The cover features a white background with several overlapping circles in various shades of purple. Some circles are solid, while others contain patterns of small dots or diagonal lines. The text is positioned in the upper right and center.

**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2017-2018

CAWLS
Women's Legal Service





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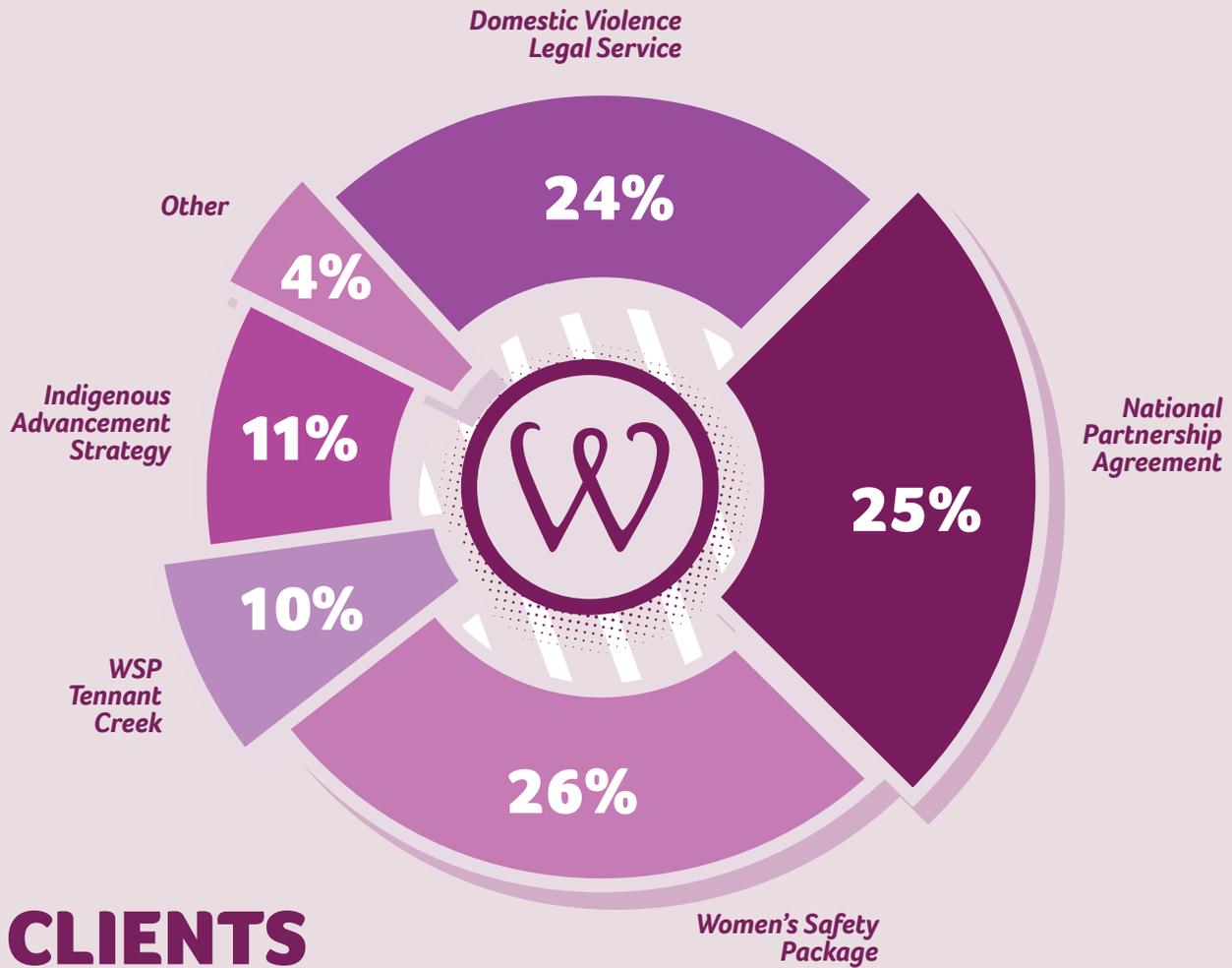
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CAWLS FUNDING



CLIENTS BY AGE



ABOUT CAWLS

22 years on...

Central Australian Women’s Legal Service (CAWLS) was incorporated in April 1996 with the first AGM being held on 17 June 1996. This was the culmination of many years of hard work by a dedicated group of women legal practitioners who had been providing free legal advice on a voluntary basis to women in Central Australia. The women seeking assistance were primarily victims of domestic violence who had no other access to legal services due to issues of conflict.

In July 2000 CAWLS commenced auspicing the Domestic Violence Legal Service funded by the Northern Territory Government Department of Justice. At this time CAWLS and DVLS were separate entities, informally integrated and co-located.

These two services later merged and with the introduction of funding under the Commonwealth Government Women’s Safety Package and Indigenous Advancement Strategy CAWLS has grown into an essential and dynamic legal service for all women in the Central Australia and Barkly regions.

CAWLS is a Community Legal Service, based in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek providing free confidential legal information, advice and representation to all women in the Central Australia and Barkly regions. A large component of our service delivery is related to women at risk of or experiencing domestic and family violence and the interconnected legal issues that accompany this including family law, child protection, tenancy matters and victims of crime compensation.

CAWLS provides Community Legal Education to the wider community and contributes to law and policy reform and advocacy campaigns to raise awareness of legal issues affecting women both on a local and national level.

During 2017/18 CAWLS enhanced and expanded outreach delivery to women in the local community and remote areas including the Barkly. We also further developed our client services to ensure all women are provided with a wrap-around, holistic, culturally safe and trauma informed response to all legal and interconnected matters.

In 2017/18 CAWLS received funding from five different streams from the Commonwealth Government and the Northern Territory Government. The funding allows CAWLS to provide a generalist legal service to all women in Central Australia and Barkly region, a drop-in domestic and family violence legal service, Community Legal Education as well as services through our Specialist Domestic Violence Unit incorporating CAWLS Health Justice Partnerships.



STRATEGIC PLAN

Advice clinics occur at out Alice Springs and Tennant Creek CAWLS offices, at our outreach locations including local and remote health centres, the Alice Springs Women's Shelter (ASWS) and NPY Women's Council as well as a duty service at the Local Courts in Alice and Tennant Creek. A domestic and family violence assistance service is also provided by phone and drop-in on a daily basis from Monday to Friday.

Vision

We aspire for a future where women and their children are safe, living with dignity and respect

Mission

Our purpose is to help women in Central Australia and the Barkly Region with their legal matters, providing legal assistance, community legal education, and specialised support services for those affected by domestic violence

Values

Integrity – Respect – Inclusion – Quality

Objectives

1. To provide free and confidential legal assistance
2. To increase legal literacy and understanding through the provision of legal education
3. To enable professionals to identify, support and refer victims of domestic violence to appropriate services
4. To advocate for law and policy reform seeking changes beneficial to our clients

Strategies

- We understand the interconnected complex legal issues facing our clients, particularly those affected by domestic and family violence
- We are accessible, proactive and responsive
- We have good governance and sound management practices
- We apply evidence based evaluation processes for reporting and ongoing improvement

Activities

1. Through advice clinics we provide information and advice in a range of civil law areas with focus on:
 - Domestic and Family violence
 - Child protection
 - Family law (divorce, property & children)
 - Tenancy
 - Employment
 - Discrimination
 - Credit and debt
 - Complaints
 - Victims of crime application
2. Ongoing casework and representation
3. Provide appropriate referrals to other organisations
4. Provide training to professionals and service providers
5. Community legal education to the wider community through:
 - Attending community events (e.g. info booths and stalls)
 - Participating in awareness campaigns (e.g. social media, radio broadcasting)
 - Educational materials (e.g. brochures, CAWLS website, videos)
 - Providing an outreach service visiting local organisations, Alice Springs town camps and remote communities
 - Maintaining the online Service Directory for family law and domestic violence services
6. Contribute to law and policy reform and advocacy campaigns to raise awareness of legal issues affecting our clients:
 - Make submissions to government both on a national and local level
 - Engage with government representatives, media agencies, human rights organisations, and other stakeholders
7. Collaborate with government and non-governmental agencies and services, including participating in network meetings and developing and maintaining partnerships

CHAIR'S REPORT

2018 has been another fulfilling year and we continue to expand and grow to ensure the CAWLS vision 'To enable, educate and empower women to better engage in the legal system so their rights are considered and respected' drives our collective work.

