

2021-22 ANNUAL REPORT



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Western Sydney Community Legal Centre Limited (WSCLC) would like to acknowledge the Burramattigal people of the Darug Nation, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation and the Ku-Ring-Gai people who are the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices are located and where we conduct our work.

We acknowledge and pay respects to Elders, past and present, who have given us time, knowledge and guidance. We appreciate the rich contribution and resilience that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and youth provide to WSCLC and the community.

WSCLC continues to work together with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and our non-Indigenous staff, to better our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and the ongoing connection to the land, waters and seas.

We are committed to creating a genuine appreciation for the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their contribution to the workplace and community, and in turn, we are working towards reconciliation.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.



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ABOUT US

Western Sydney Community Legal Centre Limited (WSCLC) is a public company limited by guarantee, governed by a Board of volunteer skills-based Directors who are generally local residents and professionals with an interest in social justice. WSCLC is accredited by the Community Legal Centres Australia.

OUR MISSION

To provide legal services and legal adjacent social services with the aim of making navigation of, and access to, the legal system easier for people in need.

OUR VALUES

- Respectful of each other, our communities and stakeholders.
- Supporting and empowering each other to achieve our vision and purpose.
- People, communities and clients come first.
- Accountable in our thinking attitudes and actions.
- Dynamic in pursuit of excellence.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

This year WSCLC developed and launched our Strategic Plan for the next three years. As part of our plan, we are focusing on three key pillars:

- 1. Build a collaborative culture, supported by the right policies and incentives to drive integrated delivery of services.
- 2. Focus on specific programs relevant to our targeted clients' needs. Build capabilities to deliver these programs.
- 3. Build a resilient high quality organisation, with governance, resilient systems, clear processes and a diversified revenue base.







ABOUT US

OUR WORK

WSCLC's work operates under two separate arms: a legal arm and a social justice arm.

The legal arm incorporates:

- The Community Legal Centre Program (CLCP) operating across Western Sydney including:
 - The Aboriginal Legal Access Program (ALAP) funded by the NSW and Commonwealth Attorney General's Departments, administered by Legal Aid NSW.
 - The Multicultural Legal Service (MLS) funded by the NSW and Commonwealth Attorney General's Departments, administered by Legal Aid NSW.
- The **Home Building Advocacy Service (HoBAS)** operating state-wide and funded by NSW Fair Trading.

The social justice arm incorporates:

- The **Central West Contact Service (CWCS)** operating within Western Sydney and funded by the Department of Social Services (Cth).
- The Children's Court Assistance Scheme (CCAS) operating at the Children's Court of NSW at Parramatta and Surry Hills with funding from the Commonwealth Government and NSW Government administered by Legal Aid NSW.
- The Cumberland Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (CWDVCAS) –
 operating within certain sections of Western Sydney with funding from the NSW
 Government administered by the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program
 (WDVCAP), Legal Aid NSW.
- The **Family Advocacy Support Service (FASS)** operating at Parramatta with funding from the Commonwealth administered as a component of the NLAP through Legal Aid NSW.
- The **Western Sydney Tenants' Service (WESTS)** operating within certain sections of Western Sydney and funded by NSW Fair Trading.
- The **Youth Education Program (YEP)** funded by NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

WSCLC is pleased to acknowledge the support of our funders and partners:

Funders:

- Commonwealth Attorney General's Department
- State Attorney General's Department
- Department of Social Services (Cth)
- NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- NSW Fair Trading

Pro-Bono Partners

- HWL Ebsworth Lawyers
- Sydney West Family Lawyers
- Sparke Helmore Lawyers

Partners

- Legal Aid NSW
- Just ReInvest NSW

















CHAIR'S REPORT

Helen Bouropoulos

The last year has continued to bring significant challenges for everybody but I am pleased to report that Western Sydney Community Legal Centre has continued its journey of growth and achievement.

The Western Sydney community in particular has dealt with the social and economic fallout of recurring lockdowns and natural disasters. I am proud of the role WSCLC has played at the forefront of delivering supports to those impacted including women experiencing domestic violence, youth at risk and communities impacted by the floods.

Throughout the year WSCLC has continued to expand the depth of our services including the expansion of our Community Legal Centre Program (CLCP) with the creation of outreach and court duty services. This has allowed us to better reach our community and increase access to legal advice and services. With the support of Legal Aid NSW we have increased our focus on family and sexual violence legal support.

A major focus has been the implementation of the first stage of WSCLC's three year strategy. This presented the management team and the board the opportunity to focus on our people, operations and program delivery, identifying strengths and opportunities to building a resilient and sustainable organisation.

We continued to invest in strengthening our infrastructure, particularly technology as many of our services moved to online delivery. This will remain a focus in the coming year.

During the year the Board farewelled Christina Bova as Director. Christina was instrumental in reshaping our financial management which has left the organisation in a stronger position to realise our strategic goals. The Board was pleased to welcome Hena Yearley as Director.

My thanks go to each Director who volunteers their time and expertise to support our organisation and to staff who, under particularly challenging circumstances, remained dedicated to our Mission of justice for all and to the community of Western Sydney.

Our achievements would not be possible without the support of our funders and partners. A special thanks goes to Legal Aid NSW, the Department of Social Services, NSW Fair Trading, NSW Department of Communities and Justice and the Attorney General's Department.

For 2022 we are prepared to continue to face challenges and the next 12 months will be vital as the Centre, our funders and community, continue to support access to legal services and social justice initiatives.

Helen Bouropoulos Chair

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE PROGRAM (CLCP)

Number of staff in team: 20

Funded by: The Australian Government, NSW Government and the Public Purpose Fund through the Community Legal Centres Program administered by Legal Aid NSW.

