



COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE

Bayside
finding a way through the legal maze

Annual Report
2016 – 2017

Our mission

To provide legal and mediation services to socio-economically disadvantaged residents of the Bayside and surrounding areas

Our objective

To reduce the unmet legal needs of the Bayside and surrounding areas by providing legal advice, referrals, legal information and education and mediation services

To provide and maintain the highest quality service by ensuring the ongoing viability of the centre through effective governance, sound financial and administrative systems and professional development support for all staff and volunteers

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BCLS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2016 - 2017

Michael Stubbins	President
Chris Ban	Vice-President
Klaudija Tsin	Treasurer (for part of year)
Natalia Wuth	Treasurer (for balance of year)
Karyn Maurehan	Secretary
Pravinita Singh-Pillay	Executive Member
Natalia Wuth	Executive Member

PRESIDENTS' REPORT

Bayside Community Legal Service (BCLS) commenced operation in 1992 with the provision of one evening volunteer advice session per week, managed and operated by volunteers from the local area.

While advice and assistance was initially provided from premises at Wynnum for most of the time services were provided at the Redland Community Centre under an arrangement where rooms were shared with other service providers.

Following a review by the management committee of the services that were being offered and the ability of clients to access advice during the day the decision was taken to investigate alternate accommodation options in the local area including leasing commercial office space.

It was during this process that the opportunity of an office in the new Wynnum Community Centre became available, with BCLS moving into the new office in January 2016.

Twenty-five years later the service has 25 volunteers and a part-time Solicitor and a part-time Coordinator providing legal advice and information three days per week from a permanent office in the Wynnum Community Centre. We also continue to provide evening advice sessions each Monday night operated by volunteer solicitors and barristers and mediation services at other times.

The last 12 months has seen some significant changes at the service including the departure of the Coordinator and the Solicitor during the latter part of 2016. With the support and assistance from members of the management committee and others we continued to offer services to those seeking assistance.

The past year has also seen a number of changes to our IT systems including the transition from the CLSIS to CLASS (our data system), a move to the Cloud for all our management policies and procedures, records and emails and an upgrade or replacement of most of our computers and other equipment.

Although we do not have a means test in place our focus has been and will remain on providing legal advice, assistance and mediation services to those clients without the means or financial resources to access paid legal advice.

Over the last 12 months the Management Committee has focused on providing the strategic direction and leadership for the centre and that we are providing the best possible legal advice and assistance we can. As part of that commitment we now also offer mediation services to our clients as an option, where appropriate. Mediation is conducted by a panel of trained and accredited mediators.

On Monday nights we usually have 3 or 4 legal volunteers and our Coordinator providing advice or assistance to approximately 12 clients between them and the part-time Solicitor 8 - 10 clients at each of our daytime sessions, held on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. It is estimated that our volunteers are contributing more than 700 hours per year to the service.

Our legal volunteers and mediators also provide advice and mediation at other times and locations during the year.

During the year BCLS has provided advice, assistance or mediation services on 1447 occasions to people living in our community.

We are fortunate in that we are well supported by an amount of \$ 125,037 in funding from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and also \$1,096.48 in donations and interest (\$126,133.48).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow committee members, our Coordinator Ana and our part-time Solicitor Candice for their work during the year and to our legal and non-legal volunteers and mediators I offer a special thank you for your ongoing commitment to the many people that approach us for advice and assistance.

I would also like to thank Ms Amanda Shipway and Ms Jessica Lisec from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, the Board and officers within Legal Aid (Q) particularly Rosemarie Coxon and Sarah Helen, Mr James Farrell and his team from Community Legal Centres Queensland and the many organisations and community members that continue to provide support to the service.

In closing I would like to mention one significant achievement that has been occurred over the last six months or more and one that is in no small way the result of the work that our Solicitor and Coordinator have been doing.

