

Legal Services **BOARD**
GRANTS PROGRAM

**PREVENTION OF
VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN – FUNDED
PROJECTS**

Report on 2013 developments

April 2014

ABOUT THE LEGAL SERVICES BOARD GRANTS PROGRAM

The Legal Services Board is responsible for managing the Public Purpose Fund. The monies for this fund are largely derived from the interest on clients' funds held in trust by solicitors.

Under the *Legal Profession Act 2004*, the Board may grant from the Public Purpose Fund to support a wide range of organisations and activities for law related purposes.

In 2010 the Legal Services Board identified Prevention of Violence Against Women as a theme for the Major Grants round through a series of consultations and reports. Projects were funded in 2011.



Participants at the Legal Services Board grants program workshop, September 2013

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report focuses on eleven projects funded through the 2011 Major Grants Round, which allocated \$3.7 million across 15 projects. Of the 15 funded projects, nine of these focus specifically on the prevention of violence against women. This report outlines those nine projects, and an additional two that also received funding in a later round which also aim to address issues relating to the prevention of violence against women.

This report outlines the aims of the projects and provides a snapshot of outcomes and highlights in the second year of the projects. Most projects have received multiyear funding. This report is the second report on these projects. The first report can be downloaded from the Legal Services Board website at www.lsb.vic.gov.au.

In keeping with the Legal Services Board Grants Program priorities, all eleven projects were funded in the areas of law reform, legal and judicial education, and

legal research and law reform. The project activities aimed to create outcomes leading to improved laws and their administration, improved access and equity, improved legal services, and better informed and educated consumers of legal services.

THEMES

In September 2013, participants from the projects came together once more to share their progress. There are some common threads and challenges experienced by the project workers, even though the projects are focussed on different areas, in different locations and working with a range of people. These themes include:

- › The importance of, and challenges of collaboration
 - › The need to map relationships and pathways
 - › The need to have a champion in each partner organisation
 - › The difficulties in navigating 'road blocks'
 - › The challenges and benefits of a multi-disciplinary approach
 - › The effort and energy that building and maintaining partnerships requires, and how important this is to the success of a project
 - › The length of time that consultation takes should not be underestimated.
 - › The need to be patient and remain hopeful.
 - › The need for flexibility and being open to new ways of doing things
 - › Monitoring and evaluation, and the responsibility associated with this
 - › The resistance of women to seek legal options, often due to previous experiences or difficulties in accessing services
- Cultural change
- navigating 'road blocks'

*Primary prevention of violence against women
is the main aim of all the projects.*

Peninsula Health, Community Health Services

Adolescent violence in the home – the missing link in family violence prevention and response project

Adolescent Violence Project

The Project was a partnership between Peninsula Health, Community Health Services, Victoria Legal Aid and City of Greater Dandenong across the Victorian Department of Human Services Region. Peninsula Health, Community Health Services provides a broad range of affordable services for people living in Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula. Peninsula Health undertook the Adolescent Violence project over two years.

Approximately 9% of all family violence call outs relate to young people under 18 with over 4000 call outs by police last year in Victoria in relation to this issue.

Project Aims

The project aimed to improve the criminal justice response to victims and offenders of adolescent violence in

the home with the aim of contributing to breaking the intergenerational cycle of family violence.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

Researchers on the project interviewed parents and analysed Victoria Police and justice data for trends and documented the experience of victims and adolescent offenders in the legal system with recommendations for improvement.

A Family and Youth Worker engaged with and delivered services to local families, with positive outcomes in relation to increased family safety and cessation of violence.



Project partners at the website launch

Two community forums were held, which had good attendance and very positive evaluations.

Peninsula Health has engaged the police and courts to look at protocol changes to how the police respond in these instances with the ultimate aim of ensuring

greater consistency and a standardised response.

A strategic reference group made up of police, magistrates, Department of Human Services, No To Violence, Women's Legal Service and Victoria Legal Aid developed a set of principles to underpin the way the service sector responds to adolescent violence in the home.



LSB board member Carolyn Bond and project worker Lisa Abbott at the website launch

In February 2013 Peninsula Health hosted Australia's first conference on adolescent violence in the home with a specialist from the United States and the Victoria Police Assistant Commissioner speaking on the subject.

In February 2014 the project launched a research report titled, *The Last Resort: Pathways to Justice* and a new website that addresses the growing problem of violence by teens against their family members.

