



SPRINGVALE MONASH
LEGAL SERVICE Inc.



Shazia Haidari, Human Rights (detail), 2017,
30 x 43cm, acrylic on canvas

Annual Report 2017

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Board of Directors

The current Board members are:

Chair – David Starvaggi

Vice Chair – Dona Tantirimudalige

Treasurer – Jared Heath

Secretary – Jamie McGhie

Monash Law Faculty Members – Renata Alexander, Nina Boughey, Vanessa Johnston, Gillian North*

Directors – Sonia Parisi, Andrew Simmons, Deborah Rulach, John Longo, Anna Hall*, Sarah Williams*

SMLS Executive Director (non-voting) – Kristen Wallwork

SMLS Staff Representative (non-voting) – Daniel Bean

**Vacated*

Vision: Shaping a fairer future for our community through accessibility and engagement

Staff

Executive Director
Kristen Wallwork

Academic Director (Monash University)
Kate Seear

Managing Lawyer (Non-Clinic)
Daniel Bean

Managing Lawyer (Clinic)
Janine Hill-Buxton

Professional Practice Supervisors
Korina Leoncio
Geraldine Carney
Helen Yandell
Sandy Kaur
Jamie Walvisch
Jackie Weinberg*

Civil Litigation Solicitor
Daniel Bean

Family Law & Child Support Solicitors
Andrea Videion
Sandy Kaur

Community Lawyer
Belinda Shen

Community Development Workers
Ashleigh Newnham
Temur Rezaie
Kei Judd*
Claire Kendall*

Youth Worker
Prue Delalande

Family Violence Solicitor
Janine Hill-Buxton

Joint Sexual Assault Clinic Coordinator
Meghan Butterfield

Executive Assistant
Phyllis Toparlanis

Finance and Administration Officer
Cheryline O'Brien

Administration Workers
Diane Roberts
Trang Nguyen
Sabrina Lim

Locum Administration Worker
Natalie Simpkin

Volunteer Program Coordinator
Trang Nguyen

Locum Volunteer Assisting Coordinator
Trish Le

IT Contractors
Ruben Ramdhony
Ritesh Foolchand

**Vacated*

SMLS Evening Volunteers

Aakshi Kapoor
Adele Ta*
Alex Bevacqua*
Alexa Sakkal
Alexandra Bolkas
Alissa Lee
Alyssandria Lim
Amanda McDermott
Amir Fahmi
Amy Sheggerud-Woods (S)
Andrea Mizzi
Anisa Zahidee
Annie Nguyen
Aphroditi Bakopanos (DS)
Argelique Botakis
Bavati Rameswaralingam
Belinda Shen (S)
Biao Chen
Bradley White
Cameron Inglis
Cathy (Mai Thy) Dang
Charles Khuu
Charlie Morshead (S)
Chat Thomas*
Cherie Fung
Chris Twidale (S)
Christina Villano
Claire Cunningham (S)*
Cyndi Tomlinson*
Damir Kulas*
Daniel Cheng
Daphne Foong (S)
Davy Hu
Debbie Bletsas
Dineth Swaris

Duong Nguyen
Eleni Angeletos*
Elissa Xu
Elle Kulesza
Elly Royston
Evonne Bethavas*
Fedja Budimir
Frankey Chung (DS)
Geerthana Narendren*
George Abraham
George Kuriakose Abraham
Gillian Lee
Hannah Tran Nguyen
Harriet Geddes*
Hilary Luk
Hoda Javidi
Ilika Vashishtha*
James Adams
James McKercher
James Thompson*
Jamil Diu*
Jane Ku
Jasmin Fleming
Jasminder Kaur
Jessica Foster*
Jing (Jane) Ku
Joanne Pak*
Jodie Hall
John Longo (S)
Jonathan Xian
Joshua Bowden
Judith Aldor*
Kalidu Wijesundara
Katherine Garnham
Katherine Parr*

Kathryn Henderson
Kelvin Ng
Khaled el-katateny
Kiralee Middleton
Krisha Reddy
Kylie Chan
Laura Brookes
Laura Evans-McKendry (S)
Lee Patouras
Liberty Gadd*
Lisa Graham
Lucia Santangelo*
Lucinda Chau*
Madison Sutton
Maria Kostas (S)
Marianna Stylianou
Martin Nguyen (S)
Maryann Robins
Matthew Muir
Maz Chowdhury
Melissa Chuong*
Melissa Morgan*
Mervyn Low (DS)
Merys Williams (S)
Michael Fewings
Mike Cooper
Mohammad Sharif Haidari*
Morsaal Aimaq
Myra Khan*
Najd Hussein
Natalia Chilkiewicz*
Natalia Tripp*
Natasha Griffiths*
Nicholas Kong
Nick Lionakis (S)

Nicolette Tan
 Nikkie Geschke
 Norbert Fritz*
 Olivia Puchalski*
 Olivia Sun
 Patrick McDonald
 Paul Zaharias (S)*
 Randy Palihakkara
 Reshma Varghese*
 Rhys Collas*
 Rita Scammell*
 Rohan Ajzensztat*
 Ronnie Meoung
 Ruby Robertson
 Ruvini Leitan
 Samantha Amjadali
 Samuel Fung
 Samuel Mason-Smith (DS)
 Sandra Kyaw
 Sarah Christie
 Shaima Igbal*
 Shane Khong*
 Shirin Motamedi
 Shiyi (Lucy) Lu*
 Sian Hope
 Simon Fuller (S)

Sofia Cabral*
 Sophie Caldwell
 Stefan Saponja
 Stephanie Garnham
 Stephanie Kemp
 Stephanie Mu*
 Steven Richards
 Tamina Sarwari
 Teresa Fae (casual)
 Thilini Liyanapathirana
 Thomas Egan*
 Tiffany Bao Thy Nguyen
 Tim Peyton
 Trish Le (DS)
 Vedrana Kovacevic*
 Verity Norbury
 Virag Kovacs*
 Vyomika Singh*
 Winnie Lu*
 Winnie Tsang (DS)

(S) Supervisor

(DS) Deputy Supervisor

*Vacated

SECASA Volunteers

Fiona Martin
 Jess Malin
 Sarah Jane Bennett
 Dan Nguyen
 Simon Acott
 Dilsha Jayasekara
 Sebastian O'Meara
 Clara Teo
 Caitlyn Burgu
 Daniel Miles
 Edwina Arms
 Holly Tan
 Perveen Maan
 Louisa Wang
 Saira Griffin
 Rebecca Burns
 Ryan Ward
 Amanda Ngo
 Verena Pichler
 Yan Kok
 Mietta McDonald
 Kate Malone
 Verena Pichler
 Tegan McWilliam
 Catherine Iliadis
 Jessica Hallett
 Sarla Hallock
 Tilly Junker
 Mark Gilbert
 Pui-Mun ("Dani") Chung



Clinical Education Program

Clinical Period 3 2016

Keifer Anthony De Silva
 Nicolette Tan
 Mohammad Sharif Haidari
 Richelle Grace Yi-En Ah-Kion
 Phuong Le
 Hasna Shiraz
 Stephen Cremean
 Jessica Hallett
 Samuel Blashki
 William Field-Papuga
 Courtney Fraser
 Kylie Trinh
 Peter Bui
 Melissa Morton
 Shyla Sivanas
 Kalidu Kalhara Wijesundara
 Sahil Bryan Lobo
 Benjamin Drinkwater
 Nicholas James La Mattina
 Eliza Considine
 Jang E (Jason) Han
 Gavishka Jayawardene
 Daniel Paul Weaich

Clinical Period 1 2016-2017

Belinda Anderson
 Grace Dong
 Sean McKeon
 Alexandra Targett
 Helen Cankaya
 Bridgette Dempsey
 Stephanie Griffin
 Qing Yi Tai
 Kylie Chan
 Nicole Mei-Won Geschke
 Rohan Sethi
 Sophie Vassallo
 Asha Rahman
 Sian Hope
 Verity Olivia Norbury
 Jacqueline Simpkin
 Katherine Anne Garnham
 Hilary Luk
 Suvetha Srikantha
 Jessica Jiayi Zhao
 Ellen Rose Hays
 Georgina May Lupson
 Lorraine Xin Ying Ng
 Teng Hui Winston Ng
 Matt Taylor

Clinical Period 2 2017

Samantha Hilda Hannah
 Joel Joy
 Matthew Molloy
 Gary Yang
 George Kuriakose Abraham
 Millie Clayton
 Tristan John Hocking
 Sonbul Mohseni
 Gital Ben-Zvi
 Kariz Fresnido
 Ani Mekerchian
 Harrison Reginald Smith
 Rachel Megan Armstrong
 Samuel Moody
 Amanda Ngo
 Rose Smith
 Mariel Starr
 Richard Peter Atkins
 Rose Emily Binns
 Ariella Clare Gordon
 Cameron Holland
 Daniela Spilkin
 Aiden James Norman McKee
 Ronnie Kyoungjune Meoung
 Christopher Lam



Clinical Externship Program

Clinical Externship Student

Family Violence Program

Shelley Burns-Williamson
James Campbell
Stephanie Griffin
Albert Ho

SMLS/SECASA Joint Clinic

Jacqueline Simpkin
Verity Norbury
Kate Parkinson

Catherine Iliadis
Jessica Hallett
Sarla Hallock
Tilly Junker
Mark Gilbert
Pui-Mun ("Dani") Chung
Edwina Arms
Yan Kok
Mietta McDonald
Ryan Ward



Acting Chair Report

We exist in an ever changing and wonderfully diverse community. SMLS works to create a fair and just society, and we respect, recognise and embrace diversity. But can diversity win the popularity contest?