Who we assist: The CLCP team assist the community of Western Sydney

What we do

The CLCP team offers a range of free legal services targeted towards priority client groups who experience barriers to accessing justice, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander people, people with a disability, and people receiving low incomes who live in Western Sydney.

We offer legal information, referrals, advice, tasks, and in some cases, representation in Family Law, Care and Protection, Minor Crime and Civil Law matters.

The CLCP team also offers services for the community, which includes attending community events and delivering community legal education across a variety of topics.

External Partnerships

The CLCP team formed partnerships with the following organisations:

- Hawkesbury Library
- Riverstone Neighborhood Centre
- Parramatta, Windsor, Mount Druitt, Blacktown, Penrith Local Courts
- The Women's Cottage
- Auburn Barnardos
- Wash House Inc
- Refuge Outreach Action Response (ROAR)
 Program
- North West Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service
- Relationships Australia through the following Family Relationship Centres:
 - o Blacktown Family Relationship Centre
 - Macquarie Park Family Relationship Centre
 - Bathurst Family Relationships Centre
- Uniting Counselling and Mediation Services
- Resilience NSW
- Western Sydney Community Centre
- Harris Park Community Centre,
- Beralla Community Centre
- Guildford Community Centre
- NSW Health.
- · House of Welcome.
- STARTTS
- Auburn Library
- Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association
- Community Migrant Resource Centre
- Blacktown Women's and Girls Health Service
- Barnardos Cranebrook
- Great Lakes Agency for Peace and Development (GLAPD)
- DV West
- Women's Cottage
- Cumberland Women's Health Centre

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE PROGRAM (CLCP)

Case Study 1: Local Court Traffic Duty Service

We met the client through our Local Court Traffic Duty Service. The client had been charged with driving whilst disqualified and had failed to attend court and so had been convicted and disqualified in her absence. The client reported to us that their reason for not attending court was that they did not receive notification of the court date as they had recently become homeless due to unpaid rent.

Our solicitor represented the client in an annulment application. The Magistrate accepted the annulment application and set aside the previous penalty. We then made submissions on the client's behalf, arguing the client shouldn't face further disqualification. The client was concerned about facing any further disqualification as they were currently living in their car and were finding it hard to secure employment without their licence.

The Magistrate agreed with our submissions and ordered a Conditional Release Order without conviction. Less than 4% of these type of matters are successful in obtaining such a positive outcome. As a result of our advocacy, the client's licence was not disqualified and this has allowed her to find employment and a place to live.

Case Study 2: Community Justice

The client suffered from an intellectual disability and was in receipt of the Disability Support Pension.

The client approached us with an application for a costs assessment filed by a solicitor who had represented the client in a personal injury matter. The amount of legal costs to be determined was just over \$35,000.

The client disputed the sum claimed by their former solicitor. We assisted the client with advice and a response to the costs assessment application. The costs assessor determined that the client had nothing to pay his former solicitor.

The client's former solicitor filed an application of review of the cost assessor's decision. We assisted the client with the gathering of evidence and submissions in response to the review application. In a pleasing result, even though an error was found in the cost assessor's decision, the review panel determined that the client was only liable to pay around \$1,000 in legal fees and the client's former solicitor was ordered to pay both the costs of the costs assessment and review.

The client was very grateful for our assistance. The client said our assistance helped to remove a very stressful time out of his life.

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE PROGRAM (CLCP)

Case Study 3: Family Relationships

We represented a client who was seeking a divorce from her husband of 40 years. The client had been a victim of domestic violence in the marriage and English was her second language.

The client attended our office and instructed that she had been separated from her husband for almost 2 years and was seeking to finalise their separation by way of divorce. The client travelled overseas at 16 years old and married her husband in the 1980s. She then returned to Australia a year after her marriage.

At the Divorce hearing, the Deputy Registrar raised concerns regarding the validity of the marriage given the client was 16 years old at the time and asked us to file submissions in relation to the circumstances of the marriage. If we could not satisfy the Deputy Registrar that the marriage was valid, the client would be considered in a de-facto relationship and would be out of time to commence any property settlement proceedings.

After extensive research, we discovered that at the time of the client's marriage, the marriageable age was 16 years. We drafted an affidavit and submissions to this effect, which also addressed the issue of consent.

The Deputy Registrar considered our submissions and granted the divorce. The client was emotional and very grateful as she could now proceed with a property settlement application.

Case Study 4: Multicultural Legal Service

Our client approached the service for advice after being terminated from a job that she only held for 5 days. She had been told that her position was being terminated and that it was effective immediately. She was informed that the reason for her termination was due to her command of English which was deemed not "professional" enough. Upon asking for feedback, she was advised by her now former employer that her lack of suitability was a result of "not being born in Australia", rather than any act of misconduct.

Our solicitor assisted the client in sending a letter of demand to her former employer requesting she be paid out her notice period, which was successful.

We then assisted her in seeking compensation and an apology from her former employer at the Fair Work Commission in a general protections claim. We negotiated on the client's behalf with the former employer and were successful in obtaining compensation of 4 weeks of pay and an apology from the former employer.

Client Services

CLCP assisted 3746 clients through:

- Information provided 1641
- Referrals delivered 5438
- Legal Advice provided 4550
- Tasks 1456
- Duty Lawyer 512
- Dispute Resolutions 30
- Court/Tribunal 58
- Other Representation 90
- Community Legal Education 80
- Law Reform 5
- Stakeholder Engagement 119

ABORIGINAL LEGAL ACCESS PROGRAM (ALAP)

Number of staff in team: 2

Funded by: The Australian Government, NSW Government and the Public Purpose Fund through the Community Legal Centres Program administered by Legal Aid NSW.