One of many focus points this year has been service accreditation. Significant policy development and review has formed a large part of this work and continues to ensure the high quality of our service, the efficacy of our governance and the effective management and leadership of the service.

Our constitution has been reviewed as part of a two year cyclical process and the Management Board continues to provide good governance of the service as the result of ongoing learning, including participation in Better Boards training. The Board has had great stability with all members nominating for a further term and one Board member nominating to attend the National Conference of CLC's in August 2018 as a CAWLS representative.

As part of the continuous improvement cycle for our organisation the Operational Plan was reviewed in consultation with all staff and is now in implementation.

Broadening the service to encompass Tennant Creek and Barkly region has been a significant development in 2017/18. Through the Women's Safety Package funding we have expanded and established a Specialised Domestic Violence Unit. This unit is co-located with Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation. This has meant a growth in our workforce and in our ability to impact positively on the lives of some of the most vulnerable women in our community.

A celebration of our success was the Business at Sunset event held late January 2018. This saw many community members drawn into our new space to hear about the breadth of our reach, meet our team and to establish and strengthen the networks that surrounds and support us in our most vibrant community.

It has once again been a privilege to Chair the CAWLS Board and I congratulate the Managing Principal Solicitor and her team for another rewarding year of growth and for providing high quality service, support and education to the women in our community.



Belinda Pearson

Broadening the service to encompass Tennant Creek and Barkly region has been a significant development in 2017/18. Through the Women's Safety Package funding we have expanded and established a Specialised Domestic Violence Unit. This unit is co-located with Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation.

Finally I would like to say a special mention to Linx Macpherson for her expertise she brought to the CAWLS' Management Board and wish her all the best in her new endeavours.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Chair: *Belinda Pearson*

Belinda has called Alice Springs home for the past 32 years and for most of this time Belinda has been an educator and now Principal in the public school system. Through contact with women, children and families over many years in schools and in our community, Belinda is critically aware of the need to empower and educate people so they are able to make informed choices and constructive changes in their lives. The privilege of being the Chairperson of CAWLS provides the opportunity to have a positive impact on the services provided for women that will ultimately improve the quality of their lives and deliver us a safer and more respectful community.



Vice Chair: *Sabine Wedemeyer*

Sabine has extensive experience in Aboriginal related health & community services across a range of roles in the private, public & NGO sectors. Previous to working as Director in the Department of Chief Minister she was a Senior Project Manager at the NT Government Domestic and Family Violence Reduction Strategy and has also worked at the Central Australian Aboriginal Alcohol Programs Unit, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress and the Drug and Alcohol Service, Alice Springs.



Public Officer: *Marguerite Baptiste-Rooke*

Marguerite has lived and worked in Alice Springs for nearly 30 years and of this time she has been involved with the settlement of migrants and refugees for the last 28 years. Chairperson of Migrant Resource Centre which is now Multicultural Community Services of Central Australia (MCSCA) for 7 years and is currently Manager of MCSCA. Marguerite served as a Councillor on Alice Springs Town Council for 4 years from 2004-2008 and was a member of CAWLS committee in the late 90's and early 2000's. Marguerite is delighted to be involved again with CAWLS and continue to advocate for women in our community.

In 2017 Marguerite received a Northern Territory Human Rights Awards for advocating for Alice Springs's multicultural community.



Treasurer: *Alison Phillis*

Alison is a proud Central Australian who grew up in Alice Springs. She is a Lawyer Director of Povey Stirk Lawyers. Alison specialises in civil litigation and has a diverse client base across Central Australia. Alison has a postgraduate qualification in Health Law and is a member of the Northern Territory Board of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia, and the Central Australian Human Research Ethics Committee. Alison brings a wealth of practical experience and applied knowledge to the table.



René Laan

René is a local lawyer who also brings 20 years experience in the community development field to the Board. René specialises in employment law and does legal and consulting work for the not-for-profit sector in the areas of governance, compliance and policy development. René moved to Alice Springs in 2008 after working in the community development field in South Africa, New Zealand and Victoria.



Jenny Hamilton

Jen has been a member of the Northern Territory Police Force for the past 21 years all of which have been served in Central Australia. Her time in the police force has given her extensive experience in the complexities of domestic violence in roles as a first responder and through community education. Jen's years spent working as a community engagement police officer in communities in the western desert, where she has family ties, allowed her to see firsthand how the programs, strategies and policies effect not just the victims but the entire family in trying to change a lifetime of intergenerational actions and behaviours.

Jen has played a lead role in introducing the White Ribbon and "No More" programs into Central Australian communities.



Meg Donohoe

Meg has lived in Central Australia since 1997 working in a range of roles supporting children, youth and families particularly with the Australian and NT Governments. Meg has an honours degree in Social Work from Deakin University and a Graduate Diploma of Family Dispute Resolution. Currently on maternity leave from her role as a School Counsellor, Meg is passionate about supporting young people through issues with family violence, mental health and cyber safety.



CAWLS STAFF

Managing Principal Solicitor: Janet Taylor

During her 20 + years as a practitioner Janet has practised in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs in the community legal sector. In 2017 Janet stepped down after serving 12 years as the Deputy Chair of the Northern Territory Public Housing Appeals Board. Having worked in frontline service delivery in the areas of family law, child protection and domestic and family violence, Janet is a committed and passionate advocate around many social issues including access to justice for women. Janet is also a Board member of the Alice Springs Women's Shelter and is a current representative on the Crimes Victims Advisory Committee NT.

Practice Manager: Anna Ryan

Anna Ryan commenced working at CAWLS in 2010. Anna worked previously at the Crimes Victims Service Unit as a Case Manager and at CAALAS as a Family/Civil lawyer. Main areas of practice: Domestic Violence, Family Law and Civil Law.

Business Manager: Alice de Brenni

Alice has lived in Alice Springs all her life and has a background of working in Administration and Bookkeeping. Alice joined CAWLS in February 2017 and enjoys the Business Manager role which she finds very

challenging and interesting. Outside of work Alice enjoys theatre, art and attending many of the events that happen in Alice Springs every year.

Receptionist: Amanda Perry

Amanda has worked at CAWLS for nearly 5 years now and enjoys her frontline job. In her spare time Amanda enjoys spending time with her husband and fur baby along with gardening, sewing, entering the Craft section at the Alice Springs Show and meeting new people when promoting and selling SeneGence Skin Care and Makeup here in Alice Springs.

Client Support Officer: Marissa Klein

Marissa was born & grew up in Alice Springs and is very knowledgeable about local issues. She has worked in a variety of jobs in the past and prior to working at CAWLS she worked in a private firm as a paralegal. At CAWLS Marissa has moved into the position of Client Support and is an important part of the team that is delivering wraparound services for clients.

CLE Lawyer: Julia Parkin

Originally from Adelaide, Julia was admitted to practice as a lawyer in South Australia in February 2015. She initially practiced in a specialist family law firm before moving to

Alice Springs in November 2015 to take up the position as Community Legal Education Solicitor. Julia has a long standing interest in social justice and women's rights. As a student she volunteered with the Women's Legal Service SA and undertook a human rights internship with the Fiji Women's Rights Movement in Suva, Fiji. Julia is passionate about community legal education and its potential to empower women to manage and avoid legal problems.

HJP Lawyer: Rachael Pliner

Rachael is CAWLS' health justice lawyer and is responsible for CAWLS' health justice partnerships. Rachael began practicing law in 2008 in NSW. Prior to moving to Alice Springs in January 2017, Rachael worked at Knowmore legal service which was set up alongside the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to assist victims of abuse, the Refugee Advice and Casework Service and at the corporate law firm, Herbert Smith Freehills. Rachael is strongly committed to improving social justice and equality for women through access to free legal services and meeting the holistic needs of clients through collaboration between legal and health sectors. Rachael has a Masters of Public Health from the University of New South Wales and is undertaking a Masters of Applied Law (Family Law). Rachael was recently appointed by the Minister for Health to the Central Australian Health Advisory Committee.

