

# South West Sydney LEGAL CENTRE

*Operating as Justice Support Centre since Dec 2022*

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22





South West Sydney Legal Centre respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we operate, the Cabrogal people of the Darug nation, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, as well as the Tharawal and Gandangara nations. We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, waters and community and pay our respects to their elders past and present. We extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## CONTENTS

Message from the President and CEO	3
About us	4
<b>Our legal services</b>	10
Community education program	18
Advocacy and law reform	22
<b>Our domestic and family violence services</b>	26
Advocacy services for women affected by domestic and family violence	28
Domestic and family violence casework services	32
Financial counselling to support recovery from abuse	37
Governance and finance	40
Our Management Committee	42
Acknowledgements	43

This is the annual report of South West Sydney Legal Centre. South West Sydney Legal Centre is a member of [Community Legal Centres NSW](#) and is accredited as a community legal centre by [Community Legal Centres Australia](#). The organisation is a registered charity with DGR1 status and meets core governance standards provided by the [Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission](#).



Community Legal Centres  
Australia





## Message from the President and CEO

Sydney became a divided community in 2021, as South West Sydney residents endured some of the toughest COVID-19 restrictions in the country. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that the inner south-west, the south-west and Parramatta made up nearly half of Sydney's job losses in October 2021. As a result, **our Centre's services were more needed than ever.**

We saw a steady flow of clients experiencing family violence, needing support and advocacy, along with those needing legal advice, including about COVID-19 rules and fines. We are proud to say our program teams and professional staff rose to the challenge.

In this report, we've shared stories from our clients that illustrate the **life-changing and sometimes life-saving services provided by our program teams.** We support clients impacted by family violence to access financial support to feed their children, move house or install security devices to keep themselves safe at home. As members of Safety Action Meetings, our staff coordinate with NSW Police and colleagues from a range of government and community services to protect the lives and safety of clients assessed as at serious threat of injury or death. Women and children benefit from our teams' advocacy and support when faced with the daunting prospect of navigating the court system to get violence protection orders. And many of our legal clients receive advice enabling them to maintain employment, successfully defend wrongful charges and ensure a safe and ongoing relationship with their children.

On behalf of our Membership Committee and the Leadership Team, we extend **our warmest thanks to all professional staff at the Centre** – from the frontline staff to the finance and operations staff. You have all worked with dedication over a challenging 12 months, pursuing a future in

which there is access to justice for all, and women and children are free from family violence. **We also thank our donors, pro bono partners, funding bodies, peak bodies and the numerous community partners** who support our work and our clients.

This year, **we developed a Theory of Change for the Centre, to clearly articulate the impact we seek to create** (see page 9). In future years, we will be able to evaluate our success against that framework. We identified 5 main long-term outcomes we aim to deliver for clients, including that systemic injustices and inefficiencies are addressed by decision makers. During 2021 and 2022, our colleagues developed compelling submissions and engaged in advocacy on domestic and family violence law and processes to improve outcomes for our clients. We also pushed for better support from the Victims Support Scheme for survivors of violence. While our limited resources are primarily directed to meeting service demand from our clients, **the Centre is committed to maintaining an advocacy role to give a voice to community members** who would not otherwise be heard by government.

**Looking ahead, our Centre is on the cusp of two major developments, as we move to a new head office in South West Sydney and launch a full rebrand** to better reflect who we are (our people and values), what we offer (our services and expertise) and what we want to achieve (our strategic goals). Our new brand will reflect what we have always aimed for – targeted programs that give clients the guidance, support services and the strength they need to claim their rights, know their options and choose their next step. We look forward to sharing and celebrating this new chapter for our Centre with our community.

**Naushee Rahman,**  
President

**Yvette Vignando,**  
CEO



# About us

# Supporting people to access justice and break cycles of violence

South West Sydney Legal Centre was established as a community legal centre in Liverpool in 1986, to ensure local people could access justice. Over the years, we have evolved to also serve the safety needs of women and children affected by domestic and family violence.

## Our vision

A future in which there is equality of access to justice, and women and children are free from domestic and family violence.

## Our purpose

Our organisation has a dual purpose:



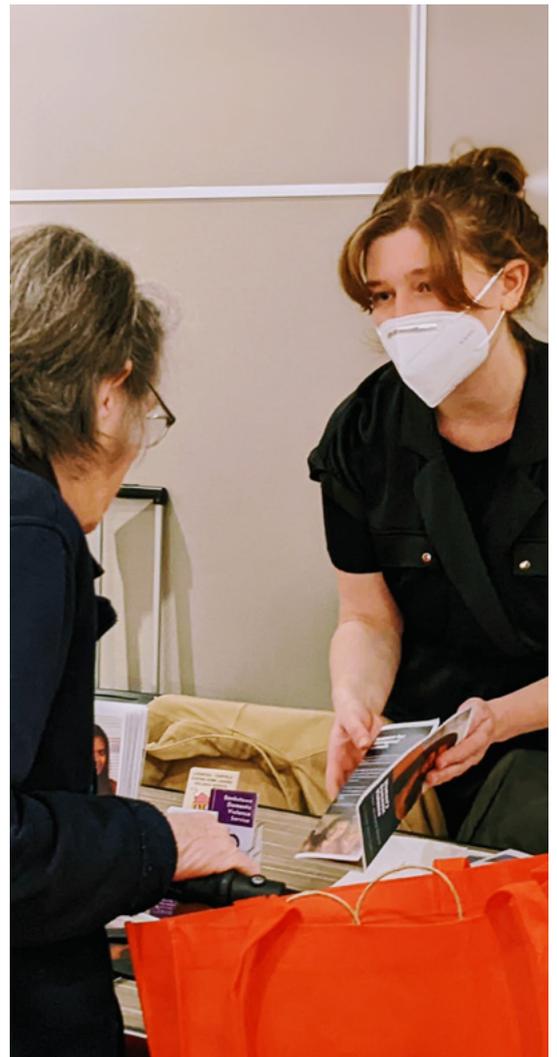
providing equitable and accessible legal services to our community



empowering women and children to break the cycle of domestic and family violence.

Our legal service supports the broader South West Sydney community to understand their rights and responsibilities and access advice and support when they face a legal issue.

Our domestic violence services collaborate with victim-survivors to make safety plans, navigate the legal system, connect with the support services they need and plan their recovery from violence and abuse.



## Accessible services for everyone

Everyone deserves access to justice and freedom from violence and abuse, regardless of their financial circumstances or their background.

Our free services enable people to access justice without paying for legal advice and enable women and their children to access the support they need to make themselves safer.

We know these are critical areas of need in many of the local government areas we serve.

South West Sydney is a vibrant and diverse community, and our clients rely on connections to multilingual workers, interpreters and culturally appropriate services. Likewise, our Central Sydney domestic violence court advocacy service supports clients from many cultural backgrounds, including First Nations women and children. Our work would not be possible without our long-standing connections with local community groups and specialised cultural services.



In South West Sydney, approximately:



**1 in 3 people**

have a personal income of less than \$26,000 per year.



**1 in 5 people**

are likely to need assistance from a community legal centre if they have a legal problem

*(compared to an average of nearly 1 in 10 across New South Wales).<sup>1</sup>*

From April 2020 to March 2021:



**22% higher rate of domestic assault in Liverpool LGA**

compared to the NSW average.<sup>2</sup>

## Systemic change through education and advocacy

We tap into the strength of our community to address systemic issues, by sharing education tools with local people and by learning from their lived experience to advocate to government.

We provide education to targeted community groups about their rights and responsibilities so that they know how to access support for legal issues and how to get support and advocacy if they are experiencing domestic and family violence.

Our experience serving the community for over 36 years has highlighted recurring issues faced by clients. Combining this lived experience with the skills of our professional staff, enables us to expertly advocate to government about key opportunities to make the legal system more accessible and eliminate violence against women and children.

<sup>1</sup> Randell SA, Mulherin G, Mirrlees-Black C 2018 *Evidence of legal need in NSW to support the Cameron Review implementation*, Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, p78.

<sup>2</sup> NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics Research, *NSW Crime Tool: Incidents of Assault (Domestic assault) from April 2021 to March 2022*, <http://crimetool.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/bocsar/>



## Our Leadership Team



**Yvette Vignando**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Peter Multari**  
Principal Solicitor



**Effi Vassiliadis**  
Operations Manager



**Angela Wang**  
Finance Manager



**Farah Assafiri**  
Manager, South West  
Sydney Women's  
Domestic Violence Court  
Advocacy Service



**Janice Waring**  
Manager, Sydney  
Women's Domestic  
Violence Court  
Advocacy Service



**Elly Raffo**  
Manager, Domestic  
and Family Violence  
Casework Services



## How we plan to deliver change

In 2021-22, we developed a Theory of Change to map out our plan to make lasting impacts for our community. It details how each of our services will contribute to short-term and long-term change for each of our stakeholder groups. The diagram below summarises key elements that we will report on in future years.





