

# SA Community Legal Centres Service Review Project

Client Advocates Workshop Summary

December 2015

# Questions discussed

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- ▶ Are there any general comments you'd like to make about the review or legal assistance services in SA?
- ▶ Are there particular issues about access to legal services that are different from other services?
- ▶ What works particularly well to address vulnerable and complex client needs?
- ▶ Do you expect different needs in regional and metropolitan areas in future?
- ▶ How would you expect collaborative service planning with the legal assistance services sector to be approached?
- ▶ Access to appropriate information is important - do you have any insights on what has worked well?

# Client Advocate Group Feedback Summary

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- ▶ The key themes for consideration in the Current State Assessment Draft Report should include Client Access:
    - ▶ It is critical to understand who accesses / should access CLC services, how to access services, eligibility, availability of interpreter services
    - ▶ Client access needs to be ensured and be culturally appropriate, in particular for indigenous, disabled, and CALD clients
  - ▶ Referrals are critical for successful client outcomes:
    - ▶ To ensure referrals to CLCs are appropriate and timely, other community organisations need to understand CLC's scope of services
    - ▶ Nurturing and maintaining relationships between community organisations is key for addressing both legal and other underlying client problems. Requires a level of maturity and specialisation.
  - ▶ More integrated community service delivery models should be considered:
    - ▶ Years ago, community legal assistance was embedded as part of local community services (i.e. integrated service delivery model). Over time, for a number of reasons, CLCs were formed and separated from broader community services, now mostly operating as standalone organisations
    - ▶ The current model of non-integrated legal assistance with broader community services contributes to the challenge of managing and responding to complex client need
    - ▶ Re-integration of legal assistance with community services is strongly preferred for consideration e.g. one-stop shop models or leveraging SA government commitment to "schools as community hubs"
    - ▶ Coordination between CLCs and other community organisations needs to be strengthened to:
      - ▶ make client experiences smoother and achieve better client outcomes overall;
      - ▶ remove fragmentation, duplication of services and focus on core CLC / non-CLC services
    - ▶ Clients often do not pursue the advised referral pathway (even when the place is just 20m away!) - there is an opportunity to provide more warm referrals and/or adopt integrated service models (one-stop-shop)
    - ▶ Uniting Communities provided an example of successful service integration: bundled health, counselling and legal assistance services for young clients (12-24 yo): After some experimentation, a co-located model where providers "wrap their hands" around clients whilst they're at the premises has proven most appropriate

# Client Advocate Group Feedback Summary

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- ▶ Regionalised approach may no longer be appropriate to service clients' legal needs:
  - ▶ Many clients do not access services the way they used to - face-to-face access is no longer the only service delivery channel; clients want more flexible services and access points; regionalisation is a constraint; priority client access needs review
  - ▶ Review concept of 'catchment' - many vulnerable/disadvantaged clients are transient, move across postcodes and may not have permanent address. Other clients may find it more convenient/appropriate to access services outside of residential postcode (e.g. working in Adelaide CBD area, but live elsewhere)
- ▶ Leverage innovative technology to deliver services and reach clients regardless of client location:
  - ▶ Examples of "tele-law" exist: Domestic Violence Court Assistance Program use technology daily to provide services (especially clients in remote / rural communities) including: Skype interviews, email advice, information and document transmittal (clients access scanners at local police station or other community organisations)
  - ▶ For clients who are not as technologically literate or have difficulties using technology (e.g. CALD, mentally ill), other strategies are still required and client access and need must be considered, including role of technology to enrich service response, not replace it
- ▶ Consider opportunities for economies of scale:
  - ▶ Many bulk type of activities (i.e. information and simple advice) can be delivered more efficiently and consistently through leveraging centralised model and /or self-serve channels ("We've all learned how to use self-serve machines at Woollies and Coles - it's just a matter of time")
- ▶ Other suggestions/feedback:
  - ▶ Consider short-term demand fluctuation in some areas (existing and imminent unemployment issues in SA)
  - ▶ In times of funding cuts, client outcomes-driven service design is paramount
  - ▶ Need to prioritise clients to focus on most vulnerable and disadvantaged and provide core services
  - ▶ Service models where clients may be asked to pay a contribution fee raise risks and not fully endorsed:
    - ▶ "this completely changes organisational imperative and behaviours"
    - ▶ "positioning towards generating income may distract community organisations from serving priority clients in need"