Legal Practitioner: Rashini Fernando

Rashini has been with CAWLS for the last 18 months, working predominantly in domestic violence, child protection and civil law. She really enjoys working at CAWLS and has gained valuable experience as a lawyer; learning to consider the unique needs of women in Central Australia. Originally from Sydney, Rashini has practiced as a lawyer for 3 years in various areas including criminal, immigration, property, family and personal injury.

Legal Practitioner: Michelle Alleman

Michelle moved to the Northern Territory in 1996. She began practicing law in 2010 for a private law firm in South Australia dealing with criminal law, family law, wills and estates. She then moved back to the Northern Territory in 2013 and worked as a lawyer for the Central Land Council. Michelle commenced working with CAWLS in 2016. Her main areas of practice are domestic violence, family law, compensation, child protection and tenancy.

Legal Practitioner: Ashlea Begg

Ashlea began practising law in 2016 at a Community Legal Centre in New South Wales. Before studying law, Ashlea worked as an accountant in the public sector. Ashlea has a Bachelor of Law and a Bachelor of Business (Accounting), and is nearing completion of a Master of Legal Practice. Ashlea believes strongly in the work of Community Legal

Centres and the services they provide to the community. Ashlea commenced working with CAWLS in July 2017, and her main areas of practice are domestic violence, family law, child protection and compensation.

Legal Practitioner Tennant Creek: Nadia Baldassi-Winderlich

Nadia began practising law in 2017, but was previously an active member of the community legal sector in Adelaide since 2014, predominately in the area of refugee law. Joining CAWLS is Nadia's first job as a legal practitioner. Since February 2018 Nadia has been operating out of the Tennant Creek Specialist Domestic Violence Service, (SDVU) at Anyinginyi Health, delivering advice and legal assistance, community legal education and case management to Tennant Creek and surrounding communities in the Barkly region. Her main areas of practice are domestic and family violence, child protection and family law.

Legal Practitioner: Tierneigh Parnell

Tierneigh was born and grew up in the Territory. Tierneigh started with CAWLS in September 2017 and was admitted to practice at the Alice Springs Supreme Court in December 2017. Tierneigh's main practice area is domestic violence. She has an excellent working relationship with the Alice Springs Women's Shelter, delivering legal advice clinics on site twice weekly and assisting women with domestic violence matters. Tierneigh is passionate about Youth Justice, the environment and the Alice Springs community. Tierneigh sits on the NT Government Youth Justice Advisory Board, Alice Springs Town Council Environmental Advisory Committee, is the Secretary for NT Young Lawyers Committee and is also Secretary of her local Federals Netball club.

Special Mentions

Administration assistant, Annabel Blain was on maternity leave for most of the year after welcoming her baby son Louis in June 2017.

Thanks to Lahni Shilton, Isabel Yffer and Anne Pridham who either worked or volunteered at CAWLS during the 2017/18 year.

CAWLS would also like to thank the volunteer students who spent their holiday breaks assisting us and learning about our services during the year.

MANAGING PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR

The reporting period 2017/2018 saw the expansion of CAWLS service delivery with the establishment of a Specialised Domestic Violence Unit (SDVU) in Tennant Creek.

In conjunction with Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation this is a fantastic opportunity for CAWLS to provide a culturally responsive wrap-around service for all our clients in the Barkly region. It is a privilege to work in conjunction with a service whose policy is aimed at promoting and respecting the cultural identities of Aboriginal people, families and clients.

The scale of domestic and family violence in the NT is at acute levels with Tennant Creek recording the highest number of incidents per population. The addition of extra funding was both timely and much needed. CAWLS' Specialised Domestic Violence Unit provides a case management approach to ensure that services are tailored to each woman's circumstances and include not only legal assistance but other practical help, such as access to counselling, crisis accommodation; and outreach to other communities as needed.

At CAWLS we know how important it is to increase community awareness around violence. Our staff see the effects of gender inequality and violence against women on a daily basis. However, what we also see is the incredible strength and resilience of our clients overcoming huge challenges in their lives. On International Women's Day 2018, CAWLS partnered with the Tangentyere Women's Safety Group to celebrate the event with a movie night. The screening of Pitch Perfect 3 acted not only as a platform to bring women together, but provided an opportunity to celebrate women's health and wellbeing in a positive setting.

CAWLS is continually evaluating our service to ensure that we are working in line with both the National and NT Government frameworks on Domestic and Family Violence. We provided feedback and input into the NT Government Domestic & Family & Sexual Violence reduction framework 2018-2028 which was released in December 2017. CAWLS has also shared our knowledge and expertise to assist lawmakers in improving access to justice for women both on a local and national level. This included recommendations, appearances and submissions to a parliamentary committee for the



Janet Taylor
Managing Principal Solicitor

Domestic and Family Violence Amendment (Information Sharing) Bill 2017. We also contributed as part of the Women's Legal Services Australia to the Australian Law Reform Commission's Review of the Family Law System Issues Paper as well as responding to the Family Law Amendment (Family violence and cross-examination of parties) Bill 2018.

CAWLS would also like to extend an enormous thank you to the NT Legal Aid Commission who have accommodated, supported and collaborated with CAWLS in Tennant Creek for the last six years before moving across to Anyinginyi Health.

Finally I would like to thank all the dedicated and hardworking staff. We have an amazing team of women at CAWLS who deliver services in a complex and challenging environment. I also extend my thanks to the Management Committee and especially the Chair, Belinda Pearson who dedicate many hours of voluntary service working for the best interests of the organisation and the women we serve. Together we all play an integral part in contributing to creating a positive and safe future for the most vulnerable women and their children in the Northern Territory.



Alice de Brenni
Business Manager Report

CAWLS has continued to grow and change over the last 12 months with 14 staff in total at the end of the financial year.

In late 2017 CAWLS applied for and was successful in receiving additional funding from the Commonwealth Attorney General's office through the Women's Safety Package to establish a Specialist Domestic Violence Unit in Tennant Creek. While initially this project presented many challenges it is now up and running smoothly.

Training and professional development has been a major focus for CAWLS during the last year with several staff members attending conferences relevant to their work as well as in-house training including trauma based legal practices, and cultural training.

I attended the National Association of Community Legal Centre's conference in Canberra in August 2017 along with two CAWLS lawyers. The conference theme was 'Mind the Gap'. Workshops on governance and management were of particular interest to my area of work while the lawyers attended many workshops and meetings based around legal service delivery and even presented a workshop themselves.

In October 2017 CAWLS held an operational planning day. This was a valuable exercise for all staff to be involved with developing a plan for our service going forward. It was a great opportunity for all the staff to sit down together and map out CAWLS activities and develop a plan for the future. Identifying gaps and risks in our service was an interesting exercise.

Network meetings have continued to play an important role for CAWLS service delivery. These meetings involve maintaining and making new connections with service providers both in Central Australia and nationally. These connections not only keep us up to date with sector trends but also assist CAWLS to provide our clients with wrap around support.

With increasing numbers of women accessing our Domestic and Family Violence drop in service, enhancing our client support will be CAWLS focus heading into the new financial year.



Anna Ryan
Practice Manager Report

2017/2018 has been an extremely busy and productive practice area. CAWLS lawyers and support staff provided advice and assistance to over 800 women. In early 2018 CAWLS expanded and enhanced service delivery by providing outreach legal clinics to the Alice Springs Women's Shelter and NPY Women's Council in Alice Springs. These outreach services provide women with the opportunity to access legal advice and support in a confidential and safe environment. In conjunction with the expansion of outreach in Alice Springs; CAWLS also established a permanent presence in Tennant Creek to provide wrap around services in the Barkly region. In proactively and sensitively progressing access to justice, special concern is afforded to holistic, multi-disciplinary, and collaborate service provision, especially for women who face additional barriers for reasons including race, culture, disability, language, poverty, age and sexuality.

