

Annual Report 2012



Serving the community
in the heart of Western Sydney

Macquarie Legal Centre

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Macquarie Legal Centre

annual report 2012

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CENTRAL WEST CONTACT SERVICE
Supervised Contact
and Changeover for families.



A program of
Macquarie Legal Centre - a non profit,
non Government organisation
funded by the Department of Families,
Housing, Community Services and Indigenous
Affairs.



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Free Legal Advice

Macquarie Legal Centre
Suite 302 Level 3
107 Phillip St
Parramata NSW
(02) 8833 0911
www.macquarielegal.org.au
Office Hours
Monday to Friday
9.00am - 1.00 pm & 2.00pm - 5.00pm
Thursday night by appointment


WESTERN SYDNEY TENANTS' SERVICE




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University of Western Sydney
Bringing knowledge to life

Parramatta Community Justice Clinic
The University of Western Sydney in
partnership with Macquarie Legal Centre





Law students
helping Western
Sydney




Phone: 02 8688 7873
Email: pcjc@uws.edu.au
Web: www.uws.edu.au/pcjc
Appointments and advice:
10am-1pm, Monday to Friday
Immigration advice on Thursday

HoBAS
Home Building Advocacy
Service

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CENTRAL WEST CONTACT SERVICE
Supervised Contact
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Indigenous Affairs.

Macquarie Legal Centre

MLC acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of this land, the Darug people, and pays respect to their elders, past and present.

Macquarie Legal Centre Inc (MLC) is an independent, non-profit, community organisation providing free legal advice, information, referrals, casework, minor assistance and community legal education to disadvantaged people of Western Sydney.

MLC was established in 1978 by a small group of lawyers, academics and law students from Macquarie University. MLC's ties with Macquarie University continue, with MLC offering clinical legal programs to students from the university.

In recent years, MLC has also been working in partnership with the University of Western Sydney through the Parramatta Community Justice Clinic, a free legal service offering advice and assistance to people at the Parramatta Local Court.

MLC is located in Parramatta, generally considered the heart of Western Sydney. Parramatta has become a major legal and transport precinct and is the economic capital of Greater Western Sydney, with over 90,000 people working in the local government area.

MLC's catchment includes the local government areas of Parramatta, Holroyd and Auburn and our clients are drawn from these areas. Statistics indicate the region has a high level of disadvantage and MLC's clients include people on low incomes, people with disabilities, Indigenous Australians, people from CALD backgrounds, single parents, victims of domestic violence and people with poor literacy skills. The statistics throughout this report highlight the types of clients MLC assists and the problems they seek our help to resolve.

MLC receives funding from a number of federal and state departments and agencies including the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department and Legal Aid NSW, as well as NSW Fair Trading, Macquarie University and the University of Western Sydney.

MLC's work is supported by a number of volunteer solicitors and students who give their time and assistance generously and we are grateful for their contributions.

Our Vision

One of the core functions of community legal centres is to help overcome barriers through advising, educating, empowering and advocating for disadvantaged people, and pursuing law reform agendas consistent with improving access to justice.

MLC's vision is to operate a highly client focused, non-profit legal service for the disadvantaged people of Western Sydney.

Chairperson's Report

John Moratelli

It has been another busy year for the Management Committee and a challenging year for Macquarie Legal Centre.

One of the ongoing challenges for the Committee has been getting a complete complement of Committee members. By March of this year the only remaining members were Deb Ronan, John Hargrave, Sylvia Sant, and Chantel Cotterell. As the Committee needs three for a quorum it was just as well that those members were all regular attenders and I would like to thank them for their commitment.

The challenges the organisation has faced this year have been both external and internal. External challenges have included having to reapply for our HoBAS funding, the discontinuation of CTTT hearings at Parramatta, moving staff onto the new Award, continuing to develop policies as part of the national accreditation process for the National Association of Community Legal Centres, and the need to deal with funding pressures. Internal challenges have included the ongoing need to develop a clear understanding of respective roles and the need to develop appropriate policies and practices in relation to matters such as the management of grievances.

The Committee, in conjunction with the Manager, has tried to address the internal challenges by actively engaging staff through such means as the circulation of draft policies for comment, training by the Anti-Discrimination Board, and planning meetings conducted by an external consultant. The Committee understands that the feedback on these measures has been positive and I am confident that the Committee will continue to work on such issues to ensure that relevant policies and procedures are clear, accessible, understood and applied.

As regards the external challenges, Committee members in conjunction with management have actively advocated (including at Community Cabinet and Community Shadow Cabinet meetings) on matters such as the discontinuation of the Parramatta CTTT hearings, albeit without success to date.

The organisation continues, however, to meet the various challenges dished up to it thanks to the professionalism, dedication and imagination of its staff. Throughout the year the Committee has been impressed by the various reports provided to us which have kept us abreast of the work of the organisation and demonstrated the ongoing capacity to achieve much with very little. One instance I would like to mention are the three short films to be used as a legal education resource for young people. The *Think Before You Act* films were made in collaboration with the Youth Education Project Officer and the Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE), in Parramatta. They are to be launched later in the year.

Throughout the year, as well as regularly attending scheduled committee meetings, my fellow Committee members have participated in selection committees, additional meetings to develop policy documents, and additional meetings to deal with staffing issues. All these activities are on top of the jobs Committee members hold elsewhere. I again extend my thanks to all my fellow Committee members for their hard work and wish those staying on all the best for 2013.

In closing I would like to thank Maria Girdler, Elizabeth Wulff, John Rafferty and Giehan Gergis for their support of the Committee during the year, and all the staff for the hard work they put in trying to satisfy some of the legal needs of the vulnerable and disadvantaged in our community.

Management Committee Members 2011-2012

John Moratelli, Chairperson 2011, Chairperson 2012

Debra Ronan, Deputy Chairperson 2011, Chairperson 2012

John Hargrave, Treasurer (3 months) 2011, Committee Member 2012

Chantel Cotterell, Secretary 2012, Treasurer (3 months) 2012

Eva Abdel Messiah, Treasurer 2011

Ken Beilby, Committee Member 2011

Paul Crowley, Secretary 2011

Nicole Miller, Committee Member 2012

Sylvia Sant, Committee Member 2012

John Moratelli, Chantel Cotterell, Sylvia Sant, Nicole Miller, Debra Ronan, John Hargrave



Name	Position	Attendance record
John Moratelli	Chairperson	10 out of 10
Debra Ronan	Deputy Chair / Treasurer	8 out of 10
Chantel Cotterell	Secretary / Treasurer	3 out of 5
Paul Crowley	Secretary	5 out of 7
Eva Abdel Messiah	Treasurer	Resigned 06/02/12 1 out of 2
John Hargrave	Committee Member / Treasurer	Resigned 03/10/11 8 out of 10
Ken Beilby	Committee Member	1 out of 2
Sylvia Sant	Committee Member	Resigned 05/09/11 5 out of 5
Nicole Miller	Committee Member	2 out of 2 Resigned 05/03/12

Manager's Report

Maria Girdler

We have had another successful year and made a positive contribution to the community we work in. Following are some of the highlights of the year.

Award for clinical programs

On 23 November 2011, Macquarie University gave us an award "in recognition of our contribution to student learning". The award recognised the clinical legal education programs we have operated since 2004. Later in this report you can read the enthusiastic feedback students have given us on this program.

ZEST Award for tenancy service

On 29 February 2012, our tenancy service received a ZEST Award, "for their capacity building, advocacy, leadership, commitment to standing up for Western Sydney". It was a welcome recognition for the dedicated work of the team who have assisted many clients on tenancy issues.

Review Children's Court Assistance Scheme (CCAS)

During the years 2011-2012, CCAS was reviewed by our funders. Both Leah Cruickshank and I were consulted by the reviewers.

The review was commissioned to evaluate the effectiveness of existing services as well as the need for CCAS services across all Children's Courts and local courts sitting as Children's Courts.

On 7 June 2012 we received the disappointing news that the Public Purpose Fund had only approved one year's funding with no indexation (when we were expecting three years funding). Our current funding runs until June 2013. Such uncertainty is not good for our clients (or staff).

Federal Attorney-General's review

We also participated in the review conducted by Allens' Consulting Group for the Federal Attorney-General. On 6 June 2012 we met with Allens.

The review's terms of reference are to comment on the efficiency and effectiveness of four legal assistance providers (the Legal Aid Commission, the Aboriginal Legal Service, CLC's and the Family Violence Prevention Program).

Barriers to service delivery - Closure of CTTT from 30 March 2012

Unfortunately government cut backs have impacted on the services we offer at the CTTT.

