

Central Tablelands CLSD Minutes Tuesday 17th November 2020 via ZOOM

Present: Tina **Napier** (Elizabeth Evatt CLC - chair), Winnecke **Baker** (CLSD unit Legal Aid – minutes), Peter **Ringbauer** (SIC, Legal Aid NSW Orange), Eveleen **May** and Sarah-Jane **Greenway** (Disability Advocacy NSW), Jodie **Bennett** (Senior Local Area Coordinator for Social Futures Western Region), Jackie **Lanigan** (Migrant Support Worker – Bathurst Information and Neighbourhood Centre), Julianne **Elliot** (Childrens Legal Service – LA), Rochelle **Thompson** (Community Engagement Officer, Centrelink), Robyn **Howard** (Synapse), Bec **Bohun** (CWWDVCAS,) Tracey **Duncan** (Energy and Water Ombudsman), Kate **Watt** (Justice Advocacy Service), Georgia **Murphy-Haste** (Pro-bono coordinator at Sparke Helmore lawyers), Lynn **Worrall** (Legal Aid NSW- WDO Team), Thea **Deakin-Greenwood** (Elizabeth Evatt CLC – solicitor)

Apologies: Jill Marshall, Kim Busuttil & Joshua Pigott (Legal Aid NSW), Arlia Fleming (EECLC), Rosemary Foy Brown & Louise Cormie (Centacare Wilcannia/Forbes), Debbie Gaudie (Binaal Billa Family Violence Prevention Legal Service), Dorraine Wilson (Corrections NSW), Keith Smith (Orange Court), Matt Elbourne & Sharryn Semmens (VERTO TAAS), Andrew Marriott (Childrens Legal Service, LA), Mark Patrick (IDRS), Caitlin Bennet (Social futures), Christine Wright (Services Australia); Kris Newton (MCRN), Stephen Ainsworth (NBMLHD), Carleen McConnell (Fair Trading). Rebecca Camilleri – Western Region Dubbo Police Force

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Responsibility/ Time
1. Introductions, acknowledgement and welcome	Tina acknowledged the Aboriginal lands that partners called from and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Partners called in from Gadigal, Wiradjuri and Darkinjung land.	
2. Updates from previous minutes	<p>1. New Regional Outreach Clinic Program (ROCP) Clinic in Lithgow Where: Lithgow Information and Neighbourhood Centre (LINC) 1 Padley Street Lithgow When: Wednesdays fortnightly from 9am-12pm, the next clinic will be on Wednesday 25 November To book: call LINC directly on 6352 2077 Help is available for issues like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Going to court and criminal law - Driver licence suspensions - Car accidents - Centrelink - ADVOs, including defendants - Fines and traffic offences - Debt and money - Family law and divorce - Buying goods and services 	<p>Please contact Winnie if your service would like copies of the flyer for the clinic winnecke.baker@legalaid.nsw.gov.au</p> <p>Winnie to contact Kate from JAS directly about the clinic.</p>

EECLC continues to provide fortnightly legal assistance at LINC on a Tuesday; bookings also taken directly through LINC.

Partners noted that there is a lack of services for people with disability in Lithgow and that it is important to make sure people with a disability know about this clinic. It is also important to ensure that the solicitors providing the service know about specialist community legal centres and local services to help with any needed referrals, as for any ROCP across the state.

2. Bushfire/Wellbeing grants in Lithgow

Elizabeth Evatt CLC has recruited a new solicitor with extensive experience in civil law to support people locally in the Blue Mountains/Lithgow area who were impacted by the bushfires. This will complement the drought wellbeing project in Lithgow, which is also funded for 1 year. These projects mean that EECLC can provide additional assistance to people on a wide range of legal issues in the region.

3. IDRS phone and sexting training session

This training is being developed by the education team at IDRS, in response to the experiences of JAS workers supporting people with disability in criminal matters where their use of technology caused them problems. The training will focus on consent and appropriate use of technology and social media, for example what happens when someone takes a screen shot of something that you said and puts it on social media.