CAWLS statistics show our domestic and family violence service delivery has increased by 23% over the past year. This increase resulted in our lawyers assisting over 200 women at the Local Court in relation to Domestic and Family Violence matters. Data reflects that many CAWLS clients return to our service for ongoing legal assistance. This provides our service opportunities to identify practice areas that require further expansion or strengthening and conversely, areas where our services are effectively increasing access and women's and children's safety.

Our ongoing strategy at CAWLS is to continually improve access to justice. This resulted earlier this year in a collaborative partnership to deliver specialist domestic violence services with NPY Women's Council Domestic Violence Unit. In addition to the weekly advice clinic at the NPY office, CAWLS' lawyers have accompanied and supported NPY Women's Council on outreach trips to provide extensive expertise in delivering high quality, empowering, and community connected and culturally safe services to all women. These communities include Mutitjulu and Docker River.

Finally, our consistent efforts over the last year to improve and enhance access to all women are evident in the continual increase in the number of clients we assist annually.

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT -COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY- GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

2017/18 Statistics

 **312 Clients**

 **368 Legal advices/legal tasks**

 **189 Referrals**

Under the National Partnership Agreement (NPA) funding CAWLS provides free legal advice clinics, ongoing casework, and representation where appropriate as well as support and referrals to all eligible women as part of our generalist women's legal service in Central Australia and Barkly regions.

During the last 12 months CAWLS has had an increased focus on wrap-around client support. This support can take many forms and is dependent on the client's needs. Examples include assisting clients to fill out intake forms, assisted transport to appointments, assistance at Centrelink and Territory Housing and other service providers.

Family law assistance remains one of the key priority areas at CAWLS. The family law system is both a challenging and complex jurisdiction. These challenges are exacerbated for CAWLS clients due to issues of remoteness, lack of social and support services and language and cultural barriers. Many of CAWLS clients present with pre-existing trauma including a history of family violence and exposure to substance abuse; in particular alcohol.

This creates significant barriers to engagement in the family law system. There are limited services available in remote communities, including family relationship centres, contact centres for changeover, counselling, safe houses for women effected by family violence, police stations and interpreters where English is not the main language in the community. Transport to the closest town can be limited and prohibitively expensive.

• Case Study - Family Law

Jane* presented to CAWLS with Family Law issues after a recent separation. While receiving advice regarding the separation it became apparent Jane would benefit from being linked in with Client Support for numerous different issues.

Jane had suffered such extreme financial abuse over the course of her relationship that she had no idea what/if any payments she was receiving from Centrelink, did not have access to any money and had nowhere to stay with her children.

When Jane left the family home she left behind important documents such as birth certificates, visas and passports, all of which were necessary for any claims made with Centrelink or Affordable Housing.

CAWLS client support worker was able to organise a Police Standby to enable Jane to return home safely accompanied by two uniformed officers, to obtain all relevant documents.

CAWLS client support worker collected Jane and attended Centrelink with her in the hope of obtaining a crisis payment. At Centrelink it was explained that Jane was not receiving any payments from Centrelink except the Family Tax Benefit (the only benefit that the crisis payment could not be paid in conjunction with) and that she would need to be on some type of payment (i.e. a parenting payment) before Centrelink would be able to issue her with a crisis payment.

Jane was advised that she would need to apply for parenting payment and when/if that was granted she would be able to apply for the crisis payment.

During this visit it was also identified that the one benefit Jane was being paid, the Family Tax Benefit was going directly into a joint bank account that she could not access. With the assistance of the client support worker, Jane was able to change the bank details attached to that payment so that the next payment would go into a newly set up bank account belonging to Jane.

CAWLS client support worker assisted Jane with the completion of all Centrelink forms and collection of all relevant documentation to submit all forms and to obtain a Medicare card.

The Client support worker then assisted Jane with the completion of an application for the National Affordable Rental Scheme (NARS) through LJ Hooker.

As Jane had been forbidden from driving (or learning how to) CAWLS client support worker collected Jane

from her short term accommodation, over the course of many weeks to attend various organisations and meetings.

Through the client support worker, CAWLS was able to assist Jane to receive a one off Crisis Payment from Centrelink, an ongoing Parenting Payment and the Family Tax Benefit and also to secure a 2 bedroom apartment for Jane and her children and were able to give her information on how to remove her name from all joint bank accounts.

• **Case Study - Family Law** (Property)

Louise* is a 32-year-old woman from China*. She came to Australia in 2001, and met Paul* in Alice Springs in 2011. Louise and Paul had two children together. Paul was violent towards Louise throughout their relationship. Louise attended CAWLS for a DVO against Paul. Louise also sought assistance with making arrangements for the children and also assistance with a property settlement.

CAWLS successfully negotiated parenting consent orders, giving primary care to Louise. CAWLS are currently and a property settlement. There was a significant disparity in assets and earning potential between Louise and Paul, with Paul continuing to work full-time throughout the entire relationship while Louise had to quit her job and her studies to raise the children.

• **Case Study - Family Law** (Parenting Plan)

Kelly* came to CAWLS for assistance in regards to coming to a parenting arrangement with her ex-partner Kurt*. Kelly instructed CAWLS that Kurt had perpetrated domestic violence towards her during the relationship and had drug and alcohol issues.

CAWLS assisted the client to apply for a domestic violence order which was granted and ensured there was an exception in the domestic violence order to allow for Kelly and Kurt to negotiate through a third party about parenting matters.

CAWLS gave Kelly advice in relation to parenting matters and assisted the client to make an application to the

Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission for the parties to attend Family Law Conference. Kelly and Kurt were assisted by their legal representatives and the facilitator to come to an agreement which was made into a parenting plan. The parties agreed that they would attend a further Family Law Conference after six months to review the current parenting plan.

• **Case Study - Family Law** (Respondent)

Lola* and Gilly* had recently separated. They had two children together who were still very young. When the parties separated, during an argument with Gilly, Lola said she was going to move interstate with the children. Gilly sought legal advice and made an application to the Federal Circuit Court requesting an injunction be made preventing the children from leaving Alice Springs.

CAWLS appeared before the court for Lola and Lola agreed to remain in Alice Springs with the children. The matter was then adjourned for the parties to attend a Family Law Conference through the Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission and for the parties to attend a Child Dispute Conference with a family consultant from the court. At the Family Law Conference, the parties reached an interim agreement for parenting matters. The matter is still before the court.

• **Case Study - Family Law** (Using Technology)

Cassie* was referred to CAWLS by the Alice Springs Women's Shelter seeking assistance to recover her two year old daughter, Sharon*. Sharon's father Donald* had taken her to a remote community and refused to return her. CAWLS agreed to represent Cassie in negotiating the return of Sharon.

The remoteness of the community on which Sharon's father lived made communication difficult and it was not possible for the CAWLS lawyer to speak to Donald to recommend he seek legal advice and negotiate the return of Sharon by telephone.

CAWLS prepared a legal letter requesting the return of Sharon. Cassie instructed that Donald regularly accessed social media and Facebook. The CAWLS lawyer worked with Cassie to send a copy of the letter via Facebook messenger. As a result of using this technology, the CAWLS lawyer was able to see when Donald had viewed the message. When he failed to reply within the requested period of time, the lawyer prepared an urgent application for recovery orders. These documents were likewise provided to Donald via Facebook messenger. The CAWLS Lawyer also liaised with Police in the area who agreed to serve the documents on Donald as personal service was required.

*Note: Names and other identifying details have been changed to maintain Client confidentiality.





