# Collaborative Planning Committee

## 21 August 2019

### In attendance

**Present**

Anna Faithfull  – Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS), Serina McDuff – Federation of Community Legal Centres (FCLC), Stuart Webb – Law Institute of Victoria (LIV), Lynne Haultain – Victoria Law Foundation (VLF), Louise Glanville – Victoria Legal Aid (VLA), Justin Hannebery SC – Victorian Bar, Megan Ross – Djirra, Moricia Vrymoet – Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

Peter Noble (VLA) (Observer), Amy Schwebel (VLA) (Secretariat)

## Meeting summary

The Committee opened with an Acknowledgement of Country. Louise Glanville, Chair of the Collaborative Planning Committee, welcomed Committee members to the second meeting of the Committee including representatives from the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Services and Djirra, attending the Committee for the first time.

Bill Jaboor, Chair of the VLA Board, attended for the first agenda item of the meeting to discuss how the Committee and the Board can work together collaboratively. Bill conveyed the Board’s interest in receiving advice and questions from the Committee. The Board also proposed, from time to time, to seek the views of the Committee where the Board identifies benefit in hearing the perspectives of the represented organisations’ clients and VLA’s partners in service delivery. The Board is committed to responding in a timely and responsive manner, and meeting with members to discuss issues of common interest. It was agreed that the Committee would invite representatives from the VLA Board at least twice a year to attend the Committee to continue to support constructive engagement and dialogue.

The Committee discussed the expiry of the current National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services (NPALAS) on 30 June 2020 and the upcoming negotiations on a new funding mechanism for Commonwealth funding for legal assistance service delivery. The Committee discussed the challenge of responding to unmet demand for legal assistance and the cost of delivering legal services, including responding to the increasing complexity of legal matters, without an increase in base funding. The Committee also discussed the importance of investment in systems, processes and capabilities in organisations delivering legal assistance to improve service planning and the provision of high-quality services.

The Committee discussed the importance of respecting the principle of self-determination in any future funding arrangements to Aboriginal Legal Services in light of the Commonwealth’s proposal to roll the Indigenous Legal Assistance Program (funding mechanism for VALS in Victoria) and the NPALAS into a single mechanism going forward.

To progress development of the Committee’s workplan for the coming year, the Committee revisited preliminary discussions from the first meeting of the Committee on priority issues for collaboration. The Committee agreed on the importance of a continued focus on the NPALAS negotiations. In addition, the Committee identified a shared interest in focusing collaboration on increasingly sophisticated data, including improved understanding of public attitudes to the law and the justice system, and legal needs analysis to support service planning; access to justice in regional Victoria, including increasing the capacity of private practitioners, community legal centres and Aboriginal legal services to deliver services while reducing reporting burden on funded organisations; identification of common issues of concern from a Victorian perspective for strategic advocacy in response to current royal commissions established by the Commonwealth Government, namely into aged care quality and safety and violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 13 November 2019.