We are a service that exists and has as one of its key drivers the need to provide legal advice and assistance to those less fortunate. We do not do this because it is the right thing to do or for any deep purpose we do this because we have all been fortunate to be given the opportunity to study and because of that study and the work we do we have the ability to source professional help of whatever sort when and if we need it.

For many reasons most of the people that contact us for assistance do not have that luxury and are often desperate for a way out of their legal problems or just want assistance in finding who can help them.

But first people need to know we exist and the services that we offer and for that we need to get out and about in the community and that is what Ana and Candice have been doing.

This has meant hosting bbq's, working with the various organisations and other service providers in the Wynnum Community Centre, working with the Churches in the area and those other organisations providing services.

It has also meant working with the local members of government at the local, state and federal level and with the courts and police.

A good example of this is the work we are doing to address Domestic Violence and Family Violence with our local Member Ms Joan Pease and being part of the Police Referral Service where victims of domestic/family violence are put in touch with our service to offer additional assistance to that provided by members of the Queensland Police Service.

We have also reached out to the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and will continue to do so, including as part of the development of the BCLS Reconciliation Action Plan.

This new approach is already having a significant impact on how we deliver our services and in ensuring that we are here to provide the best service we can.

Thank you

Michael Stubbins







ADVICE TARGETS AND OUTCOMES FOR 2016/2017

Type of service	Target 2016/17	Actual	Target 2017/2018
Advice	750	643	900
Information (information and/or referral support provided over the phone)	300	407	150
Referrals (client is seen and referred to another community/support organization or legal professional)	100	252	200
Legal casework services	300	100	150
Legal education	12	4	12
Mediations	12	24	15
Law reform and stakeholder engagement	2	17	
TOTAL	1482	1447	1427

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

With supervision from the Management Committee, my position at BCLS commenced in April 2017 as a Law Clerk. This support has continued since my admission to legal practice in August. A big thank you to all the members of our Committee for your mentoring and advice. I also appreciate the backing, guidance, and time offered to me by our President, Michael Stubbins.

I am fortunate to work alongside the Co-ordinator, Ana Brown, whose manner with clients and organisational skills is highly valued. Ana is an asset to this Service and I wouldn't be able to do my job as efficiently without Ana.

As a small community legal service, we rely heavily on our volunteer lawyers, in both our free advice sessions, and advice in specialist areas of law. BCLS depends on your continued generosity and support. I have had the pleasure of spending time with most of our volunteers, and I will continue to introduce myself.

I would also like to acknowledge the ongoing support of Community Legal Centres Queensland and look forward to closer working relationship between our organisations.

I am fortunate to work for an organisation whose focus on social justice and equal access to justice has resulted in positive outcomes for our clients, many whom are the most vulnerable of our community.

Our Service is in the heart of Wynnum, where community spirit is strong, and there is great collaboration between local government and community organisations.

The past six months has seen an increase in the use of our free mediation service run by our volunteer mediators and co-ordinated by Ana and Natalia Wuth. We have seen some very positive results for our clients in both family (parenting) and civil matters.

As a team, I look forward to future planning to increase services through student clinics, volunteering opportunities and community legal education. We are currently engaged in developing BCLS's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and will continue to develop our relationships with our First Nations people. I look forward to being a part of a growing service moving forward into 2018.

Candice Hughes

COORDINATORS' REPORT

I began my journey with BCLS on the 13th January 2017; it has been an eventful 9 months with new computer systems being implemented, a new solicitor to work with and many new characters to engage with. I'd like to thank Klaudija Tsin for showing me the ropes and for being a great resource of legal knowledge and assisting me with the duties of this position.

There was a change in solicitors in April, and in came Ms. Candice Hughes, yet again I feel very privileged to work with such a knowledgeable solicitor, we developed a great rapport and it's a joy to come to work every day.

Our facilities at the Wynnum Community Centre are continually being updated and improved: e.g. desks, double screens and needless to say a coffee machine.