Thea noted that an emerging issue that CLCs are aware of is revenge porn. Recently EECLC has helped clients to have content removed from sites.

Partners noted that a broader issue is that sex education in the disability sector is still very taboo and there isn't much education provided to people with disability about sex.

4. Family law advice west of Orange

The CWWDVCAS is meeting with Joshua Pigott (family law solicitor Legal Aid Orange) about this on 17/11. The WDVCS indicated that they have had some success accessing timely legal advice for clients and are looking to fine tune referral practices, particularly in Forbes and Condo where there has been an increase in demand for their services. The WDVCS is looking to establish AVL links in some centres that they and Legal Aid NSW can use.

Since lockdown in March Legal Aid NSW family law advice clinics have been done by telephone and this may continue in some cases.

Tina noted that Binaal Billa FVPLS is currently without a solicitor, and Debbie has requested assistance meeting local need. Debbie is currently accessing legal advice for people through LawAccess.

Invite LINC disability service staff to participate in CLSD meetings in 2021 (CLSD coordinator).

Kate and Julianne Elliott to speak directly about the related work Legal Aid NSW has done with young people in this area as the resources could be adapted easily.

IDRS is interested in further recommendations for content.

	<p>Arlia has linked Debbie in with Women’s Legal Service and Western Women’s Legal Support (based at Western CLC), who will be providing assistance with Parkes AVO list days.</p> <p><i>Note: After the meeting it was established BB has successfully recruited a new solicitor who is due to start 7th December. Additional support may still be needed however beyond this point while they settle in to the position.</i></p>	<p>Legal Aid NSW to look at resources locally or link in with EIU to see if options for extra support can be identified.</p>
<p>3. Victim’s Support and restorative justice Update: Thea Deakin-Greenwood</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Victim’s Support</p> <p>To be eligible for victim’s support there must be:</p> <p>a) an act of violence that you suffered, and b) an injury.</p> <p>There are also time limits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 years for violence • 10 years for domestic violence • There is no limit for child sexual assault. <p>What has changed?</p> <p>The online application process is the same, however you need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upload a copy of the client’s government issued ID (Victim’s Services prefers something with a photo, but you can use a Centrelink/Medicare card) - Upload bank account details for applications for financial support. <p>Counselling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Victim’s Services used to assign people to a counsellor in their local areas, but now people need to select their own counsellor from the Victim’s Services website. - People can search using different criteria (postcode, wheelchair accessible, language, speciality) <p>Records</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Victim’s Services is only collecting police records on behalf of applicants, but they don’t provide copies to the applicant or their legal representative. - Victims need to provide their own medical reports that prove that they suffered injury as a direct result of the violence that they experienced. 	

- Victim's Services will not cover the cost of a medical practitioner completing the certificate of injury form.
- Records must be provided to Victim's Services within 12-months of lodging an application or it will be closed. Victim's can re-apply but only if they are within a time limit to do so.

[KnowMore](#) is the best support service to help clients access the national redress scheme for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.

Community Legal Centres can also help in this area. EECLC provides assistance with victims' compensation claims, and can also provide training to services looking to support their clients through compiling compensation applications.

Restorative Justice – The Cicada Project

Thea and Elizabeth Evatt CLC are working on restorative justice for sexual violence- which is a way to give the person who caused the harm and the person who was harmed an opportunity to have a conversation. This work is backed up by research from overseas that says that restorative justice is better able to meet the needs of people who have experienced violence. There is a very high rate of attrition in sexual assault matters, especially those involving children and people with disability.

Thea is working with Jane Bolitho from UNSW to take the best practice approaches from around the world and develop a model in NSW.

EECLC received a grant from Westpac to employ a restorative justice practitioner to develop a model that could be piloted in NSW. Additional funding will be needed to run a pilot.

More information about restorative justice and the Cicada Project is available [HERE](#)

Interested people are welcome to contact Thea directly via her email: thea@eeclc.org.au

4. Action Plan 2019-2021 Stocktake

Increase access to legal services for young people

- Tina has been in contact with regional youth services and high schools about the availability of CLE
- Legal Aid are holding an information evening about fines/WDOs and related issues for young people in partnership with Headspace on 25/11.