DURING

2017/18
CAWLS

Assisted over

800 women

& 369 WERE NEW CLIENTS

93%

*of our clients experienced
financial disadvantage*

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEGAL SERVICE - NORTHERN TERRITORY ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

2017/18 Statistics

 **518 DV drop in clinic appointments**

 **345 clients with 76% identifying as Aboriginal**

 **563 Legal advices/legal tasks**

 **243 Referrals**

 **1065 calls via our Free call number**

CAWLS is the leading women's legal and domestic and family violence service for all women in Central Australia, including the Barkly region. Legal and non-legal support, advice and representations by CAWLS is provided for all women who are at risk of, or experiencing domestic and family violence with advice clinics via face-to-face or via telephone. 100% of all clients attending the service will receive support as soon as they present. This drop in advice service runs daily Monday to Friday between 8.30am to 5.00pm. In conjunction with this we also provide on-site legal advice clinics twice weekly at the Alice Springs Women's Shelter and weekly at the NPY Women's Council in Alice Springs. In addition we operate a duty lawyer service at Alice Springs Local Court every Monday and Wednesday and any other time during the week upon request.

Female victims of domestic and family violence usually have associated complex legal issues affecting themselves and their families. These are predominately in the areas of child protection and family law. CAWLS domestic and family violence related services have increased by 23%. CAWLS will continue to engage with communities and service providers to increase women's access to legal representation in Central Australia and Barkly region where domestic and family violence is featured.

CAWLS is flexible and holistic in its response and successfully engages with women to build trust and confidence. Over the past five years we have invested in building a reputable service that is highly regarded across both regions. Our data shows that women continue to return to our service when they have new or ongoing legal, referral or support needs.

• **Case Study Domestic Violence (Legal Service)**

Sharon presented at CAWLS in crisis situation. Sharon's daughter had been physically violent towards her and her two other children. Due to the fear of violence and threats against her, Sharon and her children were forced to move to a hotel to take refuge.

Police had issued a non-harm DVO for Sharon protecting her and her children, naming the daughter as the defendant. The DVO had been confirmed in Court earlier in the week. Since the DVO had been confirmed, the defendant had continued to threaten to hurt Sharon, destroyed property (including smashing windows, breaking doors, soiling furniture and breaking home appliances) and was verbally abusive.

The police had advised Sharon they could not assist further and referred her to CAWLS.

Court and Legal Assistance: CAWLS assisted Sharon to vary her DVO to include a clause that the defendant could not go within 100 metres of the protected persons and their home. This entailed an extensive affidavit to vary the original order including supportive material from other agencies. CAWLS appeared in Court and Sharon was granted interim orders and when the daughter was served with the documents, Sharon was granted final orders.

Territory Families: Sharon also sought our assistance with Territory Families (TF) as the defendant was still a minor and was known to the agency. TF agreed to taking out a Temporary Protection Arrangement to place the daughter with another carer and to explore options for counselling, mediation and therapeutic programs to be put in place for both the daughter and Sharon both in the short and long term. To finalise the matter, TF sought an Order that the Chief Executive Officer of Territory Families have parental responsibility of the daughter, instead of Sharon. Sharon consented to this Order being made.

Client Support - Immediate Financial Assistance: Sharon was in need of financial assistance to make repairs to the home so that she and her other children could return. CAWLS' client support officer liaised with NT Victims of Crime to assess Sharon's eligibility for two separate financial assistance programs. As a result, the Safe at Home program provided Sharon with \$400 to change locks on the property and the Security Improvement Program provided an amount of \$300. Sharon was also booked in for a free safety audit of the home.

Crimes Victims Service: CAWLS also assisted Sharon to lodge an application under the Crimes Victims Service Unit for immediate financial assistance for upfront payment of up to \$5000 towards smashed windows, cleaning, damaged doors and furniture.

Client Feedback: Sharon has supplied feedback to another support agency expressing her gratitude for CAWLS in which she specifically mentioned the dedicated staff, wrap around service and successful outcome. Part of this outcome for Sharon was the opportunity for reconciliation and healing with her daughter.

- **Case Study Domestic Violence (Warning Letter)**

Barbara* attended CAWLS shortly after she and her ex-partner Bob* had separated. Bob had been attending Barbara's house since they had separated whilst he was intoxicated and was being verbally abusive.

CAWLS gave Barbara advice about her options for a domestic violence order. Barbara did not feel that was appropriate at the time and asked CAWLS to send a warning letter to Bob explaining that if he did not stop the behaviour we would then assist Barbara to apply for a domestic violence order. CAWLS then sent a warning letter to Bob.

Barbara came to see us a few weeks later about another matter. She told us that since we had sent the warning letter to Bob there had been no further incidents.

- **Case Study Domestic Violence (Police Copy)**

Carol* came to CAWLS requesting assistance in relation to a domestic violence order which police had taken out on her behalf against her ex-partner Carlos*. Carol did not have a copy of the domestic violence order and wanted to be certain about the terms of it.

CAWLS contacted the police through the Domestic Violence Prevention Unit and requested a copy of the domestic violence order. The police sent a copy of the domestic violence order back to CAWLS and we provided a copy to our client. Our client was satisfied with the domestic violence order and did not request any further assistance.

- **Case Study Domestic Violence (Police Copy Upgrade)**

Piper* came to CAWLS and requested our assistance in relation to a domestic violence order which the police had taken out on her behalf against her ex-partner Peter*. The domestic violence order was a non-harm order. Piper instructed us that Peter had breached the domestic violence order by assaulting her. Piper wanted to upgrade the domestic violence order to a full no contact order.

CAWLS assisted Piper to make an application to vary the non-harm order to a full no-contact order. We also recommended that we make a referral for Piper to be supported by the Alice Springs Women's Shelter Outreach Support which Piper agreed to.

Piper also requested CAWLS assistance for help to apply for a housing transfer through Territory Housing which CAWLS client support officer was able to do. We also provided a support letter for her transfer to be a priority matter. Peter had a lawyer attend court on his behalf and consented to the order being upgraded.

- **Case Study Domestic Violence (Applicant and CVSU Application)**

Debbie* attended CAWLS because her ex-partner Darren* had applied for a domestic violence order against her. Darren alleged that Debbie had been verbally abusive towards him. Debbie denied she had been verbally abusive to Darren and Darren did not have any proof of the abuse.

CAWLS appeared for Debbie in Court and had the matter adjourned for further discussion with Darren's lawyer. After negotiations, Darren's lawyer informed us that the application for a domestic violence order would be withdrawn. We attended court on behalf of our client and the application was withdrawn.

- **Case Study Domestic Violence (Immigration and DV)**

Follow-up case study from 2016-17 Annual Report:

Julie* is a 34-year-old woman from Thailand*. Julie married Peter* in 2013. During their relationship Peter was verbally abusive, controlling, manipulative and degrading. In 2013 Julie separated from Peter. During the relationship, Julie applied for a visa as a partner of an Australian citizen. After they separated, Julie sought to amend her visa application to apply under the domestic violence provisions. At around the same time, Julie sought the assistance of CAWLS for advice about her family law matter. During this advice, Julie disclosed the domestic violence to her CAWLS lawyer.

The visa application process was difficult as the Department of Immigration concluded Julie was not the victim of domestic violence. This conclusion was largely based on an interview between Julie and a psychologist who was tasked with writing a report for the Department. This interview was conducted via video link, and the connection was poor. Furthermore, Julie's grasp and understanding of English at that time was limited. As a result, Julie did not understand many of her questions being asked, and was not able to communicate her story.

The psychologist wrote a report stating that Julie had not been the victim of domestic violence, and her application was rejected. Julie's lawyer appealed; however prospects of success were dim as there was no additional evidence.

At around the same time, Julie approached CAWLS for assistance applying for a divorce from Peter. Julie disclosed her difficulties surrounding her visa application, and CAWLS offered to contact her lawyer to discuss the matter. CAWLS advised Julie's immigration lawyer that they were in a position to write a letter of support for Julie, as she had disclosed the domestic violence to us in 2013 and again in 2017. There was a limited list of services that could provide supporting documentation to the Administrative Appeals

Tribunal ("AAT"); however CAWLS were able to write the letter as a "family/domestic violence crisis centre" due to our "Specialist Domestic Violence Unit" funding. This letter was presented to the AAT and accepted as evidence. CAWLS closed our file; however Julie made contact again in 2018 to advise that her application was reassessed and she was granted a visa. Julie was extremely grateful for the support CAWLS were able to provide, and stated that she did not believe she would have been granted the visa without our letter of support.

