



**COMMUNITY LEGAL**  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# Annual Report 2018-19

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## Chairperson's Report

**The last year has been extremely busy and somewhat frustrating for Community Legal Centres.**

The demand by the most disadvantaged and vulnerable in our community for legal assistance continues to grow. Community Legal Centres (CLCs) have struggled to maintain services and staff amid rising costs and increasing obligations while funding levels have stagnated meaning not enough financial resources. CLCs have secured funding to 30 June 2020, but there was little to no increase in quantum. Again, we are faced with the difficulties of staff retention and limited opportunity for long term service planning for another year. Beyond 1 July 2020, we do not yet know what the new national funding instrument will bring in the way of Commonwealth funding. State funding arrangements are currently also an unknown quantity.

However, as times have become tougher, the solidarity in the sector grows.

I believe that as a strong and united voice we can work together to get the changes our clients so desperately need. We have made strides towards greater sustainability; and we are in the fortunate position of having been asked by the WA Government for our input as to what we need and how funds should be

allocated. I have no doubt that the sector will rise to this challenge just as we have before, and continue to deliver excellence via the determined and dedicated individuals who manage and staff our 28 community legal centres; and all those who put in so much of their time to help such as Board members and volunteers.

We are, as was said so well at the National Conference recently, at a turning point where the need to uphold human rights, fairness and access to justice is perhaps more acute than ever before. To all those who continue to strive for the things that matter and to fight the good fight, it has been a great honour to lead you.

My special thanks to the Executive Committee and to the expert and dedicated staff of the CLCA(WA), the amazing job they do and their dedication in pursuing new projects that are vital to the sector. I thank Sharryn Jackson not only for her strength, leadership and perseverance, but also for her willingness to always to listen to a problem, to lend a helping hand, and we are fortunate indeed to have her continued services. Special thanks also to Dawn Fenton for her tireless administrative support, Catrina Campbell-Fraser, Trish Ryans-Taylor and Helen Liedel for their fabulous work for the Association; also, to our Bookkeeper, Dawn Emmanuel and to Fiona Hobbs for her support of the LP&PII work. Thanks also to Kylie Hansen for all help with the sector sustainability projects.

**Carrie Hannington  
Chair**



## Executive Director's Report

**Preparing for the Annual General Meeting and writing this report requires reflection about the work and activities of the Association over the past twelve months. We have had a busy year.**

Our focus has continued to be building the capacity of our sector and improving the sustainability of Community Legal Centres (CLCs).

CLCs have been grappling with sustainability issues for over a decade exploring different models of improved sustainability, including collaborative partnerships, co-location, shared services, group purchasing and mergers (full or part).

These discussions and consideration are usually driven by necessity.

For example, detailed consideration was given to the co-location of several metropolitan based CLCs in 2011-12 when commercial rents were doubling for some centres, many services were being forced to move at the end of their lease as rent increases were well beyond their budgets. However, trying to “line up” lease end dates for their then premises, that were spread across 2-3 years, proved

impossible for centres to meet the costs of transition.

The Association continued to promote and champion sustainability initiatives. As a result of this work the Association has undertaken several projects and has had others like the new ICT Strategy come into fruition based on earlier work.

Against this backdrop, governments (Commonwealth and State) are requiring CLCs to be involved in collaborative service planning, co-designing their services with clients and measuring their impact through outcomes evaluation; at the same time as increasing the regulatory burden on Not for Profit organisations.

It is already apparent that support and workforce development is required to assist the sector in WA to move to longer term funding agreements and more robust services. This year we initiated a research project including a survey of CLCs to help identify the capacity building priorities of the sector. The final report has been used to inform our professional development and training priorities including the Quarterlies program.

Our financial viability has been further impacted by the wage increases associated with the Equal Remuneration Order (ERO)



**With the team at Consumer Credit Legal Service WA for their planning day**

in the community sector. Especially as the sector has had to manage with the effective roll-over of 12-month funding agreements with inadequate indexation for the last four years. The next ERO increment scheduled for 1 December 2019 will result in further cuts to service hours and or staff salaries in many CLCs.

The lack of any additional resources is the greatest challenge for all these projects and other initiatives. Where there are limited or no funding to undertake the research and due diligence required – centre managers and Association staff are trying to “fit it into” their existing roles.

It is a testament to the commitment of the sector that despite this pressure and turbulence, centres continued to be innovative in the delivery of services. Across the sector we have seen the advent of new and innovative ways of working, such as the Safe as Houses project, health justice partnerships, place based cooperative outreach and partnerships aimed at providing holistic, integrated service delivery models.

Despite these efforts, CLCs continue to turn away people they are unable to assist. The only practical way this change may be possible is to ensure sufficient resources to assist and support the sector.

Unresolved legal problems generate a range of

flow-on effects, that result in significant cost to the government and the broader community. Access to legal help can prevent or reduce the escalation of legal problems consequently reducing the costs to the justice system and in other areas such as health and housing.

There continues to be a need to develop a process for determining adequate and sustainable longer-term funding contributions to the legal assistance sector by Federal and State and Territory Governments, in consultation with the sector; and, informed by robust data and evidence.

We are fortunate to have a strong relationship with CLC Australia (formerly NACLC). On behalf of the WA sector, I want to acknowledge their support and their advocacy on behalf of community legal centres. Our voice is being heard more clearly by policy makers because of the strength of our stakeholder relationships, the exposure that resulted from the Fund Equal Justice Campaign and the growing demand for legal assistance.

We have established an effective working relationship with LAWA, the Department of Justice and the Attorney General’s office. We have also established the Association as a stakeholder to be consulted with the Department of Communities and the departments of Commerce, Premier and Cabinet, Treasury and Finance.



**Working with a broad coalition of community organisations such as WA Peaks**

We continue to work with a broad coalition of community service organisations including WACOSS, WA Peaks and Social Reinvestment WA to advocate for reform.

It is important to build on the relationships we have established in the community sector, the legal profession and with policy makers. Effective collaboration is the key to developing and implementing good policy.