# Our legal services

Funded by the Community Legal Centres Program administered by Legal Aid NSW

# Everyone deserves access to justice.

That is why we provide free legal advice and representation services to those in the South West Sydney community who could not otherwise afford it.

In 2021-22, our legal service supported nearly 1,900 clients:



**Nearly 1 in 4 clients** were single parents



**43% men**  
**57% women\***



**30%** were clients with disability or mental illness



**2 in 5 clients** were experiencing or at risk of domestic and family violence

\*Our legal service supports men and women, while our domestic and family violence services support women and children.

Some of our clients require in-depth legal support, such as representation in court. We prioritise these representation services based on need. The vast majority of representation clients were experiencing financial disadvantage (96%), nearly 60% were single parents and nearly half were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. More than three-quarters of our representation clients were experiencing or at risk of domestic and family violence.

## The impact for our clients

We surveyed 80 of our legal service clients to find out what impact our service had for them:

**99%**

said we helped them understand how to deal with their legal problem.

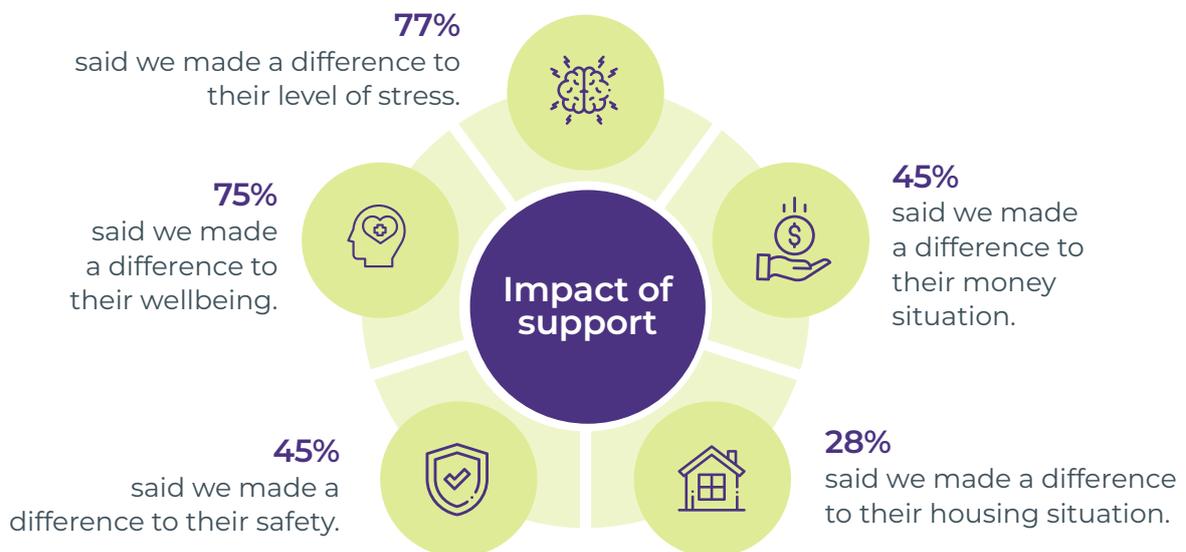
**99%**

said they know where to get help if they have another legal problem in the future.

**100%**

said they would recommend our legal service to other people.

We found that our support can have a bigger impact than simply resolving a legal issue:





## Improving local access to legal advice

Our legal service relies on our local connections.

We were pleased this year to be able to reopen some of our face-to-face services, including our fortnightly legal advice clinic at The Hub - Miller. In partnership with CORE Community Services and Legal Aid, this legal clinic is an excellent opportunity to deliver free legal advice directly to local people. Co-locating resources makes it easier for clients to access a range of services in one place and find the right support for them.

## Supporting local workers

In 2021–22:



**more than 30%**

of our legal clients needed support with an employment law issue.

Of those clients:



**nearly 2 in 5**

were experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Our service plays a critical role in bridging the significant gap in accessible legal services for workers in South West Sydney with employment law and related discrimination problems. This gap results partly from low union density, discrimination issues faced by culturally and linguistically diverse workers, and relatively limited access to Legal Aid for employment law matters.

In June to August 2021, workers across South West Sydney came to us for **support to navigate new public health orders** that introduced compulsory testing requirements for certain industries and prevented them from working outside their local government areas. These rules had a significant impact on the livelihood of these clients. With such swift changes to employee conditions, workers needed access to legal advice about their rights and entitlements when facing COVID19-related problems at work, including redundancies and new workplace policies. With slim resources, our legal team kept up to date on regularly changing public health orders so they could meet a significant growth in demand for urgent employment law advice.

In 2021–22, in partnership with migrant resource centres, we delivered:



**7 free education sessions**

to migrant workers on their rights and responsibilities under Australian employment law.

We also provided assistance over the phone to more than:



**170 unrepresented workers**

related to legal proceedings at the Fair Work Commission.



## Criminal law and COVID-19 restrictions

In 2021–22, around:



### 2 in 5 clients

needed support with a criminal law matter.



This included people seeking legal advice around the **changing COVID-19 rules** operating in 2021.

South West Sydney residents were particularly impacted by these regulations so we supported the community with a large number of urgent requests for advice in this area.

Our Centre also **continues to defend and provide representation services to women in domestic and family violence matters who have been wrongly identified as the perpetrator** and may be facing criminal charges.

Systems abuse refers to perpetrators using the threat of arrest or prosecution to exert power over the victim-survivor as part of a larger pattern of abuse. This trend was confirmed in a 2022 [report from the NSW Audit Office](#), which noted that “police forces across Australia, and internationally, have difficulty in identifying the primary aggressor, and practices are inconsistent.” See page 24 for details on our advocacy around this issue.

## CASE STUDY

### Viktor and Sandra\* could not afford to pay their fine

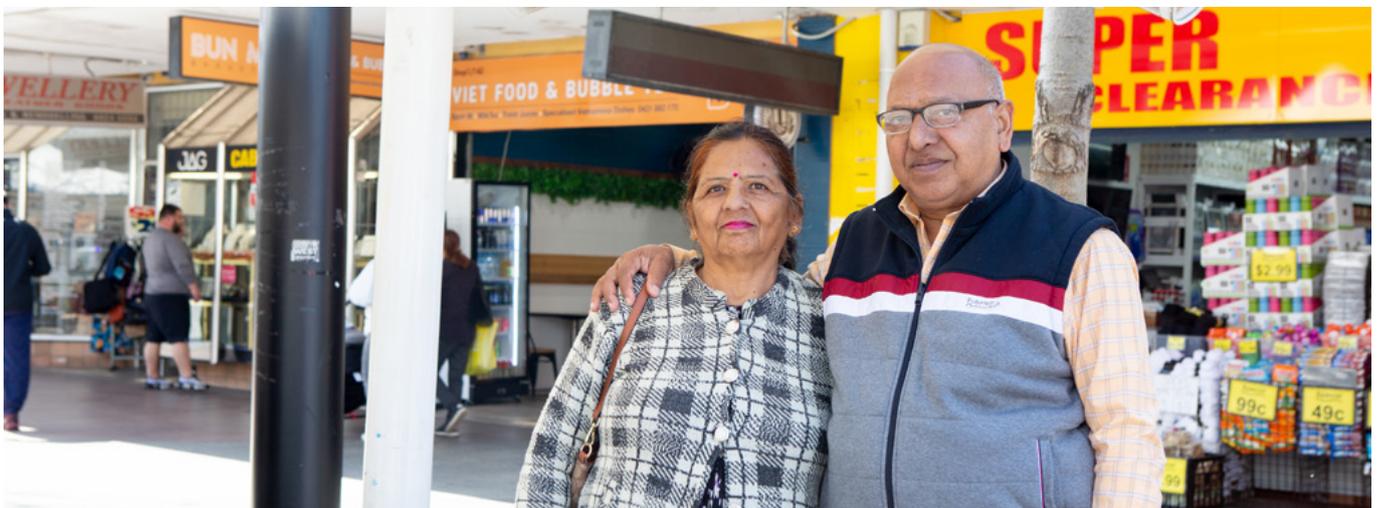
Viktor receives a disability pension. His wife, Sandra is also on a pension and acts as his carer.

During the 2021 COVID-19 lockdown in NSW, Viktor and Sandra drove to a store to buy supplies they needed. At the store, a police officer accused them of breaching Public Health Orders and issued penalty notices. **Viktor and Sandra both received \$1,000 fines** and were extremely distressed, as they did not have the financial means to pay.

