

## CLCs... talking about culturally secure services

NACLCL recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services are the preferred and most culturally appropriate providers of legal services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NACLCL also believes that it is essential for CLCs to offer culturally secure services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people so there is another choice if an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service is not available. NACLCL is committed to promoting cultural security in CLC organisations, especially in employment.

## Cultural Awareness

• listen • learn • understand • consider

Legal service providers engage in a learning process to know and understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and cultures and increase their sensitivity to the current context and cultural backgrounds of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, eg, your centre might organise a story time by a local Elder.

## Cultural Security

• collaborate • learn • incorporate • evaluate

Through ongoing collaboration with legal service providers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the primary role in defining safe, accessible legal services that meet the needs and expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients from start to finish, eg, by ensuring that someone connected to the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is accessible to hear feedback from clients and act on that feedback; mechanisms are in place to ensure that Board decisions are informed by community consultation.

## But what does it mean?

Different people use different terms: cultural awareness, cultural competence, cultural safety, cultural security. One thing that is always true: learning about cultural awareness has no end, there is always more to learn. NACLCL affirms the right of different communities and organisations to choose their own language. For ourselves, we found it useful to read about what language others had chosen, and the meanings they gave. Here and over the page are two ways that these ideas can be thought about. We found it useful, we hope you do too. At the least, it may be a starting point for your organisation, to think and talk about what cultural security means for your Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and what that might mean for your centre.

## Cultural Competence

• consult • learn • internalise • apply

An appreciation of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and cultures is required of all legal service providers. Service providers develop the skills to understand, communicate and interact effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, eg, your centre might build relationships with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through regular social gatherings.

## EVALUATE...

and regularly and systematically re-evaluate practices, policies, programs and your own beliefs about the needs and expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## LEARN...

about present and past policies that have impacted on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and gain an understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and cultures, taking into account gender, class, age and other social factors that make up Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity. Examining preconceived ideas and stereotypes with guidance from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is equally important for all staff including administrators.

# The 4 Principles of Cultural Security

In recent years the term cultural security has been used more commonly across Australia. While cultural competence is sometimes described as the step following cultural awareness, cultural security is often thought of as the goal of both cultural awareness and cultural competence.

## COLLABORATE...

regularly with stakeholders from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities you wish to serve in order to enable them to decide how services are provided and what is culturally appropriate and what is not. Collaboration will also help you have policies that promote employment and support the education, training and mentoring of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to encourage their involvement in the legal sector.

## INCORPORATE...

respect and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and peoples into work practices taking into consideration all ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people might access your services including any outreach to communities to ensure that the needs and expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients are being met.