



## NSW Legal Information and Referral Forum

### Report to NLA

LIRF met on 19 October 2016.

#### **Gambling Help project: Alison Handmer, Project Specialist – Justice and Corrections, Liquor and Gaming NSW, and Jodie Rollason, Solicitor, Wesley Community Legal Service**

Introducing Alison and Jodie, Jane noted that Richard Brading, the founder and leader of the Wesley Community Legal Service, was awarded the 2016 Justice Medal at this year's Justice Awards. This is the world's only free legal service for problem gamblers and their families.

Alison explained the context for the project she's managing:

- Up to 1 in 100 Australian adults suffers significant problems due to gambling, with a further 1 in 50 at risk.
- For every person with a gambling addiction, up to 10 more people suffer (family, friends, colleagues).
- Up to two-thirds of people with gambling problems admit to having committed at least one crime. Fraud and theft are not uncommon.
- More than a third of people with a gambling addiction report being victims or perpetrators of intimate partner violence.
- Up to a third of inmates could have a gambling problem.
- Only a small number of problem gamblers seek help.

The project has six goals:

1. Promoting the application of consistent screening processes and data collection throughout the justice and corrections system.
2. Utilising the data gathered as a consequence of screening to analyse the relationship between problem gambling and crime in NSW and develop further harm minimisation measures in the future.
3. Ensuring that all identified problem gamblers are able to access consistent support, information and/or counselling throughout the justice and corrections system.
4. Ensuring key stakeholders are aware of problem gambling issues, including how to identify affected individuals and utilise referral pathways to help or treatment.
5. Promoting and participating in diversionary programs for problem gamblers in the system, so that treatment becomes a factor in sentencing. Increasing participation of Gambling Help services in these programs is a key factor.
6. Assisting and supporting family members of those who are in the system as a result of problem gambling in a way that both reduces the negative impact on them and provides skills to assist in preventing relapse into problem gambling on release.

Jodie shared a number of stories from the legal service that she and Richard Brading run for gamblers.

- She noted that every client she has seen has suffered from trauma in the past and reports that gambling is a way of escaping that trauma and its effects.
- Jodie and Richard can run training on legal issues for other professionals working with clients who have a gambling addiction, eg training for counsellors on capacity.



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- When assisting clients with their legal problems, Jodie is also able to refer clients for a three-pronged counselling approach – financial counselling, trauma counselling and gambling counselling. Since Jodie has been able to offer her clients this service, she hasn't had any repeat customers.
- If you are providing legal assistance to gamblers you are welcome to contact Jodie for advice. Best contact is by email, which is [jodie.rollason@wesleymission.org.au](mailto:jodie.rollason@wesleymission.org.au).

#### **LawAccess NSW Communications Toolkit: Wendy Elder, Community Outreach Coordinator, LawAccess NSW**

Wendy explained that the Toolkit was developed to provide individuals and organisations with materials to help spread the word about LawAccess NSW across a range of channels, including websites, intranets, social media platforms and electronic and printed newsletters. Unfortunately there is still relatively low awareness of LawAccess in the community, so “problem-spotters” play an important role in referring clients to LawAccess when they identify the client has a legal problem.

The Toolkit will include articles for community and service providers to include in their own newsletters, website links and banners, sample Tweets and Facebook posts, and a very helpful calendar of significant events with a legal angle that can be used to time the posting of Tweets and Facebook posts. There is also a very helpful infographic that presents findings from the LAW Survey in concise, bite-sized messages.

The Toolkit is being finalised and LawAccess will let us know when it is available for distribution electronically. All members of LIRF are welcome to assist with getting out to their networks.

#### **New work in legal information and referral**

The various agencies attending provided information about newly produced legal information resources and initiatives for enhancing legal referral:

#### **Immigration Advice and Rights Centre (IARC) (Katrina Ironside)**

<http://www.iarc.asn.au/>

- Katrina reported that 50% of IARC's work is in DV, for clients on partner visas.
- The amount of CLE that IARC is running has increased, so they have recently hired a CLE worker to resource their lawyers.
- Katrina also reported that given the complex and ever shifting legislative and service environment in immigration/refugee law, IARC has commenced a mapping exercise in order to streamline and improve their referral processes. Katrina agreed to share the map with LIRF and NLAf when it's finalised (noting that it will need to be updated regularly).

#### **Diversity Services, Department of Justice NSW (Anne Mangan)**

<http://www.justice.nsw.gov.au/diversityservices>

- Anne reported on a range of community events that Diversity Services is running, intended to alert newly arrived/migrant community members to legal services and legal information



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available in NSW. All of the events and presentations are done in partnership with other community services, including schools.

- Diversity Services is developing a welcome pack DVD for refugees and will consult on the content with legal assistance service providers. If you are interested in this project, you can contact the project coordinator, Sam Borka, on [sam.borka@justice.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sam.borka@justice.nsw.gov.au).

#### **Cooperative Legal Services Delivery (CLSD) program, Legal Aid NSW (Kate Halliday)**

<http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/community-partnerships/cooperative-legal-services-delivery-clsd-program>

- Kate has started working in the CLSD unit recently.
- She reported that the newest CLSD region, located in Moree, is up and running with Judy Duncan from the ALS NSW/ACT appointed as the local coordinator.
- Jane encouraged everyone to include CLSD regions in their planning for regional NSW. All of the coordinators are incredibly helpful and generous with sharing information and connections.