Who we assist: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in Western Sydney

What we do

ALAP meet clients face to face at various outreaches, and incoming clients booked for telephone advice directly to the ALAP program.

ALAP provide the following services-Legal advice, legal representation, Community Legal Education, Community engagements, Community meetings, Community information stalls, drop-in Centres, attending outreaches, providing Information for non-legal services, offering court assistance legal, non-legal, and Referrals about issues that affect them.

Highlights

ALAP has expanded its network of partners and commenced a further two outreaches at Yenu Allowah Family Centre and NCNS Neighbourhood Centre. ALAP developed an Aboriginal Advisory Committee with other Aboriginal community organisations such as Uniting, Closing the Gap (NCNS), Kimberwalli, and AMS.

The group is vital to inform the community about Aboriginal culture and values and implement cultural practices within our service and other community services.

The ALAP team has been busy getting together to spread the word in the community about the Stolen Generation Reparation Scheme. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions and the sensitive nature of the talk, we have only been able to attend community services in February 2022. However, we managed to provide information by zoom at the NCNS staff meeting in December 2021.

ALAP delivered nine CLEs in person at the Closing the Gap Group (NCNS), Sydney; Regional Aboriginal Corporation (SRAC); Koolyangarra Family Centre; Babayan Aboriginal Corporation Centre; Wattle Place at Relationships Australia; AMS at Mount Druitt; Real Futures for women at Rooty Hill and Merana Aboriginal Community Association.

ALAP attended several community engagements at the Merana Aboriginal Community Association outreach day for communities and participated in several NAIDOC events below:

- NAIDOC event on 21 April 2022 with Baabyan Aboriginal Corporation and Kimberwalli at Mount Druitt
- NAIDOC cup (NCNS) on 21 June at Emu Plains
- NAIDOC Burramutta on 10 July at Parramatta
- NAIDOC event on 15 July 2022 at Sydney Regional Aboriginal Corporation (SRAC) at Penrith
- NAIDOC Ball on 30 July 2022 at Merana Aboriginal Corporation at Windsor.

ABORIGINAL LEGAL ACCESS PROGRAM (ALAP)

COVID-19 Impact

COVID-19 had a massive impact on the ability of services to provide face-to-face community engagements, especially during NAIDOC celebrations. Community presence, engagement, and education are the core of our service delivery.

We found it challenging to reach out to partners to present CLEs and commence outreach due to COVID-19. This impacted our clients who could not reach out to ALAP due to no internet connection and were unable to attend outreach partners due to closure to the public.

External Partnerships

- NCNS Koolyangarra Family Centre
- Sydney Region Aboriginal Corporation (SRAC)
- Baabayan Aboriginal Corporation
- · Yenu Allowah Family Centre
- Kimberwalli Centre for Excellence
- Western Sydney LHD
- Daramu
- DCJ- Housing
- Services our way (SOW)



ABORIGINAL LEGAL ACCESS PROGRAM (ALAP)

Case Study

An elderly client started litigation proceedings around 2011-12. The client has been waiting to see if the class action would go ahead after all these years with no outcome or response from the private law firm assisting her at the time.

The client thought she had already applied for a Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme application and awaited an outcome. The client has never shared her horrific story of trauma and upbringing at Coota Girl's Training home and foster care. After our CLE talk, the client felt comfortable sharing her story, and we advised our client about the scheme. We legally assisted the client in relation to her prior proceedings by contacting the Stolen Generation Council (NSW-ACT) to confirm the membership details on our client's behalf.

After contacting the public officer at Stolen Generations Council, we discovered that the council invited the client to join the litigation proceedings in 2011-12 against the Welfare Board, and for our client to join the Stolen Generations survivor's council membership. Then, not after 2011-12, they informed our client that they would no longer proceed with litigation.

However, our client does not recall receiving a letter as she has been waiting for a litigation outcome since 2011-12. Therefore, we provided legal advice to our client and assisted the client with an application to become a member of the Stolen Generation council.

The client has high prospects of success as she was initially taken from her family at the age of 4 years old and placed at Cootamundra Girl's Training home before the annulment of the Aboriginal Protection Act in 1969.

The client thanked ALAP personally by attending our outreach as she would've continued to wait for an outcome from the Stolen Generation Council. Therefore, she would have never applied under the scheme at Aboriginal Affairs and missed out as the SGRS scheme that was due to close on 30 June 2022.

CENTRAL WEST CONTACT SERVICE (CWCS)

Number of staff in team: 9

Funded by: Department of Social Services

Who we assist: CWCS provides a supervised contact services both in person and electronically and changeover service. These services are provided to families who are before the family court due to high levels of family conflict.

What we do

CWCS assists families with matters before the Federal Circuit Court and Family Court of Australia who required court-ordered supervised contact. CWCS works with families with children aged 0-18. We provide three key services:

- 1. Supervised contact visits contact sessions to allow the supervised parent to spend time with their child/ren in the presence of a professional supervisor at CWCS.
- 2. **Changeovers** CWCS provides a safe, neutral space for parents to changeover care of children.
- 3. Zoom Sessions CWCS provides Zoom sessions between parents and children with the children on-site for cases where a parent lives interstate, there are safety concerns, or during COVID-19 restricted movement orders.

External Partnerships

CWCS has a pro bono partnership with Syd West Family Law Group. Where CWCS has a matter that involves Syd West Family Law Group as a legal rep, CWCS sources legal advice elsewhere due to conflict of interest.