The report analyses the justice system response experienced by victim and adolescent offenders of violence in the home. It focuses on which responses most improved family safety. The website and animation provides advice and information to professionals working with families experiencing adolescent violence in the home.

Visit www.avith.com.au, a one-stop resource for adolescents, families and carers, and professionals working with families where there is adolescent violence in the home.

Women with Disabilities Victoria

Voices against violence project

In partnership with the Office of Public Advocate (OPA) and the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria, Women with Disabilities Victoria has been investigating the nature and incidence of violence against women with disabilities in Victoria.

The research project examined the circumstances of women with disabilities of any kind: - physical, sensory, cognitive impairments

(intellectual, acquired brain injury, dementia and mental ill-health), who had experienced violence.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

The two year project is nearing completion. The research involved:

- › engaging with the disability, family violence, sexual assault, legal and other service sectors
- › outlining current issues in understanding and responding to violence against women with disabilities
- › interviewing women with disabilities who have experienced violence and were willing to share their stories
- › reviewing OPA's records and interviewing OPA staff, undertaking a review of current legislation here and overseas, and making recommendations for change.

Women with disabilities experience higher rates of violence than women in the general community. They face a number of barriers when trying to access support services. They are often disregarded by the legal system

On 15 May 2014 Women With Disabilities will be releasing seven papers at a half-day forum where the

project findings will be outlined and discussed.



The seven *Voices against Violence* Papers that make up the research project are:-

- › *Voices Against Violence, Paper One: Summary Report and Recommendations*
- › *Current Issues in Understanding and Responding to Violence against Women with Disabilities*
- › *A Review of the Legislative Protections Available to Women with Disabilities who have Experienced Violence in Victoria*
- › *An Audit of the Office of the Public Advocate's Records on Violence against Women*
- › *Interviews with Staff and Volunteers from the Office of the Public Advocate*
- › *Raising Our Voices – Hearing from Women with Disabilities*
- › *Summary Report and Recommendations in Easy English.*

After the launch, the next steps will be to ensure that the recommendations

for legal, policy and service sector reform that the project identified are implemented. Women with Disabilities are in the process of developing a communications strategy for the reports and will be disseminating the findings through individual meetings with key government and justice personnel, conference presentations, websites, and meeting and presentations to relevant sectors.

Natasha Stott Despoja AM, Chair of the Foundation to Prevent Violence against Women and Children, will launch the series of research papers on 15 May 2014 at a Women With Disabilities hosted symposium.

Human Rights Law Centre

Promoting equality for a fair and just Victoria project

The Human Rights Law Centre's (HRLC) *Promoting Equality for a Fair and Just Victoria* project has been conducted over two years. The project builds upon the institutional capacity and expertise of the HRLC and Victorian legal and community sector organisations to promote and protect the right to equality in Victoria. It focused on three areas as outlined in the developments below.

2013 DEVELOPMENTS

- 1** Provided key support to the *No To Homophobia* campaign that raised awareness of the harms of homophobia and avenues to address. The campaign reached millions of Australians and received high profile endorsement.
- 2** Produced and distributed a range of factsheets that increased the ability of domestic violence organisations to use human rights law mechanisms to address violence against women.
- 3** Played a key role in securing, for the first time ever, federal law protections against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status.
- 4** Played a key role in securing the commitment of the Victorian Government to act to expunge convictions for consensual gay sex that continue to cause stigma and potential employment problems.

Developments in the area of violence against women:

Women in Victorian prisons: Worked with key stakeholders to identify issues relating to discrimination against women in Victorian prisons. A guide will be produced that considers remedies available under equal opportunity legislation, the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and relevant international human rights mechanisms.

Federation of Community Legal Centres

Advancing community justice: creating fairer outcomes through law reform and policy work project

Project Background

The Federation of Community Legal Centres is undertaking the *Advancing Community Justice Project*. The project is about developing a better and fairer legal system by conducting proactive law reform and policy work. The Federation will develop resources and conduct training to assist community legal centres and non-government organisations to conduct effective policy and law reform work.

In particular the project aims to improve family violence legal support services by strengthening community legal centres' contribution to Victoria's integrated response to family violence. The project also aims to prevent inappropriate fines and prosecutions against family violence victims and improve the operation of after-hours intervention orders. It is envisaged this work will increase access to justice for affected family members and ultimately help prevent family violence homicides.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

Project staff visited seven community legal centre family violence Duty

lawyer Programs at court. They observed the Duty Lawyer at work in the courts to understand issues that arise for duty lawyers, and to enhance the capacity of duty lawyers.