There is an emerging body of research that links diversity and inclusion with healthier and happier communities, and with innovation and higher performance for businesses. So, is there a downside to diversity? Just as some research has shown that diverse and inclusive communities are happier and healthier places, other research has shown an increase in diversity in some communities sees a reduction in trust in the short term. Being around people who do not have the same point of view as us can spur us to question and test our own ideas, values and philosophies, and that can be confronting. It can also make us more open and creative, and lead to a richer, more vibrant, and inclusive community and culture. It can broaden thinking, and support innovation. It can lead to growth, and to quote Virginia Rometty (CEO, IBM), "growth and comfort do not coexist".

SMLS has been in operation for 44 years and during that time we have focused on achieving a fairer future for the community we serve. We work with the vulnerable and disadvantaged, and challenge the status quo by advocating for systemic change.

In the last twelve months we have revisited our strategic plan to ensure we remain focused on redressing imbalances in access to justice, we have seen a Federal Government reversal of potential funding cuts facing CLCs, and a State Government response to recommendations made in the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

Diversity can be confronting, and change can be uncomfortable. Stagnation is not an option, so I encourage all of you to **embrace the discomfort, and grow.**

I would like to thank the board and our people for their passion and commitment to SMLS. I especially acknowledge and thank David Starvaggi, outgoing Chair, for 14 years of service to SMLS as a director and Chair. His efforts, thoughtfulness and guidance will be missed.

I look forward to an amazing year ahead with all of you.

Embrace the discomfort, and grow.

Dona Tantirimudalige

Executive Director Report

Other than long windy endless outback roads with dry shrub on either side, there are very few journeys that are predictable, including 12 months in a community legal centre. With global politics shocking our senses, the trending of 'populism' and looming funding cuts, the road ahead appeared at the very least, bumpy.

SMLS has taken the challenges in our stride. Over 18 months or so we have been engaged in behind the scenes strategies to position the organisation to ensure sound resource management, targeted and evidenced based service delivery, and a clear outcome focused direction for the future.

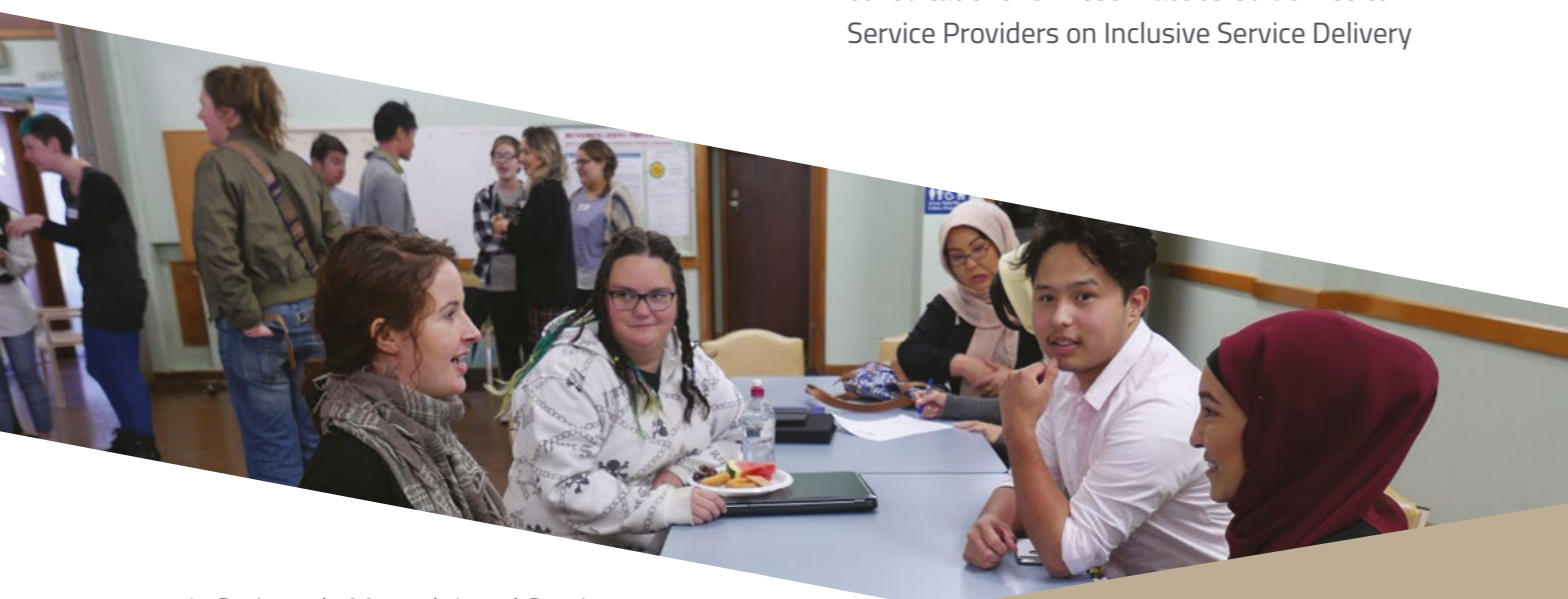
The highlights of 2016/2017:

- Reversal of funding cuts from the Federal Attorney General
- Additional funds flowing from the State Attorney General across a number of programs for CLCs
- A successful 2 year Legal Service Board Victoria grant to deliver a community development based partnership with Narre Warren PT-12 High School in collaboration with major sporting codes. This project includes the provision of a school lawyer. Early indicators are very exciting.

- Victorian Department of Justice CLC Assistance Grants to support our Health-Justice partnership with Monash Health and expand our duty lawyer services.
- Development of a new dynamic 3 year Strategic Plan based on a Theory of Change (refer to page 48)
- Developing evaluation and monitoring capacity resulting from our participation in the Federation of Community Legal Centre's project Evaluation Capacity Building.
- Launching 'South Eastern Regional Legal Assistance Network' (SERLAN) with our south eastern metro CLCs and VLA offices.

SMLS' diversity is present in our clients who represent one of the largest multicultural regions in Australia as well as many different community groups with their own unique identities. Our service delivery models are responsive and evolving. Our strength in engaging in public discourse across a broad range of topics is as a result of the depth of our matter types. This year we engaged through submission or public comment with the following:

- Interviewed by the Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Right Commission as part of consultations for Best Practice Guidelines to Service Providers on Inclusive Service Delivery



- 2017 Vic Inquiry into Drug Law Reform for the Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee
- Cth Parliamentary Inquiry into a better family law system to support and protect those affected by family violence for the Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs.

We are sometimes blindsided by events at all levels of society but once the dust settles a little, we are able to rally and draw on the strength of our values, our mission and our community to face challenges head on. Time and and time again this is proven.

We all know what happens to one hit wonders. SMLS continues to respond to the needs of our community and will continue to go from strength to strength. I acknowledge the unwavering efforts of all the SMLS staff, the collaboration of the new management team, Monash Law students and our huge volunteer cohort in supporting the diversity that makes our community all the more richer.

*If there is no struggle there is no progress -
Frederick Douglass.*

Kristen Wallwork

Academic Director Report

Diversity: Can it win the popularity contest?

The core business of Monash University's clinical legal education program is twofold. Through our longstanding connection with Springvale Monash Legal Service, we aim to serve the local community, through the provision of free legal advice and information, on the one hand, while teaching our students about the nature of legal practice, on the other. Over the last year, we have been working to diversify the relationship between the two, by developing the student experience and challenging them in the kind of work that they do – and the kind of work that they think lawyers can or should do. We've done this by making some changes to our 'Community Engagement' program. Through these changes, we have offered students more opportunities to engage with, educate and advocate for the local community. This has led to some exciting work, which I'm delighted to be able to share with you.

Earlier this year, we established a new outreach program in partnership with the Windana Alcohol and Other Drug Rehabilitation Service. A number of our students have had the opportunity to spend time at the Windana facility, meeting with, learning from and providing advice to people seeking treatment and support for alcohol and other drug issues. The development of the Windana partnership comes at an interesting time in Victorian history, since the Victorian parliament is presently conducting a major inquiry on drug law reform. We encouraged our students to get involved with the Inquiry by contributing to SMLS' submission – a challenging task that required them to understand existing drug law and policy, research possible reforms and learn how to advocate for them.

We have also broadened our students' horizons through two innovative and highly successful projects in our local community. The first is called Sporting Change, funded by the Victorian Legal Services Board, and involves students working with school-aged children, through sport, to educate them about their legal rights and responsibilities. We've used different sports to convey important lessons to these students, including lessons about bodily autonomy and respect, the consequences of breaching rules, and more. In a similar vein, our 'Express your rights' art project initiative brought students together with young people and other professionals, and encouraged those young people to develop art works through which they could express human rights principles. The artworks were exhibited earlier this year in Dandenong.

