



## CLSD Riverina Meeting – Q3 Thursday 24th August 2023, 11am – 1.00 pm (online)

### MINUTES

**Present:** Kieron Drever (Remand Program), Craig Maxwell (Pathways, Murrumbidgee), Yvonne De Borde (Macarthur Legal Centre), Seema Sanghi (Legal Aid NSW), Rachel Bennett (Community Corrections), Judy Solomon (Lifetime Learning, Ashmont), Scott Boyle (Anglicare), Susan Holly (Sister Housing), Ellie Haas (Legal Aid NSW), Annette Weeks (Edel Quin, Vinnies); Danielle Plumb and Kim Busuttil (Legal Aid NSW WDO team); Sue Killham; Lola Imawan (Legal Aid NSW, Respect at Work), Kate Halliday (Legal Aid NSW), Melissa Van Lierop (Intereach), Jacqui Comb (Minute Taker - Intereach),

**Apologies:** Sarah (Remand Program).

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#### 1. Opening

Acknowledgement of country and Introductions

#### 2. Purpose

- **Purpose of CLSD**

CLSD partnership purpose: to work collaboratively to identify and address unmet legal and related non-legal needs of people in the Riverina region. We do this by:

- Making better referrals/ referral pathways
- Working on projects and devising new services, and
- Coordinating our efforts.

- **Meeting purpose**

- Discuss the Riverina Roadshow - aims and locations (outside of Wagga city)
- Better understanding of fines and unpaid debt in the region and ways to support people
- Share information and gain better understanding of services in the region

#### 3. Riverina Roadshow discussion – aims and locations

- Go to areas of high need where there isn't much F2F.
- Proposal that the next F2F meeting (16<sup>th</sup> Nov) in Leeton be timed with an event in the community; pre-booked appointments meeting with service providers who can support clients in a wholistic way i.e. legal health check; asking about fines, employment, housing etc (providing advice in a confidential advice room), and then able to refer them directly to the other relevant services at the event who can also provide support.
- Nick at the Leeton TAFE was very encouraging to do something out in Leeton and using the TAFE venue to hold the event.
- Craig does outreach to Narrandera from Wagga, and Griffith does outreach to Leeton, so they are confident their service would attend.

How to market it and get people engaged?

- Mel noted Gerri (Geraldine Higgins - Child, Family and Community Worker - Intereach) has participants and connections in the community and would be great to get her involved.

- Having a Sausage sizzle available.
- Birth certificates generally draws people in - help with ID and getting a license, fines, support with electricity bills (EWON officers to attend).
- Social media, flyers at local places, radio and newspaper, and get elders or leaders to also promote it.
- Helping people get their DL back again (Red Cross program that has now stopped, can connect with Birrang Enterprises - <https://www.birrang.com.au/driving-programs>)
- Wills may be introduced – via Macarthur Legal service, for Aboriginal people.
- Sue had a really successful event with Patrick Dawson a local lawyer who came and talked to seniors about Wills, Power of Attorney and Enduring Guardianship in simple language and got great feedback – this could be a great service to also bring in.
- Sue also mentioned Michael Lyons ‘Uncle Mick’ - Sandhills Artefacts is great and gets people in, and is culturally accessible in this area.
- CLSD has funding to support activities like this and are also contemplating other locations in the region such as Hay Griffith and Junee. Kim added that Griffith has been identified as a priority area with high level of fines and low WDOs.
- The Leeton Community Centre has an outdoor area and lots of rooms, a park across the road, cooking facilities and big kitchen – it’s another option that we could look at for the venue.
- Local services meet with the visiting services – share their ‘burning questions’, perhaps meet night before for a casual dinner?
- Should the event be over 1 or 2 days?
- Michelle from Sally’s are based in Leeton and Karen at Land Council has her finger on everything, CentraCare works out of the Community Centre, community transport is also an access point for getting people to the event.
- Name for event: ‘Legal Information Access Day’.
- Service NSW can help with EAPA vouchers.
- Wattle Hill – has many Aboriginal people living there – perhaps could be an option to hold event there?

#### **Actions:**

- Mel to speak to Nick around location of event, talk to Gerry and Karen Davey to make sure we have got a venue that will be suitable, and the date will work.
- Look at setting up an online meeting to catch up in a month to get the ball rolling.
- Yvonne – will get back to Mel end of next week about the Wills.
- Create a flyer for the event.

#### **4. Fines and WDO discussion - opportunities and support for regional communities**

- WDO team and fines team have project money to ensure we collect data from Revenue NSW of uptake of WDO and level of fines.
- Areas of concern are Junee, Griffith and the Murrumbidgee LGA - High number of fines, low number of WDOs.
- The event in Leeton will try to engage more sponsors or talk to existing sponsors and discuss what the barriers are to transfer fines to WDOs.
- Intereach is a WDO sponsor but currently inactive, will check with Gerry and also trying to get Wagga active again.
- Fines can be worked off through a WDO, it can be done in many different ways i.e. engaged in a mentoring partnership, counselling, mental health support, drug and alcohol counselling etc.
- Kim and Danielle work to increase the uptake of WDOs.
- Pathways is sponsor in Vic and QLD as well.

- Anglicare doesn't have time – Scott says he's done the training but not many participants as workers can't afford the time, would be happy to report to a 3rd party.
- Craig said that funding and time doesn't impact them much, they have a spreadsheet and upload it onto clients WDO.

## 5. CLSD Legal Referral Guide for Riverina – partner development of content

Mel to send to Ellie so she can fill in and also to the ALS.

## 6. Partner updates and other news

Judy –

- In Ashmont there are lots of people in the community that are in need of a free birth certificate event.
  - The best time would be during school holidays in order to run a successful day as the main room is booked out a lot during the week.
- They have Centrelink come out once a fortnight, if they could be there at the same time it would be good.

Kieron –

- Assisting Sarah with a Remand Pilot Program project
- It's a whole of government approach trying to reduce the amount of unnecessary time young people spend in police custody.
- Juvenile offenders are taken to police station and then get given bail by the court – avoidable short-term remand.
- They are trying to have the largest impact on young people who are starting to come to attention on police, or on the radar of heading down that track and trying to divert them from this by wrapping them in support services and lead them away from the criminal justice service.
- Piloting in 2 areas: The Riverina Police District is one location and South Sydney is the other (due to what works in Sydney doesn't always work regionally)
- Running for 12 months - 2 years to gauge effectiveness and if successful it will be rolled across the state.
- Multiple agencies involved; Wollundry Dreaming - first nation young people being brought back to country and culture, and 54 Reasons - provide one-on-one interventions as well as group interventions and outreach program to Junee and potentially other locations.
- Program is aimed at 10-17 years of age.
- They're hoping to get an idea of what services are required in smaller community towns that aren't currently available to support younger people.
- Is the project also tracking whether the young people are also receiving penalty notices from police?
  - It's mostly where they have received a court attendance notice.
- What is Referral process?
  - There is a referral form - Mel will email out the referral form.
- Is family violence a factor for young people having contact with police?
  - Some DV offences covered by Young Offenders Act
  - It's trying to take on a whole family approach, provide education and support to families and find out what has brought them to this point.
  - Will be trying to work with the family to provide support as a whole, or otherwise if there is a family member the individual can reside with.

## 7. Next meeting 16 November 2023 (11am to 1pm) Face to Face, Leeton