In March 2012, the CTTT closed in Parramatta. We were advised of the closure by letter on 3 February 2012. Prior to its implementation we sought to consult with the Minister and the CTTT, however the closure went ahead. From 30 March 2012 the thousands of clients who used the Parramatta CTTT were referred instead to Liverpool, Penrith, or Sydney.

Parramatta is the legal and transport hub for Western Sydney and has a range of services (such as ours) that consumers can easily access. Prior to the closure, the Parramatta CTTT had referred clients to us for urgent assistance, as our office was a short walk from theirs.

We will continue to advocate for a service in Parramatta as we believe this would provide a better service to clients.

Putting our views

We attended two major events during the year where we took the opportunity to put our views to both the NSW government, and the opposition.

On 27 February 2012, the government held one of the NSW 2021 Forums and Community Cabinet Meetings in Parramatta. As well as taking part in a general discussion about future priorities for government, we had individual meetings with The Hon Greg Smith, SC, MP, Attorney-General and The Hon Anthony Roberts, MP, Minister for Fair Trading.

On 25 June 2012 we attended a Community Shadow Cabinet Meeting in Parramatta.

We also had individual meetings with The Hon Paul Lynch MP Shadow Attorney General, Shadow Minister for Justice, Ms Tania Mihailuk, Shadow Minister for Fair Trading, Shadow Minister for Healthy Lifestyles and Shadow Minister for Volunteering & Youth, and Mr John Robertson MP, Leader of the Opposition, Shadow Minister for Western Sydney and Shadow Minister for the Illawarra.

New partnership for Legal Community Education

In the coming year we will partner with the Care and Protection Service (CAPS) to provide 'Family Fundamentals Seminars'. CAPS have approached us to deliver the seminars for Arabic and African parents and carers in Western Sydney.

Future plans

In the last year we have worked hard to retain our existing programs. In the year ahead we will continue to offer high quality services to our clients.

Thanks to all the staff, Management Committee and volunteers who have worked to make our services accessible and valuable to the community, and a special thank you to our Chairperson, John Moratelli, for the extra duties he has taken on throughout the year.

MLC Staff



Jessica Abi Khattar
 Samiha Alameddine
 Shelley Alvarez
 Vanita Assani
 Cheri Barrett
 Sarah Boustani
 Michelle Brown
 Lita Chiv
 Vikram Craig
 Leah Cruickshank
 Erick Culala
 Gwen Davies
 Alexander Dovan
 Patricia Drum
 Elfet Eid
 Adele Francis
 Amira Francis
 Linda Grady
 Giehan Gergis
 Maria Girdler
 Carrol Hakim
 Sarah Hart
 Tracey Hollywood
 Lesley Humphries
 Salwa Israel
 Charizma Jarque
 Katy Jenkins
 Clare Jobson
 Bridget Kennedy
 Shalini Kumari
 Reed Langridge
 Nina Lau
 Victoria Lucas
 Clare Mangiokas
 Jamal Maroon
 Leticia Marquez Gonzalez
 Liam Meagher
 Ozra Meshkat
 Ann-Marie Najjarin
 Tanja Podinic
 Beatriz Patino
 Bridget Purcell
 John Rafferty
 Jayd Raffoul
 Carolina Saez
 Stan Small
 Christine Smith
 Madhabi Taneja
 Helen Taranto
 Sue Underwood
 Lachelle Uzcateguigaymon
 Vicki Vucetic
 Kristen Vuleta
 Nawal Wehbe
 David Willis
 Elva Wright
 Elizabeth Wulff

Volunteer Students

Amira Ambikairajah
Sarah Boustani
Ben Chung
Susannah Coles
Jade Cross
Katie Davern
Alice Deng
Alexander Dovan
Jason Feng
Carrol Hakim
Charizma Jarque
Anchal Kapur
Nigel Khine
Rebecca Kok
Lucy Liang
Hamish Mishra
Ann-Marie Najjarin
Bilal Nasri
Diana Oh
Catherine Pittaway
Esther Song
Stella Song
Monica Stanley
David Turner
Claudine Villanueva
Jasmine Wang
Lisa Wong
Allina Yang
Janelle Yong
Veronica Yoo
Sylvia Zhou

Volunteer Solicitors

Anna D'Addona
Keiran Elliot
Ray Finch
Angie Godden
Cathy-Anne Grew
Mark MacDiarmid
Carolyn Munk
Helen Perrottet

Legal Practice

John Rafferty (Principal Solicitor), Clare Mangiokas, Adele Francis,
Jamal Maroon (Solicitors) and Nina Lau (Paralegal)

Total advices

970

Macquarie Legal Centre's general legal practice provides legal advice, minor case assistance and casework for clients who cannot afford legal representation, cannot obtain Legal Aid and who meet MLC's eligibility criteria (which is based on location, legal matter type and income).

Family Law

284

MLC's solicitors prepare documentation, draft submissions, provide advice during court proceedings, write letters on behalf of clients and sometimes appear in court for clients.

Road/Motor Vehicle Offences

179

One of the most important components of MLC's work is to empower clients to represent themselves. Without MLC's help, many people would appear in court unrepresented, or would leave matters to be determined in their absence.

Credit & Debt

161

In the past year, there has been an increase in the number of elder law and wills/probate matters. Elder law encompasses issues such as power of attorney, guardianship matters and family provision claims.

Motor Vehicle Accidents

153

Student Programs

MLC also conducts clinical programs in partnership with Macquarie University and the University of Western Sydney (PCJC), and delivers community legal education seminars.

Neighbourhood Disputes

70

In partnership with Macquarie University, MLC ran two clinical programs for Macquarie University students in 2011-12. The clinical program was offered as an elective to fifth year law students in each semester, with eight students in each program.

Family Violence/ AVOs

65

The purpose of the program is to expose students to different legal areas, help broaden their views of legal practice and offer them experience working with clients in a community legal practice context.

A family law clinical program is also offered three times a year (in conjunction with our FRC Legal Service).

Elder Law

51

In the past, many students who have participated in the clinical placement program have applied to volunteer at MLC, and some have become MLC paralegals.

Consumer Complaints

27

Student Feedback

I would like to extend a really big 'thank you' to the MLC staff. The unit has been fantastic and has really coloured in the picture painted by my undergraduate studies.

I would also like to reflect upon the MLC experience...I would like to say that I am saddened that only a few get to experience the MLC placement. I have learned so much about expressions of law and legal resolution...this was experiential learning, which had so much more impact than reading an article.

Total cases

83

Client feedback

You and the service have made a great difference to the outcome of the appeal and to the future.

Case Studies

Family Law

John obtained a positive result for a female client in a family law matter. The client's partner had gambled their life savings away. The client was working two jobs to maintain the mortgage payments on the family home, but was not earning enough income to maintain the payments.

The partner wanted to transfer ownership of the home to our client and pay out the mortgage from his superannuation entitlement. The arrangements were documented in Consent Orders but the Family Court would not approve them because they were one-sided (in giving the total unencumbered property to our client).

Despite the Court's view, the partner wanted to give the property to our client to make amends for his past behaviour. As an alternative, we prepared a Binding Financial Agreement setting out the arrangement between our client and her partner.

The signed Binding Financial Agreement was accepted by the NSW Office of State Revenue, which meant our client did not have to pay stamp duty on the transfer of the family home. The property was then registered with her as the sole owner.

Our client was delighted because the arrangement provided future security.

Wills and Probate

John assisted two middle-aged brothers who suffered developmental delay and had difficulty managing their finances.

The brothers were sheltered by their mother who cared for them and made important decisions for them. After she passed away the brothers had difficulty managing their affairs and were experiencing financial trouble. They had their mother's Will, but had no idea what needed to be done. In addition, they were vulnerable and were being pursued by creditors.

John assisted the brothers to obtain Probate and have the family home transferred into their joint names. John also arranged for independent financial counselling for the brothers to help them manage their debts and provide them with a future financial plan.

Community Legal Education

- Putting Community into Clinical, UNSW Faculty of Law, September 2011
- General legal information session, Chinese Christian Community, Epping, September 2011
- Granny Flats and Reverse Mortgages, Merrylands Bowling Club, October 2011
- Family Violence, Holroyd Community Sector Conference, Merrylands, March 2012
- Legal Information Stall, Law Week, Parramatta, May 2012

Legal Information and Referral

Jayd Raffoul, Carrol Hakim, Sarah Boustani and
Charizma Jarque

Matter Types

Tenancy
32%

Family Law
18%

Family/Domestic
Violence
17%

Building/property
9%

Motor Vehicle
5%

Road/Traffic
Offences
5%

Credit & Debt
4.5%

Other
2.5%

Neighbourhood
Disputes
2%

Criminal Matters
1.4%

Probate
1.3%

Our Legal Information staff are the client's introduction to Macquarie Legal Centre. One of the most important skills for a Legal Information officer is patience.

