

NACLC STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-19

NACLC is the national peak body representing and providing services and support to community legal centres (CLCs) in Australia. NACLC's members are the state and territory associations of CLCs, which in turn represent around 190 community legal services in various metropolitan, regional, rural and remote locations. CLCs provide legal and related services to disadvantaged people in Australia.

NACLC is committed to respecting and working to promote and protect the human rights of everyone. As part of this commitment, NACLC advocates for equitable access to justice, fair laws and policies that recognise and protect human rights, including the rights and interests of CLCs' diverse client communities, and for adequate government funding and support of CLCs and other legal assistance services. NACLC sees equitable access to justice as including ensuring that everyone can obtain legal advice and assistance regardless of their capacity to pay.

NACLC leads and supports CLCs across Australia to deliver quality legal and related services to their clients and communities and to develop, maintain and continuously improve strong and quality organisations. NACLC itself strives to model good practices and ensure continuous improvement in its own operations and services.

Vision

NACLC's vision is to realise rights, fairness and equality for everyone.

Mission

NACLC leads, connects and sustains CLCs to realise rights, fairness and equality for everyone.

Our Values and How We Work

NACLC:

- is a leader
- is independent
- acts with integrity and professionalism
- is client and service focussed
- adopts a human rights-based approach to its work
- adopts an evidence-based approach to its work
- works collaboratively
- is committed to quality, continuous improvement and a culture of review
- respects, values and is informed by the experiences of CLCs and legal assistance services and their clients, who are vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the community
- strives in its own work and advocacy, consistent with the principles contained in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, to respect and be guided by the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to obtain the free, prior and informed consent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples when working in partnership
- strives to create a respectful, supportive and cohesive workplace culture.

Strategic priorities

Strive for equitable access to justice and the promotion and protection of human rights

NACLC will:

- Fearlessly advocate in the interests of CLCs and CLCs' client communities to governments and others
- Undertake strategic advocacy with the aim of promoting and protecting the human rights of everyone, and in particular CLCs' client communities of vulnerable and disadvantaged people
- Lead and support action to advance the adoption by governments and other decision-makers, of laws, policies and measures aimed at ensuring access to justice for everyone, in particular vulnerable and disadvantaged people
- Undertake research that demonstrates the cost and social policy benefits of CLCs and advocate for adequate government funding of legal assistance for people who are not able to pay for legal services
- Proactively undertake and support advocacy and initiatives that promote and advance appropriate recognition of the unique place and value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities and protect their human rights in ways of their choosing

Proactively identify the sustainability needs of CLCs in collaboration with the sector and through other evidence, and drive initiatives to sustain healthy, viable legal assistance organisations and maximise ongoing service availability

NACLC will:

- Support and promote quality assurance and continuous improvement in CLCs, including through NACLC's National Accreditation Scheme and National Professional Indemnity Insurance Scheme's risk management process and guidance
- Proactively identify sector sustainability needs through our work and consultation with the sector and use them to inform NACLC's sector sustainability work
- Continue to offer member services and resources that meet the needs and contribute to the sustainability of CLCs
- Partner with state and territory associations, particularly those without funded secretariats, to identify and roll out good practice sector sustainability initiatives with a major focus on redressing shortfalls in resources

Advance the interests of CLCs and their clients, disadvantaged and marginalised people in Australia, by developing, maintaining and strengthening mutually beneficial collaborations with CLCs and with other key partners

NACLC is committed to working collaboratively and will:

- Consult and facilitate participation from CLCs and their representative bodies in our governance, work planning, policy and law reform, advocacy and sector sustainability work
- Strengthen and maintain collaborative partnerships with our legal assistance partners, in particular with NATSILS and NFVPLS and their members, but also with pro bono contributor law firms, National Legal Aid and its members, and the Law Council of Australia
- Work collaboratively and develop strategic alliances or partner with people and organisations in the NGO, government, university and private sectors, to inform and undertake our work to support CLCs and assist their clients
- Search out and invest in opportunities to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations
- Continue to promote and strengthen the capacity of CLCs, National Networks and their collaborations

Guide the operation and oversee the wind-down of knowmore, supporting its clients and staff and preserving and building on its legacy

NACLC will ensure that:

- **knowmore** is guided by the values of NACLC and the CLC sector and models CLC best practice integrated service delivery
- **knowmore** continues to operate as an accessible, culturally secure, client-centred and trauma informed service, successfully collaborating with other stakeholders
- **knowmore** continues to influence system reform, by bringing the voices and collective experience of its clients to the attention of the Royal Commission, policy makers and the public, in ways that clients are comfortable with, contributing to the prevention of child sexual abuse in institutions and improved institutional responses for all time
- The clients and staff of **knowmore** are supported during the winding down of the Royal Commission and of the legal service, including through the building and enhancing of partnerships and referral pathways to ensure clients are supported after the Royal Commission and **knowmore** cease operating
- The successes and lessons learned from operating the legal service are recorded and publicised for future use in other contexts.

Build a sustainable future for NACLC, modelling good practices

NACLC will:

- Monitor and review the performance and effectiveness of NACLC's governance and operations
- Be active in recruiting, developing and extending the expertise and experience that our Board and our organisation need to ensure that NACLC can achieve its purposes

- Be guided by the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Continuously reflect, review and improve the operation, effectiveness, responsiveness and accessibility of our operations and services
- Proactively manage and minimise risk
- Proactively identify and take up opportunities to build and secure operational sustainability, including through diversifying and strengthening NACLC's resource base to support its work
- Provide a supportive, culturally secure and rewarding workplace, aimed at protecting the wellbeing and nurturing the professional growth of its staff