In the Association's secretariat we work hard to understand the policy priorities of our members and to advocate for them where possible. We are keen to be aware of campaigns led by or involving our member CLCs to ensure that we provide support and or advocacy as requested.

I want to thank the Association and all our Members for the support they have given me in the role of Executive Director, especially the Executive Committee. I feel privileged to work for CLCs.

The staff in the secretariat are special. They work incredibly hard and are as effective and strategic as possible with very limited resources. They manage competing priorities with equanimity, focus and impact. They are a great team. Thanks to Dawn Fenton, Catrina Campbell-Fraser, Trish Ryans-Taylor, Helen Liedel, Fiona Hobbs and Dawn Emmanuel.

I want to make special mention of our Bookkeeper, Dawn Emmanuel. She has decided to retire. Dawn has been with the Association since 2012. She has been great support to me and to previous Executive Directors. I have enjoyed discussing the vagaries of politics with her. We will miss her wise council as well as her advice for the best TV viewing and her Christmas fudge!



**Sharryn Jackson**  
**Executive Director**

## About us

**We are a not-for-profit peak organisation representing and supporting 28 Community Legal Centres operating in Western Australia.**

Community Legal Centres have been working in Western Australia for more than 30 years to advance human rights and social justice. Our Member Centres are independent community-based organisations that provide free, or low cost legal help. This help includes information, referral, legal advice, non-legal support, duty lawyer services, casework (including representation services) and community legal education.

We formed as the peak body in 1990 to represent and support the sector. Since 2002 we were known as the Community Legal Centres Association (WA) Incorporated. Whilst the Association remains our incorporated body, since September 2019 Community Legal WA is the new public face of the Association.

We are committed to providing our members with the support they need, to promote their value as providers of quality community legal services and to advocate for a fair and just legal system. We conduct our business via General Meetings of members, an Executive Committee elected by the membership and various sub-committees and working parties.

The Association is resourced by a Secretariat office in East Perth. We are part of a national network of CLCs and the National Association of Community Legal Centres, whom we work closely with.

### Our vision

**A strong, effective, connected and influential community legal sector seeking to achieve social justice.**

### Our purpose

**To lead and support our members to provide high quality services to communities, promote the purpose and value of the community legal sector, advance a fair and just legal system and unite members in their commitment to social justice.**

### Our values

**Access to Justice** The Association to be an influential community leader in promoting access to justice for all.

**Equality of Access** Member organisations experience different barriers to full participation in the Association. As such, our focus is how we maximise access for all member organisations.

**Collaboration between members** Through collaboration we benefit from our specific knowledge and our shared vision for the community.

**Autonomy of members** Members are autonomous organisations that provide access to justice. As such they bring specific skills and knowledge to the sector.



# Our Members

Community Legal Centres play a vital role in ensuring everyday people can access the legal help they need, at the time they need it most. Centres help people experiencing discrimination and disadvantage with a range of problems, which means they don't spiral out of control or create other problems.



Albany Family Violence Prevention Services



## Our Executive Committee



**Chairperson**  
Carrie Hannington



**Deputy Chair**  
Chuck Berger



**Treasurer**  
Carol Child



**Member**  
Chris Gabelish



**Member**  
Corina Martin



**Member**  
Gemma Mitchell



**Member**  
Patrick Mungar



**Member**  
Sarah Patterson

## Our Staff



**Executive Director**  
Sharryn Jackson



**Sector Development**  
Helen Liedel



**Communications**  
Catrina Campbell-Fraser



**Administrator**  
Dawn Fenton



**Accreditation**  
Trish Ryans-Taylor

## Additional support

We would be unable to provide our services to the sector without the assistance of:

- Dawn Emmanuel who provides our bookkeeping services.
- Fiona Hobbs who provides a support role to the LP+PII Sub-Committee.

## Our student volunteers

We were fortunate to have the support of students from both the McCusker Centre for Citizenship and UWA's Co-operative Education and Enterprise Development (CEED) Centre to assist us with our projects during the year.

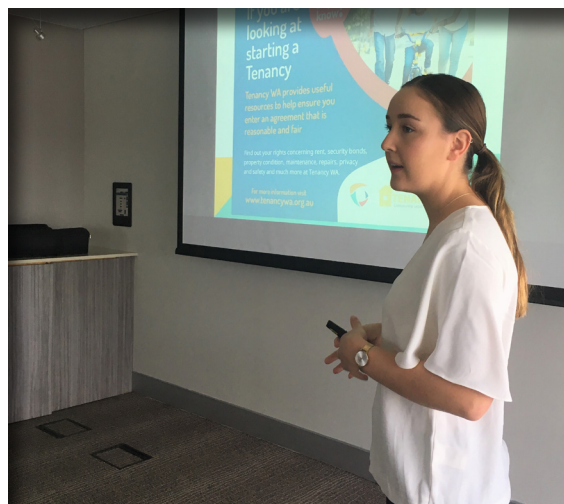


### McCusker Centre for Citizenship - Policy Project

Over a period of 12 months, we had two cohorts of students working with us to update our policy and procedure manuals for the sector. The first part of the project (semester 1 2018) was to identify areas of the current policies and procedures of the Community Legal Centres Association (WA) Inc requiring upgrading to conform to the requirements of the National Accreditation Standards (NAS). This was carried out by Hannah and Siobhan who mapped the existing policies against the NAS and identified gaps. In the second semester Abi and Tom picked up the project and updated and wrote policies to bring the policy documents up to standard. They then formatted the final documents into four separate manuals. Abi and Tom also made a presentation at the November 2018 Quarterlies about what they did and what they learned as part of the process. We are very pleased with the work that was done and congratulate Hannah, Siobhan, Abi and Tom on their excellent achievements.

### McCusker Centre for Citizenship - Social Media Project

Lisa joined us in semester one 2019 to work with our Communications Officer on a social media project. The work involved liaising with centres to develop online content to promote the work and values of the sector, as well as develop case stories that highlight the work of community legal centres. Lisa also participated in a review of our existing website and assisted staff to develop a new site that would be easier to navigate and use. Lisa presented her findings at our June Quarterlies meeting and is to be congratulated on her work.