In each of these projects, we have been encouraging our students to engage with the local community, law and social justice in novel ways. Whether it involves playing soccer, working with clay or learning how to engage with a major government inquiry, we've been challenging our students to see the role of the lawyer, the community legal centre, the university and the advocate as more diverse, more open and more charged with possibilities than they might have initially realised. This is perhaps less glamorous, less popular and more unusual work for the legally trained, but it is work that is no less vital. We see it is having the potential to positively impact on our local community for many years to come, and it's work we aim to continue and expand in the years to come.

Dr Kate Seear



Civil Litigation Report

The civil litigation department is no stranger to diverse, unique, weird and wonderful cases. We advise on a range of matters from small neighbour disputes at VCAT to County Court and Supreme Court cases. One constant is that we have wonderfully positive clients who remain determined and upbeat in some very trying circumstances. It makes your job that little bit easier and without doubt satisfying.

Civil law problems can confront anyone at any time. The complexity of civil law can be particularly confusing for new arrivals to our country. Often we have clients who have come from countries with very limited civil law systems, which means importantly we must not only advise them on the points relevant to their case but educate them as well. On the flip side we often get to learn about our clients' varying cultures and their countries philosophes and approaches to the law.

"Around the world in 80 cases"

One of the many advantages of working at SMLS is that the area is a melting pot of cultures, I am fortunate enough to act for people from all over the world. This year I have had clients from every

continent (bar of course Antarctica). Many of these clients come from war ravaged countries and their generosity and sense of justice is always inspiring. With newly arrived migrants comes vulnerability and unfortunately there will always be unscrupulous people looking to take advantage of people that are genuinely looking for work and to start a new life.

It makes our role all the more important. We must do everything we can to provide our clients with the justice they deserve and at the same time give them a sense that for every person that looks to take advantage of them there are 10 more that are here to welcome and help them.

At the end of the day we are a legal service but as our clients are often so much more than just clients, we are much more than just a legal service.

Daniel Bean

SMLS/South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault (SECASA) Joint Legal Clinic

The clinic currently has around 145 files and 31 staff including three law students this trimester. Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT) Applications continue to be our bread and butter work however, we have been called upon to represent two clients this year who were charged with assault against the perpetrators of childhood sexual abuse or their supporters. One client had suffered childhood sexual assault at the hands of her stepfather and she was charged with assault when she lashed out in anger against her mother who had sided with the offender. In another case, a former childhood victim-survivor tracked the offender down on social media years after the offending had ceased and made threats on his life. In that case, we worked very closely with SECASA to get strong material in mitigation and achieved a great disposition for our client in relation to the charges.

We have obtained divorces for two clients who were formerly married to their abusers and have assisted many clients to seek assistance under the statutory schemes which exist in Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia. We continue to work closely with the police in many cases to ensure the assets of convicted sex offenders are restrained by the Office of Public Prosecutions (OPP) so that certain clients may bring applications for compensation against the offender personally under section 85B of the Sentencing Act 1991 (Vic).

We recently settled such an application for \$165,000.00 which is indicative of the generous approach courts are currently taking to these applications.

We are presently working with the police to obtain a family violence intervention order on behalf of a client who lives in the United Kingdom who is being stalked by phone and social media by her father who offended against her in her childhood years. We are very lucky to have the strong support of the Sexual Offences and Child Abuse (SOCA) police at Seaford and Dandenong who share space within the Multi-disciplinary Centres with SECASA and appreciate the work we do.

Our practice is as diverse as a practice can be – we have clients aged from 4 to 74 years of age, transgender, male and female and clients who derive from culturally diverse backgrounds. I can think of clients for whom we presently act who have Indonesian, Chinese, Afghani, Turkish, Greek, Italian, Romanian, Serbian, English, Indian, Irish, New Zealand, Mauritian and Indigenous heritage.

As always, the work we do could not be done without the invaluable effort of the dedicated teams of volunteers. I am indebted to these remarkable people.

Meghan Butterfield



Family Violence Report

How everything changes in just a short 12 month period. Last year we were all terribly excited by the Royal Commission into Family Violence and its findings. Although the findings were favorable, the family violence services had hoped for a greater injection to the Dandenong Magistrates' Court.

On the plus side, it was good to see the Court's building extended.

We have reflected on our services on Family Violence days. 2018 will be my tenth year at the court and from the beginning we have always got the job done effectively without the frills.

We have fine-tuned our capacity to customise orders to reflect the complex needs of all parties.

Our team works towards the desired outcome of safety to all. Each case is discussed with clarity and care. We are dealing with families, not just an applicant and a respondent.

As part of our services at court, students are exposed to different jurisdictions as a result of the complexities of family violence. It has been invaluable that many of the FV students have done appearances in the criminal jurisdiction. We have often found ourselves in the criminal court, assisting clients who had intervention orders and criminal charges all heard on the one day. We have also had to appear in Drug Court as often the respondent is involved in the drug court system. It has given the students a far wider learning environment to immerse in.

Special thanks to Alan Wilkinson, FV Registrar at the court, Asha Prasad, Mandy Kearns and Suzan Gencay from Victoria Legal Aid, Cassandra Forbes from Victoria Police and the advocates who have changed often over the past twelve months and of course Samantha Davidson from DHHS.

Janine Hill-Buxton



Family Law and Child Support Progress

Family law is not always about helping the parents who cannot agree about the children, it can be a client seeking our help for a court order when they are not the parent and no other legal remedy is available.

We helped a grandmother who could only speak Vietnamese in seeking parenting orders for her 18 month old grandchild. The child's parents had no care of the child since she was born due to both having long term drug addictions. Also, neither parent was in contact with our client or the child. Child Protection were involved but there were no child protection orders in place. The client urgently needed to go overseas to visit her elderly mother but could not obtain a passport for the child as the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade did not use its discretion to issue it, particularly as the parents did not register the child's birth. The client was frustrated, having gone around in circles with no clear idea of how to resolve it.

To "untangle" the numerous legal issues we filed an urgent application in the Federal Circuit Court and obtained orders for:

- introducing that Births Deaths and Marriages to register the child's birth;
- dispensing with service of the application on the parents;
- sole parental responsibility for the grandmother and for the child to live with her; and
- permission for the grandmother to obtain the child's passport and travel without the parents' consent once an itinerary for travel was produced.

The matter took three months in the Federal Circuit Court. The grandmother was overwhelmed to have this matter resolved.

Andrea Videion



Volunteer Program

Over the years, this year being no exception, SMLS has welcomed a diverse number of volunteers joining the SMLS night service. We have volunteers whose cultural backgrounds vary from Anglo-Saxon, Asian, Latin American, European and African. Our volunteers' diversity also extends to the university they go to and their experiences in practising law. The majority of our casework volunteers are doing their law degree at Monash University. Others go to Deakin, Melbourne, Victoria University and La Trobe. Supervisors have experience ranging from personal injury, family law, Wills & Estates, commercial etc.

The SMLS night service has over 100 volunteers and each volunteer spends on average 3 hours per fortnight performing volunteer duties. This financial year, our volunteers spent a total of 7800 hours assisting clients with their legal problems. On average the volunteers see eight clients per session. In total, they saw an average of 1404 clients in 2016-2017.

I wanted to write stories about the volunteers personally and why they have come to volunteer

and continue to do so at SMLS but it is funny how the volunteers did not want to tell me stories about themselves but about the clients that they have seen, particularly ones that made a lasting impact on them.

This story gave the volunteer a feel-good feeling. The volunteer and his supervisor assisted a client with a plea mitigation matter. The matter was too urgent to be considered appropriate to refer to the day service. As a result of our limited assistance, the client achieved an outcome at the lower end of the scale penalty. The client was very thankful and wrote a very nice message thanking the supervisor and caseworker for their assistance.

This year we would like to celebrate the diversity of our volunteers. As well as contributing a great deal to SMLS as well as the community their diversity has helped to promote SMLS as one of the community legal centres that is winning the diversity versus popularity contest.

Trang Nguyen



Administration

There is a marked diversity in the background of the Admin staff at SMLS. Trang is Vietnamese, Cheryline is from the Phillipines, Sabrina was born in Malaysia, Di and Natalie were born in Australia. Phyllis (who is not technically part of the Admin group but we claim her because she shares the Admin area) was also born in Australia and has Greek parentage.