BCLS has presented two opportunities for me to engage with the CLC community, by way of conferences, the 1st on the Gold Coast in April and the 2nd in Canberra in August.

This has been an invaluable experience to network with others and also to have lectures and one on ones with the developers of the new computer system 'CLASS'

Candice and I have allocated the 1st Monday of every month to engage with community at the local church for a morning BBQ, our BBQ skills are commendable!!! Each time we reach more members of the community that need our assistance, and advise them of our services and availability.

Our Monday night clinics with our volunteer solicitors and barrister are a valuable resource for the community. A big thank you to those that come each week and give up their time to assist others in the Bayside area.

Lili Hoelscher a Griffith University Law student has started volunteering on a Wednesday, to learn and assist with the daily running of the centre. The latter half of this year will see more students assist during the week.

Mediation has been very successful with many sessions being conducted at our office with positive outcomes, in both family and civil disputes. Again, a big thank you to all our volunteer mediators, we would not be able to offer such a wonderful service without your selfless time and support.

And lastly a big 'Thank you' to the management committee who are 'awesome' to work with, nothing is too hard or difficult and you have all been just a phone call away. It's very reassuring to work with a group of individuals that have a vision for BCLS and work towards achieving it. I say watch out 2018 BCLS is growing bigger and better each day and has a reputation as a supportive legal centre that is assisting the community one half an hour session at a time.

Ana Brown

OUR SERVICES

Bayside Community Legal Service provides legal advice and assistance at the Wynnum Community Centre on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday each week and on each Monday night between the hours of 6.30pm and 8.30 pm,

We provide advice in the following areas of the law

Family Law

Child Protection

Domestic/Family Violence

Criminal and traffic

Civil including Debt recovery issues

Neighbourhood disputes

Wills and Estates

Workplace/Industrial Relations

We also provide mediation service at the Wynnum community Centre at times by arrangement with the parties and mediators.

CONTACT DETAILS

Phone: 3162 3282 / 0490 062 760

Address: Wynnum Community Centre
Room 104/ 105 Florence Street, Wynnum
PO Box 103 Wynnum 4178

Email enquiries@bcls.org.au

OUR PEOPLE

STAFF

Candice Hughes	Solicitor	Part-time
Ana Brown	Coordinator	Part-time

VOLUNTEERS

Farley Tolpen	Karyn Maurehan	
Chris Ban	Natalia Wuth	
Chris Maurehan	Tina Riveros	
Michael Stubbins	Rosita Wood	
Gary Coveney	Klaudija Tsin	
Taina Crisp	Pravinita Singh-Pillay	
Paul Flintoft	Robert Tranent	
Virginia Rabeling	Keith Sun	Lili Hoelscher

MEDIATORS

Amanda Hickey	Hugh Thompson
Kate Grant	John Want
Candace Gordon	Leigh Avuri
Nikolai Koolik	Peter Richards
Alan Stuart	Natalia Wuth
Pravinita Singh-Pillay	Virginia (Ginny) Rabeling

Case Study 1

A client came to the service with issues about a retaining wall on a neighbour's boundary. The neighbour was an elderly lady who lived alone, and was very concerned with any changes made to her property.

Our client was a young woman about to start a new house build for her and her family. The issue of the retaining wall was delaying her building start date and she wanted to have her neighbour feel fully aware and informed of what was going to happen.

Following contact from the mediators, both parties agreed to participate in mediation.

Two of our mediators were able to assist these two ladies to a mutually beneficial outcome, with an agreement reached between the two parties.

Case Study 2

A client visited our office on one of the Monday night sessions and was very concerned about the actions of a debt collector who was trying to recover a debt that had been incurred by her recently deceased daughter. Not surprisingly this was a particularly emotional time for our client, who was seeking advice and assistance in relation to how to resolve this matter. Following advice from one of our more experienced solicitors we were able to provide a solution to the issues that the client was facing.