Legal Information staff need to be able to deal with all types of clients in all emotional states. When clients call, they are not always certain about the nature of their problem, or the help they require. Clients are less distressed about their situation after they have spoken to a Legal Information officer and received some sort of assistance - whether it is an appointment with a solicitor, a referral to another agency, or information that helps them take the next step.

Legal Information staff record all referrals made by MLC – each person who calls and the referral they are given. Referrals depend upon the nature of the client's problem. Most clients are offered in-house assistance and clients that MLC cannot assist are referred to specialist legal services and/or the Law Society of NSW.

Casual relief Legal Information staff cover the role during staff absences which removes the pressure from everyone at MLC. The relief system ensures that there is a least one back-up Legal Information officer available at all times.

Legal Information staff also prepare an internal newsletter for staff that is distributed monthly. As part of that process, Legal Information staff interview the staff member of the month.

Volunteers are legal students. MLC has between 12 and 20 volunteers at any one time, with a new intake each semester. When volunteers join MLC they make a minimum six-month commitment and many go on to work at MLC in another capacity.

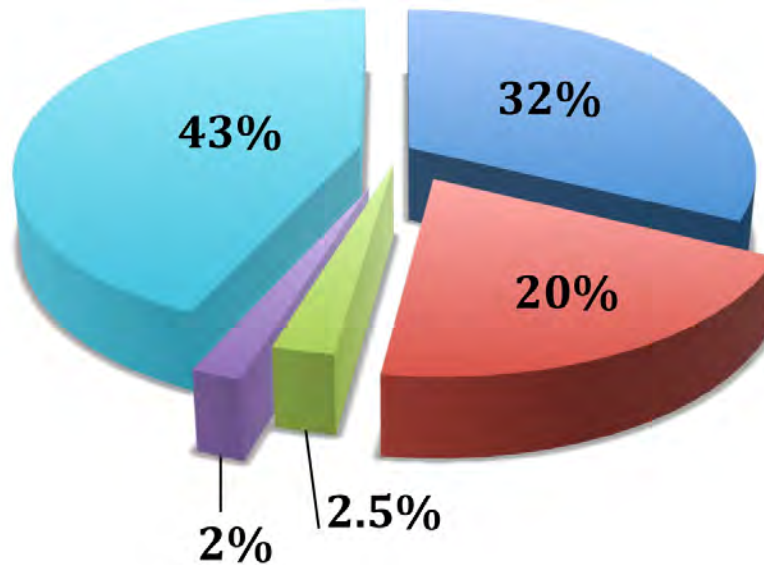
Volunteers take initial instructions and pass client information on to the Legal Information staff, who then allocate the matter to a solicitor.

This year, MLC introduced a regular 'on the job' training program for volunteers. Legal Information staff conduct the training sessions. MLC also updated the Volunteer Training and Policy Manual. This Manual is used during the training program.

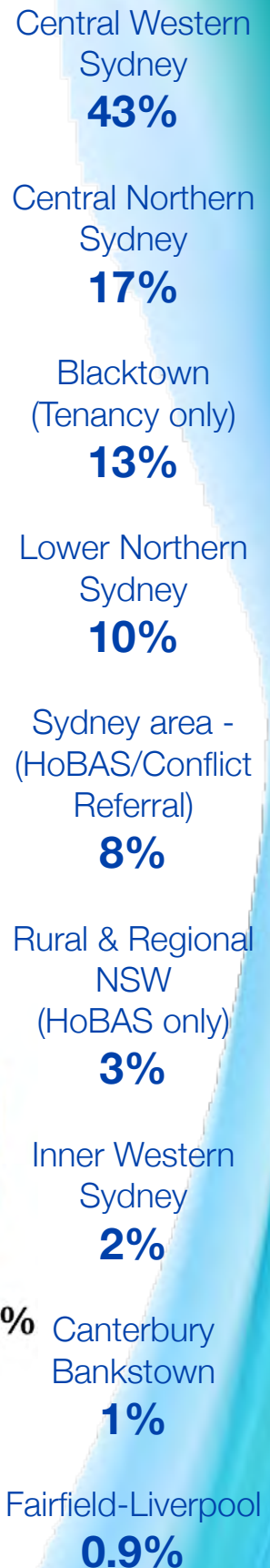
Managing expectations is the hardest thing for volunteers to do. The more training and experience volunteers have, the easier it is for them to deal with clients.

Volunteers say that Legal Information and Referral is one of the most interesting areas to work at MLC because there's always something happening!

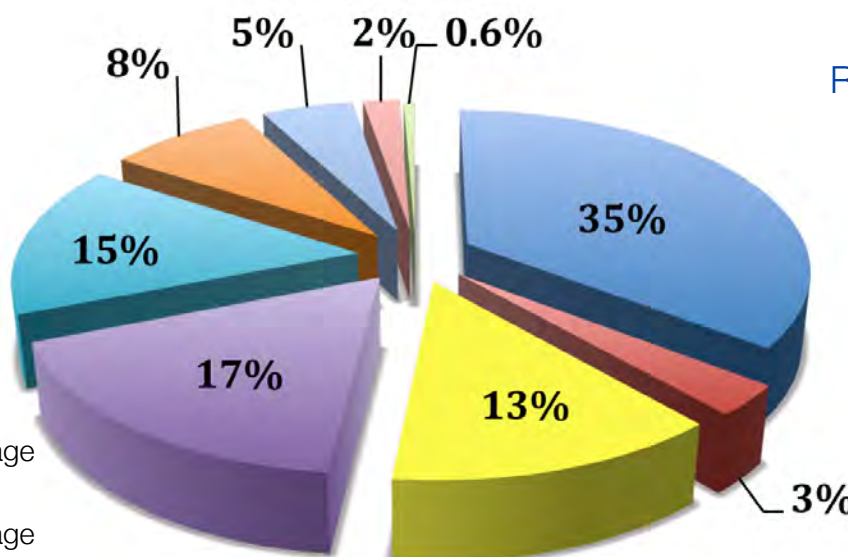
Client Income
(Client total 2885)



Client Location



Client Age
(Client total 2885)



Coordinated Family Dispute Resolution (CFDR)

John Rafferty, Samiha Alameddine, Nina Lau (Solicitors)
& Katy Jenkins (Consultant)

Coordinated Family Dispute Resolution (CFDR) is a pilot project that works with men and women who are at risk of violence post-separation, to resolve their family law disputes.

The program is funded by the Federal Attorney-General's Department, and is a partnership between UnitingCare Unifam Counselling & Mediation (Unifam), South West Sydney Community Legal Centre (SWSLC) and Macquarie Legal Centre. CFDR began in 2010 and the number of clients participating in the program has increased over the past year.

CFDR is based upon a collaborative approach to achieving outcomes in the best interests of children. CFDR employs legal, family violence and dispute resolution practitioners who develop a supported and safe process for settling family law disputes involving children.

Trained professionals experienced in working with victims and perpetrators of family violence assist clients. A consultant and a solicitor work together to ensure that each client is supported and to ensure that proper safety mechanisms are in place so that clients feel comfortable engaging and participating in the program.

The roles of consultant and solicitor are quite distinct in CFDR. The consultant's role is to support the client, undertake risk assessments and report back to case management meetings. The solicitor's role is to provide legal advice and attend mediation with the client.

Process

Clients enter the program via a referral from Unifam. If a client is assessed as suitable for CFDR they are then referred to a consultant. The consultant's role is to determine whether it is appropriate and safe for the client to continue in the process. Case management meetings are conducted regularly between Unifam and consultants.

When a client does not proceed to mediation it is usually because the level of violence has been too extreme or too recent. In many cases where mediation was attempted there was progress and the parties were able to reach agreement about arrangements for the children. When clients are successful at mediation, consent orders are usually filed with the court.

The CFDR team follows up with clients regularly at three, six and nine month intervals after the client's matter has been finalized. If the parenting arrangements agreed at mediation are not working, clients have an opportunity to return to mediation to try and reach agreement on a new set of arrangements.

Over the past year, only one client has disengaged from the program.

Total
clients
Consultant
assisted
14

Total
clients
Solicitor
assisted
23

Matters
assessed
NOT
suitable for
mediation
8

Community Legal Education

John Rafferty and Katy Jenkins have delivered community legal education presentations about family violence in general and the CFDR program in particular at:

- Connecting Holroyd Community Forum, March 2012
- Carramar Young Women's Group, June 2012
- Granville TAFE, March 2012.

In addition, Samiha Alameddine and Katy Jenkins have published an article about CFDR in *Verbals* (Legal Aid NSW newsletter), and Katy Jenkins has published an article in *On the Record* (NSW CLC newsletter).