This understanding has strengthened the policy advocacy and enhanced integration of family violence services in the community legal centre sector needed to effectively protect women and children from family violence.

The Federation produced an extensive submission to the Victorian Government's Consultation on the Action Plan to Address Violence.

Federation staff participated in a two-day training and discussion with Magistrates. They also produced a leaflet detailing where members of the public can obtain legal help with a family violence intervention order (visit www.communitylaw.org.au).

They also published an article in *Good Policy* on family violence and human rights for community workers.

Project staff recognise that relationships between services at court are crucial, as is training and supporting duty lawyers. There is increased appreciation that holistic support for victims of family violence takes time and resources.

Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre Bendigo

Why didn't you ask?

Project Background

Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre (LCCLC) in Bendigo is undertaking the *Why didn't you ask?* project, which aims to improve the safety, social and health outcomes for women at risk of or experiencing family violence. The project is looking to streamline the delivery of legal assistance through a multi-disciplinary model and through the provision of comprehensive legal services in the Central Victorian region.

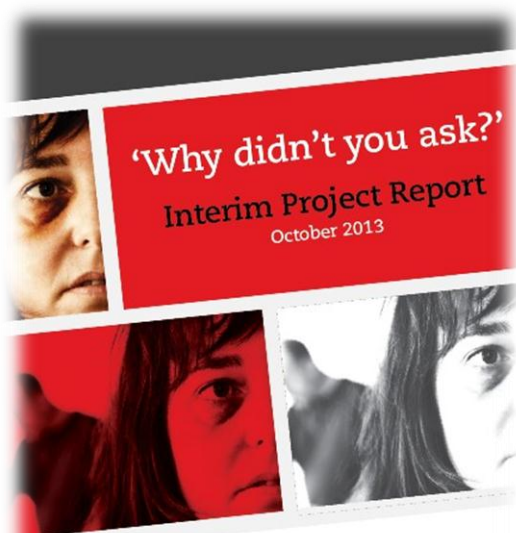
PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

Key Achievements of the project

- The development and implementation of the in-court survey data collection tool and the gathering of data from August 2012 - 131 survey responses collected
- Provision of duty lawyer services to 5 of the 7 family violence courts in the region and an on-call service to the remaining two
- The recruitment of participants for in-depth interviews regarding the impact of legal intervention
- The development of legal education content and a partnership with the Centre for Non Violence for the

delivery of sessions to health service providers as well as allied and community groups

- The establishment of a formal memorandum of understanding with key project partners and health service providers in Bendigo
- Preliminary engagement with potential project partners in the key service delivery areas including Swan Hill, Kyneton, Echuca and Maryborough
- Expansion of the delivery of duty lawyer services to two additional courts, Kyneton and Swan Hill



 loddon campaspe
community legal centre
A program of the Advocacy & Rights Centre Ltd

Educational sessions have been conducted with health professionals, incorporating a 'before-and-after' competence measure. Surveys have been conducted to assess the family violence knowledge of medical professionals.

The project is being piloted in Bendigo, Swan Hill & Echuca, with some in-court legal surveys completed by women attending the Kyneton court

The launch of duty lawyer services at Swan Hill and Kyneton Magistrates' Court has led to increased assistance for women in areas where this assistance was previously unavailable or unreliable. This has enabled the establishment of relationships with other support services in these areas.

The relationships with other services has created good referral pathways and communication which enables early referrals and the presence and provision of community legal education.

to empower and protect a significant number of Victorian women by providing legal assistance and training within the hospital context. This health-legal partnership has been established to assist health professionals at the Women's to identify family violence and provide basic information to patients on family violence complemented by a range of health, legal and social welfare assistance available at the hospital site.



Panellists at the training held for doctors at the Royal Women's Hospital, April 2013

Inner Melbourne Legal Service Inc.