CWCS does not offer parenting courses and works with Catholic Care, Relationships Australia, Uniting Care and Anglicare in referring clients to appropriate programs to deliver this for the clients needs.

COVID-19 Impact

CWCS was required to change service delivery during the period of July 2021 - November 2021 as a result of the COVID lockdown.

Since returning to face-to-face contact CWCS has had a high level of cancellations due to family's or children being sick with COVID-19. This can put a lot of pressure on families as frequently one family member will test positive and a number of days later another family member resulting in the isolation period experienced by the whole family being lengthened.

Staffing has also been impacted by COVID resulting in staff having to isolate as required.

Highlights

CWCS provided supervised Zoom sessions for the period of July – November as a result of COVID-19 2021 lockdown. CWCS returned to face-to-face supervised contact services in December 2022 under a strict COVID 19 policy and procedures.

In November 2021, CWCS received additional funding from the Federal Attorney Generals Department to expand the service. CWCS has used this funding to hire additional staff and implement an expansion to the program.

CENTRAL WEST CONTACT SERVICE (CWCS)

Case Study 1

The family began working with CWCS in 2020, in the capacity of supervised contact. CWCS worked extensively with the family to assist both parents. The supervised parent was supported in improving their parenting skills through support of the supervisor and referrals to parenting courses. The residential parent was also supported in dealing with their anxiety through ongoing support of management and referrals to programs for themselves and the child.

The child is now enjoying unsupervised time with the non-residential parent and the supervised parent is comfortable knowing the non-residential parent has improved their parenting skills, has a better understanding of the child's needs and the residential parent continues to be supported by using changeover services at CWCS so they are not required to have face to face contact with the non-residential parent.

Case Study 2

Upon application to CWCS the non-residential parent had not seen the child since the child was a couple of months old. The child is now 3 years old. The child has been diagnosed with a disability that is not acknowledged by the non-residential parent. The non-residential parent is beginning to notice differences in the child's behaviors and CWCS is providing resources and making referrals to educate the non-residential parent in the disability.

Supervised contact visits has highlighted the need for the non-residential parent to broaden their knowledge and education and skills with the child's needs and has resulted in the non-residential parent having to take this serious if the relationship is to move forward, The non-residential is slowly making progress and it is hopefully that this progress will continue with our support



Thankyou so much for helping my family. Without the service of CWCS we would not be where we are today and I may never have seen my children again. Thankyou so much for being supportive.

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CHILDREN'S COURT ASSISTANCE SCHEME (CCAS)

Number of staff in team: 3

Funded by: The Australian Government, NSW Government and the Public Purpose Fund through the Community Legal Centres Program administered by Legal Aid NSW.

Who we assist: We provide court support to young people (under 18 years old) attending The Children's Court of NSW with a criminal matter. The courts serviced by WSCLC are Parramatta and Surry Hills.

What we do

CCAS is the first point of contact for people entering the Children's Court for criminal matters and Apprehended Violence Orders.

At this point CCAS performs a shopfront role for the court. Young people and their families are signed in and checked off on a list of people expected to attend the court on that day. Based on this information CCAS will determine who it is in the Children's Court that these people need to be referred to. This will generally be Legal Aid, Aboriginal Legal Service, Youth Justice etc.

After this initial interaction, CCAS has time to be able to spend with young people to find out if there are other needs that the young person may have. Immediate needs may include issues such as information about court processes, accommodation, information about a course or explaining the benefits of mediation for an AVO matter. Other needs include education and employment, relationship issues etc.

When a young person has an established relationship with CCAS, ongoing needs can be assessed and the young person offered various levels of case management. CCAS has workers who are experienced in case management and have established contacts in the community.

Community Casework has developed into Outreach programs in partnership with external service providers. These include an OzTag team, a make-up program, a RAP music program and a fitness program called Confit. Relationship development through these program has lead to many requests for assistance with real world life issues.

External Partnerships

CCAS has primary external partnerships with Just Reinvest and Marist 180 Daramu. We work closely with providers of specific services such as; OzTag Football competition, Mac Studios (music production), Confit (fitness services). CCAS has contributed towards funding for all these services.

Court based relationships are vital to ongoing CCAS services. Great relationships exist between CCAS and; Court registry, Legal Aid Children's Legal Service, Aboriginal Legal Service, Justice Health, Youth Justice, Dept of Education, DCJ, Private Solicitors and Barristers, Police Prosecutors and Magistrates.

COVID-19 Impact:

Since March 2020 Covid 19 has significantly affected CCAS. During 2021 – 2022 CCAS was unable to attend courts for approximately 6 months. During this time CCAS staff worked from home mostly through online meetings.

The time was used to write reports, staff supervision, advisory committee meetings with our funders and participate in an evaluation. Limited community casework could continue depending on COVID-19 restrictions at the time.

CHILDREN'S COURT ASSISTANCE SCHEME (CCAS)

Client and Stakeholder relationships

Young people attending court are always grateful for the assistance given to them as they arrive and are uncertain what to do.

This goes for parents and support workers as well. Information and understanding of the processes greatly helps calm people who are anxious or distressed. For the "frequent flyers", they are always happy to catch up from the last time they attended. They often show appreciation for the time spent explaining or assisting with some community needs. Parents are also very appreciative especially the ones who don't know what to do with their teenager anymore. Many compliments have been given after time spent.

Young people supported in the community love the programs because they have a lot of fun. CCAS is always asked to provide more programs due to the enjoyment and connection that they feel. The programs are voluntary, unlike court mandated programs, so young people feel a sense of community and acceptance while attending. They have communicated this verbally many times. These programs have led to significant case work opportunities. Young people have stated that they "never want Jess to stop working with them". Credit should be given to Jessica Brown for developing these programs (in conjunction with other providers) as well as the significant relationships with the young people.

