



Annual Report 2020–2021

Australian Centre for
Disability Law

Acknowledgement



The Australian Centre for Disability Law ('ACDL' or 'the Centre') 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 ACDL office is situated. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Disclaimer

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The Centre works with all people with disability and has experience with a wide range of impairments and disability, including physical, intellectual and sensory impairments as well as neurological, psychosocial and a range of long-term health conditions. It provides legal assistance free of charge to its clients, who come from socially, financially and legally disadvantaged backgrounds and rely on the Centre for legal assistance.

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Note: All case studies in this publication have been de-identified, and all names changed.

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About the Australian Centre for Disability Law

The Australian Centre for Disability Law is a community legal centre specialising in the legal rights of people who are discriminated against because of their disability. The Centre was established in 1994 to help people with disability and their supporters to learn about and pursue their rights under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth).

Based in Sydney, the practice services clients across metropolitan and regional New South Wales and represents clients across Australia in human rights cases. Clients come from socially, financially and legally disadvantaged backgrounds and are provided with legal assistance free of charge.

Funding comes from the Commonwealth and New South Wales governments, and from the NSW Public Purpose Fund. During the year we received additional funding from the Commonwealth to increase our capacity to provide legal assistance to clients affected by COVID-19. In addition, we received much needed funding to upgrade our IT equipment to improve the efficiencies of remote working arrangements for staff. We are very grateful for this much needed funding.

The Centre's management committee provides oversight and governance. Members of the committee include people with disability, those with extensive

ACDL is a community legal centre specialising in the legal rights of people who are discriminated against because of their disability.

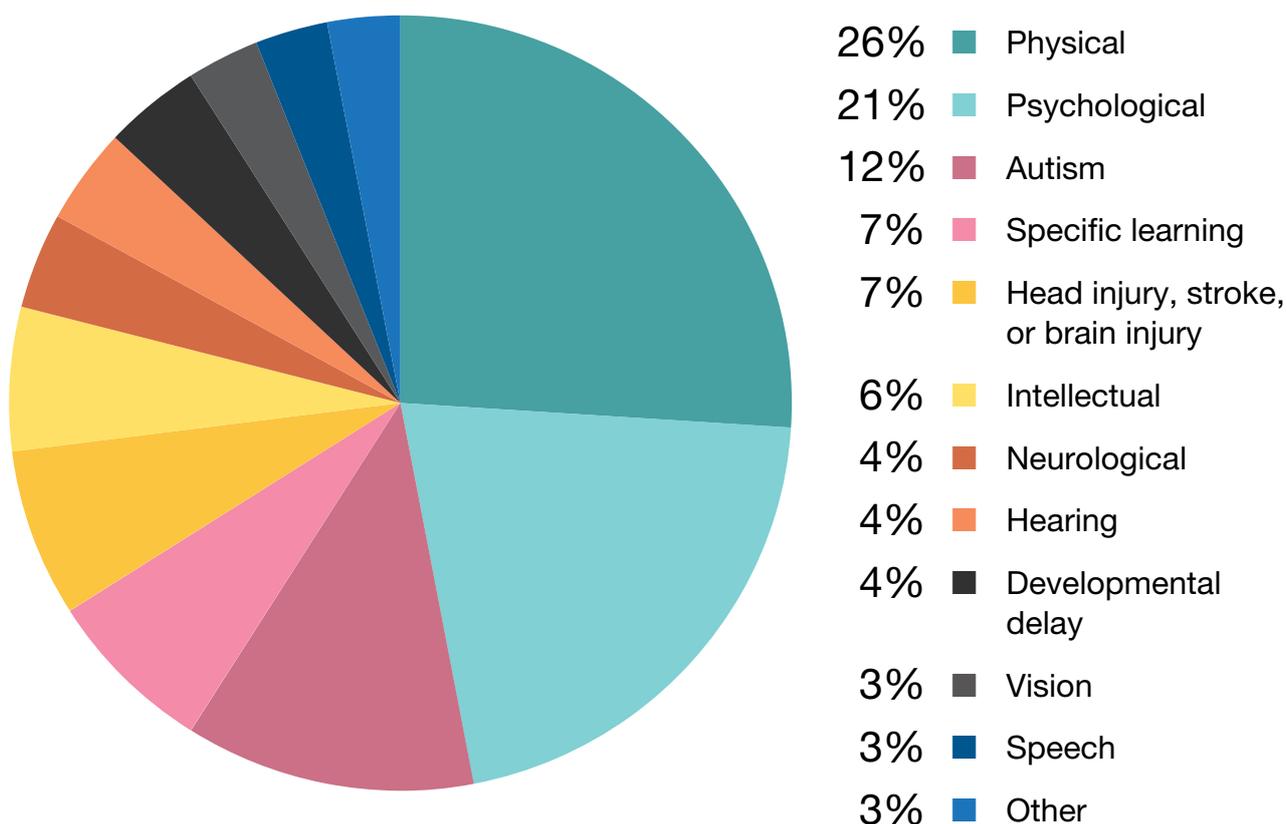
practical and academic legal expertise, and experience in disability advocacy, management and financial control.

The Centre has a small permanent staff of practicing solicitors who are supported by volunteer solicitors and paralegals. In addition, significant legal assistance on a pro bono basis is provided through partnerships with commercial law firms. Funding constraints mean paid administrative and operational support is limited. The Centre also works in close conjunction with a number of disability advocacy organisations.

Membership of the Centre is open to individuals, organisations and corporations who share the Centre's vision.

The Centre is an independent, non-profit, apolitical organisation that is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW). It is a public benevolent institution for the purposes of Australian taxation law and is therefore eligible to receive tax-deductible donations.

We work with a diverse range of people with disability, including those with physical, intellectual and sensory impairments, as well as neurological, psychosocial and long-term health conditions.





Our vision

A society in which people with disability live with dignity, and in which their human rights and fundamental freedoms are recognised, respected and fulfilled.

Our purpose

We will work towards the realisation of our vision by providing people with disability and their supporters with specialist legal assistance in our designated practice areas, and by undertaking complementary community legal education, continuing legal education and policy and reform activities.

Our goals



To work with and alongside people with disability and their representative organisations towards the realisation of the legal and human rights of people with disability in our designated practice areas



To ensure that our work is distributed equitably across all disability groups



To ensure that those people with disability and their supporters who are most socially and legally disadvantaged, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, have equitable access to our services



To understand and interpret disability and disability rights concerns within a social model of disability in which 'disability' is conceptualised not as a personal characteristic but as a result of people's interactions with a social environment prone to barriers that are capable of being overcome



To identify and pursue opportunities to achieve outcomes in our designated practice areas that will have a broad positive impact on the realisation of the human rights of people with disability



To contribute to the positive development of the law as it affects people with disability and their supporters at state, national and international levels



To support the work of Disabled People's Organisations in Australia and internationally, by contributing legal knowledge and expertise where this is relevant to their work



To build the capacity of disability rights and legal services in Australia

Chairperson's report



Welcome to the 2020–2021 Annual Report of the Australian Centre for Disability Law (ACDL). I trust this report will assist you to understand and value the work that ACDL undertakes.

ACDL has operated in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the financial year. This has had a significant impact on the centre's client base as well as its staff and volunteers, and its operations. Framed by the uncertainty and restrictions of the pandemic, the year presented significant challenges.

