

# NATIONAL COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE CONFERENCE 2007

TUESDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 4 – 5.30PM

*"Researching legal need at a centre level - Preparing for your 3-year strategic plan"*

## WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION & AGENDA

*Polly Porteous (Combined CLCs Group NSW), Suzie Forell (Law and Justice Foundation of NSW), Jenny Lovric (Legal Aid NSW)*

*Community legal centres will soon need to start preparing their next 3-year strategic plans for 2008-2011. In NSW, the peak body Combined Community Legal Centres' Group NSW is encouraging and assisting centres to use the Strategic Service Delivery Model when preparing their plans. The model, described in the 2006 Report of the Joint Commonwealth /NSW Review of the Community Legal Centres Funding Program, recommends that centres first assess local (or specialist) legal need before deciding what legal services the centre will provide in the next 3 years. CCLCG has been working with the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW and Legal Aid NSW to develop practical legal needs assessment tools for CLCs which may also be useful for other justice sector organisations.*

*Legal needs can be identified through a variety of techniques including monitoring casework patterns and statistics; research; consultation with clients, community groups, and other service providers; ABS demographic data; and socio-economic data and reports. Many questions will be asked during this session, and it is hoped that participants can help develop responses: eg how can centres do this research given they have no additional funds? Is there work the state and/or national peak bodies can do for the sector to help gather this information? What are some "best practice" models of conducting legal research and using that information to inform the service delivery of an organisation?*

### **4pm Introduction to the session, speakers and participants – Polly**

- Intro to speakers
- The session should help both specialist and generalist centres but apologies if sometimes we seem to be pitching to generalist centres – our feeling is that its harder to do legal needs research for a generalist centre than specialist centres who deal with a particular client group
- Everything is draft but we hope to stimulate discussion and maybe, if we can access some funds, develop a Legal Needs Assessment Toolkit that can be used nationally
- As we go through these ideas, feel free to stop us and say – this won't work – or this is way too much work. Tell us what you're thinking so that the state secretariats and the national association can do some more work to assist you.

### **4.10 In NSW, CCLCG is suggesting that centres conduct a Legal Needs Assessment – why?**

- Polly with Powerpoint presentation: *CLCs NSW – legal needs intro.ppt*

### **4.15 How do you currently know what legal services are needed in you area?**

- Suzy with Powerpoint presentation: *Law and Justice Foundation NSW – A2JIN.ppt*

#### 4.25 **Identifying the nature of your community – Demographics and level of socio-economic disadvantage**

- Suzy distribute Word document *LJF Identifying Legal Need form.doc*

#### 4.35 **Consulting community organisations and mapping existing services** (Polly and Jenny)

- Polly - Know what other organisations are (or should be) providing legal and related services, consult with key community groups eg Aboriginal Advisory Committees, Migrant groups etc
- Survey non-legal services to find out what they think legal need is – eg Central Coast and Loddon Campaspe surveys
- Jenny – talk to presentation *Legal Aid NSW – cooperative legal service.ppt*

#### 4.50 **Data from legal services** – Polly and Suzie

- Using CLSIS – Polly – 5 mins - quick reminder of usefulness of CLSIS reports - Good to know what the current legal issues and clients are that your centre is seeing
- Suzie - In NSW we have Data Digest– 10 mins

#### 5.05 **LJF Access to Justice Legal Needs Research Program** – Suzie

- Suzie using Powerpoint presentation: *Law and Justice Foundation NSW – A2JLN.ppt*

#### 5.15 **Having gathered all the info, how do you turn it into something useful?** - Polly

- Develop Simple template provided with key questions - overhead
- See Central Coast's folder – circulate
- Circulate Loddon Campaspe and Shoalcoast legal needs reports

#### 5.20 **DISCUSSION - problems identified?**

#### 5.30 **finish**

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#### **Documents/overheads presented at workshop:**

- ❖ CLCs NSW - legal needs intro.ppt
- ❖ Law and Justice Foundation - A2jLN.ppt
- ❖ LJF Identifying Legal Need form.doc (revised post-Conference)
- ❖ Legal Aid NSW - cooperative legal service.ppt