Case Study

CFDR assisted a client who had suffered severe domestic violence. The client had found it very difficult to leave the violent relationship because, among other reasons, she spoke limited English and had no support network in Australia. When she did leave she went to a refuge for women and children.

Even after leaving the relationship our client continued to feel controlled and frightened of the children's father. After separation an Apprehended Domestic Violence Order was taken out against the father.

Family Court Orders were made in relation to the children when they were young. By the time the client came to CFDR, the orders have been in place for 10 years. The client instructed us that the father did not follow the orders and demanded to see the children when it suited him. When our client refused his demands, he relied upon the court orders.

After meeting with the CFDR solicitor and the women's consultant, the client began to feel overwhelmed by the process, as she had gone through the legal system before. Initially the client was unsure of how CFDR could help her.

After getting support from the CFDR team the client was able to articulate what she wanted in relation to the children's arrangements. The only hurdle for the client was whether the father was willing to participate in the CFDR program.

Due to the extreme level of violence in the relationship, coupled with the father's inability to engage with the program, the client was assessed as unsuitable for mediation.

However, the support she received from the CFDR women's consultant and lawyer empowered her enough to be able to make a decision that she did not want to be trapped by the court orders anymore. As a result, she sought further legal assistance to vary the Family Court orders.

Our client was also given referrals for culturally specific family violence support services.

Cases
opened by
Solicitors
20

Ongoing
cases with
Solicitors
9

Family Relationship Centres

Sarah Hart, Helen Taranto and Katy Jenkins
(Solicitors)

Parramatta

The Family Relationship Centres Legal Services Program offers advice, information and assistance for separated parents trying to resolve their parenting arrangements through the Family Relationship Centres (FRC) at Parramatta and North Ryde.

Total clients
223

FRC solicitors work with family dispute resolution practitioners at the FRC to identify clients likely to benefit from lawyer-assisted mediation. Where clients successfully resolve their parenting arrangements at mediation, the FRC solicitors assist by drafting consent orders or parenting plans to reflect the agreement the parents have made.

Total advices
240

One of the strengths of the FRC legal services program is that clients receive legal advice about their particular family law situation and are then better informed to make decisions about their own situation, particularly in relation to what is in the best interests of their children.

Total cases
52

Clients often present with a range of complex problems including domestic violence, mental health issues, and drug and alcohol dependency, as well as unrealistic expectations about parenting arrangements.

Lawyer-
assisted
mediations
4

Many FRC clients are victims of family violence so there is often a power imbalance which has implications for the mediation process, and the outcomes for the children. At Ryde FRC for example, approximately 80% of the clients have experienced some form of domestic violence. The support these clients receive during mediation usually empowers them to feel more confident about making decisions that will improve their lives, and their children's.

Lawyer-
assisted
mediations
at other
FRCs
4

One of the challenges for the program was bringing together the legal and non-legal practices in an effective way. Now that family dispute resolution practitioners and family law solicitors have had an opportunity to work together with families through the mediation process, the program is proving to be an effective way of keeping families out of court.

Information and community information sessions

In the past year, Sarah has presented three Family Law legal information sessions each month at the Parramatta FRC. These sessions are delivered in conjunction with the FRC's Children in Focus classes and often lead to clients making an appointment for legal advice about their own family law matter.

As well as working with North Ryde and Parramatta FRCs, Helen and Sarah also assist client in mediations for other community legal centres working with FRCs, including Macarthur Legal Centre, South West Sydney Legal Centre and Northern Beaches FRC (on behalf of Legal Aid NSW).

Throughout the year, the FRC solicitors also delivered community legal education presentations about family law at Pendle Hill Family Support Services and the Parramatta Library.

Clinical legal education

Three times a year, Sarah and Helen run a clinical education program for family law students from Macquarie University. Eight students join the FRC solicitors for two weeks to learn first hand about family law and the dispute resolution process. The students are exposed to clients and their situations, and sit in with the solicitors when they are giving legal advice. Students also attend the Federal Magistrates Court and participate in a question and answer session with a Federal Magistrate during their visit.

Student Feedback

[The program] provided a fantastic learning environment, everyone was super friendly, and.....[I]t allowed a real insight as to what really happens.....

I really enjoyed the program set up and would encourage all other students to take part! Thank you very much Sarah and Helen.

Case Studies

In May 2012 our solicitor participated in a lawyer-assisted mediation on behalf of the mother. A 5 year old child was spending time with both parents, however the parents' relationship had ended badly and there was a good deal of animosity and poor communication between them. Our client's hope was that she and the father could improve communications and resolve parenting issues themselves.

The mediation started slowly, but improved after the parents discussed a few 'road blocks' to their communication. Once the misunderstandings were resolved the parties were able to agree on a parenting plan that was in the child's best interests.

Our solicitor spoke with the client a few weeks after the mediation. The client told her that she had recently had dinner together with the father and their child and that everything was going very well between them. The parties decided they did not require consent orders because they were confident they could continue to work together in the best interests of their child.

Our solicitor assisted the father of a baby boy, Liam. The mother and father were both about 19 years old. They had started their relationship while they were at school but had never lived together. After the mother fell pregnant, the relationship ended.

At the date of the mediation, Liam was about 8 months old and the father had only seen him a few times since the birth. The father was not included on the child's birth certificate.

At the lawyer-assisted mediation, both parties agreed to consider what was in the best interests of Liam. The mother agreed that the father could spend regular time with Liam for two hours, twice a week. The mother also agreed to amend the baby's birth certificate to include the father's name.

The father was very happy to be able to spend regular and frequent time with Liam to allow them to develop a close relationship.

Consent Orders to this effect were lodged with the Family Court, to make the agreement enforceable.

North Ryde

Total clients
171

Total advices
181

Total cases
35

Lawyer-assisted mediations
11

Lawyer-assisted mediations at other FRCs
4

Home Building Advocacy Service (HoBAS)

Elfet Eid, Michelle Ericoli and Tanja Podinic (Solicitors)
Kristen Vuleta (Paralegal)

The Home Building Advocacy Service (HoBAS) is a statewide service that advises and assists clients with home building disputes.

Total
clients
326

Home building is a niche area of law, and Macquarie Legal Centre is the only community legal centre in the state that offers this specialised service. Consequently, HoBAS responds to calls from clients throughout NSW and in the past year the service has experienced an increasing demand for assistance.

The HoBAS service is funded by NSW Fair Trading, and funding was recently extended to 2015.

HoBAS deals with disputes that arise between consumers and builders. These commonly include contractual issues such as variations and defective works. HoBAS solicitors assist clients by:

Total
advices
476

- advising on their legal rights and remedies
- negotiating with builders or their solicitors on behalf of clients
- appearing with clients at mediations
- advising and conducting cases for clients in the Consumer Trader and Tenancy Tribunal (CTTT).

Clients usually seek the assistance of the HoBAS team at the beginning of the process – before the contract is signed – or at the end, after the work has been completed.

Total cases
51

Clients who meet the means and merits criteria for assistance receive telephone advice from a HoBAS solicitor. If further assistance is required due to the client's inability to afford a private solicitor or resolve the matter themselves, HoBAS may open a case and act for the client.

Clients from
regional or
rural areas
94

The HoBAS service is particularly important for disadvantaged clients who cannot afford private solicitors or effectively represent themselves, or negotiate on their own behalf.

Without HoBAS, clients would have no avenue to contest defective workmanship, recover money or obtain compensation for losses they have suffered.

In the past year, MLC has received \$900 in donations from three grateful HoBAS clients.

Case Studies

HoBAS advised a client about defective work in relation to a hearing before the CTTT. Before seeking advice from HoBAS, our client had sought orders for \$5,000 compensation.

We advised our client that it was important to obtain an expert's report, a "Scott Schedule" and quotations. After our client followed this advice, his claim increased to a \$70k-\$80k compensation claim.

Our client felt very intimidated by the builder's solicitor and HoBAS assisted him throughout the directions hearing and also in replying to the builder's solicitor's correspondence.

After receiving the expert's report, which quantified the defective work in excess of \$70,000, we referred the client to a barrister, Ms Michelle McMahon. Ms McMahon assisted our client with the conduct of the matter and represented him at the final CTTT hearing. The builder was ultimately ordered to pay our client \$72,287.00.

HoBAS assisted a client with a defective works claim about the installation of a solar hot water system. Our client was elderly, on a pension and living with his carer. Our client was assisted by telephone as he lived in Tweed Heads.

Our client had asked the plumber on numerous occasions to fix the solar hot water system, but the plumber ignored his requests. It subsequently emerged that the plumber was unlicensed.

We sent a letter of demand and a number of quotes to the plumber on behalf of the client. The plumber responded by refusing to accept any responsibility for the defective work and denying it was in fact defective.