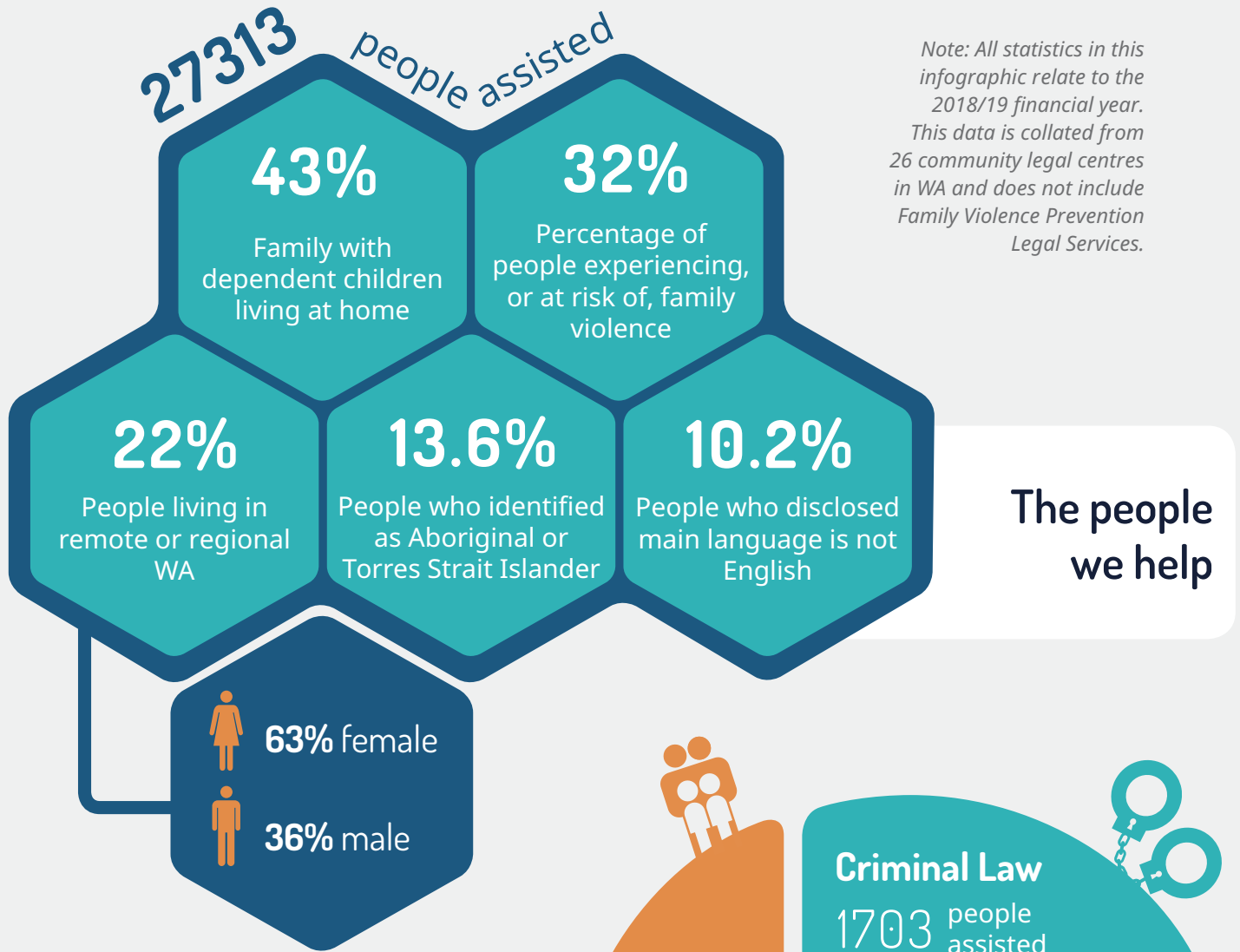
### CEED - LAWRA referral app project

The LAWRA project arose out of UWA's inaugural 'Disrupting Law' Hackathon and was the competitions winning app. The idea for LAWRA came from a number of the students who had experience working in a community legal centre. They understood the difficulty for volunteers to refer people for help who either fell outside the centre's eligibility criteria, or needed help with a legal matter the centre did not specialise in. LAWRA aims to solve this issue by providing an app for websites that quickly directs people to the centre best able to assist with their legal need after they answer some brief questions about their issue. Astrid, Georgina and Linda worked with 5 centres in semester one to develop the 'decision trees' that will underpin this app. Georgina is continuing this work in semester two. UWA have funding to create the app and are hoping to make it available free of charge to all CLCs once it's been created in 2020.

# The people community legal centres help

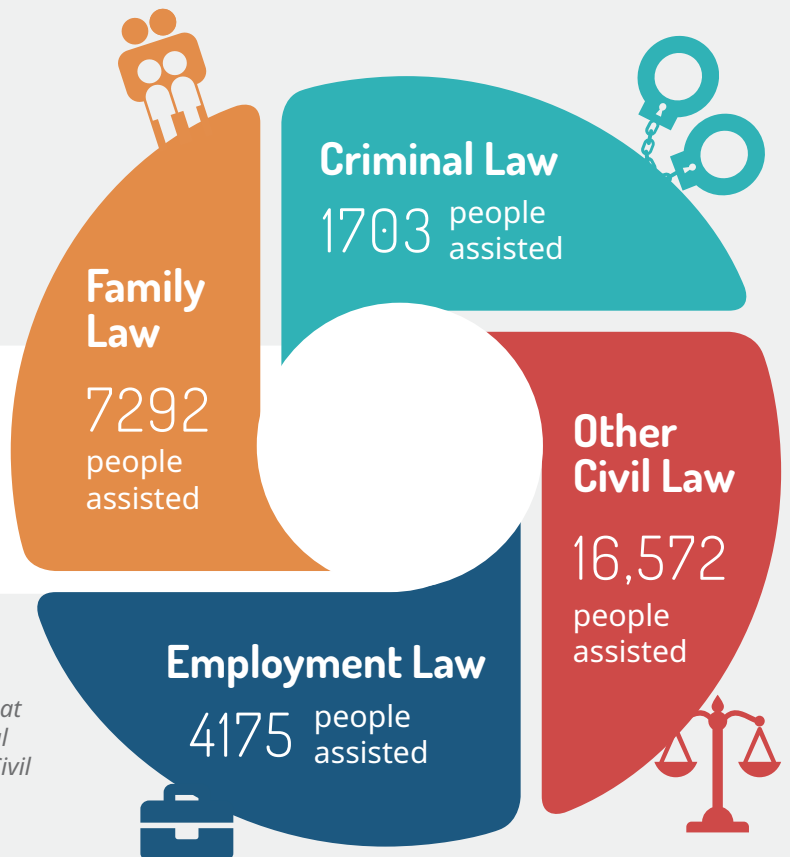
**Community Legal WA is the peak body representing community legal centres in Western Australia.** This state-wide data snapshot provides an overview of the work of community legal centres in 2018-19. There are 28 community legal centres in Western Australia. This snapshot is based on the data from 26 of those centres.