Case Study 3

A client approached the service regarding a number of issues including difficulties in reaching a parenting agreement with his ex-partner who had moved three hours away from where he lived. The other party had refused to let our client to see the child and was not prepared to negotiate. The service contacted the other party to offer mediation to the parties, but this was declined.

The day following the receipt of the invitation to mediate the other party filed an application for a domestic violence order. We then provided further advice to the client in relation to the various options available to him and a proper response to the matters contained in the Domestic Violence Application.

An outline of the submissions that could be made was also provided to the client.

At the hearing of the matter the Court struck out the domestic violence application and noted that this matter should be dealt with in the proper jurisdiction and not within the jurisdiction of the domestic violence court.

Another attempt to engage in mediation was offered to the other party, who agreed to participate. At the conclusion of the mediation a parenting agreement was reached that allowed our client time with the child of the former relationship.

BAYSIDE COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC.

Strategic Plan 2015-2020

Mission

To provide legal services to socio-economically disadvantaged residents of the Bayside and surrounding areas

Organisational Philosophy

In all dealings with members of the community we need to ensure that all services are delivered in a just and equitable manner and in particular that all members of the community are treated equally, that all are entitled to be heard in matters affecting the individual, that people are entitled to exercise their legal rights according to law and that while we may provide advice and assistance the decision on whether to pursue legal action rests with the individual.

Objectives

- Reduce the unmet legal needs of the Bayside community by providing legal advice and referral to those members of the community who seek legal advice and provide advocacy for those people in the justice system and other areas of law that are able to be supported
- Provide legal information and education to community members so that community members are better able to understand, use and benefit from the law and legal system
- Provide and maintain the highest quality service to the community by ensuring the ongoing viability of the centre, effective governance, sound financial and administrative systems and professional development support for all staff and volunteers.

ADDENDUM

BCLS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2017/2018

President	Michael Stubbins
Vice President	Chris Ban
Treasurer	Klaudija Tsin
Secretary	Karyn Maurehan
Executive Member	Pravinitia Singh-Pillay
Executive Member	Natalia Wuth

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The following documents have been produced and will be provided to the relevant parties, including our funding authority.

- 1. Treasurers Report - Attached**
- 2. Statement of Income and Expenditure**
- 3. Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2017**
- 4. Auditors Certification**
- 5. Certificate of Compliance**

BAYSIDE COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC

Treasurer's Report – Annual General Meeting
Financial Year – 1 July, 2016 to 30 June, 2017
Held on 20 September, 2017

In my report for the Annual General Meeting in 2016 I commented on the potential of the service and the benefits that this service provides to members of the local community, and this has been borne out by the changes and progress that has been made during the last 12 months.

For a number of reasons during the year, including my appointment as the part-time Solicitor for a short period I have not been the Treasurer for the full financial year but have stayed in touch with the operations of the centre and have recently resumed the role of Treasurer. During my absence Natalia Wuth was the Acting Treasurer and I acknowledge her contribution in undertaking the role.

Aimsafe are contracted to attend to our bookkeeping needs and their assistance and services have been invaluable to me and others over the last 12 few months. Robyn, Suzanne and all the other staff at Aimsafe are always happy to assist and answer my many questions as and when required.

In summary our financial position remains strong and has allowed us to further upgrade and replace equipment for the office and to support various activities within the community and the attendance of a number of the staff and members of the committee to attend conferences in Queensland and interstate.

We continue to receive funding from grants received from the Department of Justice and Attorney General and donations received from various persons in the community. All of our financial obligations including superannuation and PAYG are up to date and we commence the new year with a surplus in our accounts.

The Auditors Report, completed by Mr. Wally Kerr is attached and I thank Mr. Kerr for attending to the same.

Thank you to all the Board Members that have supported me throughout the year, with your assistance and advice I have been able to ensure that all financial matters have been conducted in compliance with our service delivery agreement.



Klaudija Tsin
Treasurer