**Note: Names and other identifying details have been changed to maintain Client confidentiality*



WOMEN'S SAFETY PACKAGE - COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

2017/18 Statistics



273 clients with 86% identifying as Aboriginal



148 Referrals



392 Legal advices/legal tasks

Health Justice Partnership

The health justice partnership (HJP) is a collaborative practice model. It was initially developed for clients experiencing chronic illness and/or disability in the United States, referred to as medical-legal partnerships, following research which established that there was a link between clients with health concerns and associated legal needs. An integrated and collaborative practice model emerged between medical services and legal services. It focused on maximising client capacity by providing legal information and support whilst addressing and managing the client's social and emotional well-being. The practice model, although relatively new to Australia, has now fast evolved. It seeks to meet client's complex and interconnected legal and non-legal needs through partnership and collaboration between the health and legal sectors.

Legal advice at health services

Through CAWLS Health Justice Partnerships, CAWLS regularly provides on-site legal assistance at the Alice Springs Hospital and Central Australia Aboriginal Congress to women affected by domestic violence in a range of legal areas, including domestic violence orders, victim's compensation, child protection, family law and housing. CAWLS' lawyers are available on-call as needed both at the hospital and Congress. In the reporting period, CAWLS' also set up weekly legal clinics at the hospital and Alukura Women's Health Service.

Through the HJPs, CAWLS' aims to deliver a flexible and responsive service and ensure lawyers are available to assist clients on-site at the health services at short notice given the need to respond rapidly in domestic violence situations. Our team works collaboratively with health professionals to optimise a client's ability to provide instructions, improve outcomes and to deliver a more holistic service. Co-location by way of the legal provider being situated on site and having a physical presence at the health facility allows:

- Relationship building for a multi-disciplinary practice;
- Referrals from health professionals to lawyer; and

- Secondary consultations between disciplines (for example between health professionals and social workers).

Education

As part of the HJP, CAWLS provides community legal sessions to health professionals in relation to identifying and responding to domestic violence, mandatory reporting obligations, information on HJPs and referral pathways.

CAWLS has delivered a number of training sessions to staff at the Alice Springs Hospital and at Congress health services and clinics. CAWLS has also delivered full-day Domestic Violence Education Seminars to health professionals in Alice Springs. This training was accredited by the Australian College of Nursing (ACN), Australian College of midwives (ACM) and the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW).

CAWLS has delivered a number of training sessions to staff at the Alice Springs Hospital and at Congress' health services and clinics. CAWLS has delivered full-day Domestic Violence Education Seminars to health professionals in Alice Springs.

CAWLS began the free all-day training in 2016 and has run the training 3 or 4 times each year since then. Since the last reporting period, CAWLS held the training in November 2017 and in March and May 2018. At the training, there are multiple sessions from a range of services, including NPY Women's Council, CAWLS, the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, Alice Springs Women's Shelter, the NT Police Domestic Violence Prevention Group and the Aboriginal Interpreter Service. The topics include identifying when domestic violence is occurring (or is likely to occur), mandatory reporting, patient warning signs, how to respond to disclosures of domestic violence, Q&A with the NT Police's Domestic Violence Unit and scenario/problem-solving group discussions.



WSP lawyers
Rachael & Rashini

Resources

CAWLS has developed a number of resources on identifying and responding to domestic violence which is specifically tailored to professionals. CAWLS partnered with the Alice Springs Family Law Pathways Network (FLPN) to develop an online Service Directory for separating families, including for women affected by domestic violence. CAWLS in collaboration with the FLPN have also produced a pocket resource containing key services in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek for separating families.

2016 saw the establishment of the HJPs, 2017 and 2018 saw the strengthening and consolidation of our existing partnerships and 2019 will see continued expansion of the HJPs and awareness-raising for women impacted by domestic violence and health professionals. In 2018, CAWLS has been working towards expanding the service to select remote areas and will continue to work with local services and community groups for this purpose.

• **Case Study** *Health Justice Partnership*

This is an example of how women are empowered to seek legal advice through the HJP. Laura* is an Aboriginal woman from a remote community. CAWLS' assisted Laura through the health justice partnership with Alice

Springs Hospital. Laura was experiencing serious domestic violence from her partner and was not in a safe position. Laura experienced serious physical assault and was transferred from her remote community clinic to Alice Springs Hospital. A CAWLS' lawyer provided her with initial advice at the hospital and linked in with her again at the Alice Springs Women's Shelter once she was discharged.

Laura had engaged with the police at the hospital and the social workers. Laura did not have the protection of a domestic violence order as her current order was expiring. Given the severity of the violence, this was a very important part of keeping Laura safe.

Through the Health Justice Partnership and in collaboration with the social worker at the hospital, CAWLS was able to provide Laura with legal assistance and support. CAWLS represented Laura in Court in order to upgrade and extend her domestic violence order against her ex-partner and assisted Laura with a victim of crime application for her injuries sustained from the domestic violence.

CAWLS also provided Laura with non-legal support she needed. CAWLS engaged in safety planning with Laura and liaised with the police and Court in order to ascertain the whereabouts of the offender and the status of his criminal matters. There were ancillary non-legal matters, including issues with her Centrelink payments and housing options which had become critical post-separation as Laura had moved out of her shared home with her ex-partner. CAWLS linked Laura in with Centrelink and helped her with her housing options.

Laura is now living back with her family in another remote community with stable housing, there is a full non-contact domestic violence order in place against the offender and he is in jail. These factors have enabled Laura to begin rebuilding her life after extremely traumatic circumstances flowing from the family violence.

The Health Justice Partnership overcame barriers that Laura would have otherwise had in accessing legal assistance. Through the Health Justice Partnership, CAWLS was able to provide legal assistance and support in the critical period following the assault. Had there been a delay, it is likely that Laura would have returned to her remote community thereby having no opportunity to access any legal services while she was in Alice Springs. The Health Justice Partnership meant that Laura could access legal assistance in an environment where she felt most comfortable which was critical given the trauma she had experienced.

**Note: Names and other identifying details have been changed to maintain Client confidentiality*

WOMEN'S SAFETY PACKAGE SPECIALIST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT (TENNANT CREEK) -COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

February to June 2018 Statistics



41 Clients with 73% identifying as Aboriginal



72 Referrals



85 Legal advices/legal tasks

In late 2017 additional funding under the Women's Safety Package was granted to CAWLS to expand service delivery for a Specialist Domestic Violence Unit (SDVU) for women in the Barkly region. With domestic and family violence at critical levels in the Barkly region; the expansion and establishment of a SDVU in Tennant Creek was both welcome and timely.

In May 2018, CAWLS partnered and signed off on an MOU with Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation in Tennant Creek to ensure that those women and their children most at risk are targeted. The SDVU provides an integrated wrap around service delivery to increase women's access to legal assistance, information, education and referrals where domestic or family violence is a factor. The SDVU consists of lawyers and support workers who operate with a high intensity caseload to support women with complex and challenging needs. The SDVU has already achieved positive outcomes for clients.

• **Case Study SDVU Tennant Creek**

Wendy* lived in a remote town and sought CAWLS' assistance obtaining a non-intox DVO against her husband. Wendy had suffered extensive violence from her husband throughout their relationship, including attempts to kill her. Wendy instructed her husband was well respected and nobody believed her when she sought help in the past. Her husband often threatened to use his connections get her in trouble if she reported him.

Wendy had decided, after many years of violence, she would no longer tolerate her husband's violence and threats. Wendy reported her husband to the local Police and they made a no-harm DVO protecting her. Five days later, Wendy's husband threatened her with a knife after consuming alcohol. Wendy asked CAWLS to help her upgrade her DVO to a non-intox DVO.

Wendy was suffering from health conditions which left her with limited mobility and she was largely wheelchairbound. Wendy's husband was physically fit and in good health, leaving her very vulnerable. Wendy was unwilling to access other accommodation due to her disability, low income and lack of suitable housing. Wendy disclosed this was the first time people had listened to her stories of the violence she had suffered from her husband and was hopeful she could live peacefully and safely.