Internal stakeholders working alongside CCAS are universally appreciative of the support CCAS provides to young people and themselves. The court states that CCAS takes a lot of load from the Registry, the solicitors, Youth Justice, Police etc. and say that their job is so much easier due to CCAS staff "connecting the dots" between young people and all the stakeholders in the courthouse.

External stakeholders such as Just Reinvest and Daramu are integral to the effective running of the programs. They very much appreciate and recognise that CCAS manages and coordinates the programs. They rely on the relationships that Jessica Brown has established with the young people.

They often praise the support that CCAS has been able to give in the past few years.



2021-22 Oz Tag Team

CHILDREN'S COURT ASSISTANCE SCHEME (CCAS)

Case Study 1

Michael* is an Aboriginal young man. He is now 17 years of age. He has a significant Intellectual disability. Michael lives with his grandfather as a court order prevents him from living with his parents.

He has been attending court for several years and CCAS has spent a great deal of time discussing his matters with him and his grandfather.

Michael has a variety of matters ranging from Assault and violence to AVO's to carrying a knife and breach's of bail. His matters are mostly proceeding through Youth Koori Court. ALL his matters are directly related to his intellectual disability.

CCAS has seen Michael grow from a young boy into a young man while remaining in systems that are perpetuating the same problems in Michaels life. If not for Michael's grandfather he would be in a youth homeless refuge by now.

CCAS has been able to support the emotional wellbeing as well as getting Michael and his grandfather through the many many days of court attendance. Intellectual disabilities and mental health problems in young people take up days, months and years of court time when a health intervention is what is actually needed.

Case Study 2

Luke* is an Aboriginal young man whose family have been known to the Children's Court for many years. He is a participant in Youth Koori Court.

CCAS, was asked to support Luke with his YKC plan and she has assisted him with many other issues as well. Luke has had many charges and spent a lot of time in youth detention. He lives in poverty in the care of his grandfather.

CCAS has assisted Luke through becoming a part of OzTag and the Confit Fitness program. He has achieved certificates such as forklift driving and has done work experience in landscaping. Luke has many ambitions like all young people his age but needs a lot of support to get there. He has many charges still going through court, but he wishes he had a better life.

With support from CCAS, and other community services, young people like Luke can hopefully set a new direction into adulthood.

* Names have been changed to ensure anonymity.

CUMBERLAND WOMEN'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT ADVOCACY SERVICE (CWDVCAS)

Number of staff in team: 13

Funded by: Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program (WDVCAP) through Legal Aid NSW

Who we assist: Female victims of Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) and female defendants if the Other Party is male.

What we do

CWDVCAS provides information, referrals, and support over the phone. In addition, we provide court support at the following Local Courts: Parramatta, Burwood & Fairfield on ADVO List days. We also do risk assessments and safety plannings over the phone and face-to-face at court.

Clients identified to be a serious threat are listed on the Safety Action Meeting (SAM) agenda which is held fortnightly with other NSW government agencies to create a more collaborated safety plan from information shared.

External Partnerships

- Safe Connections WestNet
 - Provide phones with \$30 credit which we issue to our clients who need them
- Domestic Violence Unit
 - Provide Legal Advice for clients at court (Burwood & Fairfield)
- DV Duty Scheme
 - Provide Legal Advice for clients at court (Parramatta)
- Share the Dignity
 - Provide handbags and toiletries for clients

- Seconded Worker Scheme Lisa Harnum Foundation, Staying Home Leaving Violence (SHLV), Cumberland Women's Health Centre (CWHC), Parramatta/Holroyd Family Support & Parramatta PAC Multicultural Liaison Officer (MCLO)
 - Workers from local services seconded to our service to provide court support for clients once a month

COVID-19 Impact

Most of the year was spent working remotely due to COVID-19. This had a psychological effect on the team as they were dealing with traumatised clients and did not have the immediate support of their colleagues as it would have been in the office. However, having access to the TEAMS chat was a quick way to reach out for support and everyone was utilising this when needed.





CUMBERLAND WOMEN'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT ADVOCACY SERVICE (CWDVCAS)

Highlights

The gradual returning of staff to the office in the beginning of this year was one of the highlights as it was good to be back in the same room with our team. However, a lot of illness had been hampering the consistency of this progress.

Completion of our new office space and new equipment which creates a great working environment for our team.

The face-to-face court support is back in full swing, and this has provided opportunities to continue strengthening our relationships with other court users.

Client Feedback

One of our success stories is best told through the client's own words of thanks:

"I have waited more than a year to write this letter to say thank you for your services. The court case for my ADVO has finally concluded. While the outcome favoured the defendant (my ex-husband) I did not let this affect me. It is important that we tell victims of domestic violence that if they go into battle with their perpetrator, the law may not go in their favour.

And if this were to happen, how do they protect themselves from the hurt that may arise from it? From my own personal experience, I have found that you need to shift your focus on something that makes you feel good (whether it is your children, job etc) and be thankful that every day you have your life back in your hands and you are alive.

It is important to tell victims of domestic violence to hold a job if it's possible because going into the arena means you need the financial security to not only live independently away from your former partner but to support the bills that you accumulate due to having a solicitor/family lawyer as well as everyday expenses.

And another important thing is to have people like CWDVCAS, who will support you. I remember I first received a call from CWDVCAS when the incident happened. I had no idea what the details/conditions of an ADVO meant, and I had the kindness of your worker explain it to me. She was also the person I constantly contacted to give updates and she explained other services that were available to me e.g., legal aid, forensic medical unit so the police can take pictures of the injuries I incurred and accessing financial support.

