US, Canada and the UK - administration, delivery and innovation. This report draws on developments and initiatives taking place in America, Canada and the United Kingdom in the area of child legal representation and makes recommendations on what Australia could do to improve our approach to child legal representation.

To download the report go to: https://www.churchilltrust.com.au/fellows/?keywords=beckhouse&year

New look LawAccess NSW site
The newly refreshed LawAccess NSW website brings ‘My legal problem is about’ (formerly LawAccess Online), ‘Representing yourself’ (formerly LawAssist) and LawPrompt into a single easy to navigate site.

The new website also features an improved search facility and ReadSpeaker for users who have visual impairment or literacy issues.


Disability support pension and overseas travel
The Disability Support Pension and overseas travel brochure explains what to do if you are on the Disability Support Pension and want to travel overseas. This brochure is also available in Arabic and will shortly be available in Serbian and Croatian.


Family safety pack
The Australian Government has developed resources on Australia’s laws on domestic and family violence, sexual assault and forced marriage, available in 22 languages and a low literacy storyboard.

The pack is designed for women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and those coming to Australia on a Partner Visa.

It includes four factsheets on:
- domestic and family violence
- sexual assault
- forced and early marriage
- family violence and partner visas.

To view the resources go to https://www.dss.gov.au/family-safety-pack
**Best for Kids website**

The *Best for Kids* website contains information and resources for young people and families on a range of legal topics including separating families, going into care, family violence, talking to police and everyday legal issues such as Centrelink, debts, work and discrimination.

The new interactive segments in *Best for Kids* give children and young people a sense of what they can expect from their lawyer and from the court process.

*Best for Kids* also includes four new videos for parents aimed at assisting adults to better understand and get help with family and domestic violence, using mediation to resolve their family law dispute, dividing property and money after separation, and getting family law help in regional and rural areas.

Aboriginal specific content is signposted with an icon to make it easy to identify. The videos contain translations in Arabic, Vietnamese and Chinese as well as closed captioning and audio description for blind people and were tested for accessibility compliance.

*Best for Kids* is accessible and can be viewed on all types of computer devices. To view the videos go to the *Best for Kids* website at [www.bestforkids.org.au](http://www.bestforkids.org.au) or the Legal Aid YouTube channel at [https://www.youtube.com/user/BestForKidsTV](https://www.youtube.com/user/BestForKidsTV)

**The Australian Government’s Code of Behaviour and Bridging Visas**

The *Australian Government’s Code of Behaviour and Bridging Visas* is a new Legal Aid NSW factsheet that explains people’s legal rights and responsibilities under the Code of Behaviour. The Australian Government’s Code of Behaviour is important for those who have a Bridging E visa or who are getting one.

The factsheet is available in: English; Arabic; Burmese; Hazara; Dari/Farsi; Bengali; Tamil; Urdu; Pashto; and Sinhalese.


**New translations of Legal Aid NSW publications**

Legal Aid NSW provides a number of publications in a range of community languages. The latest translations are:

- **Charged with Driving without a valid Licence**? new in Arabic, Dari/Farsi, Simplified Chinese and Vietnamese.
- **Disability Support Pension and Overseas Travel** new in Croatian, Serbian and Arabic
- **Do you have a legal problem?** new in Urdu (also available in 21 other languages including Khmer, Korean and Indonesian)
- **Kids in Care Series** new in Bengali (also available in 12 other languages including Dinka, Swahili and Tamil)
- **Legal Help for Centrelink Problems** new in Arabic, Dari/Farsi and Simplified Chinese

**Divorce classes, webinars and fact sheets**

Legal Aid NSW provide a number of options to help people manage their application for divorce.

Face-to-face divorce classes are available at nine locations and webinars are available anywhere there is an internet connection. For dates, times and locations see the events calendar at [http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/workshops/calendar-community-workers](http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/workshops/calendar-community-workers). The divorce factsheets series are available in six community languages – Arabic, Dari/Farsi, Chinese (Simple), Chinese (Traditional), Thai and Vietnamese. The fact sheets are available in divorce classes, can be ordered at [http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/publications/order-a-publication](http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/publications/order-a-publication) and are also available online.

**Aboriginal kinship and communication training 16 October**

On Friday 16 October, Legal Aid NSW will hold Aboriginal specific training for family lawyers at the Teacher’s Federation, Surry Hills, Sydney. The training will provide practical knowledge and skills for lawyers working in both the family and care and protection jurisdictions. 7 MCLE points will be available. Details will be available soon. More information contact: scott.hawkins@legalaid.nsw.gov.au

**Planning legal assistance services by area: is SEIFA the answer?**

The Law & Foundation of NSW (LJF) has released a paper that challenges the view that Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) data is the best indicator of unmet legal need. Based on analysis of the LAW Survey results, the LJF found that certain disadvantaged groups are particularly vulnerable to legal problems. While the link between disadvantage at the individual level and the experience of legal problems is well established, less is known about the relationship between legal problems and the level of disadvantage in different geographic areas. The paper examines whether or not area-level disadvantage can be used to identify people who have high legal need.

