

**Legal Assistance Services Learning and Development Group (L&D Group)
NLAf Report September 2018**

Last L&D Group meeting Wednesday 13th June 2018 @ Law Access NSW, Parramatta

The meeting included attendees from Law Access, Legal Aid NSW, Law and Justice Foundation, Office of Director Public Prosecutions

Round up of L&D activities in the NSW Legal Assistance Sector:

Agency	Initiative
Law Access	<p>Law Access has been providing different training every month for Information Officers. Recent examples include training from the Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS) training, and Marrickville Community Legal Centre (residential strata law) and Stress Management with Catalina Consultancy</p> <p>Every week two Information Officers go to the local court as part of professional development to provide IOs with an understanding of clients’ experience of court. This opportunity also offers other options for career paths.</p> <p>New videos are now available on the Law Access website including the “Representing Yourself Guide”. IOs are asked to reflect on their experience at court and also to reflect on courtroom procedure in relation to the Representing Yourself Guide.</p> <p>Law Access L&D is currently providing induction for 4 new staff which involves intensive 2 weeks of training with other agencies including Legal Aid NSW making presentations.</p> <p>Law Access is now implementing “My Performance Planning” (previously Achievement planning) which involves teams of 10 – 12 people. Team leaders provide supervision and rate team members according to how well they meet performance expectations. The revised planning focuses on longer term (12 month) performance planning.</p>
Law and Justice Foundation	<p>Law and Justice Foundation reported no particular L&D issues – all staff are on 2 year contracts and supervision of staff depends on line managers to implement.</p>
Community Legal Centres NSW	<p>The CLCNSW May Quarterlies covered a range of topics, including CLE evaluation and Measuring impact. Two new locations were tested – the Maritime Union of Australia and the University of Technology Sydney. Popular substantive law sessions included a session on Defamation Law by a leading barrister, and Neighbourhood Disputes. Another popular session for lawyers covered legal Ethics. A new look program has been developed and CLCNSW is now using Eventbrite for online registrations and zoom technology for remote access to</p>

Agency	Initiative
	<p>sessions. Community Legal centres NSW will have a new website in the next couple of months which will improve access to L&D events and resources. CLCNSW held an Aboriginal Family Law training Day on May 17th. CLCNSW has been involved in the planning for the National Community Legal Centre Conference are now open. The conference is being held in Sydney at the Masonic centre on 28-30 August. Community Legal</p> <p>Community Legal Centres NSW puts out a monthly newsletter with updates and events listings – Off the Record.</p> <p>CLCNSW has been working with consultants to develop a governance benchmarking tool for the community legal sector in NSW. Directors will be able to assess their own skills and their board skills anonymously. The data will be collated to provide benchmarking data re board skill sets and capabilities. This is in its final stages.</p>
<p>Legal Aid NSW</p>	<p>Legal Aid NSW has been focussing on Managing Organisation Development (OD) – the non-legal side of training. L&D have been looking at behaviours needed from staff – the new Strategic Plan starting on 1st July reflects the new EO’s priorities</p> <p>L&D OD space has a number of areas of focus including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unreasonable client conduct • building capability of team – the People Matters survey assists to identify this refining recruitment • building client well being • Being well – Mentally healthy workplace, demonstrating flexibility, diversity and inclusion. • vicarious trauma - started with policies and now providing training on building resilience • assisting lawyers who work with Stolen Generations so they can be part of the healing journey • building self-care strategies for Aboriginal lawyers <p>Legal Aid’s one-year plan includes management skills for lawyers. For example, resources have been developed for “How to have meaningful conversations” – resilience building conversations.</p> <p>There is also renewed focus on developing career and learning pathways – what do employees need in each stage of your employment?</p> <p>A new lawyer induction program has just been piloted.</p> <p>Solicitor in charge orientation has also just been piloted.</p>
<p>Office Director of Public Prosecutions</p>	<p>ODPP comprises a workforce of 800 staff with 11 offices from Lismore to Wagga and Dubbo.</p> <p>There is extensive staff travel on the circuit. Given the strains of travel, L&D has been providing training to support well-being such as managing exhaustion, and WHS.</p> <p>40 new legal development professionals were starting in the next few months. L&D has been focussing on assisting the workforce with structural changes in response to early guilty plea legislation. This has included a lot of training eg.</p>

Agency	Initiative
	<p>customer service training, recruitment, and the new team approach now required.</p> <p>There is a professional development lawyer in the L&D team. This has been a rotating position which is currently being evaluated. The Professional development lawyer organises Continuing Legal Education for legal staff. ODPP works with the Advocacy Institute who provide advocacy training. The annual professional development conference in development – this year will include Cultural Awareness training.</p> <p>Non legal staff in the team are working on elearning content, reviewing on-boarding and induction process, leadership and development program, recently piloting Aboriginal Cultural Awareness</p>

The meeting also included a tour of Law Access call centre operations, and demonstration of the public website as well as the Law Prompt website (internal to Law Access). Law prompt provides digestible chunks of legal information suitable for responding to enquiries. Law Access staff are allowed an hour a month to review Law Prompt website to ensure their currency with updates on the website. Legal Aid and Community legal centres have access to the Law Prompt website.

The call centre operations tour demonstrated how call data is monitored and managed in real time. Information Officers are provided with structured learning activities to ensure their skills are up to date and performance is managed by supervisors to ensure appropriate information and referrals.

Law Access runs induction training for other services in the legal assistance sector. Dates have previously aligned with Community Legal Centres NSW induction schedule. However, CLCNSW is no longer running pre scheduled face to face inductions, but now offers induction training online or in response to requests.