*Note: All statistics in this infographic relate to the 2018/19 financial year. This data is collated from 26 community legal centres in WA and does not include Family Violence Prevention Legal Services.*



## The people we help

## The areas of Law in which we provide help



#The total number of people assisted is slightly higher than the total number of people helped. This is due to the fact that one individual person may have been assisted with two legal matters during the period, e.g. a Family Law matter and a Civil Law matter.

# Services provided by community legal centres



## The services we provided in 2018-19



\*cases opened during the financial year.



“...there is a central connection between these areas of law, and fundamental human wellbeing. They relate closely to activities and characteristics that enable social wellbeing including our familial relationships, employment, the capacity to reside in the country of our choice, the dwelling in which we live and the capacity to afford fundamental rights and services as basic as food.”

— former Chief Justice Wayne Martin, 2016

**Top 6**  
legal problems

# The Association at work

## Referrals

As the peak body for Community Legal Centres in WA, our office is often the first point of contact for people in need of legal help. We will refer eligible people to the Community Legal Centre best able to assist them with their legal problem. We also make referrals to Law Access, community service providers and government departments where appropriate.

This year the people who contacted our office were seeking assistance with Family Law in most cases. This was followed by Civil Law, Employment Law and Credit & Debt law requests.

While the majority of contacts were received via our telephone number, we also received requests for advice via email and through our website.

## CAnDO

CAnDO is the e-learning site of the Association used by us and our members as a means to provide accessible learning opportunities to staff, board members and volunteers. It provides key training modules used generally across the sector including CLC 101 and understanding the Risk Management Guide.

Centres requiring frequently used information such as for inductions and Community Legal Education (CLE) online, find CAnDO a cost effective way to provide this information without consuming staff hours. Member centres can also tailor CAnDO to their own needs by producing their own in house induction.

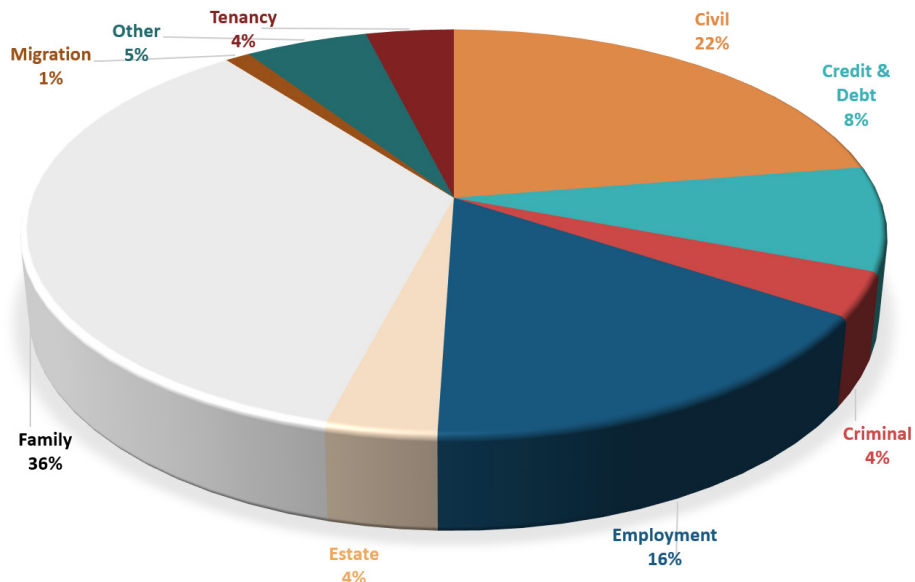
## Members Update

The Members Update (now named the Members Bulletin) is a service to members, providing a weekly electronic newsletter with news and information from across the sector. Each edition includes information updates from the Association, member centres and NACLCL. It also provides updates from across the broader community sector and government by alerting members to relevant issues, funding opportunities, training and upcoming events in one easy to read document. The Members Bulletin adopted a new look in the year with Mailchimp being used to create and circulate the Association's news.

## Quarterlies

The Quarterlies continue to provide our Members and their staff the opportunity to come together and network throughout the

**Referrals by law type 2018-19**



year. Our Quarterlies combine the General Meetings of members, meetings of Networks and professional development sessions on a quarterly basis throughout the year. This year we introduced training for paralegals and all community legal centre staff were invited to focus groups organised by Legal Aid WA to explore resilience issues for front line staff. The purpose of these focus groups was to assist LAWA to produce future training opportunities in this area.

The March 2019 Quarterlies ran over 3 days with the first day coinciding with the launch of knowmore's offices in Perth where our members met with Warren Strane of knowmore to discuss how CLCs can better work together to assist clients with redress claims.

Our Quarterlies were enriched by those presenters from both inside and outside the sector who contributed their time and expertise to our meetings and training sessions. We thank all presenters for their insightful contributions.