Acting on the Warning Signs: Addressing violence against women through the hospital setting project

Project Background

A partnership between Inner Melbourne Legal Service and the Royal Women's Hospital (the Women's) aims

PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

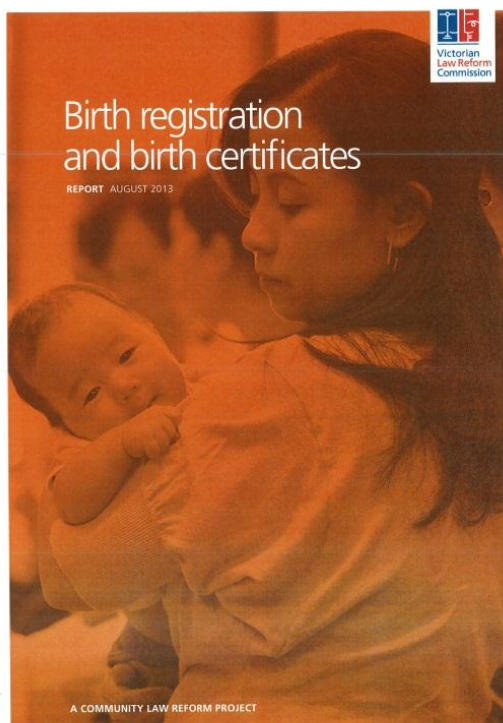
Project staff have trained 125 hospital staff and 30 doctors through a full-day study day entitled "Addressing family violence through a multi-disciplinary approach"

Doctor training has been recognised by RANZCOG and awarded CPD points.

A submission was made to the Victorian Law Reform Commission's

community law reform project on inquiry on to birth registration and birth certificates which informed recommendations that have been implemented.

The project has the support of the Women's Hospital senior staff and has created an opportunity to potentially further train a large amount of staff.



Front cover, Victorian Law Reform Commission Report

The legal assistance outreach service at the Women's has increased to twice weekly each Tuesday and Thursday. This allows women to obtain free help from a lawyer while visiting the hospital. It is located in the Women's Social Support Services Centre and all

hospital staff can now refer patients to a lawyer by contacting the service.

Family violence posters for the hospital's waiting room have been produced in six languages and sticky notes and note pads for clinicians will be available for women attending services. Additionally, TV screens in the waiting area are alerting people to the service.

Generous financial and in-kind support has been received from Herbert Smith Freehills law firm.

A highly experienced evaluation team from Melbourne University is in place to monitor the projects outcomes.

The project was profiled at the inaugural symposium on Advocacy-Health Alliances in November 2012.



Presentation at the Public Health Association of Australia conference, Canberra, April 2013

Domestic Violence Victoria

Women's voices steering justice reform – Family violence women's advisory group project

The Project

Through the establishment of a Family Violence Women's Advisory Group, Domestic Violence Victoria developed a mechanism by which women in Victoria who have experienced family violence could offer feedback and recommendations. These focused on ways in which the justice sector and the current Magistrate Court's response to family violence could improve service delivery and a more participatory and client-focused system could be developed.

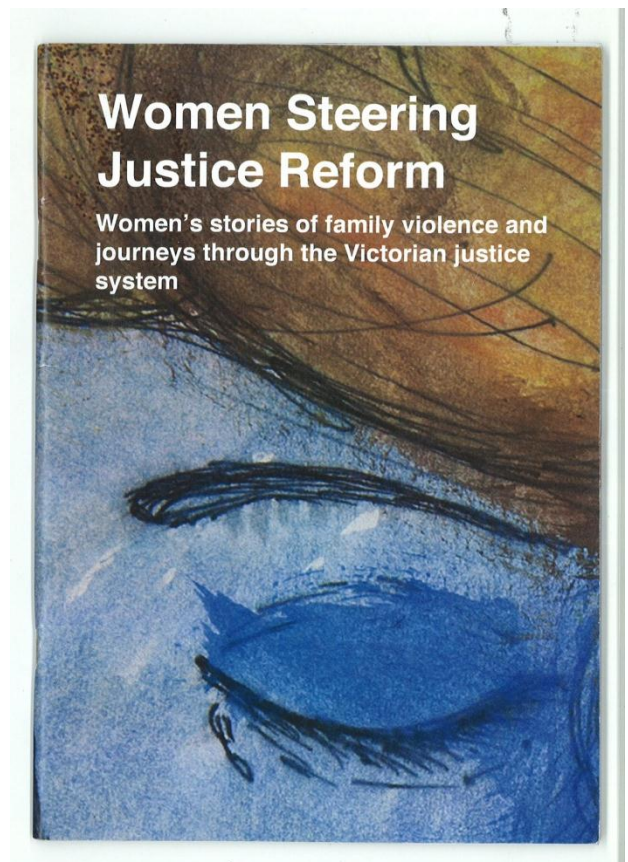
PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

The project has resulted in the creation of a powerful short documentary film and a report outlining key recommendations for change.

The result of this intense workshop was the production of a short film and booklet which presents the recommendations and reflections of the women of the Advisory Group in their own words, taken from hours of interview transcripts. The film of the participants tells their story and provides some background to the

recommendations and their individual meaning.