Viktor and Sandra asked Revenue NSW for an internal review of their fines, but were unsuccessful. They were worried about facing the legal system on their own, particularly as retired pensioners who did not have easy access to computers. We agreed to represent them.

We wrote to the police, explaining that Viktor and Sandra were not in breach of the Public Health Orders, because they lived within 5km of the store, had a reasonable excuse to travel and Viktor could not go without his carer, Sandra. The police agreed to withdraw the case and Revenue NSW withdrew one of the fines without providing reasons. Both Viktor and Sandra were extremely grateful for our assistance, as they had never been in trouble with the law before.

*\*Names and details changed to protect client confidentiality.*



## Reducing trauma for clients in the family law system

More than:



### 20% of legal services

we provided in 2021–22 related to family law.

One of the key goals of our organisation is to reduce stress and trauma for our clients (see our Theory of Change on page 9). One of the ways we do this is by partnering with local organisations to support clients during family separation.

By partnering with local Family Relationship Centres and other community legal centres, we aim to ensure each party in a family law matter has the support they need. We provide legal advice and representation during mediations so that our clients have a greater chance of securing early settlement and avoiding costly and stressful family law proceedings.



## CASE STUDY

### Nabila\* wanted to rebuild her relationship with her children

Nabila had three children with her husband before they separated. When Nabila re-partnered, her children were overseas with her husband and he took over their care. Nabila continued to travel overseas to see her children but her husband would not let her spend time with them. For four years, Nabila was only able to speak to her children infrequently. In 2022, when the husband and children returned to Australia, she was allowed short visits with her children, who told her their father had been controlling and intimidating.

Nabila came to us for family law assistance. With our advice and our support in mediations with her husband, Nabila was able to come to a swift agreement and resolve complicated issues, such as international travel. This **avoided expensive, lengthy and stressful court proceedings for both parties.**

Through the mediation, Nabila was able to secure a parenting plan that allows her to spend regular time with her children and rebuild her relationship with them. We are helping Nabila formalise this agreement into Consent Orders, which will allow the children's names to go onto the Family Law Watchlist and prevent them from being taken outside Australia without her knowledge or consent. This will give Nabila a future with her children.

*\*Names and details changed to protect client confidentiality.*

To reach more people in our community who need to navigate the family law system, we partner with Uniting Counselling & Mediation and a number of other community legal centres to **run a successful community law education series called “Family Law Basics”**. These workshops teach separating parents about the legal process involved in family separation and how community legal centres like our own can support them at this challenging time. This helps us ensure all clients have access to simple legal information so they can choose the best option for them during this difficult process.

We also provide **training to mediators in the family law space** so they can better support their clients, such as education for community workers on the restructure of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia, the impact of the 2021 Family Law Rules, and how courts decide parenting and financial matters. For example, through our masterclass on property settlement, our team has established a valuable collaboration with family law mediators that has had a significant impact for clients with limited financial means. Avoiding court proceedings is a critical step in protecting the few assets they have.

“

“We at Uniting value our strong partnership with South West Sydney Legal Centre, in particular the ongoing support and collaborative efforts to deliver high-quality, professional and informative workshops and information sessions to mediation and counselling clients, and also to our practitioners.

The free Family Law Basics session we run in partnership with South West Sydney Legal Centre and CLC NSW is such an important tool for explaining simply and clearly to people their rights and responsibilities about parenting and property arrangements. Helping people understand these issues at a difficult time in their lives, without the legal jargon, can improve the family law process for everyone.”

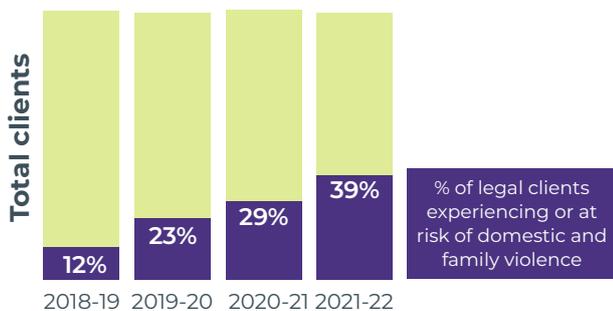
**Elke Pitkethley, Family Dispute Resolution Practice Specialist from Uniting**



## Legal support for victim-survivors of violence

We have seen increasing demand for legal support from victim-survivors of domestic and family violence over the past four years. **The number of victim-survivors supported by our legal team has more than doubled since 2018–19**, when around 1 in 10 of our legal clients were victim-survivors (12%). Now, around 1 in 3 of all legal clients (39%) have experienced or are at risk of domestic and family violence. Additionally, these victim-survivors made up around 77% of our representation services (in-depth legal support) during the year.

Our legal service has increasingly focused on supporting victim-survivors



Of the victim-survivors we supported with legal services, 37% were clients with disability, including mental health injuries resulting from the abuse.

This increase in legal service provision to victim-survivors is due in large part to changes to the [Victims Support Scheme](#) in 2020, which placed the onus on victim-survivors to gather evidence for their claims (including police records and medical records). As a result, victim-survivors require intensive legal assistance to access their entitlements under the Scheme. In 2021–22, **nearly a quarter of our legal clients needed support to make claims under the Victims Support Scheme** and we worked on nearly 350 representation files for them. As we noted in our recent submission to the NSW Attorney General, the change in Victims Services practice has shifted the burden of case coordination to government-funded legal and social services to help clients gather evidence. There has been no offer of additional resources to reflect this.

### CASE STUDY

#### After the violence, Meera\* needed legal support to pursue her claim with Victims Services

Meera suffered extreme violence from her husband for many years and was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. Her children were also traumatised by the violence. **One Assessor at Victim Services noted that this matter was among the most extreme and most confronting that they had come across.**

Our priority in supporting Meera was addressing her immediate safety needs. Our legal team and Staying Home Leaving Violence team collaborated to secure financial assistance from Victims Services to cover emergency rental accommodation and household items for Meera.

Given the severity of Meera's abuse, she was entitled to a much larger payment to support her recovery. Meera was entitled to multiple recognition payments, as she was recovering from multiple periods of abuse and different types of violence. Using statutory interpretation and making lengthy legal submissions, we secured multiple recognition payments for Meera, some of which were over \$10,000.

While this matter is on the extreme end of violence, it shows how critical it is for clients to have the legal support they need to receive their full entitlements from Victims Services. This often takes time and additional evidence gathering, however, the impact on recovery can be enormous. We are now working with Meera's children to ensure they receive Victims Services payments for their own experience as victim-survivors.

*\*Names and details changed to protect client confidentiality.*

## Building a network of support for victim-survivors

As more victim-survivors come to us for support, we have invested in partnerships to ensure clients can be connected with pro-bono legal services. This includes partnerships with private firms like Baker McKenzie, who are now providing pro-bono support on Victims Services claims, under our supervision, as part of their Domestic Violence Support Program. This has been a wonderful opportunity to upskill professionals in these firms on domestic and family violence issues, to incorporate into their practice: "Insightful training session." – **Volunteer solicitor from Baker McKenzie**

We also thank **Clayton Utz, Lander & Rodgers, Makinson D'Apice, Colin Biggers & Paisley, Legal Aid Domestic Violence Unit** and our network of community legal centres (especially **Macarthur Legal Centre**) for taking referrals to meet the growth in legal casework from clients affected by domestic and family violence.



## Court support for clients with driving and traffic offences

For many of our legal clients, driving is their primary means of access to stable employment or critical support services. In recent years, the impact of the pandemic and rising costs of living made the financial situation of many of our clients more precarious. The consequences of clients losing their driving licence or facing a fine can be incredibly serious, as it could cut off their access to employment or deepen their financial disadvantage.

In 2021–22, we **assisted more than 500 people in South West Sydney with advice and representation about traffic and driving offences.**

The valuable relationships we have developed with the Bankstown and Fairfield Local Courts through the Driving Offences Legal Service outreach program allow us to support local people with driving and traffic offences who would otherwise be unrepresented at court. This is particularly important as clients are not otherwise eligible for Legal Aid assistance for many of these offences. We are grateful to these local courts for their continuing support of this outreach program and for their efforts while court attendance has been disrupted by the pandemic.

### CASE STUDY

#### After losing his driver's licence, Arman\* was facing visa issues

Arman is a young man who originally migrated to Australia on a student visa. After a number of driving offences, he was disqualified from holding a driver's licence for more than 10 years. **Arman's visa conditions required him to work in regional NSW, and he could not do so without a driver's licence.**

Arman contacted our office for advice to get his licence back. We supported Arman to prepare an application and represented him at court. We argued that the original disqualification was disproportionate and that he had a genuine need for the licence.

We gathered evidence to demonstrate that Arman had not committed any driving offences for 5 years and had completed a Traffic Offenders Intervention Program, showing an attempt to rehabilitate. He had also completed further studies, showing his genuine desire to continue living and working in Australia, and eventually gain Permanent Residency.