Having this one familiar person to go to, provided stability and familiarity for me during a difficult time that was unfamiliar territory. She also referred me to your Intensive Support Worker who helped by completing the paperwork for the INSP and counselling as I was overloaded with work, looking after the kids and was sick with the flu at that time. That worker was there for me on the first day I went to court when the matter was heard and at every other Court appearance. Her experience and knowledge of the system made me feel that I had someone to go to for advice. Her positive feedback that I can do this, I can get through it, has given me confidence.

Thank you to your team for all that you have done for me."

That client's success in not in winning the Court case, it is in what she has learned for herself and about herself in the journey. She now has the confidence that she can get through anything and that there are people and services who will help when the going gets tough.

FAMILY ADVOCACY SUPPORT SERVICE (FASS)

Number of staff: 2

Funder: The Commonwealth Government with funding administered by the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program (WDVCAP) through Legal Aid NSW.

Who we assist: FASS Parramatta provides information and social support for women accessing the Family Circuit Court in Parramatta who experienced domestic and family violence (DFV).

What we do

FASS provides information, referrals, and court support face-to-face at the Family Circuit Court at Parramatta five days a week except during COVID19 restrictions.

The FASS team also provide cover support at the Sydney and Wollongong Family Circuit Courts on request from the other FASS teams operating at these courts.

FASS continues to provide support to clients remotely via telephone, email and text messages to clients during the COVID-19 period.

External Partnerships

- Domestic Violence Unit
- Lighthouse Project
- Independent Children's Lawyers (ICL)
- Family Referral Services Mt Druitt
- Pacific Islands Mt Druitt Action Network (PIMDAN)
- W.A.S.H. House Mt Druitt (Women's Activities and Self Help)
- Cumberland Women's Health Centre
- Supported Accommodation and Homelessness Services Shaolhaven Illawarra (SAHSSI)

- Cumberland WDVCAS
- Family Report Writers
- Early Intervention Unit
- Relationship Australia
- Victims Services
- Lisa Harnum Foundation
- Dress for Success
- Indian (Subcontinent) Criss and Support Agency (ICSA)
- ADRA Blacktown
- Bonnie Support Services
- Western Sydney MRC (Migrant Resource Centre)

Case Study

A 34-year-old single mother with a 6-year-old child had a family matter at court. There was a current Apprehended Domestic Violence Order for her protection with conditions labc and 9. The client received a Legal Aid grant and hired a solicitor. However, she had to travel overseas (India) for a family emergency. While she was there, her solicitor withdrew their service prior to the client's first mention.

Because we kept in touch with the client, this helped the client to deal with the anxiety she felt and gave her the confidence to represent herself in the first court date when she returned to Australia. This matter is ongoing, and the client has been referred to the Domestic Violent Unit team for further assistance.

The client expressed her sincere thanks that FASS is there to support her during this journey.



Funded by the Australian Government



HOME BUILDING ADVOCACY SERVICE (HoBAS)

Number of staff in team: 3

Funded by: NSW Fair Trading

Who we assist: Consumers throughout NSW with problem with their builders and tradespeople.

What we do

We assist consumers through the provision of Legal Advice, Representation, Legal Tasks, Information and Referral on the rights of consumers as well as Community Legal Education around:

- Contractual disputes
- · Licensed and unlicensed persons
- Cooling-off periods
- Non-compliance with formal contract requirements
- Breaches of statutory warranty under s 18B HBA
- Transfer of proceedings from courts to NCAT
- Uninsured works
- Preparation of evidence for NCAT proceedings
- Representation of consumers in NCAT proceedings
- Renewal of NCAT proceedings
- Appeals of decisions of NCAT
- Enforcement of NCAT orders

Client Services

HoBAS assisted clients through:

- Legal advice 582
- Legal Tasks 241
- Representation/Dispute Resolution/Court or Tribunal - 11
- Legal Information and Referral 950

Case Study

Our client, a person of cultural and linguistic diversity, entered into a contract with a builder ('A') for the performance of residential building works consisting of an extension to his existing home. The extension included -

- · Adding a new slab
- Extending an old roof
- Internal and external renovations

The contract did not include the laying of an engineered floor over the new slab. For this, the client entered into a second contract with another builder 'B.' This contract provided that 'B' would lay a soundproofing material and a water-vapour barrier before laying the engineered flooring material.

The works were coordinated between builders 'A' and 'B' and were completed.

After completion the client noticed black marks developing on the ends of the engineered floorboards.

NSW Fair Trading investigated the matter, which was complicated by having two builders that may have legal liability for any defective works. Direct negotiations between all parties broke down.

Our client sought assistance from HoBAS which opened a file to:

- · Assist with evidence
- Conduct negotiations between all parties, and
- Seek leave to represent the client in NCAT should negotiations fail

HOME BUILDING ADVOCACY SERVICE (HoBAS)

Our client obtained a report from an expert waterproofing specialist who concluded that both 'A' and 'B' were liable for defective works because:

- 'A' had not treated the existing internal wall when laying a new concrete slab abutting it, giving rise to moisture in the wall affecting the engineered floorboards in that area, and
- 'B' had laid soundproofing material but had not installed a water-vapour barrier contrary to the contract and in breach of statutory warranty

HoBAS gave copies of the expert report which complied with NCAT Practice Direction 3 to both builders and opened formal negotiations.

The likely limitation period was pending and so HoBAS made an application to NCAT on behalf of the client against both builders, and was successful in seeking leave to represent the client given the complexities of the matter.