I would like to acknowledge the Commonwealth Government for providing additional IT and frontline funding to

specifically address the needs of our clients affected by COVID-19. This was critical to ensure our staff had reliable and effective technology to meet increased demand, and for the centre to meet or exceed our targets.

Legal advocacy is a primary objective of the ACDL, and under the direction of the Principal Solicitor Mark Patrick and a team of staff and volunteers, ACDL continues to provide professional and efficient service to the increasing number of clients accessing the service. I thank our staff and volunteers for their ongoing commitment to the Centre, and for continuing to work under difficult circumstances during lockdown.

ACDL has strong ties with several pro-bono law firms — Baker & McKenzie, Hall & Wilcox, HWL Ebsworth and Sparke Helmore — who continued to provide volunteer solicitors to the Centre during the pandemic. I would like to thank them for their continued invaluable support.

Mr Giancarlo De Vere joined the Management Committee this year and has taken the role of Treasurer. This follows the departure of Tony Crossley and Ya'el Frisch and I acknowledge their efforts and commitment to the Committee and Centre. I also thank my other colleagues on the Management Committee for their ongoing professional support and dedication. I especially thank Mark Patrick, Principal Solicitor for his dedication and professional management of the centre and its legal practice.

I commend this report to you.

Rosemary Kayess, Chairperson



Our People

Our management committee

Our volunteer management committee is responsible for the governance of the Centre. Its members have broad experience and expertise, including as practising and academic lawyers, disability advocates, and as management and accounting specialists.

Members as at 30 June 2021 were:

- Rosemary Kayess
- Jenny Green
- Julian Laurens
- Mark Rae
- Samantha French
- Giancarlo de Vera

Our staff

Our staff work tirelessly to ensure the best possible outcomes for our clients.

Mark Patrick	Principal Solicitor and Executive Officer
Laura Cottam	Solicitor
Caterina Mazza	Solicitor
Roshana Wikramanayake	Solicitor
Anna Nguyen	Solicitor (commenced August 2020)
Rose Raymond	First People's Project Solicitor (commenced March 2021)
Antonietta Natoli	COVID Outreach Project Manager (commenced February 2021) COVID Outreach Solicitor
Samantha Guthleben	Operations & Administration Manager (commenced October 2020)



Message from the Executive Officer

For the year ended 30 June 2021

On behalf of the Australian Centre for Disability Law I am pleased to present the 2020–2021 Annual Report.

This year's report has a particular focus in showcasing the work of staff in the legal practice and the various projects undertaken by the centre. A great deal of the work completed during the year was undertaken under COVID-19 restrictive working arrangements that added complexity to service delivery and the dynamics of working as a team from remote locations. I pay tribute to the resilience and commitment of all team members to work through this difficult time to deliver outstanding results against our targets.

I am also pleased to report, we completed our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) during the year. The RAP sets out our commitment to the equitable treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We are also committed to strengthening our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our local area and throughout the State.

I thank the Commonwealth for its ongoing support of the Centre, and especially thank the Commonwealth for stepping up and providing funding to Community Legal Centres to address increased legal need during the COVID-19 pandemic. Without these much-needed funds, many of our clients would be left without legal

assistance to address the significant and ongoing legal issues brought on by the pandemic.

This funding enabled the centre to employ both a part time solicitor and outreach project manager. Both roles have increased our capacity to deliver legal services and increase our engagement with community organisations.

In addition to supporting the legal needs of people with disability, the Commonwealth provided additional funds to support and facilitate the centres transition to working from home. The purchase of new computers and the transition to a cloud-based operating system has enabled us to better collaborate as a team while working from home.

I pay tribute to the dedication and contribution of each of the Centre's paid staff, our legal and paralegal volunteers, and the support we receive from our pro bono partners. I am especially grateful

for the continued support of Baker & McKenzie, HWL Ebsworth, and Hall & Wilcox who continued to support us during these difficult times.

I thank the members of the Management Committee for their vision, passion, dedication, and commitment to the good governance of the Centre. I am indeed fortunate to have this Management Committee as a source of strength and resilience.

I also thank the Commonwealth and NSW Governments, and the Trustees of the NSW Public Purpose Fund for funding the Centre's work through the Community Legal Centres Program administered by Legal Aid NSW.

Finally, I also thank Mia Zahra and her team from Legal Aid's Community Legal Centres Program team for their support during the year.

Mark Patrick, Executive Officer



Volunteering with ACDL



Pearl Davidson

I volunteered at the Australian Centre for Disability Law between February and August 2021 while completing my Practical Legal Training. It was an amazing experience, and I grew so much in my understanding of disability law and in the development of my legal skills.

I primarily assisted as the first point of contact for prospective clients using the ACDL's advice line, which is a free telephone service. This involved taking detailed facts from clients, and referring clients to other services where appropriate. Although I had prior legal experience before volunteering at ACDL, I had never spoken to as many clients, and I learnt so much and gained so much confidence from being guided by supervising solicitors in how to best speak to people at what is often a really distressing time in their life.

Some callers could be quite challenging to talk to due to their disability, the emotions around their matter, or language barriers, but I received advice and support on how to interact with clients in a compassionate yet professional way.

ACDL's work means there are large numbers of callers and people to contact

each day, and it was a privilege to help with this work. I was also involved in other tasks including drafting letters, data entry, legal research and preparing educational resources for people with disabilities.

During my time at ACDL I was also able to attend helpful legal training sessions, including on employment law and translating documents into Easy Read. The solicitors at ACDL provided regular feedback on my work, and these training sessions greatly contributed to my learning.

As a person with a disability, the staff at ACDL were fantastic in accommodating me by providing me with shorter work days and the ability to complete some of my placement remotely. Work became more challenging when the entire office had to work remotely during the Sydney-wide lockdown, however we were able to adapt quickly to the new arrangements and I continued to feel very supported while working entirely from home.

The solicitors at ACDL provided regular feedback on my work, and these training sessions greatly contributed to my learning.

ACDL is a really valuable resource, providing important and free legal services for some of NSW's most vulnerable people. It was wonderful to be able to see the difference that legal advice or representation provided to so many clients.

Our legal firm partners and volunteers

Our centre is fortunate to have support from law student volunteers, secondees and pro bono solicitors. We would especially like to thank volunteers George Stribling, Nick de Bres, and Pearl Davidson who all volunteered 2–3 days a week to assist the Centre, and our pro bono law firm partners Baker McKenzie, Hall & Wilcox, HWL Ebsworth and Sparke Helmore Lawyers who provided us with the equivalent of one solicitor per week during the year.

In addition, HWL Ebsworth generously provided us with secondees — Elizabeth Bennett, Natalie Tuffin and Erica Balilo.

Our clients benefit greatly from our partnerships with law firms and other legal practitioners who provide assistance on a pro bono basis. These partnerships significantly increase our capacity to provide high-quality legal services to socially, financially and legally disadvantaged people with disability.

We thank Ben Fogarty of Denman Chambers, Adrian Lawrence, Sebastian Rusa, Hillary Brownlow, Sarah Lee and Jacqueline Gibson of Baker & McKenzie, Georgia Murphy-Haste, Trent Morfis, Hannah Rose, Isabelle Hazell and Paris Gray of Sparke Helmore, who during the year assisted the Centre by providing advice on a number of complex issues on a pro bono or restricted-fee basis.

