

Albury/Wodonga Community Legal Service 2002-03 Annual Report (Attachment)

Hours of operation

9am to 5pm Monday to Friday

Number of advices undertaken

Total Advice activities	2547
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Casework & Number of files open & closed

Total cases open during period	231
- Open at period start	40
- New (opened in period)	191
- Still open at period end (ongoing)	41
Total cases closed during period	191
Closed involving court representation	105

Duty Lawyer services

Intervention Order Support Scheme was provided in Wodonga and Wangaratta Magistrates Courts on a weekly basis.

Community Legal Education

Total open during period	21
- Open at period start	4
- New (opened in period)	17
- Still open at period end (ongoing)	4

Regular Community Legal Education delivered during this period included the bimonthly divorce classes and You & Your Kids classes. Other major projects included Family Law seminars to community workers in Deniliquin, Griffith & Tumut, launch of Intervention Order Support Scheme, Law Week activities and Paralegal Legal Aid training to community workers.

Law Reform

- Through our Eyes project which is assessing the legal needs of women in regional, rural and remote Australia.

- Family Law Pathways project

Research

Nil

Access & Equity

CLS seeks to provide a service which is accessible, equitable, non-discriminatory and non-judgmental.

CLS provides legal advice, information, referral, casework, community legal education and law reform activities in North East Victoria and the Southern Riverina of New South Wales. Any person who is in the region by virtue of their residing in, visiting, or legal issue arising in are eligible to receive service from CLS. No means test applies.

The service does have limited resources however, so within the general framework of eligibility for the service, special attention is paid to meeting the needs of the target groups. Broadly these are people who are considered to be disadvantaged in some way in dealing with the law.

There are two main categories of disadvantage:

- a) Those people who are denied access to legal assistance as a result of limited financial resources, whether they are recipients of social security benefits or in low income employment.
- b) Those people who are otherwise disadvantaged in their access to justice i.e. indigenous people, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, youth, people who have a physical disability or mental health problems, women living in circumstances of domestic violence or people who live in rural or remote areas.

Community Development work

Staff of the service are involved in the following committees/networks:

- Albury/Wodonga Community Legal Service Advisory Committee
- Victorian Community Council Against Violence
- Wangaratta Family Violence Integration Project
- Wodonga Family Violence Network
- Albury/Wodonga Domestic Violence Network
- Shepparton Family Violence Prevention Pilot Project
- Multicultural Interagency Network
- Border Interagency Group for Young People
- Rural Housing Network – board member

- Albury Community Housing – board member
- Victorian Regional Rural & Remote Community Legal Service network
- National Regional Rural & Remote Community Legal Service network
- Albury & District Law Society
- Law Week committee

Volunteers

24 Volunteer Solicitors provide advice at the weekly Wodonga and Wangaratta evening clinics on a roster basis. There are also 3 paralegal volunteers who assist at these clinics on a supervised basis.

A volunteer was also employed as an Administrative Assistant for one day a week from February to April 2003. This volunteer moved into a paid position for one and a half days a week from May 2003.

A volunteer paralegal worker is also employed to assist people to complete Legal Aid application forms. The worker is based at the Wodonga Community Information and Referral Service.

Training

Solicitors attended the following training/professional development:

- Victorian Community Legal Centres State Conference
- Family Law Gateway Forum Canberra
- Combined Group of Community Legal Centres – May conference
- Farm Succession Planning workshop
- NSW Victims of Crime information session
- Media Skills Training
- Law Institute Victoria Regional Law Tour Rutherglen
- Superannuation in Family Law training
- Conflict Management Workshop (Dispute Settlement Centre Victoria)
- VLA Relationship seminar
- NSW Legal Aid Child Support Service seminar
- Microsoft Office Word training
- Speak Out Conference (youth)
- Changing the Face of Practice conference
- 2002 National CLC conference in Melbourne
- Successful Business Writing workshop
- VIC Equal Opportunity Commission training
- NSW Women's Legal Service training

Administration staff attended the following training/professional development:

- Victorian Community Legal Centres State Conference
- Managing Potentially Violent Situations
- NSW Victims of Crime information session

- 2002 National CLC conference in Melbourne
- SSPI workshop
- Media training
- VLA Legal Issues seminar Shepparton

Additional Income

No additional income was received from other sources in this financial year.

Management Committee

Upper Murray Family Care Incorporated Directory of the Executive Committee of Management for 2002

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