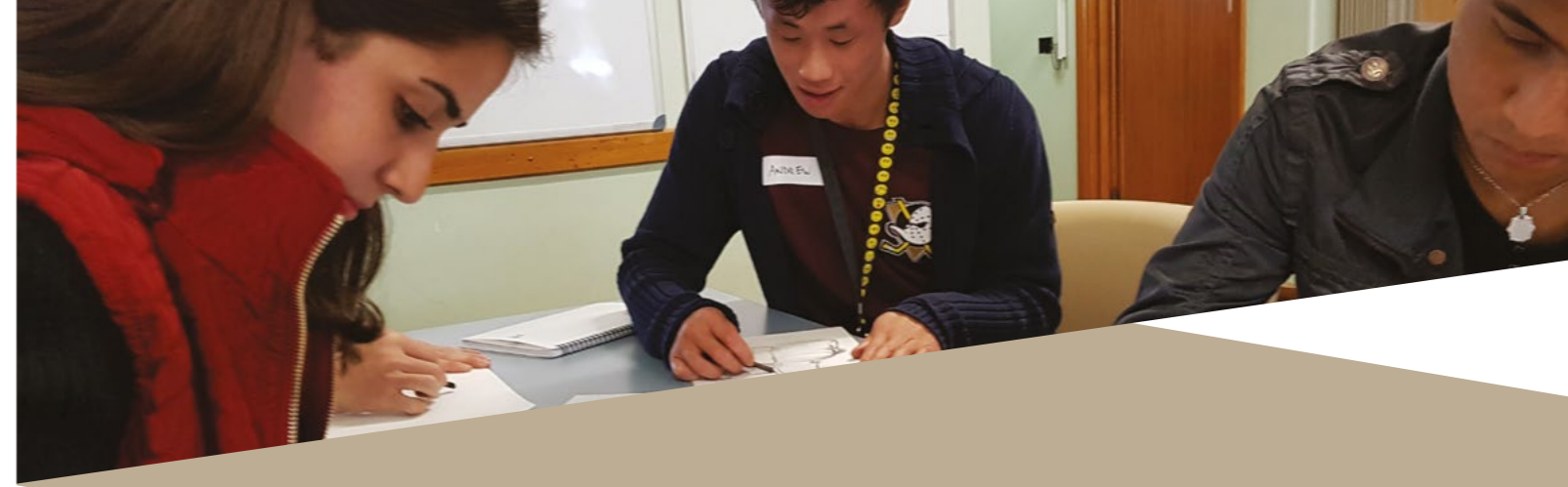
What impact does this have in our workplace? There are ample opportunities for tension and communication problems to arise. There are undoubtedly significant cultural differences between us; a lack of shared history and experience as well differences in personalities and lifestyle choices. There are occasional misunderstandings due to the use of idiomatic language, or the inability to find the right word at the right time.

But in fact, rather than resulting in a lack of cohesion, the many differences between Admin staff members lead to laughter, more active listening and the sharing of each other's personal and cultural stories in our efforts to gain mutual understanding. We 'lean in' towards each other, which has inevitably worked to enhance the richness of the relationships the admin staff share.

Central to our efforts toward creating and fostering our own community is the sharing of food. This activity is a wonderful example of how diversity is embraced and enjoyed for the mutual benefit of all involved. We all win when we are introduced to new and delicious things to eat. Who knew there were so many different kinds of fruit?

Another example of lived diversity involving Admin as well as other SMLS staff occurred recently at a staff wellbeing activity. We went bowling. There was a huge diversity in skill, style, technique and experience on display. One staff member belatedly revealed his history as a National Junior Champion (it showed), while for several staff members this was their first ever bowling experience (it showed!). Not everybody bowled well. Some of us were abysmal. But the contest, and the experience was made more enjoyable by sharing it with all the different people who make up SMLS. It was a very popular choice.

Di Roberts, Cheryline O'Brien, Sabrina Lim and Trang Nguyen



Community Development

"Be realistic. Plan for a miracle."

- Osho

After detailing a long list of strategies used in community development, a student asked me which principle in particular I felt was most important in the context of the work we do at SMLS. Upon reflection, there are two that have stood out over the past year.

The quote above reflects the first- a sense of hope.

Over the past year, SMLS has been developing monitoring and evaluating strategies across our organisation. We have been fortunate to take part in the Federation of Community Legal Centres' Outcomes measurement project, involving several Community Legal Centres from around Victoria to build our evaluation capacity so that we can better monitor and evaluate the impact of our work.

One of the first steps was to create a Theory of Change with a detailed outcomes chain. At the top of our outcomes chain, we make the bold statement: 'A Fair and Just Society'. This is the overall impact that we as an organisation hope to contribute towards. Given the current climate, the creation of a fair and just society feels like it would take a miracle to achieve. Several, in fact. Nevertheless, that is the nature of what we do and the basis on which we build our community development and community engagement strategies.

The second relates to Diversity.

We are incredibly lucky that our local community, in particular the City of Greater Dandenong, is home to many diverse communities. For many years, we have topped the list of the most culturally diverse localities in Victoria.

This means that our community development strategies need to be as diverse as the community around us. To this end, we have been reaching out of our sector to develop creative and diverse partnerships and collaborations. Art galleries, health centres and sporting fields may not seem like traditional Community Legal Centre settings, however, those are some of the places you can find us around South Eastern Melbourne. We have built on our Health Justice Partnership with Monash Health, as well as developed an Education Justice Partnership with Narre Warren South P-12 College teaching sport and the law. We also hosted an art competition and exhibition helping young people express their views of Human Rights.

As I begin my second year at SMLS, I will continue to approach the work with a sense of hope, as well as determination for our community development and engagement to reflect the creativity and diversity of the community around us.

Ashleigh Newnham



Outreach Services

Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS)

SMLS collaborates with YSAS in Dandenong to provide outreach services to young people in the Dandenong catchment. This is an opportunity for students from our professional practice program to engage with allied community services and their clients in the broader community.

South Eastern Health Justice Partnership

The South Eastern Health Justice Program aims to contribute to a resilient community by taking a holistic approach to meet the legal and health needs of vulnerable people from diverse backgrounds in a health care setting.

SMLS provides support for clients at two Monash Health locations: Greater Dandenong Community Health Service Dandenong and Cranbourne Integrated Care Centre.

Family Violence, Family Law and Child Support – Magistrates’ Court

SMLS expanded its existing duty lawyer services provided at the Dandenong Magistrate’s Court, to address a clear gap in service delivery for applicants in family violence matters where family law and/or child protection issues are also a consideration.

Dandenong Magistrates’ Court

SMLS offers a Criminal Law clinic on Wednesdays at Dandenong Magistrates’ Court.

The clinic commenced operation in 2013 and is run with the assistance of Professional Practice students and a supervising solicitor.

Assistance may be provided to clients for issues including but not limited to the following:

- Traffic offences
- Minor criminal matters
- PEWS
- Matters referred by Victorian Legal Aid

Windana

Windana Alcohol and Other Drug Rehabilitation Service provides support to young people struggling with addiction issues in Victoria. SMLS has partnered with Windana to provide regular legal education for their clients, as well as legal advice through our student program.

Sporting Change

In the City of Casey, Sporting Change educates diverse young people to engage constructively in society by using sport to teach them about the justice system. SMLS has partnered with Narre Warren P-12 College to provide this program, in addition to an onsite school lawyer.

Fair Work Commission

SMLS partnered with the Fair Work Commission and Job Watch to provide free legal assistance to unrepresented applicants in unfair dismissal and general protections matters in Melbourne.

Children’s Court

SMLS provides a duty lawyer at Dandenong Children’s Court, to assist young people and children with family violence related matters.



Students’ Perspective

In July last year, I began my placement at Springvale Monash Legal Service as part of the Professional Practice unit at Monash University. During this placement, I feel like I learned more about practising law and what it means to be a lawyer than in the rest of my law units combined. In the space of 19 weeks, I went from not being sure if I wanted to practise law after graduation, to being certain that it is something I want to pursue.

As a law student, I never thought that I would have the opportunity to get as much practical experience, or assume as much responsibility as I did at SMLS. Throughout my time there, I was able to liaise directly with clients, relay legal advice, attend conciliations at the Fair Work Commission, and even appear on behalf of clients at the Magistrates’ Court. I also had the chance to visit Youth Links as well as participate in planning an art competition for youth in the City of Greater Dandenong, which gave me a valuable insight into community development work.

Before I started at SMLS, I did not know much about community legal centres or how they operated. However, the integral role that they play in society by assisting those who are unable to afford legal assistance was immediately evident, and it was extremely rewarding to be able to help people in navigating a stressful time in their lives. While assuming the responsibility of managing client files was incredibly challenging at first, I feel like I grew both personally and professionally throughout this experience, and it will undoubtedly benefit me in any future work I undertake.

I have since begun volunteering at SMLS, and am grateful to the staff there as well as the students I worked with for contributing to such a memorable Professional Practice placement. I have no doubt that my experiences at SMLS will stay with me throughout the rest of my degree, as well as my career in law.

Nicolette Tan



The region in which Springvale Monash Legal Service (SMLS) is located is a busy, urban, multi-cultural area with a rich diversity of cultures, languages, religions and ethnicities. The 2016 census revealed that 71.8% of the residents of the suburb of Springvale were born outside of Australia and that a non-English language was spoken in 75% of households.

This cultural richness of Springvale is reflected in the client base of SMLS. Of my clients, over 50% were from culturally diverse backgrounds including Vietnamese, Sudanese, Burmese and Indian, and also included a number of refugees. Often, these clients experienced further disadvantage such as being non-English speaking and low-income earning. For most of the students doing Professional Practice, including me, their cultural experiences, biases and perspectives differed from those of the clients.

To enable us to be able to provide the best service to our clients, we participated in a seminar on 'Cultural Intelligence' run by Dr Nadine Normand-Marconnet from Monash University. This seminar encouraged us to be self-aware of our own cultures and alert to the ways in which culture might affect our practice and affect our clients' interactions with us.

Examples of questions we need to ask ourselves to ensure we are being culturally intelligent include: is it appropriate to make direct eye contact? What is the appropriate way to address the client? And, would it be appropriate to express emotions?

However, it is unrealistic to expect to understand the cultural practices of each of our clients. Instead, Dr Normand-Marconnet encouraged us to continue to educate ourselves to enhance our understanding of working across cultures, and to develop habits and approaches that could be used in all cases.