Our pro bono partners, student volunteers and interns give their time to staff our advice line, participate in research, and assist in drafting letters. Our work would not be possible without their support. In particular, we would like to thank the following solicitors and students:

Chiara D’Ercole	Audrey Chan	Chelsea Gordon
Sana Minhas	Erin Doyle	Jessica Liu
Emily Ransom	Khushaal Vyas	Georgina Barnes
Jennifer Wicks	Harry Rutner	Luke Depares
Viktoria Parkhomenko	Ian Jones	Jonathon Wood
Carl Newton	James Gough	Kim Fisher
Bianca Dearing	Lucy Neighbour	Matthew Curl
Patricia Marinovic	Tania Hanna	Karen Keogh
Natalie Tuffin	Amber Mahoney	Kate Gillingham
Elizabeth Bennett	Joshua Hayes	Georgia Murphy-Haste
Erica Balil	Katt Faapito	Nathan Kennedy
Trent Morfis	Sophie Morstyn	George Stribling
Angela Pale	Jarrod Bayliss-McCulloch	Nick de Bres
Kristina Hewetson	Maryam Alkozai	Pearl Davidson



Ibrahim gets the support he needs to succeed at tertiary college

Ibrahim has cerebral palsy spastic quadriplegia and attends tertiary college. He requires continuous assistance and/or adapted equipment for partial achievement of most activities.

Ibrahim contacted the Australian Centre for Disability Law (ACDL) after his tertiary college denied multiple requests to have his carer present with him during class so that he could fully participate in his course.

ACDL wrote a letter to the tertiary college outlining their legal obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act, Disability Standards for Education and Anti-discrimination Act. The letter requested a number of reasonable adjustments, including permission for

Ibrahim's carer to be present and seated next to him during all classes, assessments and examinations to provide him with essential personal care and assistance.

In response to the letter, the tertiary college provided Ibrahim with a number of reasonable adjustments, including having his carer present, providing a note taker, and providing additional tutorial support.

Ibrahim, his carers and his family were very happy with the result as it meant that he would be able to continue with his studies. They also hope that this positive result will help other students with disability, who come across similar issues with tertiary college in the future.

Our work

Disability discrimination

People with disability are subject to high levels of discrimination, and are often the victims of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. They are some of the most disadvantaged and marginalised people in our community.

Our legal practice focusses on areas of law affecting people with disability such as discrimination, guardianship and public trustee matters, problems with housing and debt, education and employment.

Over the course of the year, the Centre operated a telephone advice line which was staffed a minimum of three hours a day, three days a week. In all, we provided 313 instances of legal advice, completed 42 legal tasks, and provided 164 casework representation services.

Casework and representation

Typically, our casework representation service involves very intensive and time-consuming casework which may commence immediately before or after the alleged act of discrimination.

In some cases, a matter can be resolved by sending a letter on behalf of a client advising the other party of their legal obligations and that action will be taken if they do not address a problem within a specified period. Sometimes we will attend meetings with clients to try to resolve matters.

In other cases, we assist clients with a complaint to either the Anti-Discrimination NSW (ADNSW) or the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC). This includes drafting complaints, advising on options and/or representing a person in a conciliation conference.



People with disability are some of the most disadvantaged and marginalised people in our community.

Where these approaches are unsuccessful, we will pursue the matter to conclusion in the relevant tribunal or court.

Case work and representation are particularly time intensive and take up a substantial amount of resources. This concentrated and focused assistance has the potential to result in positive change for the particular client, and in systemic change that will benefit others living with disability.

This year we assisted 164 clients with intensive casework and representation services.

Dispute resolution

All our casework matters are intensive, due to the complex nature of disability discrimination matters which are rarely addressed by standard responses. In some cases, we will take on matters that are more intensive or where legal proceedings have commenced. This is often because a client is particularly vulnerable.

The work may involve attending a conciliation conference at the ADNSW or the AHRC.

Some examples of these types of matters are:

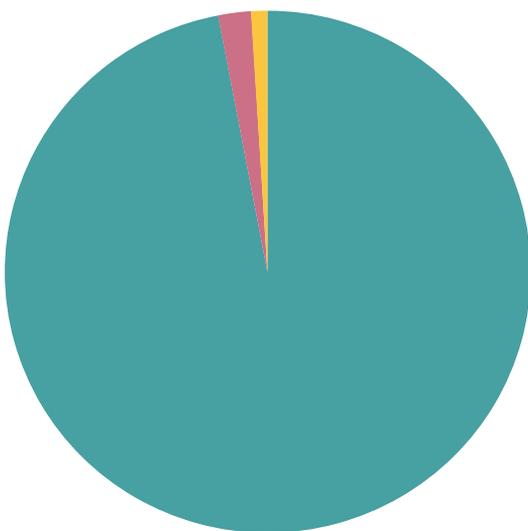
- Matters involving access to premises, including those involving assistance animals
- Unfavourable treatment in employment due to disability
- Matters involving access to appropriate adjustments in social housing
- Matters involving students across various stages of education not being given appropriate education support.

Court and tribunal matters

When resources permit, the Centre will act for parties involved in matters before courts or tribunals in relation to systemic issues that warrant the intensive use of our resources. This is usually the most intensive disability discrimination client work we undertake, and we examine the individual merits of such cases carefully before proceeding to represent the client.

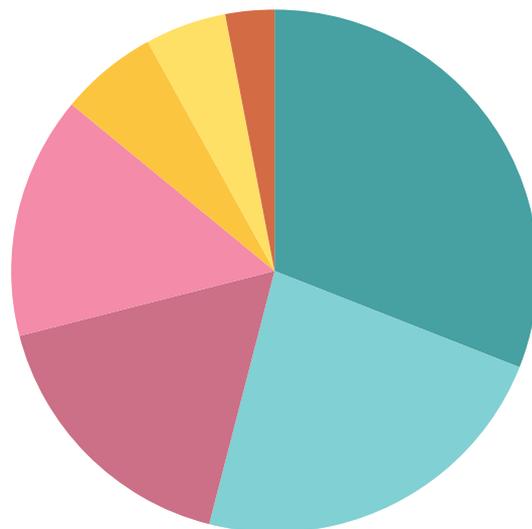
Casework by area of law

- 97% ■ Disability Discrimination
- 2% ■ Consumer
- 1% ■ Employment



Disability discrimination casework by area of public life

- 31% ■ Education
- 23% ■ Employment
- 17% ■ Goods, services and facilities
- 15% ■ Accommodation
- 6% ■ Other
- 5% ■ Premises
- 3% ■ Transport



Legal advice and tasks

During the year we provided 297 legal advices to people with disability, 114% above our annual target. In addition, we provided a further 16 legal advices regarding discriminatory treatment due to COVID-19-related issues, such as refusal to enter shops, wearing of a mask or medical exemption.