Based on the evidence we had gathered, the Magistrate ordered that the disqualifications be quashed. Without legal help to regain his licence, Arman may have faced serious visa issues that prevented him from remaining in Australia. He can now move on with his life and work towards a future in Australia.

*\*Names and details changed to protect client confidentiality.*



**Community**

**education program**

# Understanding your rights is an important step in accessing justice.

That is why we provide a program of free workshops to educate the community about common legal problems and the impact of domestic and family violence. We also provide free training to community workers so they can better serve their clients.

In 2021-22, we ran **37 education sessions**.

- 21 of these were specifically tailored to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse audience members
- 12 sessions were aimed at educating the community about domestic and family violence.



**95% of community members**  
**100% of community workers**

found our education sessions easy or very easy to follow.

**Our community legal education program plays an important role in communicating changes in the law to culturally and linguistically diverse communities**, who may not be reached through other public education campaigns.



**3 in 4 community members**

attending our education workshops said **English was not their main language**.



**3 in 4 community members**

at our education workshops had an **income of less than \$40,000** or relied on a pension or Centrelink payments.

In 2021, our team worked hard to upskill on the changes in criminal law stemming from COVID-19 public health orders (e.g. COVID-19 fines) and to pass this information on to our local community in South West Sydney, who were particularly impacted by these changes.



“Very informative, learnt a lot of information that I didn't know before.”

**Community worker who attended one of our education sessions**

“I like the interactive parts to the workshop and that we could ask questions at any point.”

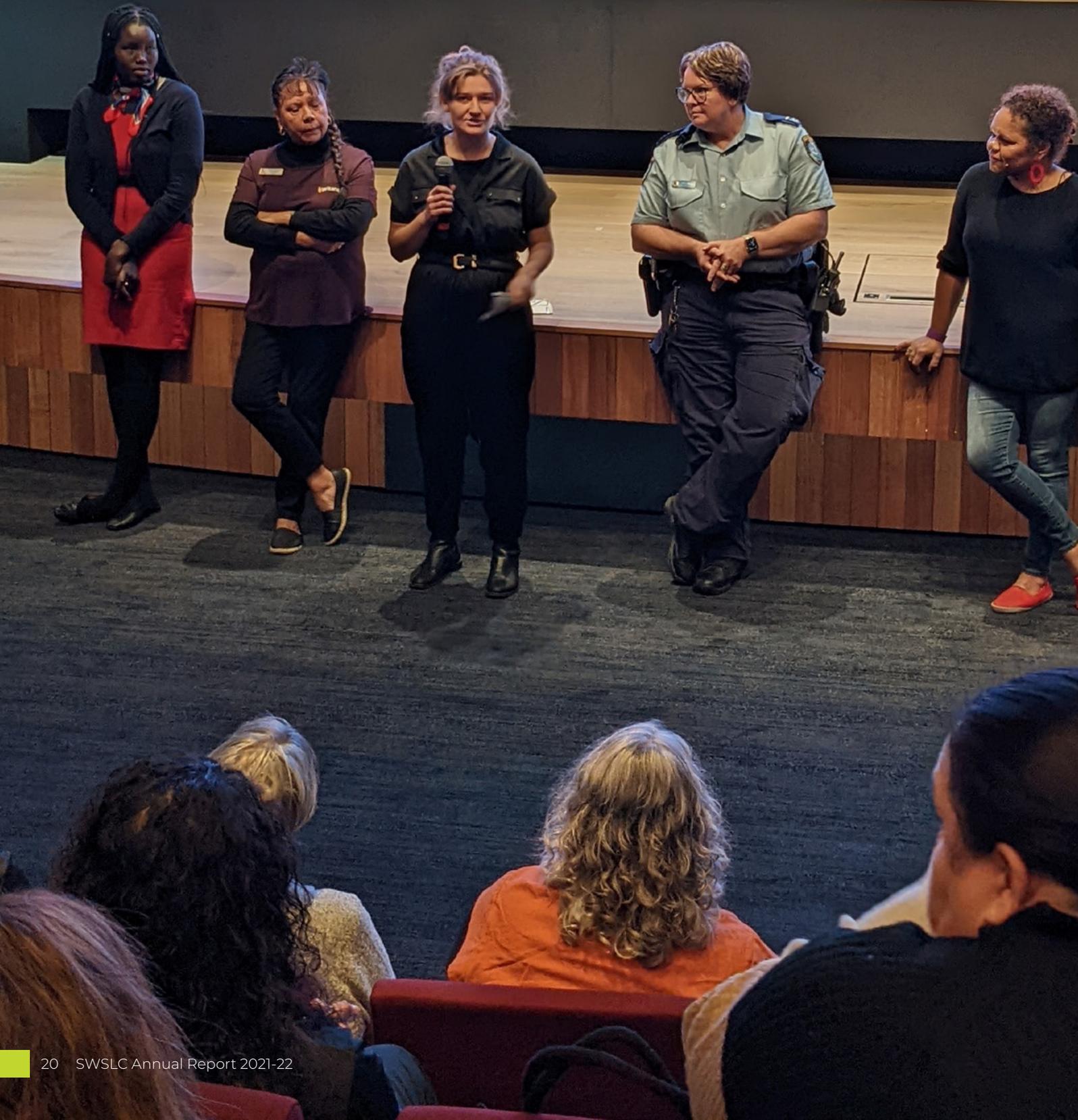
**Community worker who attended one of our education sessions**

To meet the challenge of educating community groups about these constantly changing rules, we collaborated with Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre, the Department of Communities and Justice and TAFE NSW. Our sessions reached **150 TAFE students from different South West Sydney campuses** who had questions about how the rules applied to those with shared parenting responsibilities, those moving house and how the permit system worked. We were able to expand the reach of these education sessions by appearing on a Legal Aid NSW podcast to answer questions about how to manage shared parenting arrangements during the COVID-19 public health order restrictions, particularly in Greater Sydney.

“

“...the best workshop / presentation the branch has ever had.”

**New South Wales Justices Association – Cumberland Branch**



“

“Thank you very much for your work on addressing our students. Your professionalism, patience and clarity in delivering and answering questions asked by our students is greatly appreciated.”

**Mersaline Monteiro, Adult Migrant English Program Coordinator at TAFE NSW**

“

“The team in [South West Sydney Legal Centre] are amazing... Today, you have improved the understanding of these restrictions for more than 150 students across many TAFE campuses, so a big thank you.”

**Community Liaison Officer at the Department of Communities and Justice**



In collaboration with Western Sydney MRC, we also **ran sessions that catered to people who arrived as refugees in Australia in the last 5 years.** Many audience members were experiencing mental health issues and some had experiences with regimes in other countries that had reduced their trust in police. With the support of interpreters and multilingual workers, we supported them to understand how they might be affected by the changing public health orders.

### Many of our clients needed support to understand public health orders

Here are some questions we received at our education sessions:



"Can I buy food that is not available within my 5km radius? E.g. Costco, meat shop that sells Halal or a fish shop."



"Can I go outside my 5km radius to buy medicine?"



"Can my nephew come to do urgent repairs on my house?"

### CASE STUDY

#### Educating international students about domestic violence

We were proud to partner with Navitas this year to run 10 sessions teaching students about domestic and family violence and protections under Australian law. Navitas work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, newly arrived migrants and refugees. Navitas and our own multilingual workers collaborated to provide these sessions in different languages to cater to the needs of recently arrived international students, with some sessions meeting the complex challenge of presenting in three different languages at once.

This was a fantastic collaboration between our legal team and domestic and family violence teams. We had extremely positive feedback from staff and students and gained insights into the needs of this community group, their understanding of the law and how that was influenced by community standards.

GIRLS JUST WANT  
FUNDAMENTAL  
HUMAN RIGHTS

## Advocacy and law reform

# We advocate to government to improve outcomes for our clients

## Reforming the Victims Support Scheme

Our legal service has significantly increased resources devoted to supporting victim-survivors of domestic and family violence to apply for support from the Victims Support Scheme. This can be an onerous process for clients, particularly with the 2020 changes to the Scheme placing the burden of evidence gathering on victim-survivors. The changes have made it challenging for clients to pursue applications without legal support.

In 2021-22, we advocated directly to the NSW Attorney General on the impact these changes to the Scheme have had for our clients, as well as the importance of transparency with victim-survivors about what evidence is considered in the assessment of their applications. We also shared feedback directly with Victims Services on the implementation of Immediate Needs Support Payments and the efficacy of their online forms, grounding our advocacy in the lived experience of our clients and the expertise of our staff.