#### **CLCNSW (Holly Brooke)**

<http://www.clcnsw.org.au/>

- Holly reported that the final CLC Quarterlies for the year will take place in November. You can see the Quarterlies dates, agendas and papers at this link: [http://www.clcnsw.org.au/cb\\_pages/quarterlies.php](http://www.clcnsw.org.au/cb_pages/quarterlies.php).
- The Monday of the November Quarterlies will provide training on Aboriginal family law.
- CLCNSW is currently updating their website to streamline self-referral to legal assistance services.

#### **Australian Pro Bono Centre (Afton Fife)**

<http://probonocentre.org.au/>

- Afton reported that the Centre will be launching the third edition of the Pro Bono Manual and the second edition of the Centre's What Works in Pro Bono guide next week. The Manual is a resource for law firms who are establishing a pro bono practice, or who have an existing practice and are committed to maintaining its quality.
- The What Works guide assists community organisations to develop and build pro bono partnerships with law firms.
- Both guides will be available to download for free from the Centre's website.

#### **Ashurst (Garth Tinsley)**

[https://www.ashurst.com/about-ashurst.aspx?id\\_Content=11635](https://www.ashurst.com/about-ashurst.aspx?id_Content=11635)

- Garth advised that Ashurst provides targeted pro bono work and responds to ad hoc requests.
- They have been very involved through the CLSD program in running wills workshops for Aboriginal clients in Far West NSW and on the Central Coast.
- Ashurst's pro bono program provides legal advice and capacity building for not for profits on a range of legal issues.



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- Members of LIRF are welcome to contact Garth on [garth.tinsley@ashurst.com](mailto:garth.tinsley@ashurst.com) to inquire about possible pro bono assistance.

#### Law and Justice Foundation (Catherine Carpenter and Jane Kenny)

<http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/>

- Catherine reported that the Foundation's 2016 Justice Awards were held last week.
- Photos from the event can be found here <http://gallery.lawfoundation.net.au/> (enter the password justice4all) and on the Foundation's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/NSWLawFound>.
- Stan Grant gave the Justice Address. You can listen to the full address (20 minutes) here [http://xml.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/audio/\\$file/2016 Stan Grant Address.m3](http://xml.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/audio/$file/2016%20Stan%20Grant%20Address.m3). We anticipate posting the transcript of his address on our website shortly.
- The program containing information about the nominees can be found here: [http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/pdf/\\$file/2016 Program.pdf](http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/pdf/$file/2016%20Program.pdf).
- The media release listing the winners can be found here: [http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/justiceawards/\\$file/Problem\\_gambling\\_advocate\\_wins\\_justice\\_medal.pdf](http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/justiceawards/$file/Problem_gambling_advocate_wins_justice_medal.pdf).
- You can also follow all the fun of the night on the Foundation's Twitter stream: <https://twitter.com/NSWLawFound>.
- Jane reported that the Foundation will shortly publish a checklist developed by Melanie Kallmier from the Mid North Coast CLC as part of her evaluation of the Reach Out project. The checklist alerts legal service providers to the range of considerations when establishing a video-link outreach service in partnership with a community service. The checklist will be available on the grant products page of the Foundation's website and promoted via the PLL newsletter.

#### Legal Information Access Centre (LIAC), State Library of NSW (Catherine Bryant)

<http://www.legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au/>

- Catherine reported that the Find Legal Answers website is currently being upgraded as part of a bigger upgrade of the State Library website.
- Books in the Toolkit, held in public libraries throughout NSW, are updated twice a year.
- The new sexual assault book published by Women's Legal Service NSW will shortly be added to the Toolkit.
- Most of the Toolkit books are also available to download from <http://www.legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au/guides/index.html>. These publications are updated as needed.
- The new version of the Law Handbook will also be available shortly. This book will be available in hard copy in libraries and to download from the Find Legal Answers website.
- Catherine also told us about the winners of the LIAC Centre of Excellence award at the Justice Awards.



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### Report to NLAFF

#### NSW Legal Assistance Forum (NLAFF) (Kerry Wright)

<http://www.nlaf.org.au/>

- Kerry reported on NLAFF's three active working groups. The reports from these working groups are available from the NLAFF website.
- Kerry is also happy to announce news from the legal assistance sector in the What's New section. You can email Kerry with any news items on [kwright@lawfoundation.net.au](mailto:kwright@lawfoundation.net.au).

#### CLE unit, Legal Aid NSW (Lauren Finestone)

<http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/home>

- Lauren has very recently been appointed as manager of this unit.
- Following an evaluation by the LJF, the CLE unit is currently being restructured to make a more coordinated and integrated service across Legal Aid's practice areas.
- The 2017 program of face to face training, webinars and legal information products is currently being planned.
- Lauren also reported that the 2017 legal topics for older people diary is in production, but with a smaller print run than in previous years due to the high cost of printing and distributing these very popular diaries.

The next meeting of LIRF will take place in March 2017.

#### Jane Kenny

Grants and Legal Information Manager, Law and Justice Foundation

Convenor

Legal Information and Referral Forum

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