#### **Quarterlies Registrations:**

20 -21 September 2018: 62  
 29 - 30 November 2018: 77  
 20 – 22 March 2019: 100  
 20 – 21 June 2019: 85



**Session at the June Quarterlies**

## **Accreditation Report**

**The National Accreditation Scheme is now in its ninth year of operation. Designed to help with more effective service delivery, by providing guidelines for quality governance and practice management, the scheme has been actively embraced by community legal centre organisations, and engagement with the process has been very positive.**

**WA is now nearing the end of the Phase 2 accreditations and we will commence Phase 3 assessments in late 2020.**

Phase 3 will provide more streamlined and integrated processes and tools to reduce the administrative effort for centres. This includes a purpose-built Accreditation portal which will align self-assessment questions directly with the National Accreditation Scheme Standards. Regional Accreditation Coordinators will also work directly with centres during the 9 month lead-in time to an Accreditation renewal to assist with the process. Where possible a pre-assessment/engagement visit will be organised about 6 months before the Accreditation site visit.

The next evolution of the National Accreditation Scheme will provide a mechanism for Regional Accreditation Coordinators, in consultation with centres, to identify the best option for Phase 3 assessment. Assessment options will include:

- New members or merging centres: full assessment as per the current scheme (Phase 2) to direct and build compliance
- Centres with well established quality improvement processes: an assessment review process with the onus on centres to define future improvements

The National Accreditation Scheme Phase 3 aims to strengthen the support relationship between the Association which is delegated to conduct the assessment and the centre. National Accreditation Scheme assessment and Improvement Plan reporting processes will build in triggers to identify issues and prompt a request for support by the centre and/or intervention from peak bodies.

The National Accreditation Scheme also connects with the National Risk Management Guide and works closely with the LPP & PII Sub-Committee. Combined, these initiatives demonstrate the community legal sectors' commitment to quality assurance, risk management and good governance.



NACLC CEO, Nassim Arrage with the National and Regional Accreditation Coordinators.

Left to right: Meg Houston (NACLC), Laurel Draffen (NSW), Penny Sullivan (QLD), Trish Ryans-Taylor (WA), Natalie Hallam (Vic), Nassim Arrage (NACLC)

**Trish Ryans-Taylor**  
**Accreditation Project Officer**  
**Accreditation Coordinator WA**

## Sector Sustainability Report

**Sector sustainability has remained a top priority this year. We have built on last year's Models of Sustainability Report, which produced an extensive volume of work based on sector consultations and wider research.**

The report outlined the potential models of sustainability for the community legal sector to ensure two clear objectives; namely providing services that are accessible, relevant, responsive, agile and high quality and delivered in a longer-term sustainable manner; are achieved.

We have worked on improving CLCs' sustainability exploring different initiatives including models for organisational sustainability, co-location, shared services, group purchasing identifying alternative funding sources from increased and varied use of pro bono resources (not just legal support), corporate and private donations; and other fund-raising initiatives.

The importance of this work was highlighted by the Attorney General's commitment of additional resources to support sustainability initiatives in the sector. The first tranche of this money was used to employ our Sector Sustainability Coordinator, Helen Liedel, in November 2018.

The Attorney General wants the sector to become more sustainable, for CLCs to be robust organisations that receive more certain funding and deliver more effective services. The State Government have indicated their support for longer term funding agreements (5 years) to give greater financial certainty to CLCs and a preference for administering fewer funding arrangements but that they expect the sector to have come together to achieve greater economies of scale in some ways.



## Ongoing initiatives

Some of the initiatives progressed this year include:

- **Capacity Building Survey:** The survey of the sector resulted in a report showing the greatest challenges facing the sector include funding uncertainty, competitive tendering and organisational viability and sustainability. This report will be valuable for informing training priorities for the next 12 months to 2 years as well as informing funding applications and other projects.
- **Shared Services – Clearing House:** We have been working with centres to progress the options for shared services and group purchasing arrangements of IT products. The Association is trialing a project whereby it acts as a coordination point for different centres who are coming to the end of contracts for products or services. As all contracts are likely to come up for renewal at different times, we are advertising to centres in the Members' Update to contact us if they are considering service purchase/renewal. We are then able to link centres with each other and assist in coordinating research into providers and negotiations for discounts. Unfortunately to be effective additional resourcing is required.
- **Shared Services - IT Provider:** This project arose for the Specialist Centres MOU work. They considered the costs and options for shared services/group purchasing arrangements of IT products. There was a lot of research required and comparison of IT needs and demands. It was as a result of this information gathering that the digital strategy was born. We were able to achieve some improvement in costs.
- **Distribution of Pro Bono Publication:** "Creating shared value" We wrote to law firms in Western Australia to provide a copy of our research paper looking at

ways to increase pro bono support for legal services in Western Australia AND non-traditional support law firms can provide to Community Legal Centres to seek their feedback and support.

- **Group purchase:** In consultation with centres we changed providers for our sector wide Employee Assistance Program to achieve reduce rates and improved services for staff in community legal centres.

## Specialist Merger Project

Our specialist merger project gathers pace this year with the participation of three centres with project management support provided by Association staff.

A Steering Group was formed consisting of the Manager and Board Member(s) from each centre, our Executive Director and Sector Sustainability Coordinator, to provide the strategic direction and oversight to the process. Two Working groups were set up to support the Steering Group, a Managers Working Group to operationalise the process and another consisting of the Principal Solicitors from each CLC and our State PII Representative, to examine and develop a process for managing any potential conflicts of interests associated with the merger.

The rationale for the merger has been expressed by members of the Steering Group:

*The merger will make us stronger and increase our impact and we will be able to use our funding more effectively.*

*We will be able to provide more holistic client centered services to clients and make it easier for clients to access a wider range of legal services within one entity.*

*The breadth and quality of our services will not decrease. The current scope of the legal practices within each CLC will transfer in their entirety to the new entity.*

Pro-Bono legal and other specialist assistance have been provided to the Group to assess due diligence, human resource matters and other governance issues.

With a new Constitution developed, finalisation of a new trading name and the securing of new premises underway, these three specialist centres are on-track to form a new merged service in early 2020.

### Co-Design Pilot Project

The Association has also focused on the clients who use community legal centre services to ensure the help provided is tailored to meet their needs. Our Co-Design Pilot Project is based on the principle that our clients have the right to participate in the development of community legal services that affect their lives.

