

Media Release

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Rosie Batty and leading family violence experts unite to highlight crisis in family violence legal and non-legal services funding

600 Community Legal Centre (CLC) representatives are meeting this week in Melbourne at the National CLC Conference. Delegates have been sharing stories of frontline service delivery assisting vulnerable and disadvantaged members of their community, including significant and increasing demand for assistance in relation to family violence.

“The very first plenary at the Conference this week delegates heard from survivors of domestic violence and how there were inherent flaws in the justice system” said Michael Smith, NACLC Chair.

Delegates and leading family violence advocates have expressed their disappointment at the Senate Report released last week which fails to recognise the crucial role of the legal assistance sector and that the Committee backed away from the recommendation in the Interim Report calling for the Commonwealth Government to restore impending funding cuts from legal services. The Commonwealth’s recent National Partnership Agreement locked in a 30% cut to CLCs in less than two years.

The Senate report was a real opportunity to address some of those fundamental flaws in the system, most disappointingly it failed to do so and CLCs have ongoing concerns about the Commonwealth Government’s commitment to addressing family violence” said Michael Smith, NACLC Chair.

Ahead of her presentation, Australian of the Year, Rosie Batty highlighted the vital role played by CLCs in assisting people experiencing family violence. Rosie said

“I learnt from my journey as Australian of the Year how important it is for governments to listen to community services like CLCs. They are experts at working with survivors like me to achieve genuine justice for women and children affected by family violence and they need to be properly funded to do this work.

“Working with Rosie and other survivors of family violence shows how far we have to go to be able to provide safe and seamless help and to hold perpetrators genuinely accountable for their violence” said Dr Chris Atmore, Senior Policy Adviser at the Federation of Community Legal Centres (Victoria).

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“Aboriginal women remain the most legally disadvantaged group in Australia and it is unacceptable that there is still uncertainty around longer term funding for Family Violence Prevention Legal Services”, said Antoinette Braybrook, National Convenor, National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Forum.

There will also be some further workshop sessions around family violence including:

Session 24 - Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence incorporating the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and
Bearing witness: practical ways women were supported to tell their stories to the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence

Session 41 – Re-focus smartphone app: technology can be part of the answer – an easy to reach resource for women fleeing violence.

Open the link to see all the sessions: [agenda at a glance](#)

For comment contact:

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Note to Media

Please advise Te Raehira Wihapi, Communications Manager of your intention to attend, 0404 624 049

NACLC acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands across Australia and particularly the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, traditional owners of the land on which the NACLC office is situated. We pay deep respect to Elders past and present.