



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

3 December 2015

Community Legal Centres assist people with disability to access legal assistance services

The National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) and Disability Discrimination Legal Service (DDLS) today acknowledge International Day of People with Disability, held annually on 3 December.

“Nationally, 25.4% of the over 200,000 clients that Community Legal Centres help each year identify as a person with disability, and we know that this figure is actually much higher. Our direct experience in helping clients with disability highlights the multitude of legal problems and barriers to accessing justice people with disability face” said Rosslyn Monro, Chair of NACLC.

“Unfortunately however, the 30% funding cut that CLCs are facing nationally from 2017 will limit our ability to give people with disability access to the vital legal help they need” added Ms Monro.

There are a number of specialist disability CLCs across Australia, including the Disability Discrimination Legal Service (DDLS), which provides legal help to people with disability. Julie Phillips is Manager of DDLS and last week was announced as a 2015 National Disability Award recipient: “every day we see the discrimination faced by our clients with disability. It is only when people with disabilities are afforded the same protections in law, safety and security as others in the community, that they will be equal,” said Ms Phillips.

“There have been a range of national, state and territory reports highlighting issues for people with disability over the last year, including difficulties accessing justice, indefinite detention, decision-making, and violence, abuse and neglect. A number of recommendations were also made as part of Australia’s recent human rights scorecard. The reports and evidence are there- it is now time for government action” concluded Ms Phillips.

[For further information or to arrange an interview contact:](#)

Julie Phillips, Manager, Disability Discrimination Legal Service, 0417 570 197
Amanda Alford, Director Policy and Advocacy, NACLC, 0421 028 645

NACLC acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands across Australia and particularly the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, traditional owners of the land on which the NACLC office is situated. We pay deep respect to Elders past and present.