CAWLS assisted Wendy with an application for an upgrade to a non-intox DVO. To provide additional protection, CAWLS worked with other services to link Wendy into support services including counselling. Within hours of being served with the application for DVO upgrade, Wendy's husband acted on his threats to get an order against Wendy and sought a non-intox DVO against her through Police, alleging verbal abuse. Police made an s28 application on his behalf. CAWLS provided legal assistance to Wendy in order to contest the DVO.

CAWLS assisted Wendy with in-depth safety planning, mindful of her limited mobility and unwillingness to leave the family home. This involved careful discussion of how Wendy could protect herself from further accusations by her husband. CAWLS' application to upgrade Wendy's DVO was successful, and had the DVO where she was listed as the defendant set for hearing. CAWLS obtained an order requiring Police to file further and detailed information about Wendy's husband's allegations if they intended to continue with the application.

**Note: Names and other identifying details have been changed to maintain Client confidentiality*



The SDVU consists of lawyers and support workers who operate with a high intensity caseload to support women with complex and challenging needs. The SDVU has already achieved positive outcomes for clients.



COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S PROGRAM DEPARTMENT OF PRIME MINISTER & CABINET

2017/18 Statistics



63 CLE sessions



516 Participants

This funding allows CAWLS to provide Community Legal Education to women as well as other service providers in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and the surrounding remote localities as part of our remote outreach program. CAWLS regularly visits town camps around Alice Springs, Santa Teresa and also facilitates Love Bites training for High School students. CAWLS also attends many community events such as NAIDOC week celebrations.

It has been a busy and exciting year for the Community Legal Education (CLE) program at CAWLS. CLE forms a key part of CAWLS' efforts to improve access to justice for women in Central Australia and the Barkly region.

CLE is intended to improve legal literacy in the community as well as expanding understanding of the options available when legal issues arise.

The 2017-2018 financial year has seen CAWLS staff travel regularly to Tennant Creek, Ali Curung, and Santa Teresa for CLE as well as delivering sessions with a variety of agencies in the Alice Springs area. Activities vary from informal conversations over morning tea to structured presentations for staff and professional groups about particular legal topics.

• 2017-2018 Highlights

Respectful Relationships in the Barkly

Respectful relationships education forms a key part of CAWLS domestic violence prevention work. A number of CAWLS staff have completed facilitator training for the Love Bites respectful relationships program which is run by the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN).

Late 2017 saw CAWLS carry out two visits to Alekerenge School in Ali Curung Community to run respectful relationships sessions based on the Love Bites Junior program with the year 7-9 class. Staff ran a total of three sessions across the two visits. Students engaged really well with the activities around what is safe and unsafe behaviour in relationships with friends and family.

In November 2017, two CAWLS staff facilitated the one day Love Bites workshop for year 10 students at Tennant Creek High School.

In April 2018, the CAWLS CLE Lawyer also assisted the NAPCAN senior prevention worker for the NT in running facilitator training for professionals in Tennant Creek.

Connecting with Santa Teresa

In early 2018 CAWLS connected with Atyenhenge-Atherre Aboriginal Corporation (AAAC) in Santa Teresa through CEO Susie Low and other staff members. Supported by AAAC CAWLS has carried out monthly visits to Santa Teresa Community in 2018. Community Legal Education Sessions have been run at the AAAC hair salon. Topics covered include child protection, domestic violence orders, family law, consumer law and generally how to get legal help. The CLE Solicitor has also been available during



CLE Santa Teresa

these visits to provide private legal advice for women who attend the sessions. We are looking forward to continuing to work with Susie and the AAAC staff in the future.

Flying Visit to Kintore

Supported by NT Police, two CAWLS staff flew to Kintore Community in the Police Plane to carry out CLE sessions in May 2018. We met with community members, students at Yirara and staff at the medical centre. Our sessions covered what lawyers do, how to get legal help and discussions about the particular issues experienced by community members in Kintore. The visit was short, but well received and we are working towards more regular visits to the community in the future.

Sisters in Law

In April 2018 CAWLS CLE Solicitor completed a two day radio presenter training at 8CCC community radio with a view to recommencing the legal education show “Sisters in Law”. The show addresses some of the main legal issues affecting women in Central Australia and shares information about legal rights and what to do if you have a legal problem. The first season of Sisters in Law was produced by CAWLS in 2015. Production of season 2 is now underway and we are looking forward to airing new episodes later in 2018.



CAWLS travelling to Kintore for CLE

CLE for Service Providers

In addition to working with community groups, a key part of Community Legal Education at CAWLS is providing training and information to other service providers and professional groups in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek. Key topics covered include domestic violence orders, mandatory reporting obligations and child protection. In 2017-2018 CAWLS provided CLE to NT Police, the Shelter NT Crisis Accommodation Action Group, Family Law Pathways Network, and Foster Carers Association NT.

NT CLE Professional Development Workshop

The NT CLE workshop is a professional development opportunity for people working in community legal education, training and development. The workshop is convened by the NT CLE Network of which CAWLS is a member. The workshop is attended by professionals across the Territory and interstate. It is a great opportunity to network, practice new skills in CLE delivery and to learn about new CLE resources.

CAWLS CLE solicitor was an organising committee member for the 2017 workshop which was held in Darwin in September. CAWLS is again helping to organise the 2018 CLE the first time in Alice Springs.





1. CAWLS at White Ribbon Day 2017
2. IWD 2018
3. Lawyers debate
4. Community BBQ



ACTIVITIES

• **International Women’s Day 2018**

CAWLS and Tangentyere Womens Family Safety Group were again successful in securing a grant from Territory Families to celebrate International Women’s Day 2018. This year we screened the film ‘Pitch Perfect 3’ a light hearted comedy depicting and celebrating strong and positive friendships between women of diverse backgrounds. This theme was directly reflected by the audience who attended including people from a variety of age groups, cultural backgrounds and genders.

• **Youth Week 2018**

For the first time CAWLS successfully applied for a NT Govt Youth Week grant. As part of Youth Week celebrations CAWLS hosted a movie night at the Alice Springs cinema in April. The movie viewed ‘A Wrinkle in Time’ projects a powerful message for young girls to stay true to themselves, to embrace the things that make them different and to admire other fierce, strong-minded women.

The audience was a mix of male and female, varying ages and backgrounds. Tickets were distributed by social service providers working in the youth sector and local high schools.

CAWLS would like to thank the Northern Territory Government, Alice Springs Cinema, Tangentyere Women’s Family Safety Group for making these events possible.

• **Business at Sunset**

CAWLS is a member of the Alice Springs Chamber of Commerce and with their assistance held a Business at Sunset event in early 2018.

These events are an opportunity for Chamber of Commerce members to showcase their business or organisation to other members. The event was attended by about 60 people from various Alice Springs organisations and many of these people heard about the work CAWLS does for the first time.

• **NT Young Leaders Great Debate – Senior vs Junior Lawyers**

CAWLS lawyers Anne, Ashlea and Rashini participated in the annual Law Society Northern Territory Junior v Senior Lawyers Great Debate. Congratulations to CAWLS lawyers Ashlea and Rashini who were instrumental in securing the win for the Young Lawyers. A special thank you to CAWLS’ lawyer Tierneigh Parnell and the Northern Territory Young Lawyers (NTYL) team for putting on the event.

• **Admission to Supreme Court of the Northern Territory**

CAWLS congratulated Tierneigh Parnell on being admitted into the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory on Tuesday 12 December 2017.

Tierneigh commenced working with CAWLS in September 2017 in administration and quickly become a valued member of the CAWLS team. Tierneigh moved into the role of lawyer in 2018.

• **Fun Run**

In October 2017 CAWLS and the Alice Springs Running and Walking club hosted a free event to raise awareness for domestic violence and the Luke Batty Foundation. The river run of 5.7km was attended by approx 60 early risers who took part in the event.

CAWLS has a strong focus on staff training and professional development with staff attending several conferences during the year relevant to our work.