Our [detailed submission to the Statutory Review of the Victims Rights and Support Act 2013](#) presented **14 achievable reforms** to the legislation and NSW Victims Services policy **that could significantly improve outcomes for victim-survivors.**

Alongside this submission, we signed an [open letter to the NSW Attorney General](#), from the broader domestic and family violence sector, to remove the requirement to separately prove injury in Victims Support applications.

The statutory review of the *Victims Rights and Support Act 2013* is likely to deliver its findings in 2023 or 2024. We will continue to advocate on these issues to maintain pressure for achievable reform.

### Some key recommendations from our submission on the Victims Support Scheme

**Recommendation 2:** NSW Victims Services should assign greater weight to evidence from specialist domestic violence support workers when determining if the applicant was a victim of an act of violence.

**Recommendation 6:** Remove the redundant requirement for a victim-survivor to separately prove injury to access their entitlements under the Scheme.

**Recommendation 7:** Ensure procedural fairness by giving claimants access to the same evidence as Victims Services Assessors.



## Improving police responses to domestic violence

We have significant interaction with the police in our work, working collaboratively with them on a daily basis to share information, advocate for our clients, manage referrals and conduct legal proceedings with police and police prosecutors. Our domestic and family violence services are members of local Safety Action Meetings (SAMs) with the police as part of a cross-agency response to ensure women at serious risk of death or injury receive a coordinated and effective response. In 2021-22, our WDV CAS services coordinated regular SAMs in Canterbury-Bankstown, Liverpool, Fairfield, City of Sydney, Waverley and the Inner West LGAs.

In 2021, we shared our expertise and experiences to inform the review of the NSW Audit Office into [Police responses to domestic and family violence](#) and developed a private submission to the review. This 26-page submission detailed areas for improvement in police responses to domestic violence matters based on the common experiences of our staff and clients.

We welcome the recommendations for reform released in 2022 by the Audit Office as part of this review, particularly recommendations to:



develop a framework to guide police training in domestic and family violence policing



design a procedure to collect and analyse service user and stakeholder feedback about police responses to domestic and family violence and ensure service improvements are made to areas of identified risk



expand existing activity measures and targets for domestic and family violence policing to include police performance measures, service quality measures and outcomes reporting.

We will continue working with our local area police commands to share our expertise and find collaborative solutions to improve our clients' experiences of police responses to domestic and family violence. We are committed to advocating publicly on systemic issues in this area.



Image: The Hon. Natalie Ward, Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence, visited our Bankstown offices in 2022 to meet our CEO, Yvette Vignando, and the team of our South West Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service.



## More consultation needed on coercive control legislation

In December 2021, the NSW Government committed to criminalise coercive control in intimate partner relationships. Coercive control is a form of domestic and family violence in which an abuser exhibits a sustained pattern of abusive behaviours (not always physical) to intimidate and control their partner. Draft legislation to amend the Crimes Act was made public in July 2022. In 2022, we advocated against this legislation being rushed into force without adequate consultation and consideration. This advocacy built on the recommendations in our [detailed submission to the NSW Government's Joint Select Committee on Coercive Control](#) (January 2021), which noted that without significant cultural and procedural changes and investment in training, such legislation could result in unintended consequences for the very people it intends to protect, particularly First Nations women and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

In 2022, we joined the NSW Women's Alliance, Domestic Violence NSW and more than 60 other organisations in signing an [open letter to the NSW Attorney General and to the NSW Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence](#) asking for an extended consultation period to allow sector experts to review draft legislation. This open letter called for the consultation period for the draft legislation be extended from 6 weeks to 6 months, to allow adequate time for experts in the sector, including victim-survivor representative groups and cultural experts, to properly review it and give feedback.

## National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children

In February 2022, we contributed to consultation on the [draft National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2022-2032](#).

In our feedback, we called for:



public release of **consultation reports**



a dedicated action plan that recognises **children as victim-survivors** of domestic and family violence in their own right



concrete targets to **improve accountability**



**a nuanced approach** to intersectionality.

In July 2022, we were pleased to see success on one of these key points, as the Australian Government made public [reports from Monash University's National Plan Consultation Project](#), which contained critical insights from victim-survivor advocates.



**Our domestic and family  
violence services**

# Supporting women and children to break cycles of violence

Our vision is for a future in which women and children are free from domestic and family violence.

We provide free support services to women and children experiencing violence and abuse from a partner or ex-partner, carer or a family member. These services are designed to give victim-survivors a space to feel heard and respected, as well as support to make themselves safer, access justice and pursue their goals.



**More than 6,000 women and children** were supported by our domestic and family violence services in 2021-22.

We offer casework services, court advocacy services and a financial counselling service to provide clients with wrap-around support, including:

- safety planning
- support at court and referral to free legal advice
- case management and emotional support
- support to overcome unfair debt and plan for the future
- community education about domestic and family violence.

## Collaboration across five services

**Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service**

**South West Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service**

**Financial Counselling Service for women affected by domestic and family violence**

**Bankstown Domestic Violence Service**

**Staying Home Leaving Violence service (Liverpool, Fairfield and Bankstown)\***

\*Extended to Canterbury and Burwood in July 2022

## Some of the priority outcomes for our domestic and family violence services:



Clients feel heard and respected



Clients' immediate safety needs are addressed



Clients feel less stressed and a sense of relief



Clients have more clarity about their options and how to take action

(See page 9 for our Theory of Change)





# Advocacy services for women affected by domestic and family violence

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Our WDVACS services are funded by the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program run by Legal Aid NSW and funded by the NSW Government

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The Family Advocacy and Support Service, provided by our Sydney WDVACS team, is funded by the Australian Government and overseen by Legal Aid NSW

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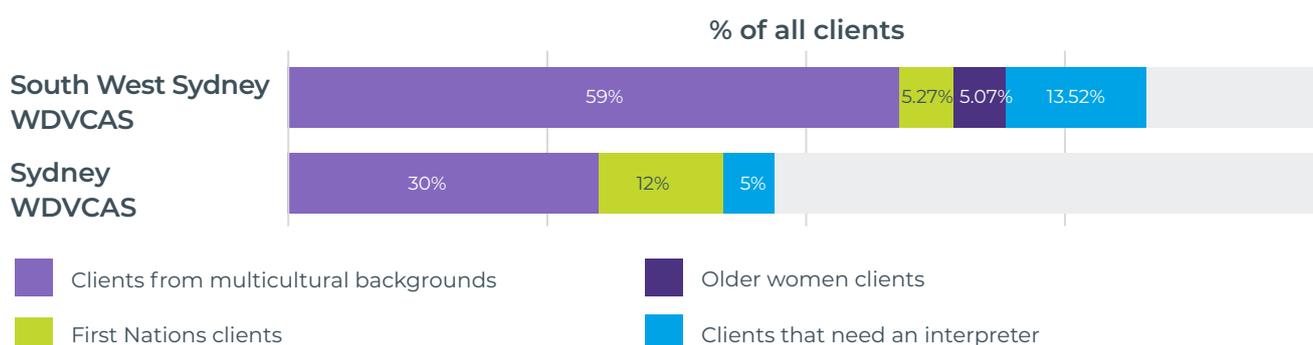
Our Centre oversees two [Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services \(WDVCAS\)](#) in South West Sydney and Sydney. These services support women and their children experiencing domestic and family violence as they navigate the criminal justice process and obtain protection through appropriate Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs).

In 2021-22:

**3,200 clients were supported**  
by Sydney WDVCAS at Downing Centre,  
Newtown and Waverley courts.

**2,600 clients were supported**  
by South West Sydney WDVCAS at Liverpool,  
Fairfield and Bankstown courts.

### These services support women in different areas of Sydney



*Note: Some clients were represented in more than one category.*

## Maintaining a presence at local courts

Our workers are available at the Downing Centre, Waverley and Newtown local courts (Sydney WDVCAS), Liverpool, Fairfield and Bankstown local courts (South West Sydney WDVCAS). We support women (and sometimes children) at court regarding an Apprehended Domestic Violence Order mention or hearing.

Every woman has different needs but we might support them with:

- advice about:
  - the conditions on the ADVO
  - the court processes
  - family law issues or property settlement
- a Safe Room to prepare for their hearing
- liaising with police and court staff on the ADVO conditions, property recovery orders and other related matters
- representation in court, through Legal Aid's Duty Lawyer scheme (Sydney WDVCAS) and the Domestic Violence Unit solicitors (South West Sydney WDVCAS).

## Safety planning and needs-based support

Addressing the immediate safety needs of clients is a key part of our role. We discuss safety planning with every WDVCAS client. We also work with clients to find out what their other immediate needs are and connect them to the services they need.

In 2021-22, our WDVCAS teams made nearly 40,000 referrals, connecting clients to our domestic and family violence casework teams, and to emergency housing, free legal advice, counselling and more. We also provide some clients with grocery vouchers and support bags donated by Share the Dignity, which include toiletries and other useful items.