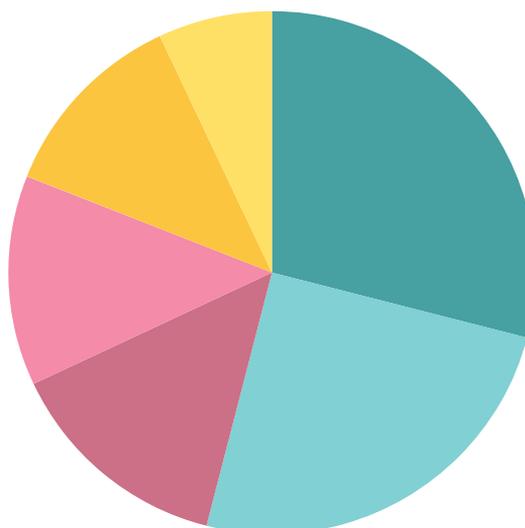
We completed 40 legal tasks on behalf of clients, meeting our target of 40. We also provided an additional 2 tasks in COVID-19 related matters.

While the majority (84%) of our work is related to disability discrimination, we provided advice on other areas of law affecting our clients, including employment matters, housing and accommodation access, consumer and debt, guardianship and criminal law.

Of our advice in the area of disability discrimination, 29% per cent related to education, 25% to employment, 14% to the provision of goods and services and 20% to accommodation and access to premises. We also provided advice on consumer contracts and other areas of civil law, employment law, housing and tenancy matters.

Disability discrimination advice by area of public life

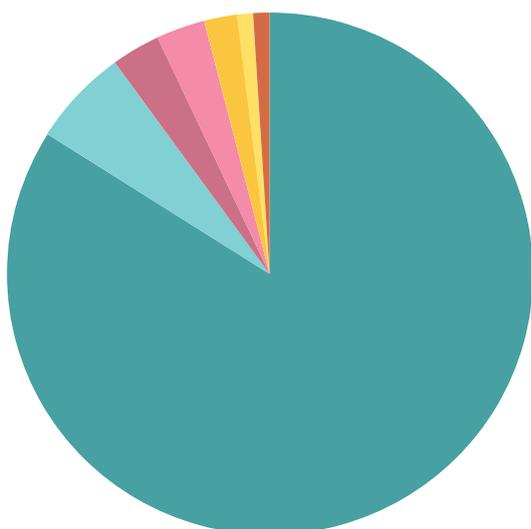
- 29% ■ Education
- 25% ■ Employment
- 14% ■ Provision of goods & services
- 13% ■ Accommodation
- 12% ■ Other
- 7% ■ Access to premises



During the year we provided 769 referrals to clients.

Legal advice by area of law

- 84% ■ Disability discrimination
- 6% ■ Other
- 3% ■ Employment
- 3% ■ Housing
- 2% ■ Consumer and debt
- 1% ■ Guardianship
- 1% ■ Criminal



Legal information and referral

Our legal information and referral service includes providing general information about disability discrimination law over the telephone or by email or via downloads from our website, such as the Using Disability Discrimination Law in NSW booklet.

When an enquiry falls outside our areas of practice, our team will assist by providing a referral. During the year we provided 769 referrals to clients. These referrals may be to appropriate complaint-handling bodies, to other sources of legal assistance, or to disability advocacy organisations.

Community legal education

The Centre plays a key role in educating members of the community about disability discrimination laws, what disability discrimination looks like, and how to act on possible discrimination when it arises.

This year the centre conducted 22 community legal education programs. We also invested significant work in creating 7 new community legal education resources.

This year we presented:

- ‘Introduction to Disability Discrimination Law’ to Blacktown LGA Disability Interagency Meeting
- ‘Disability Discrimination Law’ with Baker McKenzie to Pro Bono Solicitors who have worked or will work with ACDL
- At Hunter Cooperative Legal Service Delivery (CLSD) meeting on disability discrimination and in relation to education matters in particular
- Three times to the Rape and Domestic Violence Service Australia in conjunction with PwDA
- To Vision Australia at their webinar ‘Accessibility and the Law’, focusing on digital accessibility and discrimination law
- To Taree Forster CLSD meeting on disability discrimination in education
- To the Central Tablelands CLSD meeting on disability discrimination in education
- To the Central Coast CLSD meeting “Q&A for legal and non-legal services in the area” to build their knowledge and understanding of disability discrimination, the work we do, the current projects we are running, and encourage referrals to our service

Outreach

Our team make visits to rural and regional areas to provide advice and education on disability discrimination and about rights. These include advocacy and legal services, disability services, family violence services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific services and Land Councils, and individual clients.

This year our outreach services were heavily affected by significant public health restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our team attended two virtual outreach events hosted by Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) for residents in Ulladulla in August 2020.

Community Events

The Centre attends disability expositions and events to raise our profile and promote better awareness among people with disability and relevant organisations about our service. These events are an opportunity to network with other disability and legal organisations and engage people with disability who are in need of legal assistance.

Policy and law reform

Policy and law reform is often the most efficient way of dealing with systemic legal issues and social injustice. It can result in change for a whole group of people and prevent repeated costly, time-consuming legal proceedings for individuals facing similar situations.

The Centre contributes to policy and law reform activities when appropriate. Our policy and law reform work are informed by our casework experience, as well as by detailed research and policy analysis. Much of this work is undertaken by our volunteers.



This year, policy and law reform work undertaken by ACDL included:

- Participation in the Australian Human Rights Commission “Building a more effective anti-discrimination framework”
- Submission to the Royal Commission in relation to employment issues paper
- Participation in the National Disability Peak Bodies Webinar for the 2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education
- Participated in an interactive webinar launching the 2020 Review of Disability Standards for Education
- Signatory to an “Open letter from disability sector on the publication of NDIS settlement outcomes”

Human rights law practice

Our human rights law practice involves assisting people with disability in relation to complaints that allege a contravention of their human rights as recognised under the Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth).

We also assist people with disability in relation to communications to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities under Article 1 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that allege violations of their human rights as those rights are recognised or declared in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Unlike our disability discrimination legal practice, our human rights legal practice operates on a national basis and is unfunded, relying heavily on the work of our volunteers and pro bono legal partners. As such, it is only capable of providing legal assistance to a very limited number of people. Priority is given to people with legal problems that, if resolved, will result in systemic change for people with disability and their supporters.



Assisting Michael to address employment-related discrimination

Michael was diagnosed with Lymphoma in late 2019, which prevented him from working for 12 months. He also suffered a rare and severe life-threatening complication of chemotherapy, which resulted in wearing a temporary stoma bag. He is currently in remission with a lowered immune system. Michael suffers from anxiety and adjustment disorder as a result of the traumatic events following his diagnosis, chemotherapy, and the use of a stoma bag.

Since November 2020, Michael has attempted to negotiate a return to work with reasonable adjustments. He has not been given permission to return to work, nor has he been paid since December 2020.

ACDL wrote a letter to Michael's employer, outlining their legal obligations under the Fair Work Act, Disability Discrimination Act, and Anti-discrimination Act and requesting a number of reasonable adjustments, which mainly included work from home arrangements.

The employer refused these adjustments,

stating that it was an inherent requirement of the role to work from the office, and work from home arrangements would be too costly for the business.

ACDL then made a general protections non-dismissal claim to the Fair Work Commission on Michael's behalf. As a result, the employer back-paid Michael for the 12 months he was off work.

ACDL then represented Michael at a case conference at the Fair Work Commission. The matter was stood over, as the employer wished to settle the matter privately. The employer then made Michael a settlement offer including, among other things, a termination of employment for not being able to perform the inherent requirements of the role.