The short film was viewed by 100 Magistrates at a family violence training session. Victoria Police have requested the DVD go out to all police stations with a family violence liaison worker.



St Kilda Legal Service Co-operative Ltd

Community action for small Courts – Family violence response project

The Project

The *Community Action for Small Courts* project has developed a model for the provision of family violence support services at small courts. It uses a community based approach to improve the level of access to and coordination of support for those attending court or requiring legal assistance on family violence related matters.

Community agencies that are a part of the project include:

- Salvation Army Family Violence Outreach Program
- Connections UnitingCare
- Emerge Women and Children's Support Network
- VincentCare
- Inner South Community Health Service
- Family Life
- Hanover Welfare Services
- St Kilda Legal Service.

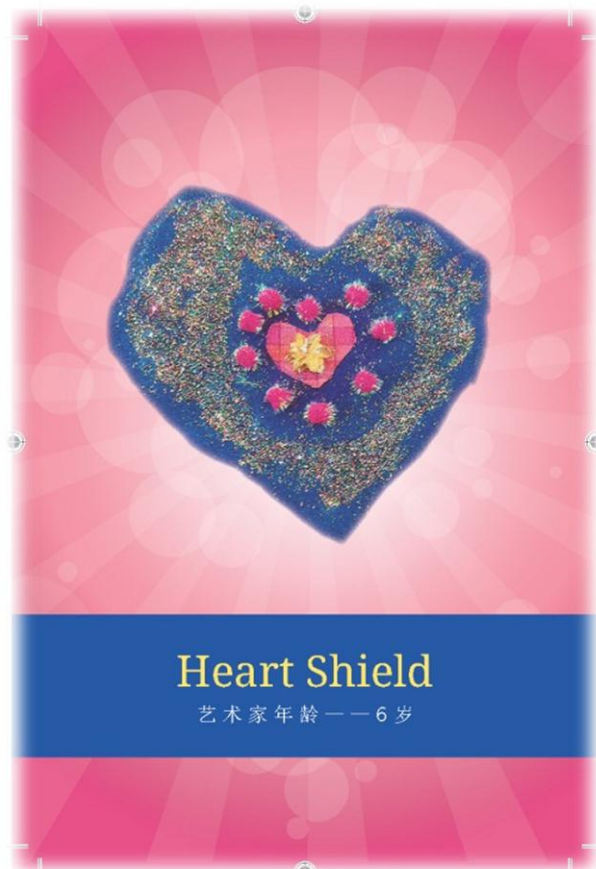
PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

The project was officially launched on 30 March 2012 at the

Moorabbin Justice Centre with strong support from local agencies. CEOs and board representatives from the eight project agencies attended.

Reaching Out to the Community

In cooperation with the City of Bayside Maternal and Health nurses, the project agencies have developed a postcard to promote the local family violence support services that are available.



In October 2013 a further 1,000 copies of the original Heart Shield postcard were printed after a request for more copies of the postcard from Bayside Council. 200 copies of a Mandarin version of the postcard were printed and provided to Bayside Council for distribution through their Maternal and Child Health team.



Legal Outreaches

The family violence lawyer sees clients by appointment at Family Life, Sandringham and at the Highett Maternal and Child Health Centre, fortnightly. The maternal health nurses in particular are welcoming and very supportive of the project. This link has been key and an unexpected outcome

because it put women who are possibly isolated and outside the court system in touch with the project.

Pregnancy is a risk factor for family violence. Maternal health centres are perfectly placed to offer referrals for legal advice to women who otherwise may have no access to reliable information about their rights and responsibilities in the law.

At Court

Every Monday the St Kilda Legal Service family violence lawyer and her volunteer administrative assistant provide a duty lawyer service at Moorabbin Justice Centre for applicants in family violence matters.

Each Monday's court list contains around 35-45 intervention order matters. Approximately 25 per cent of applications are made by police officers on behalf of affected family members.

An average of 5 men each month were engaged with through the respondent worker service.

A total of 20 workers attended the two training sessions leading to increased knowledge of workers of how to

effectively work with CALD clients and about the intervention order process.

The total number of clients assisted through the family violence duty lawyer service at MJC for the second year of the project was 270. This included 204 new clients and 32 repeat clients. Including the other outreaches a total of 298 clients were assisted by the family violence lawyer.

In 2013 there were 247 children affected who were the children of clients of St Kilda Legal Service. Children are considered “affected by family violence” where they are either included on the intervention order application or where they live in the same house as the applicant.

