

Media Release

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Disability Lawyers Call for More Legal Help for People with Disability on International Day

The National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) and the Australian Disability Rights Network today acknowledge International Day of People with Disability, held annually on 3 December, but emphasised that this year there is a real threat to free legal help for people with disability.

“Community Legal Centres across Australia provide free legal help to many Australians including people with disability every day. Our [National Census of CLCs 2015](#) showed that 26.6% of our clients on average identify as having a disability and we know that this figure is actually much higher” said Dan Stubbs, National Spokesperson of the National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC).

“Our experience in helping clients with disability tells us that often they have a multitude of legal problems and barriers to accessing justice. Community lawyers assist people with disability in crucial areas such as discrimination in work and education, domestic violence and other situations of abuse, and access to goods and services” he said.

“Unfortunately however, the 30% funding cut that CLCs are facing nationally from 1 July next year will limit our ability to give people with disability access to the vital legal help they need” he added.

There are a number of specialist disability CLCs across Australia, including: Australian Centre for Disability Law, AED Legal Centre, Disability Discrimination Legal Service, Intellectual Disability Rights Service, Mental Health Law Centre, Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Centre and Mental Health Legal Centre.

“On days like today it is important to highlight the key role CLCs play in helping people with disability, including the network of specialist CLCs that have particular expertise in assisting people with disability” added Mark Patrick, Convenor of the Australian Disability Rights Network.

“We are also part way through the 16 Days of Activism, an important time to acknowledge the very high and disproportionate levels of violence and abuse against women with disability and the intersection of gender and disability” continued Mr Stubbs.

“Today, and as part of the 16 Days of Activism, we remind the Federal Government of the urgency of these issues and the importance of working with the sector to reverse the planned funding cliff, which is \$35 million nationally for CLCs, to ensure people with disability get access to vital legal help” concluded Mr Stubbs.

To arrange an interview or for more information contact:

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