The builder 'A' submitted evidence that appeared to infer that our client may have damaged the ends of the floorboards through 'excessive cleaning' and, in the alternative, that there was no elevated moisture readings, and, if there were, moisture may have been coming from the roof area and not through the slab and up the wall affecting the floorboards.

HoBAS represented the client on all directions hearings and ensured that the client complied with all orders and directions of the Tribunal.

Whilst preparing for a formal hearing the parties agreed that Consent Orders be made as follows –

- Builder 'A' to remove the end floorboards and chemically treat the wall for rising damp, and
- Builder 'B' to install a moisture vapour barrier on the exposed slab and to install new floorboards and restore skirting boards
- That the parties pay their own costs of and incidental to proceedings

The rectification works were estimated by our client's expert to cost over \$12,000.

Our client expressed satisfaction with the outcome and said that it would not have been achieved without assistance from our service.



We couldn't have asked for more, we received help within a matter of days, the advice couldn't have been more concise and easily understood and at the end of the process we felt far more comfortable with the process of resolving a dispute with our builder. A fantastic service all round, thank you.





WESTERN SYDNEY TENANTS' SERVICE (WESTS)

Number of staff in team: 7

Funded by: NSW Fair Trading

Who we assist

We service a large catchment area within Western Sydney providing free, confidential tenancy advice and advocacy to residential tenants, boarding house residents, people living in land lease communities, social and community housing tenants and other renters.

Our service caters to but not limited to tenants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, low-income earners, social and community housing tenants and/or those with a disability.

WESTS use interpreters, face-to-face appointments, communicate with Real Estate Agents and Social/Community Housing providers on the tenants' behalf. Where necessary we also attend meetings to support tenants in their tenancy related matter.

What we do

WESTS provide telephone or face-to-face advice, referrals, community education sessions, duty advocacy and assistance in preparation for and in some cases represent clients at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT).

During the lockdowns and NCAT physical closures, WESTS provided over the phone assistance to our clients where possible.

WESTS relocated their outreach office in Penrith. The outreach office is serviced three days a week, Tuesday to Thursday, the presence in the Penrith area allows WESTS to service the tribunal and cater to clients within the Penrith/Hawkesbury region.

External Partnerships

Maintaining connections is crucial for our service and we continue to maintain strong and lasting relationships with local NCAT registry, Social and Community Housing providers, Real Estate Agents, and Park Operators. WESTS also uphold close relationships with local councils attending regular interagency meetings covering, Auburn, Parramatta, The Hills Shire District, Blacktown to Hawkesbury.

Relationships are also maintained with our local MPs. Regular community education sessions are held through service providers tailored to facilitate staff members or their clients. WESTS participate in major events annually to connect with diverse groups and increasing our exposure within the community; NAIDOC (Parramatta and Penrith), and Western Sydney Homeless Connect, etc.

At each event show bags are prepared filled with resources and information about our service and distributed to clients, anywhere from 100-500 bags are distributed at each event. WESTS work closely with Tenants' Union ensuring resources are up to date, promoting our service and providing updates on key changes on their website.

Brochures and posters are regularly sent out to various service providers within our catchment area ensuring our contact details, location and operating hours are up to date.



WESTERN SYDNEY TENANTS' SERVICE (WESTS)

Highlights

Returning back to face-to-face interactions has allowed WESTS to reconnect and establish relationships with service providers within our community. Facilitating face-to-face appointments has removed any barriers our disadvantaged clients faced with technology during the lockdown. Face-to-face interactions has improved client satisfaction and outcomes.

Moving to our new Parramatta office has been a major highlight for WESTS team and clients. Ample space to hold confidentially and resources for our clients. Clients can contact WESTS to arrange face-to-face appointments for assistance regarding tenancy, tribunal hearings, social and community housing and tenancy related paperwork etc. Whilst we do accept walk-ins, appointment should be made to avoid disappointment.

Case Study

Eight residents from a residential land lease community in Western Sydney had approached the service in October 2020 with what ought to have been a simple "open and shut" case regarding repairs to the common facilities under the maintenance and management of the park operator. Sediment particles had appeared in the water as it; these residents have continued to notify the park operator who took interest in resolving the matter initially but then declined to investigate the matter further.

WESTS had assisted the residents in engaging in a "group action" at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT). Due to the complex nature of the case the matter had to be adjourned. WESTS had assisted in research into an expert who could assist us pro bono in testing the biofilm, then liaising with the experts of the park operator on a joint report/work plan and Scott Schedule; WESTS had obtained the assistance of a Solicitor/Legal Officer from the Tenants' Union to represent at the Hearing, and then eventually a Pro Bono Barrister.

The matter is ongoing, and WESTS is continuing to provide support to these residents and facilitating correspondence with the Park Operator and their Legal Counsel regarding repairs and maintenance.



... Some good news. My final hearing for the bond was today. I presented my arguments and was awarded the full bond thanks to your help and mentoring...





YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAM (YEP)

Number of staff in team: 2

Funded by: Department of Communities and Justice, Targeted Earlier Intervention Program.

Who we assist: Young people (aged 12 -24) and young pregnant or parenting teens (aged to 20 years) and youth workers.

What we do

The Youth Education Project aims to assist children and young people aged 12 to 25 years, residing in the Parramatta and Cumberland Local Government Areas who are at risk of disengagement from school, family and community by developing training, information and educational resources to support community workers working with young people.

Highlights

Attendance at youth networks and the Child Protection Legal Conference.

COVID-19 Impact

COVID-19 significantly impacted our ability to deliver education sessions.