Working with clients from so many different cultural backgrounds at SMLS was a rewarding learning experience. The experiences I have had have laid the foundations for me to become a capable cross-cultural lawyer.

Rosie Binns

Lawyers Practice Manual

The LPM comprises 67 chapters being written, reviewed and updated by volunteer contributors and commentators.

Chapters Updated/Inserted

July 2016

Ch 1.8 "Acting for an accused in committal proceedings" updated

Ch 7.5 "Debt recovery by Centrelink and the Family Assistance Office" updated

August 2016

Ch 1.1 "The role of a lawyer at a police station" updated

Ch 2.8 "Family violence" updated

Ch 4.1 "Residential tenancies and other housing arrangements" updated

September 2016

Ch 2.4 "Child support" updated

November 2016

Ch 1.7 "Acting for the accused charged with drug offences" updated

Ch 3.5 "Claims under WorkCover" updated

Ch 13.3 "Administration of estates" updated

Ch 2.8 "Family violence" updated

Ch 8.2 "Guardianship, administration and substitute decision-making" updated

Ch 15.2 "International human rights remedies" updated

February 2017

Ch 4.6 "Neighbour disputes" updated

March 2017

Ch B "Practice management" updated

Ch 6.1 "Criminal prosecutions of children" updated

April 2017

Ch 3.1 "Acting for a creditor in the Magistrates' Court" updated

Ch 3.2 "Acting for a defendant in debt recovery proceedings in the Magistrates' Court" updated

May 2017

Ch 16.2 "Veterans disability law" updated

June 2017

Ch 3.6 "Personal injuries actions under the Wrongs Act" updated

Ch 14.1 "Immigration law" updated

In addition, new chapter 15.4 "Victorian Charter of Human Rights" is currently being developed.

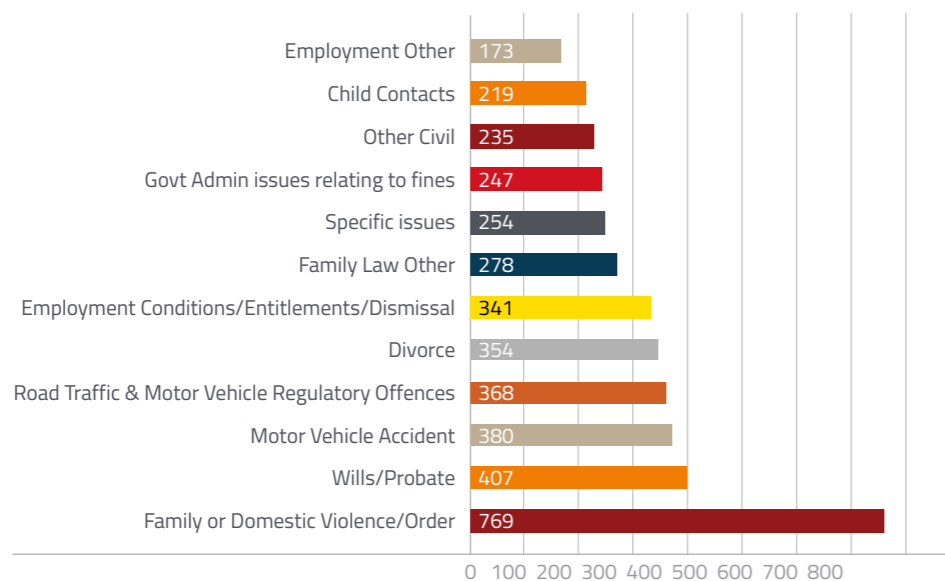
SMLS Statistics

1 July 2016 to 31 March 2017*

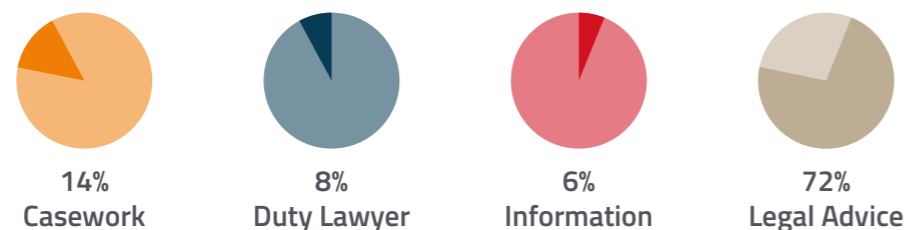


3,980 total number of clients	2,525 total number of legal advices provided	2,639 total cases open during the period (open & new)	1,129 total cases closed during the period	53 community legal education (projects completed)
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Number of Services by Problem Type



Client Count by Service Type



*The previous client information system "CLISIS" was decommissioned on 31 March 2017 and was replaced by the new system called "CLASS". The latter does not have the reporting capability available to CLCs yet. Therefore the statistics for 1 April 2017-30 June 2017 are not included in this report. Also, the types of information that are able to be reported at the moment are limited.

Acknowledgements

Professor Bryan Horrigan – Dean, Jane Prior – Faculty Manager, and the staff of the Faculty of Law Monash University for their ongoing commitment to Clinical Programs which assist marginalised members of the community.

Victoria Legal Aid for funding assistance, advice and referrals.

Magistrates of Dandenong Magistrates' Court, Magistrate Jack Vandersteen, Coordinating Senior Registrar Mark McCutchan and staff for their assistance in running advocacy workshops for students each clinical period and facilitating the student appearance program.

Staff and Committees of Management of our partner organisations at 5 Osborne Avenue, Springvale; South East Community Links (SECL); Springvale Neighbourhood House (SNH); and Springvale Learning and Activities Centre (SLAC).

Management and staff of the City of Greater Dandenong for their support, advice and service in attending SMLS's requests.

Magistrate Peter Power, Practice Seminar program. SMLS Patron Justice Shane Marshall.

The Victorian legal fraternity who provide ongoing support through supervision of law students in their student appearances. This valuable part of our clinical program could not operate without this support.

Victorian Bar for their endless enthusiasm and energy assisting with the Volunteer Program and casework.

Victoria Campbell and Cilla Brookes from Patterson's list for representation of financially disadvantaged clients in family law proceedings.

Narre Warren South P-12 College for their participation in the Sporting Change program.

WestJustice for school lawyer support.

Job Watch for employment law support.

Asha Prasad, Mandy Kearns, Susan Gencay from Dandenong Legal Aid.

Casandra Forbes from Victoria Police.

Alan Wilkinson from Dandenong Magistrates' Court.

Samantha Davies from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Everyone involved in the Express Your Rights Art Project including the City of Greater Dandenong; Monash Law Students; Connection Arts Space Artists; Sasha Sivanas who designed the workshop posters; and Anthony Dillon who designed the Express Your Rights logo.

All of the Express Your Rights Art Project sponsors including Art Shed; Michael's Camera, Video & Digital; Heide Museum of Modern Art; Melbourne Artists' Supplies; Radical Paint.

Kate Purcell – Fair Work Commission

Legal Practice Manual Committee

All the staff at Federation of Community Legal Centres for their support and assistance.

Fair Work Commission

Deborah Stuart and all the staff at Monash Health Fitzroy Legal Service

Windana Drug and Alcohol Recovery Inc.

Berwick Family Relationships Centre

Catholic Care Dandenong

The following Barristers: Mary Baczynski, Cam Truon, Matthew Minucci, Val Stoilkovska and David Starvaggi.



Kristen, Executive Director and Ashleigh, Senior Community Development Worker



Sabrina, Administration Worker and Phyllis, Executive Assistant



Kathryn, Clinical Supervisor with Emily



Sandy, Clinical Supervisor with Jasmin, Student



Temur, Community Development Worker

Funders Acknowledgement

Springvale Monash Legal Service Inc. gratefully acknowledges the following organisations for their funding support during 2016-2017.

Commonwealth Government	
Generalist	\$517,668
State Government	
Family Violence	\$50,728
Generalist	\$237,848
Monash University Law Faculty	
Clinical Legal Education Program	\$461,350
Additional In-Kind Financial Support	\$80,991
Victoria Legal Services Board	
Sporting Change Project	\$138,464
Department of Justice & Regulation	
Family Violence Duty Lawyer	\$52,174
Community Legal Centre Assistance	\$50,198
City of Greater Dandenong	
(CGD CSGP16-2-074 2017)	\$6,000
(Provided premises, including maintenance and security)	
Taxi Services Commission	
Taxi Clinic	\$23,151
Department of Social Services	
Volunteer Grants	\$5,000

Audited Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2017

SPRINGVALE MONASH LEGAL SERVICE INC.
REGISTERED NO: A0013997D
ABN: 96 206 448 228

BOARD'S REPORT **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017**

Your Board members submit the financial report of Springvale Monash Legal Services Inc for the financial year ended 30 June 2017.

Board Members

The names of Board members at the date of this report are:

David Starvaggi	Jared Heath
Andrew Simmons	Renata Alexander
Nina Boughey	Rhonda Cumberland
Vanessa Johnston	John Longo
James McGhie	Sonia Parisi
Deborah Rulach	Dona Tantirimudalige
Kristen Wallwork	Daniel Bean

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were to provide free legal advice and casework to the general public, whilst maintaining a strong community development focus.

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The operating profit after providing for income tax amounted to \$149,229 (2016:18,299).