Our Co-Design project is exploring the different ways in which Community Legal Centres can empower clients to engage in co-design, through a pilot project auspiced by the Association.

This work has been funded by the Department of Finance and is informed by the WA Government's Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy (DCSPP). This policy aims to improve outcomes for all Western Australians through a genuine partnership between Public Authorities and the not-for-profit community sector.

To achieve this aim, our co-design project with selected centres is based around using a 'Journey Mapping' tool to understand the full

experience of the clients we help and identify:

- fail-points where the person may feel unsupported, confused, or get off track
- opportunities to improve current services and efficiencies
- opportunities to innovate new services.

We selected two regional and two metro centres to participate, with each centre undertaking approximately 10 interviews with current and former clients.

We have provided training to all eleven project staff on the Journey Mapping process and ensured a good mix of clients were interviewed across each centre. An additional outcome from the Co-design Project is the development of a Toolkit for our sector outlining what co-design is and how to apply in practice.

**Helen Liedel**  
**Sector Sustainability Coordinator**



**A journey mapping interview**

# Information, Communications and Technology Strategy

**As an additional sustainability measure, we have been gathering information and data over 18 months to understand the technology needs and challenges for community legal centres in Western Australia.**

This research informed our successful application to Lotterywest for a grant to implement a 30-month ICT strategy. The application was based on the development of a scalable ICT strategy for community legal centres, taking into account the special requirements of rural, regional and remote workspaces. It will scope, build and implement a state wide ICT strategy that is practical, affordable and sustainable for all sized centres.

The grant covers a 30 month time frame. During this time Association staff will work with participating centres to implement ICT technology improvements in their centre. At the end of each implementation the centre will have moved all data and processing to a cloud based platform using Office 365, be utilizing SharePoint data and intranet platform to connect internally and with other centres, have access to a web based communications provider, an education

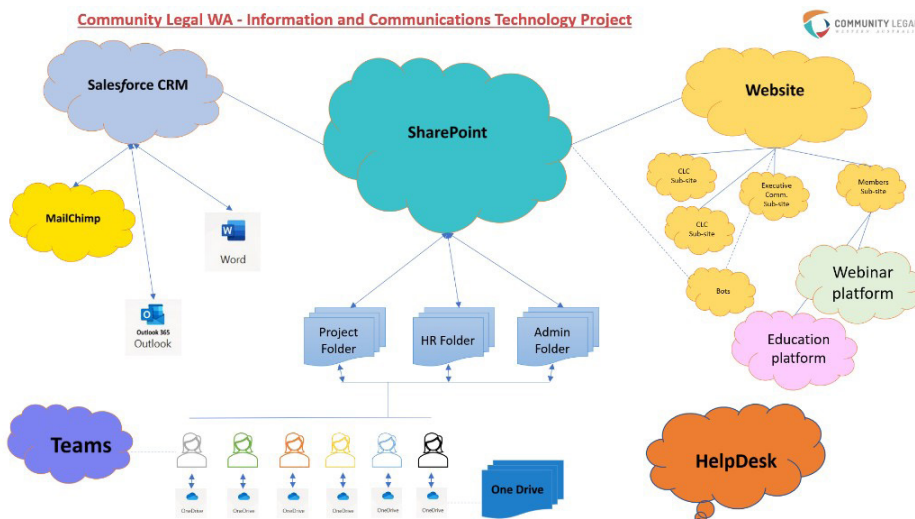
platform which is branded to the particular CLC, and have access to webinar and video conferencing facilities.

The new systems will be supported by a Helpdesk advising on upgrades to software and other technology as it becomes available. Initially the Helpdesk will be funded by the LotteryWest grant. As the process matures community legal centres will be provided with a specialised Helpdesk at a significantly reduced cost compared to commercial enterprises.

In addition to the Lotterywest grant we also applied for a grant to Titan Institute of Technology (a new philanthropic organisation) to update the Association’s website. This provided access to the Joyful organisation, a social enterprise, to build a highly functional website on a platform especially created for not-for-profits.

The website build is well underway with input from community legal centres. When fully operational it will provide a point of reference for members of the community about the work of community legal centres, how they can help, community legal education, references to legal FAQs, and contact information. We are also developing a specialist referral ChatBot designed in conjunction with UWA which will be added to the website when fully operational. The website will also be an ongoing resource for centres with a dedicated ‘Members only’ section to provide appropriate and timely information.

Community Legal WA - Information and Communications Technology Project



## Our Partnerships

**We worked with a number of partners throughout the year to progress the vision and values of the community legal sector.**

### National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC)

It was a busy year nationally with a Federal Election, a Review of the National Partnership Agreement (NPA) on Legal Assistance Services and the annual National Conference.

NACLC played the key leadership role in advocating for the sector during the Federal election and co-ordinating our engagement in the NPA Review. We congratulated NACLC for the work undertaken and their detailed submissions.



### Legal Aid WA

The Association continues to work with Legal Aid WA as the program manager for Community Legal Services Program (CLSP), funding Community Legal Centres in WA.

This year, we have also worked with LAWA and others on a project considering resilience in the legal assistance sector. LAWA contracted the NSW Justice Foundation to assist the project. The Association convened focus groups with Hugh McDonald (NSW Justice Foundation) during the March Quarterlies. LAWA continued this work to develop a survey to provide feedback on the resilience resources and support to community legal centre staff.

### Collaborative Services Working Group (CSWG)

The CSWG was established under the National Partnership Agreement and has started exploring the ways in which it could become an effective forum for the sector.

A workshop held this year provided an opportunity for the participants to review where we had come from, identify some of the concerns/problems and consider what the agenda for the future should be. For now, we await the decision of the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments regarding a future NPA.