After considerable negotiation, the matter settled. The plumber paid our client compensation so our client could get the work fixed by a licensed plumber.

HoBAS assisted homeowner clients in a \$50,000 claim against a builder.

Our clients claimed that the builder had not completed the contract and had also undertaken defective and incomplete work on the premises. The builder filed a cross claim against our clients seeking payment of \$63,000 for work completed.

Due to the size and complexity of the case, both parties engaged Counsel.

The matter was heard at the Sydney CTTT in April 2012. The Tribunal concluded that the builder was only entitled to recover half of what he had claimed, and the homeowners were entitled to recover 90% of their claim against the builder.

Setting off one sum against the other, the builder was ordered to pay our clients approximately \$15,000.

After a long 14 months the case was finally settled with the builder making full and final payment to our clients.

Client Feedback

Thank you for all your efforts and for putting up with me. I couldn't have done any of it without you.

Thank you so very much for all you have done to help my partner and myself. We are truly grateful to you.

Your time, effort and advice were all greatly appreciated. We cannot thank you enough for the long hours and hard work you put into our case.

Parramatta Community Justice Clinic (PCJC)

Adele Francis and Jamal Maroon (Solicitors)

Total clients
201

The Parramatta Community Justice Clinic (PCJC) offers a free legal service to eligible people of Greater Western Sydney, Mondays to Fridays, 10am to 1pm.

The PCJC is a social justice initiative of the University of Western Sydney (UWS), in partnership with Macquarie Legal Centre.

Total advices
234

A Steering Committee comprising representatives from stakeholders (including funders, local agencies and the community) is responsible for the overall direction of the PCJC.

Face to face
advice
162

The PCJC provides legal advice and assistance to clients. One of the main aims of the service is to help clients represent themselves by ensuring they are adequately prepared when they go to court. The PCJC does this by advising on the client's rights and responsibilities, providing information about how they should respond in court and assisting them prepare submissions about possible penalties. The PCJC often represents clients during negotiations where the other party has a solicitor.

The PCJC offers advice across a range of legal areas including neighbourhood disputes, debt matters, family law, and traffic and motor vehicle offences.

Telephone
advice
70

Each fortnight, the PCJC offers a specialist clinic for clients seeking advice about immigration law. Michaela Byers from the University of Western Sydney and Dr Bao-Er, a private Migration Agent, provide free advice to clients at the clinic.

The PCJC is staffed by MLC solicitor Jamal Maroon, Nola Bourne, Administration Support Officer, and volunteer legal students from UWS who deal with front desk inquiries.

Email advice
2

During the year, the PCJC has received many referrals from local agencies including the Police, Legal Aid NSW, the Local Court Registry and local members of Parliament.

UWS Clinical Program

Total cases
opened
2011-2012
58

The PCJC delivers a quality practical education program for students from the University of Western Sydney.

Each week, two students from UWS attend the PCJC and assist the solicitor with clinical work. A placement with the PCJC gives students an opportunity to develop practical legal skills including interviewing and legal research, as well as learning about court procedures and protocols.

Each student is asked to provide feedback on the program and this gives the PCJC an opportunity to develop and improve the course.

UWS Student Feedback

It was a well-rounded unit with every aspect of it having equal importance and relevance. For me the best part of it was that it was a small team allowing for a learning environment for law students.

The client interviews with PCJC solicitors was a great hands-on learning experience.

Watching and listening to the solicitor taught me a lot about balancing support with getting the material facts out of clients.

The whole unit was fantastic and it must continue to operate to help the community and UWS students gain an insight into the legal profession.

Community Legal Education

Throughout the year, the PCJC participated in the following community legal education events:

- Immigration Law, Parramatta Town Hall, September 2011
- Elder Law, Merrylands Bowling Club, October 2011
- Small Business, Parramatta Town Hall, November 2011
- Information Stall, Law Week, Parramatta Mall, 2012

Client Feedback

I wish to say a special thanks to Jamal who provided me with professional and caring advice ... the result was positive and justice was served. A heartfelt thank you to Jamal & students who were great!

I'm glad I made it to see you yesterday. It has made a world of difference. I commend you for facilitating a positive consultation that I have benefited greatly from.

Case Study

A client attended a medical centre for scanning procedures in April 2012. Prior to the procedure the client was directed to remove jewellery, including a wedding ring. The wedding ring was handed to the scanning technician but was not returned to the client after the scanning procedure.

The client requested the return of the ring a number of times, but the medical centre told the client repeatedly that the ring could not be located.

The client then requested compensation for the value of the wedding ring, as well as compensation for the emotional distress of losing it, having had the wedding ring for some 28 years.

Initially the medical centre offered the client \$500.

After seeking assistance from the PCJC (which was able to negotiate a more acceptable outcome for the client), the medical centre agreed to pay the client compensation of \$2,000.

Matter type

Road traffic and
motor vehicle
offences

50

Motor
Vehicle Accidents

49

Credit & debt

44

Motor Vehicle
property damage

43

Neighbourhood
Disputes

38

Debt recovery/
overcharging

19

Family Law

15

Domestic
Violence/AVOs

12

Western Sydney Tenants' Service (WESTS)

Jessica Abi Khattar (Team Coordinator), Shelley Alvarez, Linda Grady, Bridget Kennedy, Nina Lau, Liam Meagher & Jayd Raffoul

Total
clients
1,079

The primary role of Western Sydney Tenants' Service (WESTS) is to advise tenants on their rights and responsibilities under the *Residential Tenancies Act*.

Many tenants are not aware of or do not understand their rights as a tenant and there is often a power imbalance between tenants and landlords. WESTS is a forceful and reliable advocacy service during what is often a distressing and difficult time for clients. WESTS plays an important role in preventing homelessness by ensuring disputes are resolved quickly and effectively so that wherever possible clients can remain in their home, or receive compensation that allows them to find alternative accommodation.

Total advices
1,193

In addition to delivering telephone advice to tenants, WESTS also provides minor casework assistance, as well as preparing and running cases on behalf of clients in the Consumer Trader and Tenancy Tribunal (CTTT).

Total cases
82

Minor casework usually involves negotiating for the client, writing letters on their behalf, drafting submissions and the preparation of evidence.

WESTS is staffed by five tenant advocates including a Coordinator and receives funding from NSW Fair Trading.

Community Legal Education

Total
community
legal
education
seminars
16

WESTS delivers community legal education throughout the local community and is a strong advocate for law and policy reform. WESTS advocates have spoken about tenancy issues at 16 community events this year including:

- SydWest Multicultural Services, July 2011
- Auburn Welcomes You Festival, August 2011
- DV Line, August 2011
- Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association, August 2011
- Community Safety Expo, White Ribbon Day, November 2011
- Macquarie Community College, December 2011
- Auburn Diversity Services Information Session, January 2012
- Guildford Library Evening Session, Law Week, May 2012.

Law reform and policy

WESTS
referrals to
other
agencies
210

In the past year, WESTS was active in the area of law and policy reform, supporting a Tenants Advice and Advocacy Program Repairs Campaign which aimed to ensure that residents in Department of Housing tenants have proper and appropriate repairs made to their homes as quickly as possible.

WESTS was also involved in the Tenancy Legal Working Party, the Share Housing Campaign and the Tenants' Union Boarding House Bill Consultation Committee. Changes were made as a result of the Boarding House Bill campaign which will improve the rights of boarders and lodgers.

WESTS advocates attend TAAP Network Meetings three times each year, twice in the city and once at a regional centre.

National Conference

In October 2011 Jessica Abi Khattar and Shelley Alvarez delivered a paper entitled *Sustaining Tenancies For Ex-Prisoners Project*, at the Community Legal Centres National Conference. The paper was based on a series of seminars WESTS delivered to prison inmates about housing options prior to release, and sustaining those tenancies in the longer term.

CTTT in Parramatta

A development that continues to concern WESTS was the closure of the CTTT in Parramatta in March 2012. WESTS lobbied against this move because of the detrimental effect it would have on clients, potentially increasing adverse outcomes.

Case Study

The client and her husband rented a property to live in with their young daughter. The client was a successful businesswoman with her own beauty salon, and her husband had been a labourer since he left the armed forces a few years ago.

As her income was reliable and her husband was out of town when the lease was signed, the property was rented in the client's name only.

Her husband had been violent towards the client on a number of occasions and over time the violence escalated.

One evening during a particularly violent argument, the client grabbed her daughter and ran to the car. Her husband followed, and in a fit of rage smashed the windscreen with a sledgehammer. The police were called and advised the client not to go back to the property. The client and her daughter went to stay with friends and the next day the client called the real estate agent and told them she no longer lived at the premises.