ACDL continued to negotiate with the employer on Michael's behalf. Michael and his employer came to an agreement which included a payment of financial compensation, and a positive reference recognising the end of his employment as a resignation.

Some highlights

the telephone advice
line available for

975  hours

6 law
reform
services

 30

dispute resolution
services worked on,
including 5 relating
to COVID-19 issues

164 intensive
casework
files

 313
legal advices
provided to people
with disability

22 

community legal
education programs
conducted, including
2 relating to
COVID-19 issues

7 community
legal education
resources created

Anna Nguyen



Anna joined the ACDL team in August 2020 as a Solicitor. Her role involves providing legal advice and case representation to people with disability who are experiencing discrimination or other legal issues.

Anna brings extensive experience working with people who are marginalised or experiencing disadvantage.

In addition to her past work in criminal law as a duty solicitor with Legal Aid, Anna has also spent several years working with asylum seekers — both in Australia, and in Thailand.

In Thailand — Anna supervised a program that helped to locate and resettle more than 100 people who had been stranded for

more than 30 years. Having fled Vietnam because of human rights abuses, many of these people had no documentation.

With the help of a sister community in Canada, Anna and her team assisted people with visa applications, liaised with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), also helping with fundraising, and other practical assistance so that they could re-settle and start their new life in Canada.

Anna says this work “gave me so much fulfilment, and I was so happy to use my skills and knowledge to help people who were in the same situation as my parents.” Anna’s parents were also refugees, arriving in Australia from Vietnam in 1980.

During this time, Anna’s international advocacy work also saw her travel extensively and meet with government representatives to raise awareness about human rights issues in Vietnam.

When she returned home to Australia, Anna knew that she wanted to continue working in human rights and she was interested in supporting people with disability who represent the largest number of complaints to the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC).

Anna says “disability discrimination is an area of law where I feel like we can make some sort of a change, there are so many different ways to help people and provide support to the community.”

Working with ACDL, Anna assists clients with legal advice — for example people experiencing discrimination in employment or education, or people not receiving access to services due to COVID-19.

Caterina Mazza

Caterina joined ACDL in April 2020, having previously worked in general and specialised civil law teams at Legal Aid.

Caterina was drawn to this sort of work because she wanted to work closely with the community and vulnerable people. She says, “growing up in South-West Sydney I always had a keen interest in social justice and supporting people who need it most.”

Caterina brings experience in outreach work, and she has helped to develop our practice in other areas like family law and family violence. She has also leveraged her previous relationships to source training for our team in areas such as employment law and tenancy law.

“growing up in South-West Sydney I always had a keen interest in social justice and supporting people who need it most”

Recently working on a complex employment discrimination matter, Caterina reached out to a previous colleague for support, and as a result she was able to source free training for the ACDL team, covering areas of employment law such as general protections, unfair dismissal and bullying.

Caterina is also leading a Family and Domestic Violence project, investigating ways for ACDL to work more closely with



specialist support and legal services, and extend our practice to better support people with disability experiencing family and domestic violence.

She recently arranged training through Women’s Legal Services NSW to upskill the ACDL team to be able to provide people experiencing family and domestic violence with general legal advice, as well as appropriate and meaningful referrals to other legal and non-legal services.

Caterina says she is very “passionate about making sure that vulnerable people get the extra support they need”.



COVID-19 Legal Assistance Project

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all of us in different ways, bringing unprecedented challenges to the way we live, work and learn. For many people with disability, COVID-19 restrictions have led to additional barriers such as:

- Reduced access to information and services,
- Disruption to their everyday lives
- Isolation
- Difficulty communicating
- Difficulty working or learning from home, and in some cases
- Increased instances of discrimination.

ACDL has received Commonwealth Government funding to address some

of these additional challenges through our targeted COVID-19 Legal Assistance Project.

The aim of this project is to reach out to people and communities who may not know about ACDL, and offer assistance with:

- Advice on Public Health Orders and restrictions
- Carer's rights during lockdowns
- Masks and medical exemptions
- COVID-19 related fines
- Their rights to enter shops and supermarkets
- Getting the adjustments they need at work or in education

Antonietta Natoli

Antonietta Natoli joined ACDL in February 2021, bringing a diverse range of skills and experience in social policy, local government, higher education and health projects.

Antonietta's role is about expanding ACDL's reach and establishing relationships with new stakeholders — with a focus on reaching people with disability who may have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19, but are unaware that they have legal resources to draw upon.

Although the project will run for a limited time, Antonietta has already established some great links for ACDL which will ensure that we can continue to grow our reach and maximise our resources to assist as many people as possible.

For example, ACDL is now involved with the national 'Speak my language' program. This program involves people with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and other guest speakers, sharing stories, advice and resources to support living well with a disability. Interviews are made available in 25 community languages, and are free to stream.

ACDL solicitors have been interviewed for the 'Speak my language' program, describing the free services that we offer to people in NSW with disability. These interviews will be translated into a number of community languages, allowing us to

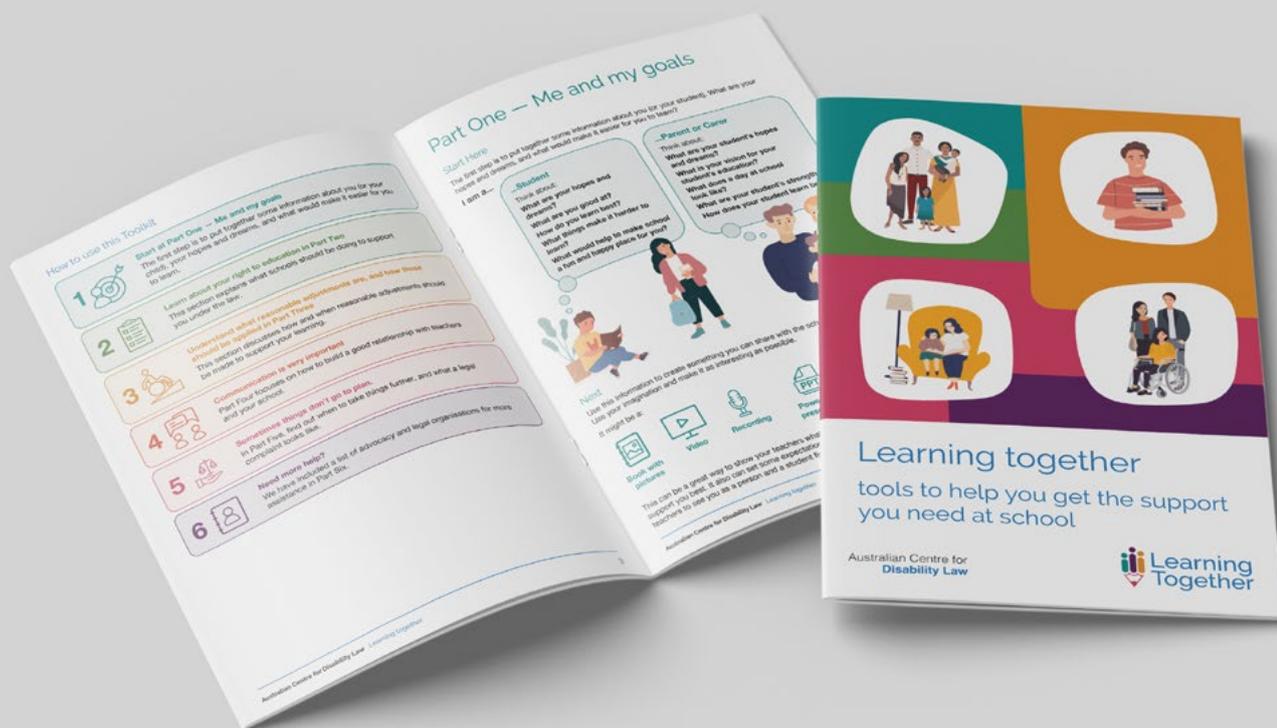


reach culturally and linguistically diverse communities and provide free legal advice and resources.