### WA Peaks

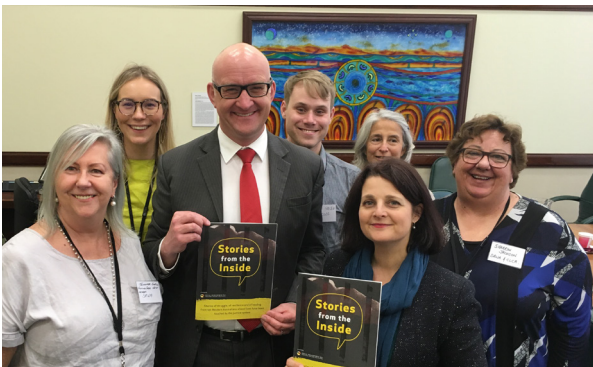
The Association has maintained its active membership of the WA Peaks Forum. This forum convened by WACOSS, has representatives from all community sector peak organisations. It is an important body for sharing information and working collaboratively across the community sector.

The Association has been active in a small working group that has identified key strategies for agencies when they are

required to recover debt from customers e.g. government utilities. The working group is focused on trying to relieve customers debt stress.

A letter was sent to the Treasurer, Minister Wyatt, approved by all the organisations in the Peaks Forum, endorsing a standard early intervention approach to utilities debt recovery across all agencies. The standards include identifying customers in hardship (training for recovery and call centre staff to recognise hardship or disadvantage), flexible payment options, concessions and other support for best practice debt recovery approach and calling on the State Government to apply the strategies across Government and especially with utilities.

A meeting with the newly formed Government Trading Enterprises (GTE) Governance and Oversight Unit to discuss the WA Peaks call was positive. We were advised there is a timetable for the development and introduction of legislation that will impact on the 16 GTEs' governance and oversight, with agencies such as Homeswest to be dealt with after the GTEs.



## Social Reinvestment WA

Attorney-General John Quigley's commitment to reform the Fines Act was welcomed by Social Reinvestment WA (SRWA). As chair of their Fine Default Sub-Committee, our Executive Director, Sharryn Jackson, worked closely with the collation of members to advocate for this law reform. The Fine Default Sub-Committee wrote to the Attorney-General requesting involvement in the drafting process of the announced amendments to

fine default laws in WA. The Sub-Committee subsequently met with representatives from the Department of Justice to discuss our 'asks' for reform in this area, namely:

- Mandate alternative options to imprisonment for fine defaulters to reduce incarceration rates.
- Implement a work and development order scheme for vulnerable and disadvantaged persons (as currently used in New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland.)
- Implement the coroner's recommendation that imprisonment must be subject to a hearing in the Magistrates Court and determined by a Magistrate.

With the proposed bill still to be introduced to the Parliament, members of SRWA have been actively engaging with the government about the reforms. A briefing day will be held at Parliament House in mid-September with representatives from SRWA briefing MPs about the need for fine default reform in WA.

# Legal Practice and Professional Indemnity Insurance (LP & PII) Report

**The LP & PII representative for WA, Catherine Eagle, performs two roles: As the WA representative on (and chair of) the National PII network and the Convenor of the WA Legal Practice and PII committee.**

## The National PII Network

The network is made up of each of the State/Territory PII representatives and Alice Jones-Rabbitt who is the NALCLC insurances coordinator. We meet monthly by phone and also had a half day face to face meeting in Brisbane immediately before the NALCLC conference in August.

We also meet regularly with the Accreditation coordinators and have worked with them in the design of stage 3 of the accreditation process.

As a national network we have sought pro bono assistance to draft a revised Sample Privacy Policy and Data Protection and Response Process to assist centres – these will be available to centres once they are finalised. A review/update of the Risk Management Guide will commence in November 2019.

## WA PII Representative

I regularly take calls from centres about potential notifications and a wide variety of issues that arise when running a legal practice within a community legal centre setting. I note the difficulty for centres in the current funding environment to attract and retain sufficient qualified staff to meet increasing demands from clients for assistance.

The Legal Practice and PII administration sub-committee meets approximately 6 weekly.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the other members of the sub-committee particularly Fiona Hobbs for her invaluable administrative support. The current committee members are Ann-Margaret Walsh, Alison Muller and Sharryn Jackson. During the year Kathy Bogoyev left the CLC sector and our sub-committee. I acknowledge her valuable contribution.

During the year amongst other things we:

- Presented PII sessions and helped to plan CPD at the quarterly training days organised by CLCA;
- worked out the allocation of CPD points for the quarterlies and the NALCLC conference; and,
- finalised 2018 crosschecks and organised the 2019 crosschecks.

We also continued to work with the Department of Justice, the State Solicitor's Office and the Legal Practice Board to resolve issues that had arisen for some volunteers to CLCs when applying for or trying to renew their pro bono practice certificates.

This was a time-consuming and not always straight forward process. Amendments to the Legal Profession Regulations 2009 were made and the Law Society 'approved' the NALCLC PII scheme which covers both employees and volunteers of CLCs for the 2018/19 year and then for the 2019/2020 insurance year.

**Catherine Eagle  
PII representative WA**



# Our Networks Report

**The Networks provide a great opportunity for Community Legal Centre staff working in common areas of law to come together and share information, resources, expertise and experience.**

We thank those individuals who have taken on the role of Network Convenors during the year, to their Centres for allowing the Convenors the time to undertake this role and to Dawn Fenton in our Secretariat for providing admin support as required.

## Administrators Network

**Convenor: Dawn Fenton**

Following Jacquie Carter's departure from the sector at the end of last year, Dawn Fenton, the Administrator of the Association took on the role of convenor. The Network met in September 2018 and the second meeting for the year in March 2019 was replaced by one of the two focus group sessions on resilience training facilitated by Legal Aid WA. We are hoping that the outcome of these focus groups will produce some relevant training to frontline staff. The Administrators Network will continue to meet twice per year and continues to be a forum for members to share information.

New members are always welcome and we look forward to providing valuable support to Community Legal Centre administration workers in the future.

## Community Legal Education Workers' Network

**Jessica Bayley/ Rhea Thomas (2018)**

**Rhea Thomas/ Vachel Spirason (2019)**

The CLEWs Network is made up of representatives from member centres who are involved in delivering community legal

education (CLE) in Western Australia. The network meetings are available to all interested CLC workers.