The client and her daughter found a new home and settled in. A few times over an eighteen month period, the real estate agent contacted our client to say that the rent on the home she had shared with her husband was behind. Each time the client responded saying she did not live there. Eventually the agent stopped contacting her.

The client called us 18 months after she and her daughter left the property, saying she had received a letter stating that the landlord of the former family home was taking her to the CTTT for unpaid rent and compensation for damage done to the property.

We advised the client, spoke to the real estate agent, helped her gather evidence, wrote submissions and attended the hearing with her.

At the hearing the CTTT found that our client had repudiated her tenancy contract when she advised the agent she was no longer living there, and the agent had accepted that repudiation by allowing her former husband to continue living at the property. As the rent was up to date and the property was in fine condition when our client moved out, the husband, not our client, was liable for the money the landlord was claiming, regardless of whose name was on the lease.

Macquarie Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS)

Bridget Purcell (Coordinator), Shalini Kumari and Elizabeth Wulff (Acting Coordinators), Christine Smith (Assistant Coordinator), Elva Wright (Aboriginal worker), Samiha Alameddine (CALD worker), Cheri Barrett & Tracey Hollywood (Administrative Assistants)

The Macquarie Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (Macquarie WDVCAS) supports women and children experiencing domestic violence.

Macquarie WDVCAS assists women seeking Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (AVOs) at Parramatta and Ryde courts including supporting them at hearings, providing information on AVOs and the court process, and making referrals for women and their children.

For Macquarie WDVCAS workers, the initial contact with a client is the most important, and that often happens in response to a yellow card issued by the police. Workers will usually meet a client at court on the first court date and may subsequently support them through a hearing for an AVO if a perpetrator resists orders.

Macquarie WDVCAS works closely with a number of local organisations including:

- Domestic Violence Liaison Officers from Parramatta, Castle Hill, Granville, Eastwood and Gladesville Police Stations
- St Michael's Family Centre
- Parramatta Holroyd Family Support
- Cumberland Women's Health Centre
- Erin's Place Refuge
- Ryde Mental Health
- Horizons Legal Service, and
- Ryde Family Support.

Community Events

Throughout the year, Macquarie WDVCAS has spoken about how the service assists women and children living with domestic violence at events including the following:

- Early Intervention for DV Information and Workshop Session, Granville Youth and Multicultural Centre, November 2011, and
- Family and Domestic Violence Forum, Castle Hill Council, March 2012.

Review of WDVCAS

Macquarie WDVCAS workers also attended the annual two day DV Forum convened by Legal Aid NSW. In the past year, Legal Aid NSW commissioned a report on the WDVCAS program expansion. The report entitled *Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program: A Review of the Program Expansion, 2012*, was prepared by Tim Leach in 2011 and released by Legal Aid NSW in February 2012.

Total
clients
770

Disability
25

Indigenous
19

CALD
background
347

Interpreters
66

Criminal
charges
261

ADVO
625

APVO
1

MLC provided a response to the report and attended follow up meetings arranged by Legal Aid NSW.

The WDV CAS program is essential to supporting vulnerable victims. Women who live with domestic violence are usually traumatised before they get to the first court appearance.

Often, these women find it difficult to make clear decisions and Macquarie WDV CAS assists them navigate their way through the court process. Referrals are frequently made for legal advice - particularly family law and victims compensation - counselling, housing, immigration and financial assistance. In this way, Macquarie WDV CAS makes a practical difference in the women's lives.

Case Study

Macquarie WDV CAS assisted a CALD woman who had been to court several times trying to get an AVO against her ex husband and various members of his family.

The woman had married overseas and come to Australia with her husband approximately ten years ago. The client and her husband had a number of children. The husband abused the client, physically and emotionally. The children had witnessed the violence, and the woman feared for her life and her children's safety.

Our client eventually left her husband but the abuse continued. The police took out applications for AVOs against the ex husband many times, but our client frequently was too scared to give evidence and assist police.

We were able to support this woman through a number of court appearances, including a final hearing. We also offered her referrals for family law advice, a contact centre and other welfare and support agencies.

Our client's struggle was long, but ultimately positive. Final orders were made against her ex husband who is now in custody for breaching the AVO. Our client and her children are adjusting to living without constant fear and torment.

New
Matters
887

**Referrals
made by
WDV CAS**

Counselling/
welfare
543

Legal service
158

Police
44

Family
Relationships
Centre
12

Government
agency
12

Accommodation
12

Children's Court Assistance Scheme (CCAS)

Leah Cruickshank (Coordinator & Aboriginal Specialist Worker),
Vik Craig, Stan Small, Sue Underwood & David Willis
(Court Support Workers)

Parramatta Children's Court

The Children's Court Assistance Scheme (CCAS) provides support to young people at Parramatta and Bidura Children's Courts.

**Total clients
4,459**

The CCAS team of youth workers ensures that young people appearing at court receive legal advice and representation from Legal Aid NSW and the Aboriginal Legal Service, as well as referrals and assistance with welfare-related issues such as drug and alcohol use, accommodation, finances and education & training. If necessary, CCAS workers can also provide informal mediation between young people and their families, and supply emergency food hampers and clothing vouchers.

**Male
3,809**

CCAS clients range in age from 10 to 17 years. By the time CCAS workers meet them at the Children's Court many have experienced homelessness, family violence, drug and alcohol abuse, illiteracy and a lack of education.

**Female
650**

The CCAS service operates at Bidura Children's Court two days each week, and the Parramatta Children's Court five days each week.

**Aboriginal &
Torres Strait
Islander
779**

CCAS staff work closely with Children's Court staff, the Aboriginal Legal Service, Legal Aid and NSW Police. The CCAS service has also developed productive and supportive relationships with local youth and education programs in MLC's catchment area including Reconnect, Anglicare Youth Service, Bankstown Multicultural Youth Service, Eagleraps and many PCYCs.

Throughout the year, the CCAS continued to work towards improving service for its clients.

Leah Cruickshank (CCAS Coordinator) collaborated with solicitors, police and the judiciary including the President of the Children's Court and the Court Registrar to develop a callover process for young people involved in apprehended violence orders. This work led to the development and implementation of a new Practice Note for the Court.

**Long Contacts
(>15 mins)
1,083**

Leah also consulted with the NSW Department of Attorney-General and Justice on the issue of how court staff can support and work effectively with young people suffering developmental delay when they are at the Children's Court.

**Accompanied
3,145**

Leah remained actively engaged with the CCAS Advisory Group throughout the year. During this period, she and Stan Small worked with Legal Aid NSW and the Advisory Group to establish statewide guidelines for the CCAS program.

Case Studies

A young girl appeared before the Children's Court on charges of larceny twice in a short period of time. On both occasions she had no family members with her.

A CCAS worker approached the young girl who remembered the worker from the previous occasion. After a short conversation with the court support worker the young girl became upset.

In the privacy of the court support office, the young girl confided that she was scared she would go to gaol. She told the worker she had stolen a jumper because she was cold and had no warm clothes or blankets. Her parents were unable to buy them for her, and they had no money to buy nappies for the baby of the family. The young girl was frightened and concerned about causing any further problems for her parents.

The court support worker was able to reassure the young girl that her parents would not be in any trouble, that help could be arranged and that a solicitor at the court would be able to advise and assist her with the larceny charges.

The court support worker organised a clothing voucher so the young girl could collect warm clothes and blankets on her way home from Court that day. The worker also made a referral to Reconnect for intensive family support to assist the family through the hard times they were experiencing.

Two weeks later the young girl came back to the Court with her father. She was not required to appear before the Court that day, but had returned to thank the court support worker. Her father told the worker the family had received additional clothing and blankets, as well as assistance in paying their electricity bill.

A young Aboriginal man appeared before the Children's Court on domestic violence charges.

The CCAS court support worker met with him on a number of occasions and got to know him and his family over that period of time.

It was apparent there was a high level of family dysfunction and although his ambition was to become a plumber, the young man told the support worker that his family undermined him and told him he would never amount to anything. The young man said he wanted to move out of home to escape the drinking and the fighting.

The court support worker was able to assist the young man to find supported accommodation. He also applied for and began to receive Centrelink benefits.

The CCAS worker made a referral for him to attend MTC Solutions for assistance enrolling in relevant courses and in finding a plumbing apprenticeship.

Twelve months after his first appearance, the young man's court matters have been finalised, he is enrolled at TAFE and his current employer is supporting him through the course. His employer has also provided him with a letter of support to present to the Court at his sentencing hearing.

The young man has not breached his AVO, or been charged with any other offences since he left home. He continues to visit his family once a week and only goes there when they are all sober and he can enjoy his time with them.

