



## *Rising to the Challenge*

**2014 CLCs National Conference  
13-15 August 2014, Alice Springs**

### **Theme**

The theme of this year's National Conference of CLCs, *Rising to the Challenge*, reflects the values and commitment of the people working in community legal centres. The phrase refers to the difficulty of CLCs' work, but celebrates CLC workers' determination to strive against unfairness and injustice. At the heart of their dedication and determination to *rise above* difficulties are belief, optimism, pragmatism and hope.

*Rising to the Challenge* also recognises a core principle of the CLC model: that our organisations and operations are informed by and work with disadvantaged people to support *them* rising to meet their challenges. Assisted by CLCs, clients choose their own solutions and participate in solving their own problems. As individuals are empowered, the CLC sector is enriched and communities are made stronger.

Some of the challenges that the CLC sector faces are:

- *ensuring responsive and holistic legal services*: ascertaining and meeting the true extent of need in the community - how do CLCs find time and resources, beyond the continual struggle of meeting the demand at the door, to reach out and meet so many different needs?
- *responding to demand more strategically or working to reduce it* – what role can or should CLCs play in protecting the rights of the disadvantaged and vulnerable aside from direct service delivery, and what organisational and service models are best for our clients?
- *looking after our people and continuously improving our organisations*: how do we ensure that CLCs have skilled, trained and available Boards working in partnership with skilled and trained staff? How do we continue to develop our organisations and advance our workers?
- *coping with and adapting to external factors*: such as inadequate funding or funding requirements that clash with CLCs' commitment to utilising preventative strategies, and operating a legal practice in situations not catered for by the legal profession regulators.

### **Programming**

The focus of the Conference will be on exploring innovative and strategic ways of meeting these challenges. Accordingly, programming will give priority to presentations that demonstrate success in one or more of these three strands:

*Advancing* (by discovering and creating, developing innovative ideas and strategies, including and incorporating the learning and perspectives of others)

*Enriching* (the experiences, knowledge and skills of people and organisations)

*Solving* (problems with evidence-based, cross disciplinary and lateral solutions, and by innovation)

### **Invitation**

*Join others committed to understanding what is at the heart of social justice, in the red centre of Australia, Arrernte country, for the 2014 National CLCs Conference.*