Antonietta's work has also led to new links with disability-specific member organisations, and multicultural organisations across NSW.

Antonietta says 'it's great to be working with an organisation that makes a real difference in people's lives.'

interviews will be translated into a number of community languages, allowing us to reach culturally and linguistically diverse communities



Learning Together

— tools to help you get the support you need at school

This year, ACDL made significant progress on our project ‘Learning Together — tools to help you get the support you need at school’.

This project is made possible with funding from the Australian Government Department of Social Services through their Information Linkages & Capacity Building (ILC) programme. The aim of this project is to make it easier for students with disability to stay in mainstream education and reach their full potential.

In consultation with our expert Working Group and project Steering Committee, we developed the ‘Learning Together’ toolkit, which is designed to:

- Assist students with a range of disabilities to access an equitable and inclusive education
- Build capacity and empower families and students with disability to advocate from a position of knowledge and strength for reasonable adjustments

- Preserve relationships between families and schools, and avoid stressful and lengthy formal complaint mechanisms being invoked
- Optimise the legal position of students and families if self-advocacy fails, and formal complaints are later required.

The Learning Together toolkit helps students with disability to understand:

- How to create a vision for their education journey
- Their right to education, and what education providers should be doing to support them
- Reasonable adjustments, and how to request the support you need
- Communication techniques to encourage a positive, collaborative relationship
- What to do when things are not working
- How the legal complaint process works, and how to access more help if necessary.

Laura Cottam

Laura Cottam is the lead Solicitor working on the Learning Together project, in addition to her other work providing legal advice and representation to people with disability.

Laura was drawn to this project, having worked with many clients who were experiencing discrimination in education, or struggling to get the support and reasonable adjustments they need to participate in education on the same basis as other students.

Laura says “we often assist students and parents who are not aware of their legal rights in education, or are unsure about how to approach the school to ask for reasonable adjustments. The Learning Together toolkit is helping families to gain confidence in advocating for the support they need, and avoid lengthy formal complaints processes. The toolkit and community training focusses on establishing positive, constructive communication from the beginning of the learning journey”.



The Learning Together toolkit is helping families to gain confidence in advocating for the support they need

The toolkit is also available in a range of accessible formats such as large print, e-text, audio narration, Auslan, and Braille – with Easy Read coming soon.

Work is now underway on the next phase of the Learning Together project, which will involve significant consultation with culturally and linguistically diverse communities to address the needs of students and families with disability for whom English is a second language.

Resources will be translated into a number of community languages in 2022, and free, culturally appropriate community training will also become available. The project will run until February 2023.

‘Talk Up’ project — meet Rose Raymond



Rose Raymond recently joined ACDL, having previously worked in criminal law for the Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT).

Rose was attracted to the opportunity to work on our collaborative ‘Talk Up’ project, a chance to apply her background working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults and juveniles to a different setting.

Rose says, ‘I enjoy working with ACDL because it’s very closely aligned with my values — it’s social justice oriented, small, specialised and genuinely trying to make a difference’.

‘Talk Up’ is a project funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services, through an Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grant.

ACDL is working in consortium with First Peoples Disability Network and People with Disability Australia to build the capability of First People (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders), families and communities to assert their rights, speak up to perceived authority, and negotiate effectively from a position of strength with schools, employers and service providers.

This project is about developing legal educational resources and training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities. The project design is entirely community-led, community-driven and progresses with community guidance. The community is entirely invested in the outcomes and the resources created, and work is targeted to specific geographic areas and other key cohorts.

Rose says “The community is at the heart of the project. It’s essential that the work we do with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is completely guided by those communities and meets their needs”.

We’re looking at all areas of life, with a specific focus on legal issues, but it’s community-driven, so the first part of the project is meeting with the community on the ground, and asking what the priority legal issues are — that way they are directing the project.”

First People with disability are known to experience unique forms of ‘intersectional discrimination’ — a form of social inequality

“The community is at the heart of the project. It’s essential that the work we do with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is completely guided by those communities and meets their needs”

which is an interaction of discrimination that is both race & disability related. Research shows intersectional inequality is both acute & pervasive across all support services — including disability services, health, education, employment, housing and transport.

Rose says “Intersectional discrimination is very important — for a lot of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people there are other issues that intersect with disability discrimination such as race discrimination, and other markers of disadvantage that disproportionately affect these groups. We know from the statistics that there are a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, and this intersects with other issues and compounds the disadvantage that they experience as a result.”

Community engagement will start in metropolitan locations, then expand to regional areas — acknowledging the diverse needs of different communities which will affect the legal issues that they identify. For example, access to services is a key issue affecting some regional communities.

In terms of what the project will achieve — this will also be decided by the community. Rose says “The best outcome is that we build successful relationships with communities, and from those relationships we establish open communication where communities can tell us what they want from the project, and we can deliver that for them.”

The project will run until February 2024.



Reconciliation Action Plan



Artwork on this page is used with permission from the artist — Hayley Pigrim. The title is 'Inner life'.

The Australian Centre for Disability Law (ACDL) undertakes our work on the lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. We acknowledge and pay our respect to the Elders past, and present and the leaders of the future.

We also acknowledge the intersectional discrimination faced by all First Nations people in Australia and we pay our respect to all the Traditional Owners of the lands throughout Australia.

This year ACDL took a step forward in our reconciliation journey, developing our first 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Our reconciliation journey begins with an acknowledgement that 45% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live with a disability, and are twice as likely to be living with a disability than other Australians.

In developing our first RAP, we acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are under-represented in both the provision of legal services, and employment and volunteer opportunities at ACDL.

We acknowledge the overwhelming and urgent need to address the legal needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Australian Centre for Disability Law's Reconciliation Action Plan is our commitment to realise a vision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to live and prosper in a world free from discrimination in all its forms.

We acknowledge the overwhelming and the urgent need to address the legal needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Our RAP will also be the basis for working together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote and protect their rights as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



We commit to realising this vision by advocating for equitable treatment of First Nations people through our legal advocacy and educational work, and with national and international disabled peoples associations, national human rights institutions, governments and international human rights bodies.

In developing our RAP we are committed to strengthening our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Central to this process is our commitment to strengthening our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people both in ACDL's local area and throughout NSW.

For example, we are currently working with First Peoples Disability Network on a project to build the capability of First People with Disability and their families and communities to assert their rights, speak up to perceived authority and negotiate effectively from a position of strength with schools, employers & service providers.