Employment law sessions for migrants/refugees

Please contact Tina about requests for CLE or ideas of services to connect with.

- The Migrant Employment Legal Service (MELS) originally planned to run a roadshow in our region in 2020. This has now been tentatively rescheduled to the first half of 2021, with plans to provide CLE in Lithgow, Bathurst and Orange in 2021, and potentially in some smaller locations. These sessions may be done at TAFE in conjunction with classes for English as a second language where members of the public can attend also.

Legal issues for people with disabilities, including NDIS related issues

- Disability Advocacy (DA) are available to help people who would like to make a submission to the Disability Royal Commission, either in writing or in person when hearings re-commence.
- DA also has its own specialist NDIS solicitor now who is providing training to advocates about consumer related NDIS issues.
- DA is seeing a lot of clients with debts related to tenancy and consumer issues. There is an opportunity to do training about this with support coordination workers because consumer related issues are a big problem for people accessing the NDIS.

Connecting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

- EECLC now the auspicing body for a suicide prevention initiative in Bathurst called Wambuul Life Connection Network, which has a focus on providing culturally safe, wholistic mental health initiatives.
- Rochelle suggested that the partnership reach out to the AMS operating in the catchment.

Fines debt figures and progress – Lynne Worrall

- WDO service has trained all DCJ caseworkers about WDOs and they are now registered providers.
- Training with St Vincent de Paul is almost completed, which means that shortly all St Vincent de Paul services will be WDO sponsors.
- The service is also working with TAFE at a state-wide level to make sure that every campus is a WDO sponsor and is hoping to do the same with Service NSW cost of living specialists.
- Revenue NSW is preparing a community engagement plan for schools that will focus on what happens to the fines that young people have accrued when they turn 18, as well as voting and particular fine types. They are also looking at providing temporary opal cards to crisis centres.
- The WDO team is also trying to do some advocacy around the use of cautions, particularly for bike helmet fines.
- The biggest issue for the WDO team is not having enough sponsors so they are also looking at introducing 3rd party sponsorship to address this.
- CLSD unit are getting some breakdown of data from Revenue around fines to assist with more targeted messages and promotions.

Jackie and Tina to speak about delivering the CLE at Bathurst TAFE and the language needs of the local migrant community.

Jodie and Eveleen to discuss the complementary supports that they can provide clients in this area. Eveleen to attend Jodie's team meeting on Friday.

Eveleen to connect with Jill Marshall from Legal Aid Orange about the training that she is able to provide in this area.

Kate and Lynn to talk about the possibility of JAS workers becoming sponsors.

Jackie speak to Lynn about advocacy for a client who is having difficulty conducting volunteer work due to police checks.

Tina and Winnie to work further on this.

For help with anything fine related contact - lynne.worrall@legalaid.nsw.gov.au

Q. if someone does courses in prison can that go towards working off their fines?

A. Yes, most gaols are sponsors, however it is at the discretion of the SAPO if the course work will go towards paying off their fine. On intake, prisoners are assessed for eligibility for the WDO program but there needs to be a suitable program on offer at the centre. Any prisoner should have their fines put on hold while incarcerated and also for 3-months post release.

FDV related issues

- Tina has contacted local FDV groups about the Cut it Out training for salon professionals, which is a project template aimed at assisting hairdressers to identify possible FDV issues with their clients and refer them to appropriate services. Bathurst and Blue Mountains networks have expressed interest and this project could be run in the new year.

Tina to follow up

Smaller towns access to legal needs

- Joint legal service flyers have been printed by the CLSD unit and will be sent to local libraries and councils in the region.
- Thank you to everyone for your help finalising the content!

5. Next meeting

TBC 2021

Meeting will be held via Zoom, please phone in if you are unable to access zoom.

It was agreed that the next meeting will feature case studies and small groups, to help identify potential legal problems and referral options.

All to send in details of potential issues to Tina that they would like covered in a scenario

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