Generous donors have also enabled us to provide additional grocery vouchers to clients.



### 548 referrals to housing services made

in the second half of 2021 for clients of South West Sydney WDVCAS.

## Preparing women for the court process

Attending a hearing following a domestic violence incident can be a confronting experience, particularly if you don't know what to expect. Some clients told us that they were not aware of their upcoming ADVO hearing, while others felt pressured to attend.

We support women with **one-on-one advice about what to expect from their upcoming hearing** and how to prepare. Through this service, we also refer women for advice on other areas of the law, including family law, immigration law, criminal law as well as credit/ debt issues through financial counselling.

Previously, we provided monthly advice clinics to reach women who were preparing to attend an ADVO hearing, but pandemic safety requirements prevented these group sessions. In September 2022, we will launch an additional **Hearing Support pilot programme**.



"You have an amazing service available to women and it's made the world of difference through all of this to have it there."

**Sydney WDVCS client**

## Walk Against Domestic Violence

Our Sydney WDVCS team was proud to take part in the Walk Against Domestic Violence in December 2021. Walking through the Inner West, this event was a partnership with Inner West local council and various senior NSW Police Force members and was a great opportunity to bring together various groups in the community.



## Collaborating with local services and police

**We collaborate with local groups so we can connect clients to the support they need.** This includes referrals to Wirringa-Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Service, local domestic and family violence service providers, local health services and other community legal centres.

This collaborative approach is particularly important at a time when there are capacity issues across the sector. Staff from our two WDV CAS teams are involved in 10 interagency networks that allow us to share knowledge across the sector and encourage referrals to improve client outcomes.

Maintaining a **strong working relationship with our local Police Area Command** is critical to supporting our clients. We have almost daily contact with the Domestic Violence Liaison Officers at our local police commands. The high level of trust between our services and police helps us to advocate effectively for our clients.

Attendance and coordination of Safety Action Meetings (SAMs) is a key tool we use to reduce threats to victims' safety through targeted information sharing. SAMs are regular fortnightly meetings that focus on reducing threats to women and children at risk of harm in the local area. They are chaired by police and attended by representatives from agencies or services with the authority to make decisions at the meeting. Our WDV CAS staff attend and coordinate SAMs in Bankstown, Liverpool, Fairfield, City of Sydney, Waverley and the Inner West.

### CASE STUDY

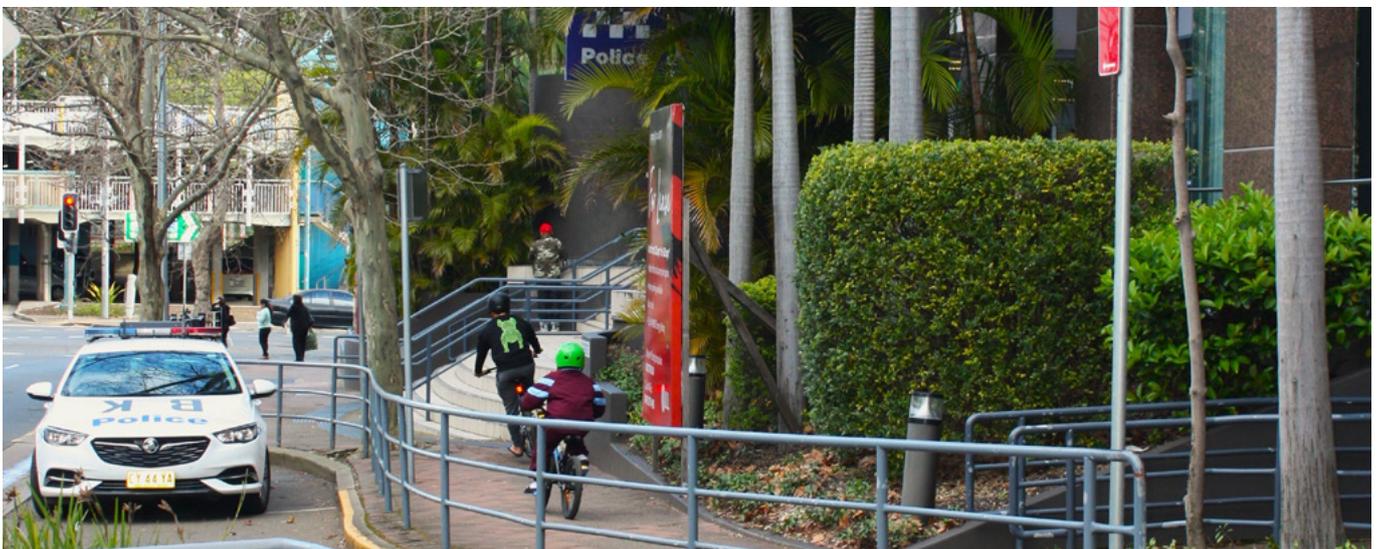
#### Working together to find safe housing for Abi\*

Abi was referred to Sydney WDV CAS by police after she was assaulted by her partner, who she lived with. Abi wasn't sure if she wanted to leave her partner and didn't trust the police enough to make a statement to them about the violence.

Abi was admitted to hospital for other medical issues (not related to the violence). When it was time for her to be discharged, our service had serious concerns for her safety if she returned to her home with her partner. Her partner had an ADVO applied to him, but its conditions were insufficient to protect her.

In collaboration with our contact in the health system, with the cross-agency members of the local Safety Action Meeting and Abi's counsellor, we arranged for Abi to be discharged and provided safe accommodation that suited her health needs. After we established trust with Abi and spoke with her about her options, she decided to make a statement to the police and secure an ADVO that would better protect her from her partner.

*\*Names and details changed to protect client confidentiality.*





**Domestic and  
family violence  
casework services**

We run two casework services for women and children affected by domestic violence in South West Sydney:

- **Bankstown Domestic Violence Service**
- **Staying Home Leaving Violence** service (this service covers the Liverpool and Fairfield LGAs and expanded in 2021-22 to cover Bankstown. From July 2022 it will also cover Canterbury and Burwood LGAs).



I never thought I would be able to be safe, always had fear inside me. After you guys helped me out, I feel much better emotionally. Now I don't feel fear as much, I feel safe knowing I am not alone.

## How these services support women in South West Sydney

Our casework services work with clients to develop a safety plan and connect them with support to meet their immediate needs. The Staying Home Leaving Violence service can also provide long-term support to women to help them achieve their goals as they recover from the impact of the violence.

Our caseworkers are trained in providing trauma-informed support in a culturally appropriate way. They tailor their support to the needs of the client and keep safety as the top priority. This might include:



supporting our client to take the matter to the police



providing safety devices and other safety measures to keep them safer at home



home visits and group activities



providing them with resources to support their children after trauma



connecting them to other services, like crisis accommodation, counselling, health services or legal advice



Image: Secondees Michelina Bell and Amber Figura joined our casework teams this year to share their expertise in service provision for clients with disability.

**The Bankstown Domestic Violence Service is part of the Integrated Domestic and Family Violence program funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice**

**The Staying Home Leaving Violence Service is funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice**

## Helping clients meet their immediate needs

Many clients of our casework services face financial hurdles that prevent them from taking the steps they need to keep themselves and their children safe. They may need funds to change the locks and make their housing secure from their abuser, or to access another service or just to buy groceries for the family.

In 2021-22, our casework services provided a total of **more than \$70,500 in direct financial support to clients**. By meeting their immediate needs and removing financial stressors, we aim to give these women the space to start planning for the future.

## Safety plans for victim-survivors

Our caseworkers support women and children affected by domestic and family violence to identify the key risks to their safety and develop a plan to reduce those risks.

This is an important process, as many of our clients may not have a clear understanding of the danger they are in. One client told us that working through our safety assessment tool with her caseworker “opened my eyes about how dangerous my situation was. I didn’t think what I was experiencing was the ‘severe’ type of DV [domestic violence].”

In 2021-22, our caseworkers developed **more than 260 safety plans** with women and children. In some cases, we supported clients to set up security devices in their homes to make their current housing safer or supported them to report abuse to the police.

## Long-term support

Our Staying Home Leaving Violence service enables us to provide long-term support to clients. We have operated this service for years in **Liverpool** and **Fairfield**, and in 2021-22 we were able to expand the service into **Bankstown**. This service can support women throughout their recovery journey and work with them to plan for long-term goals that can rebuild their lives after abuse. This includes employment, study, health and financial goals.

We see the impact of this long-term support in feedback from our clients. One client told us: “The fact that SHLV is a long-term service is what has been so helpful for me as I don’t feel that I am being left to pick up the pieces on my own.”



“Since being connected to SHLV my house has become safer as security cameras installed and since then my ex-partner has not come to my house unannounced which has created a safety for my children and I.”