Our journey towards achieving justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is ongoing. We stand firm in our commitment to achieving justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We acknowledge the overwhelming and urgent need to address the legal needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

What our clients say about us

In accordance with the National Partnership Agreement, we conduct an ongoing client satisfaction survey every year. The survey is administered both online, and over the telephone as appropriate.

Responses this year were overwhelmingly positive, and indicate that we are consistently meeting the needs of our clients.

Client survey results

100%

Agreed it was easy to access ACDL when they needed help

100%

Would recommend ACDL

100%

Said the staff at ACDL listened to their legal problem

100%

Know where to get help if they have another legal problem in the future

100%

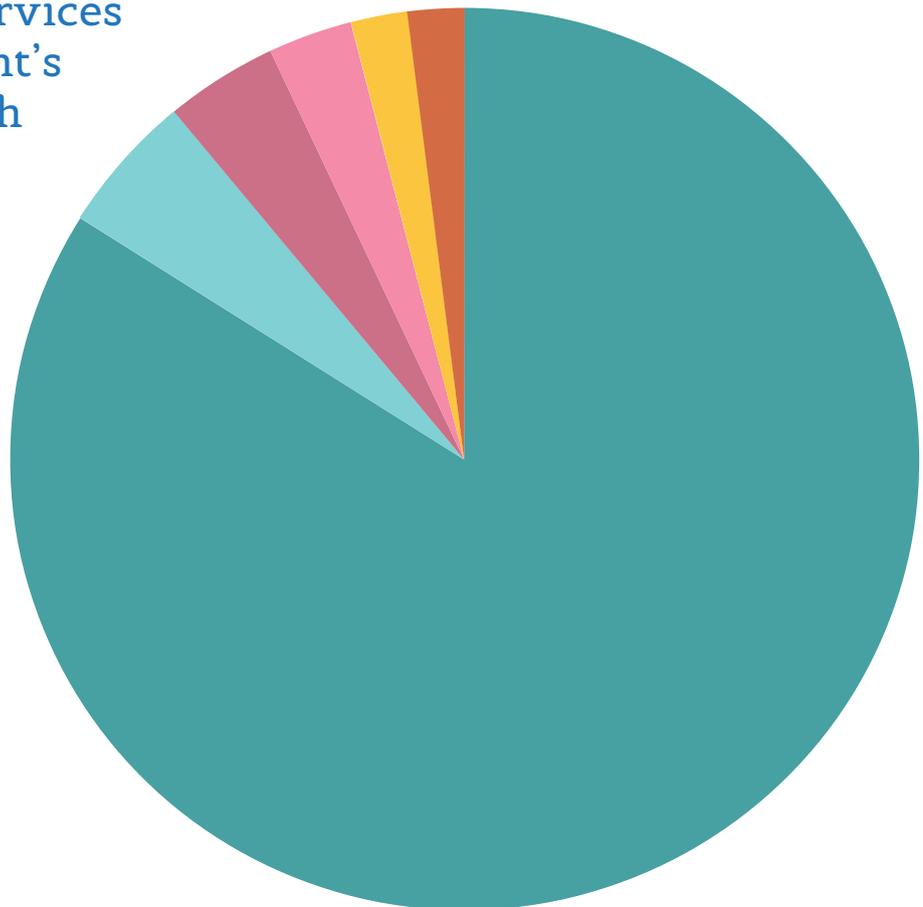
Received help understanding how to deal with their legal problem

“Roshana and Mark were utterly amazing, generous with their time and extremely knowledgeable. I am so grateful that they took on my case. I will always remember Roshana’s kindness after conciliation when she called several times to console and comfort me after a disappointing outcome. Roshana’s warmth and compassion lifted mine (and my family’s) spirits and reminded us that the future is bright because there will always be good people like her in the world that will advocate for the voiceless and the marginalised.”

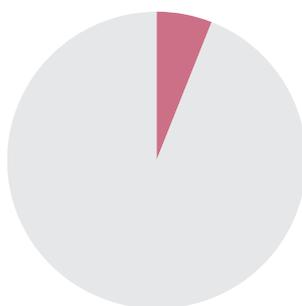
"Outstanding — Caterina was extremely professional at all times, and guided me through the process to reach a positive outcome. Caterina was very patient as my communication is challenging at times due to my disability. Thank You!"

Percentage of services provided by client's continent of birth

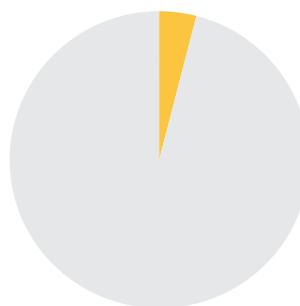
- 84.8% ■ Australia
- 5.5% ■ Asia
- 4% ■ Europe
- 2.5% ■ Other
- 1.6% ■ Africa & Middle East
- 1.6% ■ Pacific & South America



21.15%
Children under 18



4.83%
Culturally and linguistically diverse



4%
Experiencing or at risk of Family Violence



4.53%
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



Improving outcomes and addressing discrimination in early education

Grace is 3 years old and has autism and global developmental delay. Her mother was unhappy with the level of service provided by Grace's day care provider, especially the lack of reasonable adjustments put in place to support her early learning.

ACDL represented Grace and her mother at conciliation proceedings after a complaint was made to the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Our client was able to share her daughter's story, and reached an agreement with the respondent. Among other things, the day care provider agreed to do the following:

- Acknowledge that our client was unhappy with the level of service she received from the day care centre

- Ensure that all frontline and management staff would receive disability awareness and disability discrimination training
- Pay compensation to our client in recognition of the pain, suffering and disruption to Grace's early education
- Make a policy update whereby all children with disabilities who enrol in their day care centres will now receive a round-table consultation with educators, carers, and parents to ensure reasonable adjustments are put in place to support the child.

As a result, there is now a mechanism in place to ensure that all children with disabilities who enrol in this day care service in the future have access to reasonable adjustments to support their learning.

Our community organisation partners

The Centre maintains partnerships with cross-disability Disabled Peoples Organisations that share our vision and values. These relationships maximise the strengths of each organisation within a collaborative framework to achieve the best possible outcomes.

In particular, we would like to thank First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN) and People with Disability Australia (PWDA) for their ongoing association and support.

Many of our clients don't have the resources, confidence or knowledge to take their legal complaints beyond the advice stage. Our partnerships with disability

advocacy service providers put us in a unique position to provide clients with a holistic service to suit both their legal and advocacy needs, so that the best overall outcome can be achieved.

In addition, the Centre partners with other community organisations and individuals to work together to achieve the best for our clients. We would also like to thank Tenants Union of NSW, Women's Legal Service of NSW, Deloitte, knowmore, Justice Connect, Legal Aid Commission of NSW Employment Law team, and HR Consultant Jennifer Bulkeley.





Georgia receives access for her mobility scooter

Georgia has a physical disability and requires the use of a mobility scooter. Georgia contacted ACDL after her landlord — a community housing provider denied her access to park her mobility scooter in the common area of the public housing residence. The landlord also refused to provide Georgia with a storage space in the underground parking garage.

ACDL wrote a letter to the community housing provider outlining their legal obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act.

In response to this contact, the community housing provider eventually provided Georgia with an allocated lock up cage in the underground parking garage to store her mobility scooter, and an electrical output for charging purposes.

Georgia was happy with the result, especially as she did not have to escalate the matter to an independent complaints body.