Court representation was provided by the family violence duty lawyer in 231 matters.

79% of clients were female and 21% were male.

Of the 298 clients assisted in 2013, 28 were assisted via the outreach services at Highett Community Hub and Family Life or via telephone advice.

In January of 2014 a dedicated Family Violence Registrar has been appointed by the court as part of a family violence initiative at Moorabbin Justice Centre. The new Family Violence Registrar will be a key contact for the project in 2014. It is also expected that the court will employ an applicant support worker and a part-time respondent worker sometime in 2014.

1300 brochures promoting the family violence services available at court each Monday have been printed and continue to be distributed at Moorabbin Justice Centre

Victoria Legal Aid

Collaborative change to prevent family violence in newly arrived communities project

The Project

Victoria Legal Aid (VLA) is undertaking the *Settled and Safe - Collaborative change to prevent family violence in newly arrived communities* project.

This project aims to increase the knowledge of family violence laws in newly emerging communities in Victoria.

A network of community liaison educators have been established to work with non-government organisations and community workers delivering services to newly-arrived communities who have been in Australia between 18 months to 5 years.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

Project staff delivered the Settled and Safe Training Program across four regions – Shepparton, Morwell,

Dandenong/Ringwood and Inner Melbourne. The two-day training sessions increased the knowledge and understanding of workers in three key areas – family law, family violence and child protection. 125 Settlement workers have been trained to discuss these issues with their communities.

Project staff also developed a comprehensive *Settled & Safe Training Manual* that can be used by legal service providers to equip them with all of the necessary training materials and knowledge to continue to deliver the Settled & Safe training beyond the scope of this project. This training manual will be distributed in hard copy and will be available from the Victoria Legal Aid Website.

Local Court and regional office tours were conducted where Settlement workers and members of newly emerging communities could visit the courts and VLA offices to meet with relevant professionals to further build relationships.

The Project co-ordinator and the Community Legal Educators presented information about the project and the experiences of newly emerging communities in their area to VLA offices and to VLA's Legal Help telephone advice and information service employees. These presentations included information



about community profiles of newly emerging communities within their region along with key information about referral agencies for newly emerging communities and barriers that affect newly emerging communities accessing VLA.

Project staff delivered 10 Forums to organisations including settlement services, local councils, community legal centres and support agencies across Victoria, including Mildura, Wodonga and Geelong.

Communities that benefited from training sessions include the Hazara of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan; the Zomi, Hakha Chin and Karen communities of Burma; and Iranian, Iraqi, South Sudanese, Chinese, Indian and Afghani communities.

Women's Health in the North

Women, lawyers and workers: Piloting a legal advice system that responds holistically to prevent family violence project

The Project

Women's Legal Service Victoria (WLS) lawyers have provided Skyped legal advice to individual women supported by their caseworker in four metropolitan and three rural agencies.

The Women, Lawyers and Workers (WLW) Project staff have produced

legal education and development to assist workers in the family violence sector and provided education and secondary consultation for workers.

Lawyers and workers affirm the benefits of women receiving legal advice in familiar and safe places, with some workers taking a laptop to the woman's house to access the service. Traditional barriers of distance, childcare and cost are overcome utilising this service model.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

Since the start of November 2013, Women's Legal provided 227 advice sessions to women who have experienced family violence. Without the project these women would not have received adequate legal advice.

Project staff facilitated 33 secondary consultations with workers on family violence and family law matters. A number of cases were taken on by the Legal Service which had successful outcomes in court for the women involved.

As a result of the project, WLS identified a need for a 'Legal Needs Analysis Toolkit' that caseworkers could use to identify and respond effectively to women's legal needs. A working group was formed, comprising lawyers from the Education Team, the WLW Coordinator and both rural and metropolitan workers. The draft of the toolkit was work-shopped in a full day's training with workers from each agency – 16 in total. Evaluations of this day indicated that 100% of the



Training session held by Women's Legal Service for the Legal Needs Toolkit

workers either agreed or strongly agreed that the toolkit was easy to use, valuable, and would assist them in recognizing and responding to clients legal needs.

A significant achievement – indicative of the value of the project – has been the extension of the Skype appointments beyond the project timeline by WLS.