Bidura Children's Court

Total clients
1,695

Male
1,289

Female
406

Aboriginal &
Torres Strait
Islander
454

Long Contacts
(>15 mins)
267

Accompanied
1,329

Central West Contact Service (CWCS)

Lesley Humphries (Coordinator), Gwen Davies (Senior Supervisor), Salwa Israel, Ozra Meshkat, Madhabi Taneja, Lachelle Uzcateguigaymon, Nawal Wehbe & Beatriz Patino (Supervisors), Vicki Vucetic, Tracey Hollywood, Victoria Lucas, Lita Chiv & Amira Francis (casual) (Administrative Assistants)

Total
clients
595

Central West Contact Service (CWCS) is a child-focused service, committed to providing a physically and emotionally safe environment for children who are spending time with a parent or changing from the care of one parent to another.

Supervised/
Monitored
contact
221

CWCS supervises and monitors contact visits and changeovers for children and parents, and assists parents by providing appropriate referrals to other community agencies.

Changeover
clients
184

Many parents using the service do so because of an order by the Family Court or the Children's Court. CWCS provides a facility where parents can spend quality time with their child or children in a stress-free and homely environment, or where children can be delivered from one parent to another without incident.

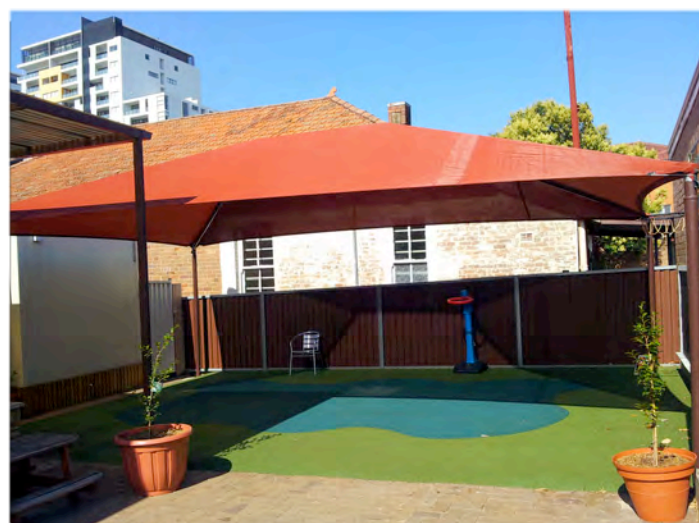
ATSI Clients
9

The service's trained staff are present at all times and work to ensure that contact and changeovers are smooth, safe and conflict free. Supervisors are fluent in many languages including Arabic, Bengali, French, Hindi, Persian, German and Spanish. Where necessary, CWCS arranges for interpreters to attend for family visits.

CALD
Clients
133

The service is located in Harris Park in a cottage with a backyard housing an outdoor play space and small garden. Children sometimes bring plants to add to the garden, and many like to pick flowers from it to give to a parent. The cottage is well equipped with books, toys and activities, making it a relaxed and comfortable space for families.

Client
Intake, Info,
Referral &
Support
190



Outdoor shade sail and soft-fall play area

Clients come to CWCS from across New South Wales. Many of them have experienced domestic violence, mental health problems, intractable conflict around parenting arrangements, drug and alcohol abuse or a lack of contact with their child for some time.

Referrals are an important part of the work that CWCS does. After an initial client assessment, CWCS can make referrals to programs that can help parents develop their parenting skills, manage anger, better understand their child's needs, or assist them with accommodation and other family support.

Client feedback

- *The team at CWCS is very professional, the time with my children has strengthened our relationship, which now led to the children coming home to visit. The facilities are good with plenty for the children to do and enjoy their time with me.*
- *Staff members were friendly and assured me the children were OK after the visit which was important for me to know.*
- *I like the service, I was treated with respect and was satisfied that I received adequate information to meet my needs.*
- *I really appreciated all the helpful info on parenting techniques plus the encouragement I received. CWCS is a deeply appreciated service that helps to keep the kids in contact with their parents.*



Ozra Meshkat Lesley Humphries Salwa Israel Gwen Davies

CWCS was sad to see the departure of Salwa Israel at the end of 2011 after many years of dedicated service as a casual supervisor. CWCS wishes her well for the future.

Youth Education Project

Caroline Saez (Youth Educator), Leticia Marquez Gonzalez and Alex Dovan
(Administrative Assistants)

Total
attendees
at
workshops
329

The Youth Education Project (YEP) aims to educate young people from the age of 14 to 24 years about the law, and create resources they can use when legal issues arise.

Workshops

Throughout the year, YEP continued to conduct *Think Before You Act* live theatre workshops for young people, predominantly at high schools and youth centres. The workshops cover a range of legal issues including criminal law, work and development orders, bullying and harassment, and the use of technology such as mobile phones and Facebook.

*Think
Before
You Act*
workshops
6

After workshops, YEP often refers participants to other services for assistance. This frequently includes legal advice and financial and housing support.

This year YEP partnered with the Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE) to produce three short films of the scenarios presented in the *Think Before You Act* workshops. This will ensure the workshops have been captured as a resource that can be used by young people well into the future. Filming finished in June 2012, with completion planned for the end of 2012.

Community Legal Education

In addition to the workshops, YEP delivered a number of presentations at various forums including:

- Information stall, Merrylands Youth Expo, September 2011
- Youth Crew, Merrylands Youth Centre (with Jamal Maroon), May 2012
- Carramar Early Intervention Program (with Katy Jenkins), June 2012
- Law and Justice Foundation Grants Seminar, Parramatta, June 2012.

Conferences

YEP staff regularly attend quarterly interagency meetings including the Cumberland Combined Services Network, the Youth Justice Coalition and the Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Network.

In February 2012 Carolina Saez attended the Holroyd City Council Sector Conference. In April Carolina attended a seminar by Sydney University's Institute of Criminology on *NSW Crime Statistics and Trends*.

General
legal
info
3

Community
worker
presentation
1

Filming *Think Before You Act*



At Holroyd High School



Discussing *Party Hard* script with Director Vanna Seung



Acknowledgements

Macquarie Legal Centre would like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their generous support throughout the year:

- All our volunteer solicitors and front office workers
- Local courts and tribunals that opened their doors to our clinical program students and the judicial officers who spent time with the students
- Eric Petersen and Michelle McMahon, Barristers, for their generous support and assistance
- Peter Longfield from Marrickville Legal Centre for his assistance in research and legislative interpretation
- UWS staff
- PCJC Steering Committee members
- Parramatta Local Area Command, NSW Police
- Registry staff at the Parramatta Local Court
- Probation and Parole for providing CWCS with a volunteer worker who assists with cleaning the premises, toys and equipment
- Parramatta/Holroyd Family Support for providing toys at Christmas time for the children of our most disadvantaged families.

Funders

Commonwealth

Attorney-General's Department
Department of Families, Housing,
Community Services &
Indigenous Affairs (FaHSCIA)

New South Wales

Attorney-General's Department
Department of Human Services
Legal Aid Commission of NSW
NSW Fair Trading

Local Government

Holroyd City Council
Parramatta City Council

Non Government

UnitingCare Unifam Counselling & Mediation
Law & Justice Foundation
Macquarie University
University of Western Sydney

Macquarie Legal Centre Inc

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended
30 June 2012

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CWCS	Central West Contact Service
CCAS	Children's Court Assistance Scheme
HoBas	Home Building Advocacy Service
TAAP	Tenants Advice Advocacy Program
FRC	Family Relationship
PCJC	Parramatta Community Justice Clinic
Maq Family	Macquarie University Family Law Clinic
CFDR	Coordinated Family Dispute Resolution
PSFRS	Post Separation Family relationship Services
Council	Parramatta City Council

STATEMENT BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE INC

In the opinion of the members of the Management Committee

- (a) The accompanying Income & Expenditure Statements of:

MLC	Macquarie Legal Centre
DVCAS	Macquarie Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services
YEP	Youth Education Project
CWCS	Central West Contact Service
CCAS	Children's Court Assistance Scheme
HoBas	Home Building Advocacy Service
TAAP	Tenants Advice Advocacy Program
FRC	Family Relationship
PCJC	Parramatta Community Justice Clinic
Maq Family	Macquarie University Family Law Clinic
CFDR	<i>Coordinated Family Dispute Resolution</i>
PSFRS	<i>Post Separation Family relationship Services</i>
Council	<i>Parramatta City Council</i>

are drawn up so as to give a fair and true view of the results of the financial year ended June 30, 2011 and the state of affairs as of that date.

- (b) The accompanying balance sheet is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Centre as at June 30, 2012
- (c) At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that the organisation will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

The Centre has, during the financial year:

- i) Kept such accounting records as correctly explain the transactions and financial position of the Centre;
- ii) Kept its accounting records in such a manner as would enable true and fair accounts of the organisation to be prepared from time to time: and
- iii) Kept its records in such a manner as would enable the accounts of the Centre to be conveniently and properly audited in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards;

The Accounts for the Centre have been properly prepared by a competent person.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the committee.