**SHLV client**

## Staying Home Leaving Violence Service – Liverpool, Fairfield, Bankstown



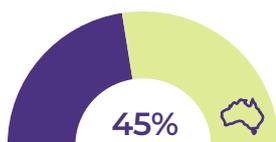
**181 clients** were supported by a caseworker, including 23 children.



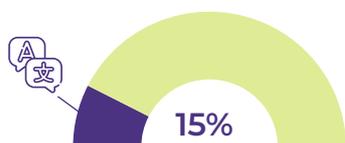
This service also supported **202 children who were not clients** usually in the process of supporting their mothers.



**More than \$47,000** in payments to clients in need of direct financial support to meet their immediate needs.



**45%** of people contacting the service were born in a country other than Australia.



**15%** of people contacting the service required an interpreter.

“

“This service is very supportive to me and my daughter. I can start our lives again, and I am not afraid of my ex-husband anymore. I have confidence in myself now, I will try to study, to get a car and go back to work when my daughter starts Kindy.”

**Client of our Staying Home Leaving Violence service**

### CASE STUDY

#### "I now believe there is light at the end of the tunnel"

*A letter written by a client of our Staying Home Leaving Violence service, to thank her caseworker:*

I contacted Staying Home Leaving Violence after experiencing many counts of domestic violence with my ex-partner over 1 year ago. [My caseworker from Staying Home Leaving Violence Service] never left my side, she has helped and supported through it all.

She assisted me with many things such as: financial aid, security, food, court attendance, legal advice and **sometimes even just a shoulder to cry on.**

She was my angel in disguise and I don't know how I could have managed without her support and guidance, she has truly showed me how to be strong and not feel alone, that there is also help out there and I don't have to do it alone. I was able to get back on my feet and restart my life for the better. I was able to become a better mother and provide my daughter a safer environment to live in.

I now believe that there is light at the end of the tunnel and **I no longer have to live in fear, abuse and control.**



## Bankstown Domestic Violence Service



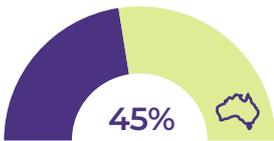
**126 clients** were supported by a caseworker, including 18 children.



This service also supported **215 children who were not clients** usually in the process of supporting their mothers.



**More than \$23,000** in payments to clients in need of direct financial support to meet their immediate needs.



**45%** of people contacting the service were born in a country other than Australia.



**10%** of people contacting the service required an interpreter.

“

Thank you for always being there for me through the most difficult time of my life...”

**Client of Bankstown Domestic Violence Service**

### CASE STUDY

**“The very first time I met her, I knew I was going to be ok.”**

*A letter written by a client of our Bankstown Domestic Violence Service, to thank her caseworker:*

We met [our caseworker] in the worst time of our life when we had initiated an AVO (Apprehended Violence Order) against my husband, father of my 3 kids, being married to him for 15 years.

The very first time I met her. I knew I was going to be ok. **The road is going to be rough, but I have a friend who'll help me go through it.**

I was lost before meeting her, overwhelmed by the quick changes and the whole legal process. At times so broke that I hardly had any money to buy food to feed my family. [My caseworker] always had that gentle tone to comfort my worrying and anxious nerves...

I have no family here... I still struggle with many issues and try and live everyday as it comes, sometimes easier said than done.

**I know one thing for a fact that [my caseworker] is just a call/message away, she always replies and returns calls.**

Thank you for everything you have done and continue to do for me and my kids.





# Financial counselling to support recovery from abuse

For many women experiencing domestic and family violence, financial abuse is a factor. Financial stress can act as a barrier to women leaving an abusive relationship and can also make the recovery process more difficult.

Our Financial Counsellor works with women affected by domestic and family violence to address key sources of financial stress and to plan for their financial goals.

In its second year of operation (thanks to funding from the Financial Counselling Foundation) this service was able to support 40 victim-survivors.



In 2021-22, our Financial Counselling service

**saved clients a total of more than \$36,000**



“I actually didn’t know prior it was possible to have such amazing help from a financial counsellor... Jillian goes above and beyond to assist and help me in many of the problems I have in my life and has helped me dig out of the overwhelming financial burden that was over me.”

**Financial Counselling client**

## How can financial counselling help?

Suicide Prevention Australia found that cost-of-living and personal debt was the lead cause of elevated distress for Australian women in 2022. Our Financial Counsellor can help victim-survivors with:

- speaking with creditors to waive unfair debts
- making plans to manage outstanding fines, overdue bills or unpaid rent
- budgeting and planning for financial goals.

## Supporting women to reach their financial goals

After leaving an abusive relationship, many of our clients have to manage the family budget and bills by themselves for the first time in their lives. Most of the clients of this service are single parents supporting children and for some their partner had been the primary earner. Some clients can no longer afford their rent after their abuser leaves.

Our Financial Counsellor supports clients to better understand how to manage bills, potential expenses and identify where they can make savings. This year, clients were facing added financial stress from the rising cost of living and rising interest rates.

By better understanding what their options are, and with support to find savings on utilities and other areas, clients can plan for their financial goals and a fresh start.



Image: (L-R) Montanna Tassell, Legal Program & Outreach Officer, Elise Newton, Communications Manager, and Jillian Scahill, Financial Counsellor hosting an information stall at the KARI Aboriginal Women’s Wellbeing Conference.

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**The Domestic and Family Violence Financial Counselling service is funded by the Financial Counselling Foundation**

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## Victims of financial abuse

Many of our clients have been victims of financial abuse and are facing unfair debts that have been taken out in their name by their partner. Our Financial Counsellor has been able to act as an advocate with banks and other lenders to reduce or waive these debts for clients or set up a workable repayment plan.

In this second year of the program, we were pleased to reach new clients through partnerships with KARI and Macarthur Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service. We hope to expand the service further in future years, subject to funding.



### CASE STUDY

#### **Sara\* was unable to work and facing significant debt**

Sara first came to our financial counselling service after experiencing abuse from an intimate partner. She was suffering from debilitating mental health issues (some resulting from the abuse) that prevented her from working and had a significant amount of debt to different lending companies.

Our Financial Counsellor worked with Sara to develop a budget and to map her assets and liabilities. While Sara was reliant on the disability pension, she had a deficit every fortnight and no assets except furniture and clothing.

Our Financial Counsellor worked with Sara to collect medical evidence that she would be unable to return to work. Our Financial Counsellor requested a debt waiver from each of Sara's creditors, explaining her change in circumstances. Both lending companies agreed to waive the debt to relieve the pressure on Sara, adding to more than \$15,000 in cleared debt.

Our Financial Counsellor also worked with Sara to find further savings in her budget – switching to a pre-paid mobile phone, using the fresh food program in her area and setting up repayment plans with the electricity and gas company. Now, Sara is able to live within her budget and is no longer creating debt.

*\*Names and details changed to protect client confidentiality.*



# Governance and finance

## Income and expenses

The majority of the Centre's income is derived from NSW state government and Commonwealth government funding for domestic and family violence programs and for our community legal service. We also receive funding from the Financial Counselling Foundation for our financial counselling service.

Gross revenue for the Centre in the last financial year was marginally higher than the previous year, at \$7.15 million. There were some modest increases in government funding, mainly due to indexation, but we received less funding from one-off COVID-19 related grants than in the previous year. Total expenses for the year amounted to \$7.04 million. The [full audited financial report is available on our website](#).

## Risk management and financial governance

To provide the Centre with increased financial assurance for future unexpected events, in 2021 the Management Committee adopted an operating reserves policy; the Committee will review and adjust the policy each year after receiving the financial report from our auditors.

Throughout 2021-22, the Leadership Team and board continually reviewed the Centre's approach to managing risk associated with the pandemic. To prioritise the safety of our clients and staff members, frontline staff were instructed to work from home during lockdowns for the most part. Limited face-to-face services at offices and courts were offered where required. When lockdowns were lifted, staff returned to offices on rosters, following our detailed COVID-19 safety plans, which include vaccination and mask-wearing requirements.

## Management Committee

The Management Committee held 7 meetings over the 2021-22 year. Towards the end of 2021, the Leadership Team and Management Committee participated in a governance training update on topics including strategy, risk, culture, reporting and the board-management partnership. Some committee members joined the CEO in other learning and development opportunities during the year, notably development of the Centre's Theory of Change and applying human-centred design to planning organisational impact.

Management Committee members are volunteers who are elected annually by the members of South West Sydney Legal Centre Ltd.



South West Sydney Legal Centre is an Incorporated Association and a registered charity. It has reporting and compliance obligations to Fair Trading NSW and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. The Centre is an organisational member of the Fundraising Institute of Australia.