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the members of the Board


 D. TANTIRIMUDALIGE.....

Board Member



Board Member

Dated this 28TH day of SEPTEMBER 2017



Auditor's Independence Declaration under Section 307C of the Corporations Act 2001

To Springvale Monash Legal Services Inc,

As lead auditor for the audit of Springvale Monash Legal Services Inc for the year ended 30 June 2017, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- (a) No contraventions of the independence requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Victoria)* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- (b) No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

SHEPARD WEBSTER & O'NEILL AUDIT PTY LTD
 Certified Practising Accountant
 Authorised Audit Company No 415478
 434 Nepean Highway Frankston 3199, PO Box 309 Frankston Victoria 3199
 Telephone (03) 9781 2633 – Fax (03) 9781 3073
 Email – szepfalusy@shepard.com.au

DAVID A SZEPFALUSY
 DIRECTOR

Dated at Frankston this 28th day of September 2017



Level 1 / 434 Nepean Highway, Frankston Victoria 3199
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 scheme approved
 under Professional
 Standards Legislation

**STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017**

	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
CONTINUING OPERATIONS			
INCOME			
Grant Funding	2	1,446,395	1,238,650
Other Income	3	146,555	126,795
		1,592,950	1,365,445
EXPENSES			
Depreciation Expense		7,587	8,907
Employment Expenses		1,237,020	1,146,315
Occupancy Expenses		59,235	45,266
Office & Administrative Expenses		104,612	106,091
Resources Expenses		27,463	38,158
Travel		7,804	2,409
		1,443,721	1,347,146
		149,229	18,299
NET PROFIT / (LOSS)			
Other Comprehensive Income			
- Items that may be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss when specific conditions are met		-	-
- Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss		-	-
		149,229	18,299
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
 AS AT 30 JUNE 2017

	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash at Bank and on Hand	4	429,446	98,192
Term Deposits		1,011,421	1,000,000
Receivables		1,287	1,800
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,442,154	1,099,992
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Fixed Assets	5	27,749	16,347
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		27,749	16,347
TOTAL ASSETS		1,469,903	1,116,339
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and Other Payables	6	40,797	27,925
Payroll Liabilities	7	30,867	14,178
Grants in Advance	8	142,163	64,314
VLA Unused Funds	9	70,652	39,401
Employee Provisions	10	310,528	271,952
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		595,007	417,770
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Employee Provisions	10	97,780	70,682
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		97,780	70,682
TOTAL LIABILITIES		692,787	488,452
NET ASSETS		777,116	627,887
EQUITY			
Retained Earnings		777,116	627,887
TOTAL EQUITY		777,116	627,887

The Accompanying Notes Form Part of These Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
RETAINED EARNINGS			
Opening Balance		627,887	609,588
Profit / (Loss) in the current year		149,229	18,299
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
CLOSING BALANCE OF RETAINED EARNINGS		777,116	627,887
TOTAL EQUITY		777,116	627,887

The Accompanying Notes Form Part of These Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from Grants & Other Income		1,719,179	1,462,700
Payments to Suppliers and Employees		(1,383,086)	(1,283,483)
Interest Received		25,646	18,857
Net cash provided by / (used in) Operating	11b	<u>361,739</u>	<u>198,074</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Payment for fixed assets		(19,064)	-
Investment in Term Deposits		(11,421)	(500,000)
Net cash used in Investing Activities		<u>(30,485)</u>	<u>(500,000)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES			
Proceeds from Borrowing		-	-
Repayment of borrowings		-	-
Net cash provided by / (used in) Financing Activities		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net Increase in Cash Held		331,254	(301,926)
Cash at the beginning of the year		98,192	400,118
Cash at the end of the year	11a	<u>429,446</u>	<u>98,192</u>

The Accompanying Notes Form Part of These Financial Statements

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Victoria), the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Victorian Legal Aid Commission. The Board has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity.

The following accounting standards have been applied in the preparation of the financial report:

AASB 101	Presentation of Financial Statements
AASB 107	Statement of Cash Flows
AASB 108	Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors
AASB 1048	Interpretation and Application of Standards
AASB 1054	Australian Additional Disclosures.

The financial report has been prepared on the basis of historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets. Cost is based on the fair values of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of the financial report.

a) Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE)

Leasehold improvements and office equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amount of all PPE is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

Leasehold improvements are amortised over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

Rates of depreciation and amortisation vary between 10% and 40%.

b) Impairment of Assets

At the end of each reporting period, the Board reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, an impairment test is carried out on the asset by comparing the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying amount over its recoverable amount is recognised in the income and expenditure statement.

The Accompanying Notes Form Part of These Financial Statements

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

c) Employee Entitlements

Provision is made for the liability for employee entitlements arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. These are in the form of Annual Leave for all employees, Long Service Leave accrued for all employees but not entitled until ten years of services (pro-rata after seven years of service), Personal Leave in line with management's estimate of the likelihood of individuals taking the leave, and Maternity leave in line with management's estimates that individuals will take the leave allowed in line with the awards.

Contributions are made to employee superannuation funds and are charged as expenses when incurred.

d) Cash

Cash on hand includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

e) Accounts Receivable and Other Debtors

Accounts receivable and other debtors include amounts due from members as well as amounts receivable from donors. Receivables expected to be collected within 12 months of the end of the reporting period are classified as current assets. All other receivables are classified as noncurrent assets.

f) Revenue and Other Income

Grant and donation income is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds, which is generally at the time of receipt, unless otherwise stated. Where the entity has a specific obligation to expend the funding on a project, that money is held as 'income in advance' until the program obligations have been achieved.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

g) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities, which are recoverable from or payable to the ATO, are presented as operating cash flows included in receipts from customers or payments to suppliers.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

h) Income Tax

The association a not for profit organisation and as such is exempt from income tax under section 50-B of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. Consequently, no provision is made in the accounts for income tax.

i) Trade and Other Payables

Trade and other payables represent the liability outstanding at the end of the reporting period for goods and services received by the Association during the reporting period which remain unpaid. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

j) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the entity has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured. Provisions recognised represent the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

k) Comparative Figures Changes

Where required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with changes in presentation for the current financial year.

l) Financial Assets

Investments in financial assets are initially recognised at cost, which includes transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value, which is equivalent to their market bid price at the end of the reporting period. Movements in fair value are recognised through an equity reserve.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
NOTE 2 - STATE, COMMONWEALTH AND OTHER FUNDINGS		
Commonwealth Grants	457,329	448,044
State Grants	235,072	240,432
MBA/ERO Grant	82,592	66,896
Other Grants	199,416	48,354
Monash University Grant	471,986	434,924
Total Grant Funding	<u>1,446,395</u>	<u>1,238,650</u>
NOTE 3 - OTHER INCOME		
Disbursements Reimbursed	60,406	66,168
Fundraising/Donations	11,960	-
Interest	25,646	18,857
LPM Royalties	47,620	41,770
Other Costs Recovered	923	-
	<u>146,555</u>	<u>126,795</u>
NOTE 4 - CASH		
Cash at Bank	429,394	97,798
Petty Cash	52	394
	<u>429,446</u>	<u>98,192</u>
NOTE 5 - FIXED ASSETS		
Office Furniture & Fixtures at Cost	114,147	97,947
Provision for Depreciation (Office F&F)	(86,398)	(81,600)
Total Fixed Assets	<u>27,749</u>	<u>16,347</u>

MOVEMENT IN THE CARRYING AMOUNTS OF FIXED ASSETS
Reconciliation of the Movement in Carrying Amounts

	Office Furniture & Fixtures	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at the 1 July 2015	25,254	25,254
Additions at cost	-	-
Disposals	-	-
Depreciation expense	(8,907)	(8,907)
Carrying amount at 30 June 2016	<u>16,347</u>	<u>16,347</u>
Additions at cost	19,063	19,063
Disposals	(74)	(74)
Depreciation expense	(7,587)	(7,587)
Carrying amount at 30 June 2017	<u>27,749</u>	<u>27,749</u>

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
NOTE 6 - TRADE & OTHER PAYABLES		
Trade Payables	6,284	6,276
GST Payable	17,407	17,767
Other Payables	17,106	3,882
	<u>40,797</u>	<u>27,925</u>
NOTE 7 - PAYROLL LIABILITIES		
Superannuation Payable	8,140	7,047
PAYG Payable	22,759	22,981
Other Payroll Liabilities	(32)	(15,850)
	<u>30,867</u>	<u>14,178</u>
NOTE 8 - GRANTS IN ADVANCE		
	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Department of Justice - Family Violence	i) 61,061	59,314
Department of Social Services - Volunteer Grant	ii) 443	5,000
City of Greater Dandenong - Art Project	iii) 4,242	-
Victorian Legal Services Board	iv) 76,417	-
	<u>142,163</u>	<u>64,314</u>

i) Department of Justice - Family Violence

In the 2016/17 year, additional funding of \$102,372 was received from the Department of Justice, to be expended on the specific programs. These programs are for the provision of paying for a lawyer.