Place: Parramatta, NSW

Date:.....5/11/12.....
 Member:.....JOHN MORATELLI.....
 Signature:.....*[Signature]*.....
 Committee Position:.....CHAIR.....

Date:.....5/11/12.....
 Member:.....JOHN HARGRAVE.....
 Signature:.....*[Signature]*.....
 Committee Position:.....Committee Member.....

Macquarie Legal Centre Inc.
P O Box 23
Parramatta NSW 2124

Balance Sheet

As of June 2012

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Cash At Bank	
Cheque Account	\$105,003.94
EFTPOS CWCS	\$7,550.36
Total Cash At Bank	<u>\$112,554.30</u>
Cash On Hand	
Petty Cash Float	\$200.00
Petty Cash - CWCS	\$200.00
Cash Drawer	\$781.52
Petty Cash CCAS	\$40.00
Total Cash On Hand	<u>\$1,221.52</u>
Investment Accounts	
Colonial First State Inv MLC	\$275,906.45
National Term Deposit 4877	\$25,192.22
Bank Guarantee Kuei-Jung Hsieh	\$9,011.40
Bank Guarantee NASUS GROUP	\$22,332.90
Total Investment Accounts	<u>\$332,442.97</u>
Debtors & Receivables	
Prepaid Expenses	\$8,317.26
Total Debtors & Receivables	<u>\$8,317.26</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>\$454,536.05</u>
Fixed Assets	
Office Fitting	\$25,481.67
Furniture, Plant & equipment	\$62,277.19
Computer Equipment	\$15,630.50
Total Fixed Assets	<u>\$103,389.36</u>
Total ASSETS	<u>\$557,925.41</u>
LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities	
Current Receivables	
GST collected	\$41,040.36
GST Paid	-\$12,224.65
Accrued Expenses	\$2,981.98
Total Current Receivables	<u>\$31,797.69</u>
Accrued Leave Expenses	
Sick Leave Accruals	\$20,500.00
Annual Leave Accrual	\$152,043.66
Long Service Leave Accrual	\$48,806.46
Provisions for Redundancy	\$6,117.48
Parenting Leave Provision	\$9,586.84
Grants In Advance	
PCJC-UWS	\$11,908.33
Coordinated Family Dispute Re	\$80,000.00
Post Separation Family	\$19,589.00
Tenancy Advocacy Services	\$26,191.56
Macquarie CLE Family Law	\$20,532.00
YEP Work Shop	\$4,845.00
Total Grants In Advance	<u>\$163,065.89</u>
Deductions	
Group Tax Payable	\$17,075.50

Macquarie Legal Centre Inc.

Balance Sheet

As of June 2012

Total Deductions	\$17,075.50	
Provisions		
Historic Adjustment	-\$2,483.48	
Audit Fees Provision	\$18,829.99	
Training Provisions	\$1,004.10	
Computer replacement	\$5,500.00	
Equipment replacement	\$2,529.49	
Repairs & Maintenance	\$1,550.00	
Telephone system	\$3,433.31	
Publication Provision	\$9,409.00	
Provision for wages	\$693.31	
Total Provisions	\$40,465.72	
Total Current Liabilities	\$489,459.24	
Total LIABILITIES		\$489,459.24
Net Assets		\$68,466.17
EQUITY		
Current Year Surplus	-\$16,279.79	
Prior Surplus	\$84,745.96	
Total EQUITY		\$68,466.17

Macquarie Legal Centre Inc.
P O Box 23
Parramatta NSW 2124

Profit & Loss Statement

July 2011 through June 2012

INCOME

Operating Grants	
LAC State Grant	\$272,940.50
FLLAD Commonwealth Grant	\$157,918.00
Family Relationship	\$112,652.57
Home Building Advocacy Service	\$233,685.65
DOCS Grant	\$43,046.09
Post Separation Family Relatio	\$17,630.00
Macquarie CLE Family Law	\$31,323.96
Tenancy Advocacy Program	\$297,292.61
Coordinated Family Dispute	\$38,333.60
LAC DV Grant	\$275,995.94
Legal Income	\$1,650.75
FAHCSIA Grant	\$297,492.78
Parramatta PCJC	\$68,673.33
Parramatta Council Grant	\$4,500.00
LAC / CCAS	\$226,281.64
Macquarie University	\$21,000.00
Total Operating Grants	<u>\$2,100,417.42</u>
Bank Interest	\$27,081.38
Donations Received	\$1,050.00
Membership Fees Rec'd	\$230.00
Sale of Equipment	\$90.00
Sale of Publications	\$4,156.71
Worker's Compensation Received	\$6,175.40
Miscellaneous Income	\$662.95
Admin and management costs	
Management fee	\$83,644.15
C'bution to operating costs	\$251,566.52
Total Admin and management costs	<u>\$335,210.67</u>
CWCS Income	
Subpoenas	\$3,440.00
Admin fees	\$1,360.00
Service fees	\$73,564.43
Total CWCS Income	<u>\$78,364.43</u>
Total INCOME	<u>\$2,553,438.96</u>

EXPENDITURE

Wages and Oncosts	
Direct Salaries	\$1,298,325.11
Casuals	\$236,812.83
Relief Staff	\$91,053.46
Superannuation	\$147,452.52
Leave Loading	\$18,239.74
Workers Comp Insurance	\$6,923.92
Training	\$7,614.40
Travel	\$4,676.70
Conferences	\$5,168.86
Provisions - Annual Leave	\$47,613.63
Provisions - Long Service	-\$13,314.08
Total Wages and Oncosts	<u>\$1,850,567.09</u>
Operating Costs	
C'bution to operating costs	\$251,566.52

Macquarie Legal Centre Inc.

Profit & Loss Statement

July 2011 through June 2012

Consultancy	\$17,475.15	
Evaluation Expenses	\$3,400.00	
Professional Supervision	\$9,039.39	
Macquarie University	\$16,500.00	
Advertising/Promotions	\$1,393.18	
Annual Report/Service Eval'n	\$3,127.61	
Bank Charges	\$2,459.35	
Consumables	\$8,219.87	
Electricity/Gas	\$8,216.03	
Insurance	\$5,976.78	
Library & Resources	\$2,425.27	
Management Committee	\$835.82	
Memberships/Subscriptions	\$8,183.18	
P'copier/computer maintenance	\$12,699.59	
Postage/Couriers	\$4,019.37	
Rent and rates	\$111,380.68	
Cleaning Services	\$20,627.28	
Repairs & Maintenance	\$5,195.14	
Security/Alarm System	\$858.00	
Stationary & Printing	\$12,568.94	
Telephone/fax/internet	\$39,944.72	
Total Operating Costs	<u>\$546,111.87</u>	
Other Costs		
Evening Advice Expenses	\$2,394.03	
Audit Fees	\$13,950.00	
Depreciation	\$34,541.67	
Furniture and Equipment	-\$794.00	
Legal Expenses	\$3,426.68	
Disbursements	\$596.37	
Management fee	\$83,644.15	
Practising Certificates	\$2,523.64	
Moving Expenses	\$6,146.43	
Publication Expenses	\$12,039.00	
Workshop Expenses	\$5,168.18	
Translations - Interpreters	\$1,702.19	
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$2,121.45	
Total Other Costs	<u>\$167,459.79</u>	
Obsolete accounts		
YEP Publications	\$5,580.00	
Total EXPENDITURE		<u>\$2,569,718.75</u>
Operating Profit		<u>-\$16,279.79</u>
OTHER INCOME		
Net Profit/(Loss)		<u><u>-\$16,279.79</u></u>



PITCHER PARTNERS

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MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE INC. ABN 81 963 193 626

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE INC.

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Macquarie Legal Centre Inc., which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2012, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in members funds and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the governing committee's declaration.

Responsibility of Those Charged With Governance

The governing committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act 2009 (NSW) and financial reporting needs of the members.

The governing committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the governing committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by those charged with governance, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

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PITCHER PARTNERS

MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE INC.
ABN 81 963 193 626

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE INC.**

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Macquarie Legal Centre Inc. as of 30 June 2012 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial report and the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act 2009 (NSW).

Basis of Accounting

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 in the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Macquarie Legal Centre Inc. to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act 2009 (NSW) and the financial reporting needs of the members as determined by the governing committee. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Auditor's Qualifications

Registered Company Auditor and member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia. Registered Company Auditor No. 172348.

Association's Financial Records

The Association has kept such financial records as are necessary to enable financial statements to be prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards.



MARK GODLEWSKI

Partner



PITCHER PARTNERS

SYDNEY

Date 12 November 2012