Based on feedback from the Women's Legal and participating agencies, the WLW project agreed to amend the booking format for legal advice to an open schedule. This meant that participating agencies could book as many sessions as they needed via Google Calendar on any of the three mornings set aside for Skype appointments. Prior to this, each agency was restricted to particular days in the fortnight. A related suggestion to shift Monday morning

appointments to Tuesday mornings was implemented at the same time. These changes have resulted in greater satisfaction and an increased number of appointments.



Reference Group Meeting

In June, two additional agencies expressed interest in participating in the project. The Project Coordinator ran one-to-one training with Kildonan Family Services and Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation (Albury-Wodonga). Since then, the staff at Kildonan have regularly supported their clients to access legal advice through the project.

Presentations about the WLW project were made at several national conferences in 2013, including: Australian Women's Health Conference (May); National Association for Community Legal Centre Conference (July) and the Family and Relationships Services Australia National Conference (November). A highlight was national media coverage in November 2013 when Elisa

Whittaker from WLSV and Ayfer Berdilek, from Nexus Primary Health were interviewed on Radio National's *Law Report* about the project and the provision of legal assistance to women experiencing violence.

Both Women's Health in the North and WLSV made separate submissions to the Productivity Commission's Access to Justice Inquiry and discussed the model piloted by the WLW project as an effective outreach model to ensure access to justice for women in rural areas.

WLSV has secured funding for another year from Victoria Legal Aid and the Legal Services Board to continue the Skype outreach legal service.

inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence

InTouch Legal Centre Pilot

The Project

inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence Service has established a pilot legal centre within the service (inTouch).

The Legal Centre provides comprehensive and culturally and linguistically appropriate legal advice, support, representation and referrals to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) victims of family violence. It is integrated within the broader organisation, which is a family violence service.

The Centre's model includes strategic litigation, advice, and casework and lawyer-client briefing.

The model prioritises supporting CALD victims of family violence, as this is a group who are known to currently fall through the gaps of the legal system.

In addition to providing legal support for CALD victims, the Centre seeks to build the skills of the legal sector through providing cultural competency training for legal professionals and implementing a community legal education program for CALD communities.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

After extensive consultation with key players in 2012 inTouch developed a best practice model for the Legal Centre. The Centre focuses on providing legal advice & support for clients who reside in the Sunshine Magistrates Court catchment area. The majority of InTouch clients reside in this area. It opened to clients on the 15 January 2013.

Strong relationships have been developed with Sunshine Court, local Community Legal Centres (CLC),

Victoria Police, VLA and mainstream family violence services.

Victorian Legal Aid (VLA) has provided an additional grant to the inTouch Legal Centre this year to deliver more services. Additionally, private law firm Norton Rose provided pro bono legal advice on the establishment of the Legal Centre. Norton Rose has offered to provide commercial legal advice on the management of the Legal Centre into the future.

After one year's operation the Centre had assisted 149 clients. 34 have participated in Legal Education.

A CLC Law Graduate will commence placement with the centre in 2014. They are currently seeking law student placements with Universities.

The Centre will receive CLC accreditation in 2014.

It meets a gap that other CLCs don't meet...because of the multi-disciplinary co-location, interpreters on site model...they're filling that need.

[external legal practitioner quoted in Bluett-Boyd evaluation report 2014]

inTouch has established a partnership with law firm Lander and Rogers whereby lawyers from their Family Law Department provide pro bono advocacy

services for inTouch clients at Sunshine Court.

The inTouch Legal Centre, was launched on 21 November 2012 by the Hon. Robert Clark, MP, as the first model of its kind in Australia.

Clients are referred to law firm Altavilla Vessali with warm referrals and the cases are being co-managed.

VLA & Intouch have also begun a collaboration that will mean that the clients inTouch are not able to assist through their legal service will be linked to Victoria Legal Aid lawyers, so that they do not miss out on the legal help they need.

victim/survivors that their safety and support needs will be upheld through their interaction with the legal components of the family violence system.



Ringwood Magistrates' Court and Intervention Order Support Service information session

Eastern Community Legal Centre

Family Violence Integration project

The Project

The *Family Violence Integration* project is a partnership project led by Eastern Community Legal Centre.

The project is seeking to improve the response of legal and support services to victim/survivors of family violence in a coordinated and integrated manner, with a focus on partners working at the Ringwood Magistrates' Court.