The program funding is to be used exclusively for the purposes outlined in the funding agreement. As at 30 June 2017, approximately \$105,625 had been utilised on the project, and accordingly, \$61,061 has been carried forward to be utilised in the subsequent financial year. As a result, \$105,625 has been recognised in income in the 2016/17 year, and \$61,061 has been recorded as a liability in the Statement of Financial Position for unused project funds.

ii) Department of Social Services - Volunteer Grant

In the prior year (2015/16), funding of \$5,000 was received from the Department of Social Services for the specific purpose of contributing to the reimbursement of volunteers' training costs.

As at 30 June 2017, \$443 remain unspent, and accordingly has been recorded as a liability in the Statement of Financial Position for unused project funds.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

NOTE 8 - GRANTS IN ADVANCE (CONTINUED)

iii) *City of Greater Dandenong - Community Support*

In the 2016/17, funding of \$6,000 was received from the City of Greater Dandenong for the specific purpose of the project "Express your Rights: An Art Project for At Risk Youth Living in the City of Greater Dandenong".

The program funding is to be used exclusively for the purposes outlined in the funding agreement. As at 30 June 2017, \$4,242 remained unspent, and accordingly has been recorded as a liability in the Statement of Financial Position for unused project funds.

iv) *Victorian Legal Services Board*

In the 2016/17, the first of a two year funding stream of \$138,464 was received from the Victorian Legal Services Board.

The program funding is to be used exclusively for the purposes outlined in the funding agreement. As at 30 June 2017, approximately \$62,049 had been utilised on the project, and accordingly, \$76,417 has been carried forward to be utilised in the subsequent financial year. As a result, \$62,049 has been recognised in income in the 2016/17 year, and \$76,417 has been recorded as a liability in the Statement of Financial Position for unused project funds.

NOTE 9 - VLA Unused Funds

Allowable Surplus - VLA unused funds carried forward	31,251	-
Allowable Surplus - SACS ERO grants	39,401	39,401
Excess Surplus	-	-
	<u>70,652</u>	<u>39,401</u>

In line with the VLA service agreement, any unused funds are required to be carried forward as a liability in the organisation's Statement of Financial Position. Any amounts of unused surplus funding that are in excess of 15% of the total VLA funding for the current year are to be classified as *Excess Surplus*, with the remaining to be classified as *Allowable Surplus*.

In the 2016/17 year, there was no additional funding provided by the VLA for SACS future funding, so the balance remained at \$39,401. As specified in the funding agreement, this funding was a SACS ERO grant to be reserved for use in future years to assist with additional costs arising from the Award salary rate increases. This funding has been recorded as a liability in the Statement of Financial Position for unused funds. On the basis that the funding agreement specifically reserves this for future periods, and hence the funding has not been recognised as income in the 2016/17 financial statements.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
NOTE 10 - PROVISIONS		
<i>Current</i>		
Annual Leave	79,396	60,850
Personal Leave	105,691	101,272
Maternity Leave	90,815	82,427
Long Service Leave	34,626	27,403
	<u>310,528</u>	<u>271,952</u>
<i>Non-Current</i>		
Long Service Leave	97,780	70,682
	<u>97,780</u>	<u>70,682</u>
NOTE 11 - TRUST ACCOUNT		
Money Held in Trust	36,780	28,447
Amounts owed to clients	(36,780)	(28,447)
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

The Association maintains a Trust account regulated by the Legal Services Board of Victoria. This trust account is reconciled at the end of each month and the total amounts within the trust account agree to the liability of various account holders.

NOTE 12 - CASH FLOW

(a) RECONCILIATION OF CASH

Cash on Hand	429,446	98,192
	<u>429,446</u>	<u>98,192</u>

(b) RECONCILIATION OF CASH FLOW FROM OPERATIONS
 WITH NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)

Operating Surplus / (Loss)	149,229	18,299
<i>Add/deduct non-cash items:</i>		
Depreciation	7,587	8,907
Net loss on the disposal of plant and equipment	75	-
<i>Changes in assets and liabilities</i>		
(Increase)/Decrease in Debtors	513	(566)
Increase/(Decrease) in Trade Creditors & Accruals	107,410	61,723
Increase/(Decrease) in Provisions	65,674	109,711
Increase/(Decrease) in VLA Unused Funds	31,251	-
Cash Flow From Operations	<u>361,739</u>	<u>198,074</u>

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

NOTE 13 - EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO BALANCE DATE

There have been no significant events occurring after balance date which may affect the operations of the Association, not otherwise disclosed in this report.

NOTE 14 - ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

The Association's ability to continue to carry out its current activities remains dependent upon future funding by the State and Commonwealth governments.

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

The Board have determined that the Association is not a reporting entity.

The Board have determined that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the accounts.

In the opinion of the Board the financial statements

1. Present a true and fairly view of the financial position of Springvale Monash Legal Service Inc as at 30 June 2017 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Victoria), the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Victorian Legal Aid Commission; and
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Springvale Monash Legal Service Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:


.....
Board Member


.....
Board Member

Dated this 28TH day of SEPTEMBER 2017



Shepard Webster & O'Neill Audit Pty Ltd
 Certified Practising Accountant, Authorised Audit Company
 ABN: 89 154 680 190

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
 SPRINGVALE MONASH LEGAL SERVICE INC.
 REGISTERED NO: A0013997D
 ABN: 96 206 448 228**

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Springvale Monash Legal Service Inc, which comprises the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2017, the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the certification by members of the Board on the annual statements giving a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the Association.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report gives a true and fair view of the financial position of Springvale Monash Legal Service Inc as at 30 June 2017 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)* and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110: Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the Association to meet the requirements of *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.



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 scheme approved
 under Professional
 Standards Legislation



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**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
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Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor's Report Thereon

The Board of the Association is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Association's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2017, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Board for the Financial Report

The Board of the Association is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Board is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Board either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Board of the Association is responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.



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**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
SPRINGVALE MONASH LEGAL SERVICE INC.
REGISTERED NO: A0013997D
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As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the Board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



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**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
SPRINGVALE MONASH LEGAL SERVICE INC.
REGISTERED NO: A0013997D
ABN: 96 206 448 228**

Dated at Frankston on the 3rd of October 2017

SHEPARD WEBSTER & O'NEILL AUDIT PTY LTD
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DAVID A SZEPFALUSY
DIRECTOR

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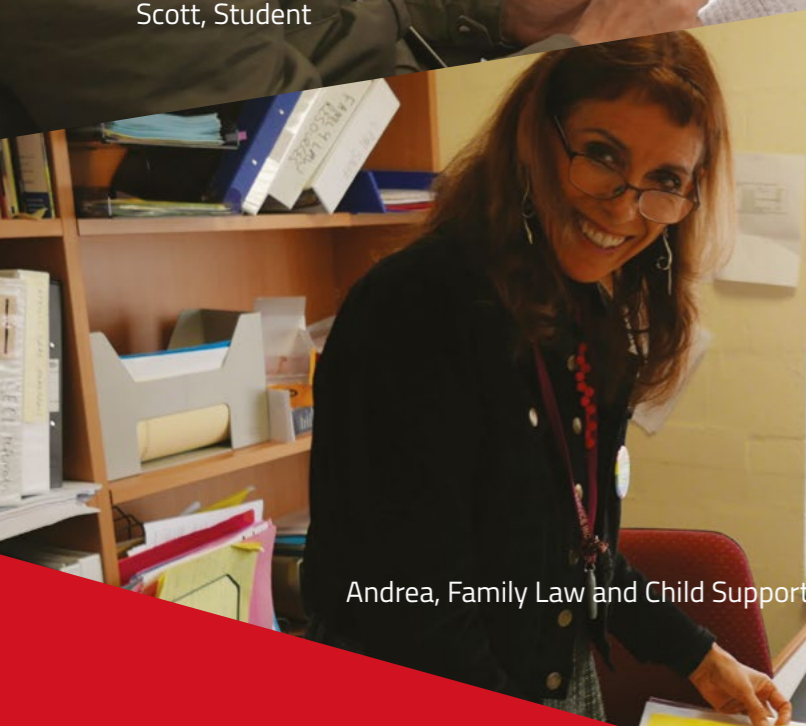
Scott, Student



Professional Practice Students



Cheryline, Finance Worker and Ashleigh, Senior Community Development Worker



Andrea, Family Law and Child Support



Geraldine, Clinical Supervisor with Robert, Student



SMLS Strategic Plan 2017- 2020

Our Vision

Shaping a fairer future for our community through accessibility and engagement

Our Mission

Working with vulnerable and disadvantaged community members, Springvale Monash Legal Service contributes to a fair and just society by :

- Advising on legal rights and responsibilities;
- Advocating for systemic change;
- Collaborating with stakeholders; &
- Educating law students as future advocates

Our Values

Integrity: We act with honesty, transparency, fairness and compassion to build trust.