THANK YOU

The work we do would not be possible without the tremendous support from our volunteers.

We would like to extend a thank you to:

CLCP

Agnes Lloyd
Alexa Swientek
Alison Hwang
Amani Darwich
Andrea (Hong Yu) Fok
Angela Vangdahl
Annalise Stanton

Antonia Mangos Arya Iranpour Aryana Khaja

Chantal Ryan-Liannane

Eleanor Soane Gabrielle Knight Grace Catldo Hamna Amaan

Haytham Gorgis

Holly Grant Ignat Kozlov Jasmin Pierson John Youssef Joy Samuel

Kit Nam Cheung

Kusum KC

Lorraine Kleier

Madison Hill

Morwarid Faiz

Nidhi Chowkira

Nina Batra

Nishta Gupta

Oshanie Hettiarachchige

Phoebe Herrera

Prem Kumar Selina Cabacar Shania Guimaraes Sharika Hossain Skylar Li Sladjana Kuridza Smeeti Prasad Stella Monteleone Taylor Doughty Zoe Turner

HoBAS

Harrison White Keshav Bajpai Yasmeen Langoo

WESTS

Jackson Radnege Phil Marchionni

Western Sydney Community Legal Centre Limited ABN 81 963 193 626

Financial Report - 30 June 2022



AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION UNDER SECTION 307C OF THE CORPORATIONS ACT 2001 TO THE DIRECTORS OF WESTERN SYDNEY COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE LIMITED

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2022 there have been:

- No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Corporations Act 2001
 (Cth) in relation to the audit; and
- No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

William Buck
William Buck

Accountants & Advisors

ABN 16 021 300 521

Michele Nevill

Partner

Sydney, 26 October 2022



Western Sydney Community Legal Centre Limited Contents 30 June 2022

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Western Sydney Community Legal Centre Limited Statement of comprehensive income For the year ended 30 June 2022

	Note	2022 \$	2021 \$
Revenue	4	6,348,942	5,714,426
Interest revenue		1,156	2,254
Expenses Administration expenses AASB 16 lease interest expense Employee benefits expense Depreciation and amortisation expense Other expenses		(501,973) (17,659) (5,380,939) (250,651) (38,000)	(528,318) (27,481) (4,755,506) (341,193) (30,000)
Surplus for the year attributable to the directors of Western Sydney Community Legal Centre Limited		160,876	34,182
Other comprehensive income for the year			
Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to the directors of Western Sydney Community Legal Centre Limited	:	160,876	34,182

Western Sydney Community Legal Centre Limited Statement of financial position As at 30 June 2022

No	ote	2022 \$	2021 \$
Assets			
Trade and other receivables 7 Investments 8	6 7 8 9	2,229,761 4,943 466,282 62,945 2,763,931	1,937,479 9,251 466,164 30,337 2,443,231
Non-current assets Property, plant and equipment Right-of-use assets Total non-current assets	0 1 -	30,766 - 30,766	40,849 312,608 353,457
Total assets	_	2,794,697	2,796,688
Liabilities			
Lease liabilities 15 Employee benefits 17 Other provisions 15	2 3 4 5 6	432,715 - 805,793 60,500 540,507 1,839,515	379,353 168,626 724,803 30,000 536,976 1,839,758
	7 8 -	193,878 193,878	194,668 161,834 356,502
Total liabilities	=	2,033,393	2,196,260
Net assets	=	761,304	600,428
Equity Retained surpluses	_	761,304	600,428
Total equity	=	761,304	600,428

Western Sydney Community Legal Centre Limited Statement of changes in equity For the year ended 30 June 2022

	Retained surpluses \$	Total equity \$
Balance at 1 July 2020	566,246	566,246
Surplus for the year Other comprehensive income for the year	34,182	34,182
Total comprehensive income for the year	34,182	34,182
Balance at 30 June 2021	600,428	600,428
	Retained surpluses \$	Total equity \$
Balance at 1 July 2021		
Balance at 1 July 2021 Surplus for the year Other comprehensive income for the year	surpluses \$	\$
Surplus for the year	surpluses \$ 600,428	\$ 600,428

Western Sydney Community Legal Centre Limited Statement of cash flows For the year ended 30 June 2022

	Note	2022 \$	2021 \$
Cash flows from operating activities Receipts from grants and clients Payments to suppliers and employees (inclusive of GST)	-	7,656,323 (7,096,230)	6,557,314 (5,674,880)
Interest received Covid 19 Government stimulus received Lease interest paid (AASB 16)		560,093 1,156 - (17,659)	882,434 2,254 50,000 (27,481)
Net cash from operating activities	-	543,590	907,207
Cash flows from investing activities Payments for property, plant and equipment Net decrease/(increase) in term deposits Proceeds from disposal of property, plant and equipment		(82,683) - 	(153,492) (278) 7,727
Net cash used in investing activities	-	(82,683)	(146,043)
Cash flows from financing activities Repayment of lease liabilities	-	(168,625)	(148,839)
Net cash used in financing activities	-	(168,625)	(148,839)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	-	292,282 1,937,479	612,325 1,325,154
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	6	2,229,761	1,937,479

Western Sydney Community Legal Centre Limited Directors' declaration 30 June 2022

In the directors' opinion:

- the attached financial statements and notes comply with the Corporations Act 2001, the Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and New South Wales legislation the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and associated regulations, the Corporations Regulations 2001 and other mandatory professional reporting requirements;
- the attached financial statements and notes give a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2022 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of directors made pursuant to section 295(5)(a) of the Corporations Act 2001.

On behalf of the directors

Helen Bouropoulos Chairperson

26 October

2022

Anna Harding Secretary

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