Youth week movie night

• **Youth Justice Advisory Committee**

In early 2018 CAWLS lawyer Tierneigh Parnell was appointed to the NT Youth Justice Advisory Committee (YJAC). The Committee encompasses select professionals and community members from across the Northern Territory with experience and expertise in the field of youth justice.

The YJAC monitors and evaluates the administration and operation of the Youth Justice Act, advises the Minister on issues relevant to youth justice; collects, analyses and provides the Minister with information relating to issues and policies concerning youth justice, and completes any other functions the Minister considers necessary.

In June 2018 Tierneigh attended her first YJAC meeting in Nhulunbuy. The meeting was a great opportunity for YJAC to consult with and learn from service providers in the region about the programs they were running, what was working and what their concerns were.

• **Conferences & Training**

CAWLS has a strong focus on staff training and professional development and sent staff to attend several conferences during the year relevant to our work.

National Association of Community Legal Centres conference

The theme for the NACLCC conference held in Canberra in August 2017 was 'Mind the gap: responding with resilience, resourcefulness and reconciliation'. CAWLS was represented by three staff who attended a variety of interesting and relevant workshops during the conference.

At the conference CAWLS lawyers Rachael and Anna presented a session on "navigating the minefield of domestic violence: a Central Australian perspective".

The session explored the difficulties faced by women in Central Australia in achieving long term and effective change and the challenges in supporting them. Through a number of case studies, Rachael and Anna looked at how CAWLS can support and assist women experiencing family violence who wish to continue living with their partner, who continue to live in the same small remote community as their ex-partner or need to communicate with their ex-partner in relation to their children.

CAWLS will be part of a panel of speakers on legal responses to family violence at this year's NACLCC conference which is being held in Sydney.

Family Law Conference 2018

In January 2018 CAWLS sent two lawyers to the NT Family Law Conference "Start at the Top Family Law Conference 2018" held in Darwin. The conference covered many interesting topics relevant to family law including family violence, cross examination, dealing with people with mental health and personality issues, social media and other forms of electronic communication and had a judicial panel session where the Judges spoke about "things we like and things we hate".

Community Legal Centres Queensland Masterclass

In March 2018 CAWLS CLE lawyer, Julia attended the Queensland Community Legal Centres CLE masterclass conference in Brisbane. As a representative on the NT CLE network this was a wonderful opportunity for Julia to connect with other CLE practitioners and learn about the CLE programs and resources available in other jurisdictions.

HJP Conference

CAWLS Managing Principal Solicitor and HJP lawyer attended the first national conference on Health Justice Partnership which was held in Melbourne from 31 October 2017 to 2 November 2017 and organised by Health Justice Australia. The conference provided an invaluable opportunity for CAWLS to network and share ideas and knowledge with other health justice practitioners from Australia and overseas. CAWLS shared information about our Health Justice Partnership, Women'sHELP, through the presentation of CAWLS' HJP poster to other participants.

Law Society NT – Practical Advocacy Workshop

CAWLS lawyer Nadia travelled from Tennant Creek to Darwin to attend the 2018 Practical Advocacy workshop facilitated by the Law Society NT in June. A number of judges and senior practitioners made up the teaching and coaching team and this was a valuable experience for Nadia to further develop advocacy skills.

Aboriginal Family Violence Policing Conference 2018

In June 2018 Tierneigh attended the Annual Aboriginal Family Violence Policing Conference. The conference took place in Yirrkala, Arnhem Land. This year's conference sought to engage attendees through a range of workshops and empowerment training opportunities, to reduce the spate of domestic violence across the country. The Conference was a truly unique and extraordinary three-day learning symposium with interactive sessions taking place throughout the Yirrkala Community, from an outdoor marque overlooking the Gove Peninsular, to the local Church.

STAKEHOLDERS

Funding Bodies

CAWLS would like to thank our funding bodies for their ongoing support.



Other Stakeholders

CAWLS would like to recognise other organisations which make it possible for us to provide access to legal justice to women in Central Australia.



NT Working Women's Centre



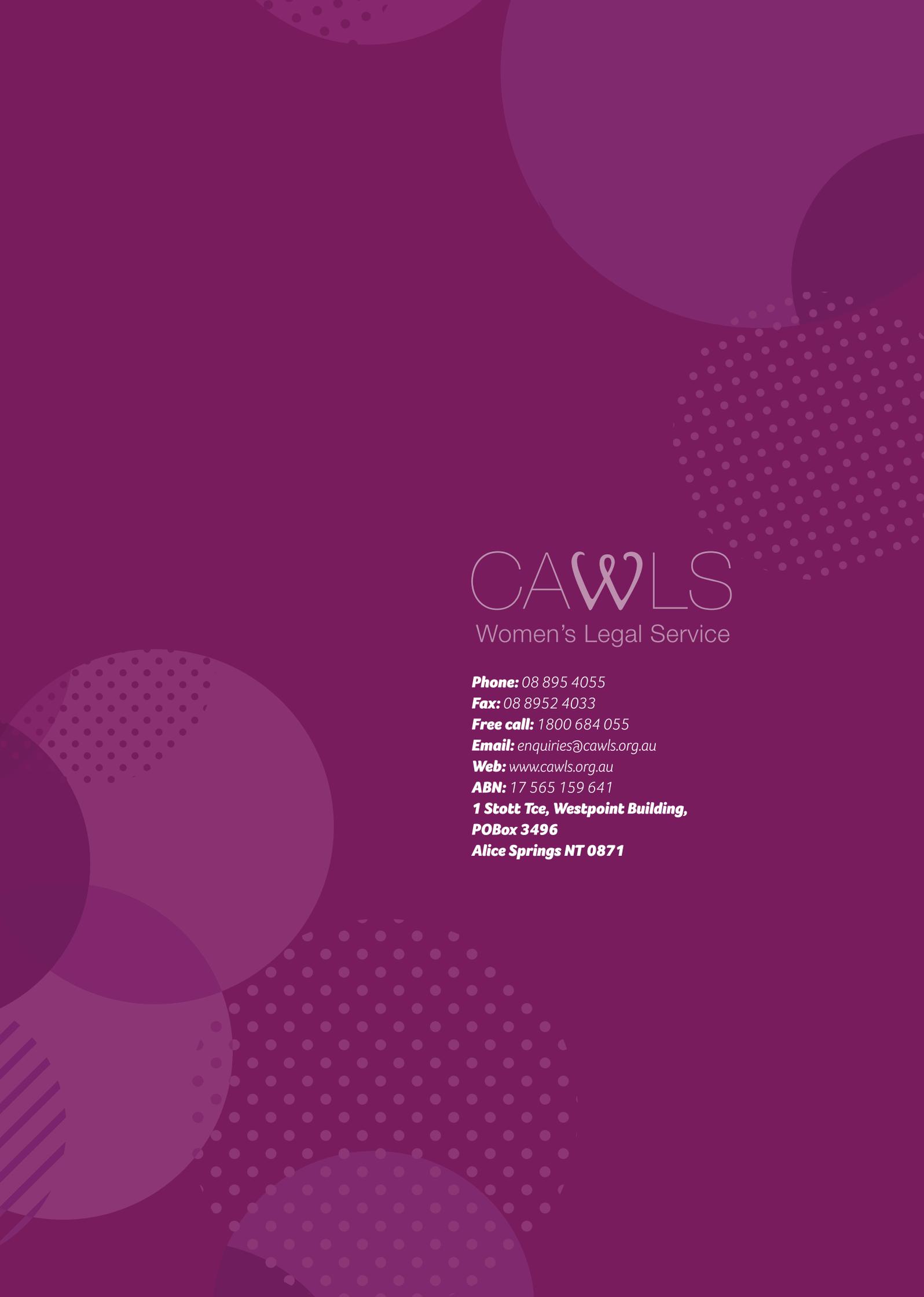
Australian Government



Family Law PATHWAYS NETWORK

ALICE SPRINGS



The background features several overlapping circles in various shades of purple. Some circles are solid, while others contain patterns of small dots or diagonal lines. The overall aesthetic is modern and abstract.

CAWLS

Women's Legal Service

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