The project aims to instil trust and confidence in the most vulnerable of

The Intervention Order Support Service at Ringwood Magistrates' Court is provided by a partnership which includes:

- Eastern Community Legal Centre
- Ringwood Magistrates' Court
- Victoria Police
- Victoria Legal Aid
- Eastern Domestic Violence Service
- EACH Eastern Victims Assistance and Counselling Program
- Eastern Men's Behaviour Change Consortium (led by Anglicare)
- Eastern Metropolitan Regional Family Violence Partnership and
- Court Network.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

The Protected Person's Space at Ringwood Magistrate's Court was launched by the Attorney on 9 November 2012.

This remains a significant moment in the project, securing a separate space at the Court where applicants could be seated away from the main waiting area. This provides a safe space for victims of family violence whilst allowing more integrated support. It also provides the court with options that could be provided to vulnerable applicants and decreases some of the risk and chaos of family violence days at Court.

This has led to improved respect for the safety of victims of family violence in Court, and means the support needs of victims of family violence can be appropriately addressed. Relationships and referrals between services have improved, as have opportunities and strategies to support victims of family violence.

The Family Violence Integration Project Partnership received funding for Stage 2 of the project from the Legal Services Board grants program, to continue into 2013-14.

The steering group has expanded to include the participation of the VOCAT Registrar, VCAT Koori and Family Violence Support Worker, Manager of the Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service and the Executive

Officer of the Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee

Improved information and referral pathways between the Intervention Order Support Service (IOSS) and the additional FVIP Steering Group partners have developed



Victoria Police partnership in the project

The project has established the Aboriginal Focus of the FVIP Working Group Koori Court Support Worker

Additionally, the project established systems for data collection of Aboriginal community accessing the Ringwood Magistrates' Court and the development and distribution of the IOSS Referral Guide

The development and delivery of 3 Ringwood Magistrates' Court and IOSS Information Sessions including the new FVIP partners benefitting 320 workers.

Increased relationships and confidence with the Aboriginal community to access Ringwood Magistrates' Court.

Over a 5-month period the Koori Court Support Worker has been able to assist 23 applicants and 6 respondents through their experience of the Intervention Order process.

Western Region Health Centre

UpScale

The Project

In 2012 WRHC received funding for UPSCALE to conduct targeted legal education to enhance newly arrived refugees' understanding of parenting, family law and family violence matters. The education aims to reduce the likelihood of legal problems in the first instance.

This project follows on from *Supporting Traditional African Mediators Project (STAMP)* a health promotion project working with the African-Australian community in western suburbs of Melbourne, being undertaken by the Western Region Health Centre.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

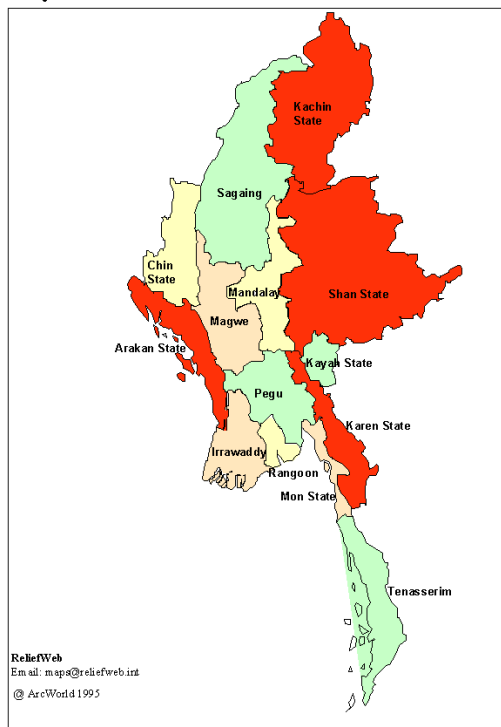
Project Staff held two 'groups' of five training sessions to 32 attendees with Community Leaders and Community workers from a Karen background in Werribee in English and Karen.

Chin community

In May 2013 project staff facilitated a group of 10 people from the Chin background to attend Sunshine Magistrates court, for a general visit and information on family violence and intervention orders.

Sunshine Family Relationship Centre, will run a session on Healthy relationships, as an introduction to the family violence training that will be run. Three advisory groups run with the aim of developing culturally relevant training material and models of teaching for this community. Interest from Indian communities has been expressed in participating in UpScale training

Myanmar: Divisions and states



INFORMATION SOURCES

The information in this report was obtained from a number of sources, including the Legal Services Board project descriptions for the 2010 - 2011 Major Grant funded projects, the Legal Services Board grants program workshop in September 2013, reflection workshops with agencies, from evaluation reports submitted by agencies and from agencies directly.

Photographs and images in this report were sourced from the Legal Services Board workshop and also provided by agencies.

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