Community Legal Centres  
Australia

Community Legal Centres Australia is our national peak body – we are accredited by them by participating in a quality assurance process to ensure that we operate according to best practice and industry standards. To maintain accreditation, the organisation must be a member of the NSW Community Legal Centres peak body, comply with the mandatory standards in the Community Legal Centres Australia Risk Management Guide and comply with the accreditation scheme that includes requirements relating to governance, financial and risk management, data management, communications, client satisfaction and cultural safety.

# Our Management Committee



**Naushee Rahman,**  
**President,**  
**appointed 13.11.14**

MAg (AgEc), BResEc (Hons)

Naushee has 15 years' experience in the public sector, including at NSW Treasury and TAFE NSW, where she was Director of Policy and Industry Engagement. Most recently, she focused on strategic projects and reform, working with the Commonwealth. Previously, she led advocacy and strategic projects at the NSW Small Business Commission and implementation of activity-based funding at NSW Health before that.



**Caroline Alcorso,**  
**MC Member,**  
**appointed 6.5.19**

MA Social Science, PhD Economics,  
Certificate IV Carbon Management

Caroline is a workforce, gender and diversity expert. She has enjoyed a long career in industrial relations, workforce development, immigrant women's programs and disability workforce policy and programs. Currently she consults via her own company Purpose at Work to create high-quality jobs that also achieve high-quality human services. She is undertaking a Master in Sustainability.



**Diana Chang,**  
**Vice President & Secretary,**  
**appointed 2.5.19**

BA LLB (Hons), GAICD

Diana brings extensive experience as a leading commercial litigation lawyer with governance and management experience. She has been a partner in commercial law firms including leading corporate boutique law firms and a global law firm where she was Office Managing Partner and Practice Leader.



**Rivkah Nissim,**  
**MC Member,**  
**appointed 10.6.21**

BA Politics, Graduate Certificate Social  
Impact

Rivkah is Impact Manager with the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC). She has expertise in social and legal policy, having held senior roles with Inside Policy, the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission.



**Rakesh Raj,**  
**Treasurer,**  
**appointed 2.5.19**

B.Bus Accounting, Com Ad Cert, CPA

Rakesh is a Financial Consultant and has been the Finance Director and Regional Controller of several Australian and multinational companies, including large independent not-for-profit colleges. Rakesh is a Fellow of the Institute of Public Accountants and a BAS agent.



**Carmela Tassone,**  
**MC Member,**  
**appointed 17.9.20**

MA, LLB, BEd

Carmela is a Senior Lawyer in the Office of General Counsel, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Before this, Carmela was the founder and Principal Director of CP Partnerships Legal & Consulting. She has extensive human services experience and expertise in litigation and legal policy and reform.



**Joanna Abraham,**  
**MC Member,**  
**appointed 17.9.20**

LLB, LLM, BSocSci

Joanna is a Principal Lawyer at Justice Connect (Sydney), Co-Chair of the Human Rights Committee for Australian Lawyers for Human Rights and Co-Chair of the Community Advocacy Working Group with the Human Rights Act for NSW Alliance. Previously, Joanna held positions with the Australian Human Rights Commission and Caxton Legal Centre.

# Thank you to our supporters and partners

Our legal service receives funding from the NSW Government and Australian Government, administered and managed by Legal Aid NSW. Our domestic and family violence services receive funding from the NSW Government and Australian Government, administered and managed by Legal Aid NSW and the Department of Communities and Justice. Our Domestic and Family Violence Financial Counselling service is funded by the Financial Counselling Foundation.

## **Our sincerest appreciation goes to our funding bodies and government and community partners.**

South West Sydney Legal Centre has been a member of the South West Sydney Domestic and Family Violence Alliance since 2017 and a member of the NSW Women's Alliance since 2021. These alliances are wonderful examples of local collaboration between government and non-government organisations, working together to break the cycle of violence.

## Thank you

to all of our donors and our supporters during 2021–22, including:

- ACON
- Adam Guy, barrister
- Ali Hallani, solicitor
- Allan Goldsworthy, barrister
- Arab Council Australia
- Ashley Gobeil & Alice McLennan children trauma services
- Asian Women at Work
- Atlassian
- AusRelief
- Baker McKenzie
- Bankstown Family Relationship Centre
- Bankstown Local Court - Magistrates, Registrars and court staff
- Bankstown PAC
- Bankstown Women's Health Centre
- Baptist Care
- Benevolent Society
- Blue Knot Foundation
- Bondi Beach Cottage
- Bonnie Support Services
- Budyari Community Health Centre
- Campbelltown Family Relationship Centre
- Canterbury-Bankstown Council
- CatholicCare
- Central Sydney SAM Members
- Central Tablelands and Blue Mountains Community Legal Centre
- Centrelink Outreach
- City of Sydney
- Clayton Utz
- Colin Biggers & Paisley
- Community Legal Centres Australia
- Community Legal Centres NSW
- Community Legal Centre Program Unit, Legal Aid NSW
- CORE Community Services
- Corrective Services NSW
- The Council on the Ageing NSW
- Creating Links
- Crimson Life Church
- Cumberland Women's Health Centre
- David Campbell
- Department of Communities and Justice NSW – Sydney and South West Sydney
- Department of Human Services
- Domestic Violence Duty Scheme Solicitors (Downing Centre, Newtown, Waverley, Bankstown, Fairfield and Liverpool courts)
- Domestic Violence NSW
- Domestic Violence Unit at Legal Aid NSW
- Downing Centre Local Court - Magistrates, Registrars and court staff
- e-Safety Commissioner
- Eastern Beaches Police
- Eastern Suburbs Domestic Violence Services Network
- Eastern Suburbs Police
- Eastern Sydney SAM Members
- Elizabeth Bell
- Elizabeth Kelleher-Cook
- Emmanuel Kerkyasharian, Barrister
- Fairfield Council
- Fairfield Family Relationship Centre
- Fairfield Local Court - Magistrates, Registrars and court staff

- Fairfield Women's Health Service
- Fair Work Commission's Workplace Advice Service
- Fair Work Ombudsman
- Financial Counselling Foundation
- Frisina Lawyers
- Georges River Life Care
- Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers
- Good Foundations
- Housing NSW
- Human Rights Commission
- Hume Community Housing
- Illawarra Legal Centre
- Immigration Advice and Rights Centre
- Inner West Police
- Inner West SAM members
- Jack Tyler-Stott, barrister
- Jennifer Newton
- Jodie Vo
- Junction Neighbourhood Centre
- Julie Dombrowski
- Justice Advocacy Service
- Kathy Archer, Family Separation & Mediation Services
- KARI
- Kristian Bolwell, solicitor
- Lander & Rogers
- Law Access
- Legal Aid NSW
- Linda Head
- Lindt Chocolates
- Liverpool Council
- Liverpool-Green Valley Domestic Violence Service
- Liverpool Family Dispute Resolution Services
- Liverpool Local Court - Magistrates, Registrars and court staff
- Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections
- Liverpool Women's Health Centre
- Lokahi
- Louisa Hatfield
- Lou's Place
- Lurnea High School
- Macarthur Legal Centre
- Makinson D'Apice Lawyers
- Mark Higgins, barrister
- Marrickville Legal Centre
- Marsdens Law Group
- Metro Assist
- Michael Costello, clinical psychologist
- Minus 18
- Moving Out Moving On
- Mudgin-gal Aboriginal Women's Service
- Multicultural Policy and Engagement Office of the Deputy Secretary - NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- Newtown Local Court - Magistrates, Registrars and court staff
- Newtown Neighbourhood Centre
- Navitas
- Nicholas Lavidis, clinical psychologist
- NSW Department of Education Representatives
- NSW Refugee Health
- One Door Mental Health Services
- Out Loud
- Rozelle Neighbourhood Centre
- SDN Brighter Futures (Central and Eastern)
- Sergio Almendrades
- Settlement Services International
- Share the Dignity
- Simply Divine Co
- Social Impact Hub
- South West Sydney Domestic and Family Violence Alliance
- STARTTS Liverpool
- Staying Home Leaving Violence (Redfern, Parramatta and Eastern Suburbs)
- Stephen Penny
- Sydney City Police
- TAFE NSW
- The Deli Women & Children's Centre
- The Hub, Miller
- Translating and Interpreting (TIS National) Service at Department of Home Affairs
- Uniting Counselling and Mediation
- NSW Victims Services
- Warwick Farm Neighbourhood Centre
- Waverley Local Court - Magistrates, Registrars and court staff
- Weave
- Welfare Rights Centre
- Wesnet
- Western Sydney Community Legal Centre
- Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre
- Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre
- Women's and Girls' Emergency Centre
- Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program Unit, Legal Aid NSW
- Women's Legal Service NSW

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### ***Liverpool Local Coordination Point***

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