The paper notes: “CLSD networks draw on data from sources such as the ABS, the Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales and Legal Aid NSW to inform planning in their particular region. In addition, through sharing information, these networks are a key forum for understanding the existing legal and non-legal service environment, and the physical and cultural barriers that may exist to accessing these services in a particular region. Such data and contextual information clearly facilitate the appropriate and efficient planning of services to those most in need.”

**Dealing with debt collectors**

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) have produced a booklet called *Dealing with debt collectors – your rights and responsibilities.*

The booklet provides information on:
- what your legal rights and responsibilities are if you owe a debt
- where to get help about your debts
- what to do if a debt collector contacts you
- what you can do if you have been treated unfairly by a debt collector
- how to dispute a debt

Taking care of business – planning ahead for Aboriginal people in NSW

*Taking care of business*, produced by the NSW Trustee & Guardian, provides an introduction to Wills, Powers of Attorney, Enduring Guardianship and Advance Care Planning for Aboriginal people. This recently updated publication includes case studies, tips, useful definitions and contacts.


New Legal Aid NSW Webinars from October to December 2015

Legal Aid NSW new law webinars calendars are now available.

**Webinar calendar for Community Workers:**


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<tr>
<td>Child Support</td>
<td>Friday 9 October</td>
<td>10.30am-11.00am</td>
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<td>Divorce</td>
<td>Wednesday 14 October</td>
<td>2.00pm-2.30pm</td>
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<td>Fines</td>
<td>Tuesday 20 October</td>
<td>10.00am-10.30am</td>
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<td>Drink Driving</td>
<td>Thursday 5 November</td>
<td>11.30am-Midday</td>
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<td>Sexting and cyber-bullying</td>
<td>Friday 6 November</td>
<td>4.30pm-5.00pm</td>
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<td>Unfair Dismissal</td>
<td>Monday 9 November</td>
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<td>Car Accidents</td>
<td>Wednesday 18 November</td>
<td>10.30am-11.00am</td>
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<td>AVO Defendants</td>
<td>Tuesday 24 November</td>
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<td>AVO defendants</td>
<td>Wednesday 3 December</td>
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<td>Mortgage Stress</td>
<td>Thursday 10 December</td>
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**Law in a nutshell**

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<tr>
<td>Domestic violence reforms update</td>
<td>Wednesday 14 October</td>
<td>9.30 am to 10.00 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Care and protection law</td>
<td>Thursday 10 December</td>
<td>10.00 am to 10.30 am</td>
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<td>NDIS</td>
<td>Wednesday 11 November</td>
<td>10.00 am to 10.30 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parenting plans and parenting orders</td>
<td>Thursday 3 December</td>
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**Master class**

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<td>Child support master class for Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners and mediators</td>
<td>Wednesday 25 November</td>
<td>10.30 am to 11.30 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration master class for WDO sponsors</td>
<td>Thursday 15 October</td>
<td>11.00 am to 11.30 am</td>
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**Webinar calendar for everyone:**

"Safer Pathway" Domestic Violence reforms explained

Domestic violence reforms set a new strategic direction for addressing domestic and family violence in NSW. Safer Pathway started in two launch sites, Orange and Waverley, in September last year as part of the NSW Government’s *It Stops Here* Domestic and Family Violence Reforms. Safer Pathway aims to better support domestic violence victims through standardised threat assessment, streamlined referral, case coordination and Safety Action Meetings. Safer Pathway was rolled out to Bankstown, Parramatta, Tweed Heads and Broken Hill on 1 July 2015.

At the heart of the Reforms is the safety and protection of victims. Safety Action Meetings are regular meetings between key government agencies and non-government service providers regarding victims assessed as at serious threat of further harm. The meetings aim to identify risks, and prevent or lessen these threats through targeted information sharing.

As part of Safer Pathway, the 28 Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services (WDVCASs) funded by Legal Aid NSW have been chosen to perform the key role of Local Coordination Point in each area. These services provide women victims with information, support and warm referrals to a range of service providers for their ongoing needs. The services also provide secretariat support for Safety Action Meetings.

The diagram below sets out the Safer Pathway service delivery map.

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For more information on the CLSD Program, go to [http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/clsd](http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/clsd) or contact Jenny Lovric on: [jenny.lovric@legalaid.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jenny.lovric@legalaid.nsw.gov.au) or T: (02) 9219 5102

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