The CLEWs Network continues to meet on a Friday morning during the CLCA Quarterlies and provide an excellent opportunity for members to share and learn from each other about recent CLE experiences.

In the past year we have had a particular focus on methods of delivering CLE and using innovative technology. We have also explored connections between centres in order to cultivate joint CLE delivery, particularly within regional, rural and remote areas.

The network has continued to work with Legal Aid in order to develop a professional development program for CLE workers across Australia. We have also been able to collaborate with Legal Aid WA to provide training from the program to the network and contribute feedback accordingly.

The CLEWs Network are very grateful to Jessica Bayley for her role as Co-Convenor since 2016. Jessica has contributed to the network tremendously and continues to be actively involved even after stepping down from her role as convenor at the beginning of 2019.

## Domestic Violence Legal Workers' Network

**Convenor: Malcolm Bradley**

The Network works as a representative for all centres in the field of Family and Domestic Violence, preparing submissions, education sessions, and law reform on behalf of all members. This year we prepared submission for the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) for the Family Law Review, and the Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs on the Family Law Amendment (Family Violence and Cross-examination of Parties) Bill 2018. We provided input to reforms to the Residential Tenancies Act to benefit family violence victims and participated in family violence networks and peak bodies, including the Safe Systems Coalition and Our Watch.

We also focused on professional development in relation to the intersection of family law and migration law; aiding the facilitation of professional development sessions for members with knowmore on the legislative changes arising out of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and provided input to the WA Government Family Violence Strategy.

The Network is currently looking to restructure, and is seeking input from all CLCs who deliver services related to Family and Domestic Violence. We know that resourcing of the network is necessary to ensure it is effective.

## Information, Communications and Technology Network

Co-Convenors: Trish Ryans-Taylor /  
Catrina Campbell-Fraser

The Information, Communications and Technology Network was formed early this year to address the technology needs of community legal centres in Western Australia. During the previous 18 months staff at the Association have been gathering information and data about the needs of centres in WA, to inform a grant application to LotteryWest. This application was to scope, build and implement a state wide ICT strategy which would be practical, affordable and sustainable for all sizes of Community Legal Centres. We also applied for a grant to Titan Institute of Technology (a new philanthropic organisation) to update the our website. Both grant applications were successful

The ICT Network will play a vital role over the next 12 months to guide the roll-out of the ICT strategy and provide insight into the ongoing technology challenges and opportunities facing the sector.

## Managers Network

Convenor: Sarah Patterson

The Manager's Network has remained focused on the goal of maintaining a sustainable and successful Community legal sector. We

welcomed the opportunity to provide feedback to the review of the National Partnership Agreement earlier this year, highlighting some of the unique challenges faced by community legal centres servicing the regional and remote areas of our state.

We have worked collaboratively, sharing information with new managers, working together on submissions and funding applications, and making sure that all areas of our sector are well supported.

Whilst our regular Managers' meetings have been largely focused on sector-wide sustainability measures, we have appreciated representatives from the Department of Justice, Department of the Attorney General and Legal Aid sitting in on selected meetings to gain an insight into the experiences, value and challenges in the sector.

This has provided us with the opportunity to further inform decision makers why improved contract arrangements and secured funding are important to the future of the sector.

As a newer member of the network, I am excited to see the level of enthusiasm, experience and passion in the group; which combined with sustainable funding and better capacity; can only have a positive effect on the sector and the community we serve.

## Rural, Regional & Remote Network

Convenor: Julie Mason / Alison Muller

The RRR Network has continued to provide an opportunity for members from rural, regional and remote centres allowing for relationship building, mutual support and an avenue for feeding RRR issues to and from the Association.

During meetings this year, members discussed common issues being faced by their services and communities, kept one another informed as to their capacity, fostered referral pathways, and shared their strategies for local partnerships and effective service delivery in a RRR environment.

We extend our thanks to convenor Alison Muller from Regional Alliance West who stepped down from the role in June 2019.



# Thank you

**We thank the many individuals and organisations who have contributed to our sector in the past year. Although too many to mention we acknowledge your support, which is invaluable to us.**

We also acknowledge the consultants and suppliers who generously discounted their services to the Association. Special thanks to the Executive, the Secretariat and our Network Conveners for all your work. Finally, thank you to our funding bodies principally Legal Aid WA for our core funding and to Lotterywest for specific project funding.

## State Government

- WA State Attorney General John Quigley and staff
- Dr Graham Hill, Director of Legal Aid WA and staff
- Mark Hainsworth, Department of Justice
- LotteryWest



## Legal Community

- WA Law Society
- WA Bar Association
- Law Access, especially Dominique Hansen
- Members of the Pro Bono Coordinators Group
- Law firms providing venues and support for our Quarterlies Meetings including: King & Wood Mallesons; Herbert Smith Freehills; Jackson McDonald; Clayton Utz; Allens; Corrs Chamber Westgarth; Ashurst and DLA Piper

## Project Partners

- National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC), especially Nassim Arrage and Amanda Alford
- WACOSS
- McCusker Centre for Citizenship
- CEWA (Community Employers WA)
- WA Peaks
- Social Reinvestment WA
- CEEDWA and UWA's Coders for Causes
- Jane and Co, Claisebrook Lotteries House
- Thomas Jreidge, Focus Cyber Group
- Ron Alexander, Methamphetamine Task Force
- Gary Dean, Barrister, Dr Philippa White, Director at Tuart Place, Lauren Rathbone and Anna Liscia, Irldi Legal
- Mark Morrissey, Consultant and former Commissioner for Children & Young People
- Lara Anstie, Lawyer, Clairs Keely
- Pauline Logan & Lucy Reynolds, Lotteywest
- Rick McDougall, MKM Partners
- Deb Henderson, FinWA, Maxine Drake, Disability Development WA
- John Southalan, Barrister
- Justine Clarke, Financial Counsellors Association WA

We also wish to thank all our Quarterlies Pro bono presenters:

- Nicolette Smith, Dementia Australia

## **Financial Statements**

**2018-2019**

*Attached separately*





# COMMUNITY LEGAL

W E S T E R N  
A U S T R A L I A

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