Australian Centre for Disability Law

ABN 15 992 360 253

Summary financial statements — 30 June 2021

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Committee members' report

30 June 2021

The committee members present their report, together with the financial statements, on the association for the year ended 30 June 2021.

Members of Management Committee

The following were members of the Management Committee of the association during the whole of the financial year and up to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated:

Ms Rosemary Kayess	Chair
Ms Jenny Green Vice	Chair
Mr Julian Laurens	Secretary
Mr Mark Rae	Member
Samantha French	Member
Giancarlo de Vera	Treasurer (Appointed as Treasurer on 19 June 2021; appointed as a member on 25 November 2020)

Principal activities

During the financial year the principal continuing activities of the association consisted of:

- promotion of community awareness of the potential to use discrimination laws to advance the rights of people with disabilities and
- provision of legal service for people with disabilities, their associates and representative organisations, who have been discriminated against

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

On behalf of the committee



Rosemary Kayess
Chair



Jenny Green
Vice Chair

18 October 2021



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Partners

Elias Y Bader

Rupa Dharmasiri

George P Rochlios

Mark W Willock

Australian Centre for Disability Law

ABN: 15 992 360 253

Auditor's Independence Declaration to the Committee Members of Australian Centre for Disability Law

In accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, as auditor of Australian Centre for Disability Law for the year ended 30 June 2021, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Rupaninga Dharmasiri
Partner

LBW & Partners
Chartered Accountants
Level 3, 845 Pacific Highway
CHATSWOOD NSW 2067

Dated this 17th day of October 2021

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income

for the year ended 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue	4	1,101,853	778,993
Total revenue		1,101,853	778,993
Expenses			
Employee benefits expense		(644,575)	(452,731)
Accounting fees		(22,600)	(15,000)
Audit fees		(6,500)	(6,128)
Board/Governance expenses		(3,858)	(8,617)
Client support services		(18,094)	(1,000)
Computer/IT/website		(33,664)	(22,634)
Consultancy/Legal costs		(148,871)	(43,996)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	5	(53,081)	(9,923)
Insurance		(5,221)	(4,636)
Office equipment		(30,900)	(23,205)
Printing and stationery		(21,081)	(19,624)
Rent & operating lease expense		(5,789)	(42,580)
Resources/subscriptions		(13,173)	(11,945)
Telephone & Internet charges		(11,807)	(10,054)
Travel & Accommodation		(1,926)	(9,695)
Other expenses		(18,702)	(15,030)
Finance costs	5	(5,851)	-
Total expenses		(1,045,693)	(696,798)
Surplus before income tax expense		56,160	82,195
Income tax expense		-	-
Surplus after income tax expense for the year		56,160	82,195
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		56,160	82,195

Statement of financial position

as at 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	2,137,878	1,665,417
Trade and other receivables	7	-	48,367
Prepayments		4,319	3,600
Total current assets		2,142,197	1,717,384
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	9	28,512	28,512
Right-of-use assets	8	123,140	-
Total non-current assets		149,631	28,512
Total assets		2,291,828	1,745,896
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	10	104,335	77,921
Contract liabilities	11	1,656,772	1,366,506
Lease liabilities	12	46,939	-
Employee benefits	13	85,322	45,879
Total current liabilities		1,893,368	1,490,306
Non-current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	12	73,421	-
Employee benefits	13	27,966	24,577
Provisions	14	9,900	-
Total non-current liabilities		111,287	24,577
Total liabilities		1,514,883	1,514,883
Net assets		231,013	231,013
Equity			
Retained surpluses		231,031	231,031
Total equity		231,013	231,013

Statement of changes in equity

for the year ended 30 June 2021

	Retained Surplus	Total Equity
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2019	148,818	148,818
Surplus after income tax expense for the year	82,195	82,195
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	82,195	82,195
Balance at 30 June 2020	231,013	231,013

	Retained Surplus	Total Equity
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2020	231,013	231,013
Surplus after income tax expense for the year	56,160	56,160
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	56,160	56,160
Balance at 30 June 2021	287,173	287,173

Notes to the financial statements

30 June 2021

Note 1. Basis of preparation on the summary financial statements

The financial statements cover Australian Centre for Disability Law as an individual entity. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars, which is Australian Centre for Disability Law's functional and presentation currency.

Australian Centre for Disability Law is a not-for-profit association, incorporated in New South Wales under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 and domiciled in Australia. The association is registered with Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission as a charity. Its registered office and principal place of business is:

Level 8
418a Elizabeth Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010

A description of the nature of the association's operations and its principal activities are included in the committee members' report, which is not part of the financial statements.

The financial statements were authorised for issue on 18 October 2021.

Note 2. Significant accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Basis of preparation

In the committee members' opinion, the association is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements.

These are special purpose financial statements that have been prepared for the purposes of complying with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and New South Wales legislation the Associations Incorporation Act 2009. The committee has determined that the accounting policies adopted are appropriate to meet the needs of the members of Australian Centre for Disability Law.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements specified by the Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') and the disclosure requirements of 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 of Standards' and AASB 1054 'Australian Additional Disclosures', as appropriate for not-for profit oriented entities.

Historical cost convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Critical accounting estimates

The preparation of the financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the association's accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements, are disclosed in note 3.

Notes to the financial statements

30 June 2021

Revenue recognition

The association recognises revenue as follows:

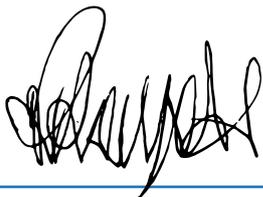
Revenue from contracts with customers

Revenue is recognised at an amount that reflects the consideration to which the association is expected to be entitled in exchange for transferring goods or services to a customer. For each contract with a customer, the association: identifies the contract with a customer; identifies the performance obligations in the contract; determines the transaction price which takes into account estimates of variable consideration and the time value of money; allocates the transaction price to the separate performance obligations on the basis of the relative stand-alone selling price of each distinct good or service to be delivered; and recognises revenue when or as each performance obligation is satisfied in a manner that depicts the transfer to the customer of the goods or services promised.

In the committee members' opinion:

- the association is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements. Accordingly, as described in note 2 to the financial statements, the attached special purpose financial statements have been prepared for the purposes of complying with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*;
- the attached financial statements and notes comply with the Australian Accounting Standards as described in note 2 to the financial statements;
- the attached financial statements and notes give a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

On behalf of the committee



Rosemary Kayess
Chair



Jenny Green
Vice Chair

18 October 2021



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Rupa Dharmasiri

George P Rochios

Mark W Willock

Australian Centre for Disability Law

ABN: 15 992 360 253

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Australian Centre for Disability Law

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of Australian Centre for Disability Law (the association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the committee members' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the association has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (a) Giving true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) Complying with *Australian accounting standards* to the extent described in Note 2, 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 2 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the association's financial reporting responsibilities under *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.



Australian Centre for Disability Law

ABN: 15 992 360 253

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Australian Centre for Disability Law

Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 2 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. The committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee 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 committee 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 committee either intend to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

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 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 the financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located in the auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: <http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Rupaninga Dharmasiri
Partner

LBW & Partners
Chartered Accountants
Level 3, 845 Pacific Highway
CHATSWOOD NSW 2067

Dated this 18th day of October 2021