Team: We are united for the benefit of our clients, community & students - working together and supporting each other to make a difference

Respect: We recognise and embrace diversity and different perspectives

Accountability: We strive to meet the needs of our people and communities. We are responsible and take ownership for our actions

People-focused: We assist, educate & empower our clients and students, to achieve the best possible outcomes

Ethical: We are guided by human rights principles and professional standards

Strategic Priority 1

Secure resources to be responsive and to achieve stability

Our Ambitions

- Pursue financial stability
- Seek non-financial resources
- Improve resource management

Our Strategies

- Diversify funding sources
- Develop partnerships to leverage on pro-bono advice, expertise & services
- Formulate intentional resource allocation decision-making

Strategic Priority 2

Evolve quality services to respond to clients' needs

Our Ambitions

- Provide quality legal services & programs to achieve client outcomes
- Take a proactive approach through education & targeted early intervention services
- Focus on advocacy and law reform to enable change and to maximise community impact

Our Strategies

- Train staff in evidence-based reporting
- Review programs & services to embed a proactive approach to meeting clients' needs
- Seek and engage in advocacy & law reform opportunities

Strategic Priority 3

Develop innovative and efficient services & systems to increase comparative advantage

Our Ambitions

- Use technology to improve service delivery
- Review programs & services to improve responsiveness
- Leverage on opportunities to develop innovative & efficient services & systems

Our Strategies

- Conduct environmental scan on available technology in sector and seek expert advice on improving technology & related skills
- Review existing processes & practices with view to improving responsiveness
- Understand and leverage on 'market position' to innovate

Strategic Priority 4

Be an influential and recognised voice in the community

Our Ambitions

- Maintain an enviable reputation through strong culture and brand
- Attract and retain quality people who identify with our culture & brand
- Maintain relationships with alumni and educate future advocates

Our Strategies

- Enhance best practice and evidence-based service delivery
- Support professional development of staff in a positive learning environment
- Provide innovative clinical practice to create positive experience for Monash students

Strategic Priority 5

Foster strong relationships and create new connections to achieve the best outcomes for our community

Our Ambitions

- Strengthen existing relationships
- Drive new partnership opportunities
- Provide informed and relevant services that reflect community needs

Our Strategies

- Embed shared outcomes with Monash and SECL
- Diversify and innovate service delivery to attract new partners
- Maintain connection with our community

Theory of Change statement: Springvale Monash Legal Service (SMLS)

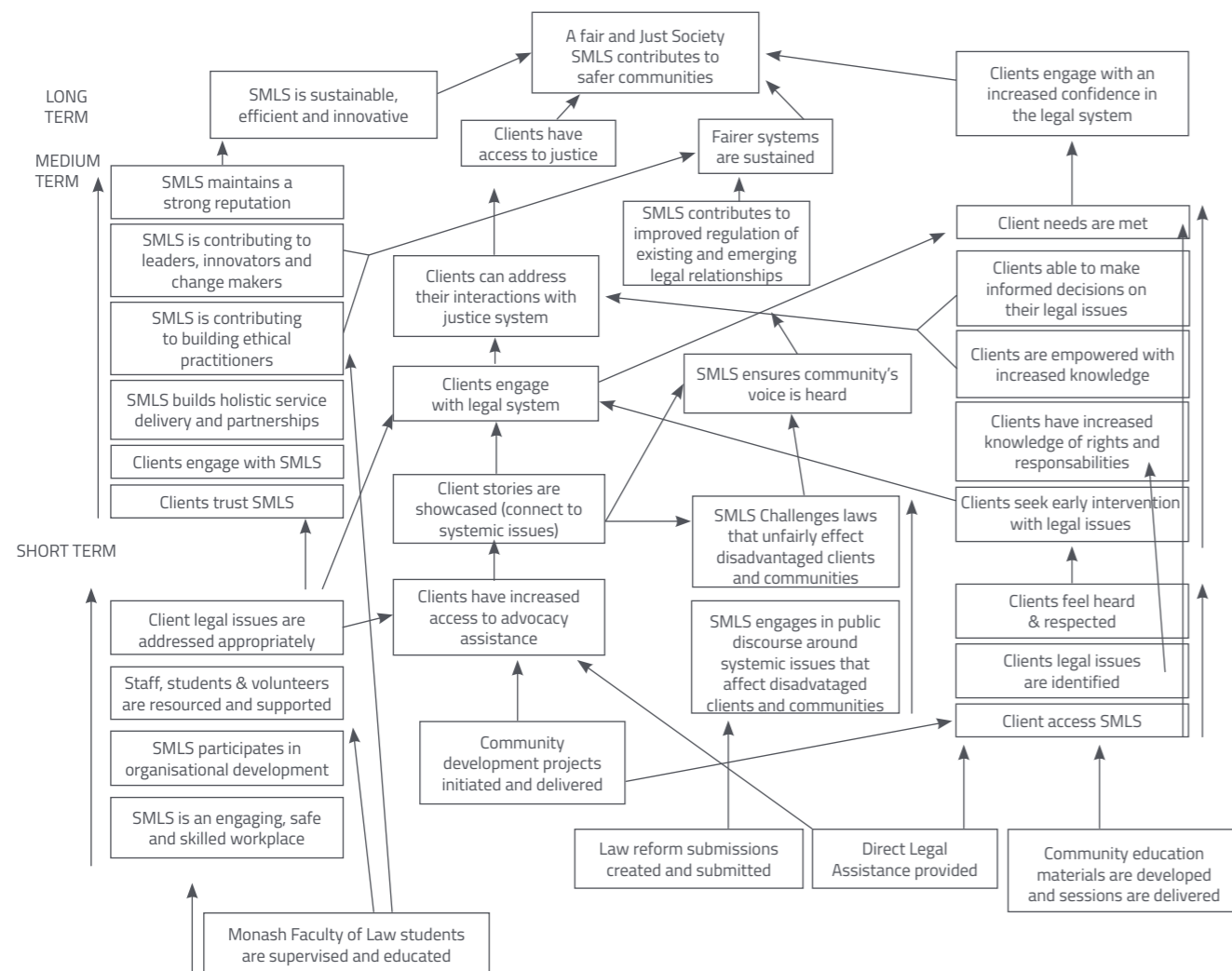
PROBLEM / NEED:

Vulnerable and disadvantaged community members have a greater likelihood of facing complex issues and suffer a disproportionate impact of the legal system.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

Working with vulnerable and disadvantaged community members, SMLS contributes to a fair and just society. It aims to achieve this by advising on legal rights and responsibilities; advocating for systemic change; collaborating with stakeholders; and educating law students as future advocates.

OUTCOMES CHAIN:



Description of problem / need

- Vulnerable and disadvantaged community members have a greater likelihood of facing complex issues and suffer a disproportionate impact of the legal system.
- These factors undermine access to justice, health, wellbeing and social cohesion.
- Traditionally those with a limited education lacked practice, opportunity, and exposure to social justice context.

Context in which intervention occurs

- SMLS has limited capacity and resources
- Competitive professional environment
- SMLS operates in a predominantly CaLD community
- The City of Greater Dandenong is a highly disadvantaged LGA
- Located in the South Eastern corridor
- There is limited funding available
- There are diversity of place based services in the region
- Cultural factors may influence decisions and outcomes for client
- CLCs are recognised as having a distinct voice in law reform submissions.

Evidence base and assumptions

- Direct Legal Assistance meets client's needs, and allows them to
 - » Better understand the legal system
 - » Better understand their rights and options
 - » Make decisions that lead to more favourable outcomes.
- Clients have gaps in knowledge, awareness and capacity to act on legal issues
- Legal advice and information leads to improved wellbeing and empowered clients
- Many clients cannot afford legal assistance
- Current systems unfairly impact vulnerable and disadvantaged people
- Law Reform submissions are read and acted upon by policy makers
- Legal processes lead to safer communities
- That some elements of our community are unsafe
- That practical experience assists law students to become better lawyers
- That our work has a lasting impact on student's social conscience
- That professional ethics are instilled in students through supervision and exposure to social justice issues
- Service standards are maintained

How what we do leads to the intended outcomes


Springvale Monash Legal Service ensures that direct legal assistance services are accessible to people who are vulnerable and disadvantaged. Accessibility is constantly monitored and increased through various partnerships and outpost advice locations. Services are free and confidential. Accessibility means that people are more likely to receive assistance earlier in the course of their legal problem.

When people access SMLS, they can access services including information, referral, advice, legal casework (including representation), and duty lawyer/advocate services; and non-legal support services. Through all of these services, people receive information about the law and the legal system. This information increases people's understanding of their rights, responsibilities and legal options. Where appropriate people are referred to other services that can assist them to resolve non-legal issues that impact on their wellbeing.

Through advice, casework and duty services, people receive clear and targeted advice on their specific legal circumstances. Information and advice increase people's confidence and enable them to make better-informed decisions about how to respond to their legal issues. Through casework,

people receive the assistance of legal professionals in advocacy, negotiation, preparation of documentation and other matters. Through both casework and duty services, where appropriate, people will receive legal representation in courts and tribunals. These forms of assistance ensure that the client's case is handled effectively and strategically.

Through providing direct legal assistance, we learn about the legal needs and issues of many vulnerable and disadvantaged people. From this information, we are able to generate knowledge about societal legal needs and issues, and ways in which systems and institutions contribute to these problems. With this knowledge we are able to provide more responsive and targeted Community Legal Education, and to undertake well-informed advocacy and law reform to improve the legal system and reduce the structural causes of disadvantage. Our collective impact service delivery philosophy means that we scope and form strategic partnerships with various service delivery organisations in the region in order to better facilitate positive outcomes for clients and communities. We have an extensive community development program that incorporates community engagement, partnership development, project work and community legal education.

The background features a dark blue field filled with numerous out-of-focus, golden-yellow circular lights, creating a bokeh effect. A large, solid yellow diagonal shape cuts across the lower half of the image, and a dark blue diagonal shape is visible at the bottom left corner.

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