

YOUR RIGHTS  
YOUR VOICE  
LEGAL  
ADVOCACY  
EDUCATION



Seniors Rights  
Service

Annual Report 2016-2017

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Seniors Rights Service staff and Board gratefully acknowledge the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation and their Elders past and present. Our workplace is located on the grounds of these people and we thank them for the custodianship of this land. Mid North Coast: Macquarie/Hastings (Birpai), Kempsey (Dhungutti), Greater Taree (Birapai), Coffs Harbour (Gumbayngirr), Clarence Valley and Tweed (Bundjalung). South Coast: Tharawal (South Coast Northern) and Yuin (South Coast Southern).

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# YOUR RIGHTS YOUR VOICE LEGAL ADVOCACY EDUCATION

The purpose of the Seniors Rights Service is to foster communities where older members of society are aware of, actively exercising and defending their individual rights, in a society that respects and values older people and promotes and upholds their rights.

## PRINCIPLES

In all of its endeavours, the Seniors Rights Service will:

- empower older people as rights holders and active contributors to society
- provide high quality and timely service
- provide access and equity in service to seniors, regardless of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, gender, marital status, disability, religion, political beliefs, sexual preference, or other characteristic
- support capacity development of staff to ensure they can deliver high quality service
- collaborate with other organisations in pursuit of common goals
- work with broader civil society to foster respect for older members of society and their individual rights.

## PRIORITY POPULATIONS

The Seniors Rights Service will prioritise engagement with older people who are:

- disadvantaged and vulnerable
- in regional, rural and remote locations
- culturally and linguistically diverse
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex.

Seniors Rights Service is a proud member of:





**It has been a particularly productive year for Seniors Rights Service, and one that I believe highlights just how far we have come in recent years.**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As the aged care landscape continues to shift and change, we are better positioned than ever to play a key role in providing advice, education, advocacy and support that the older people in our community can count on.

One of the biggest achievements of the year has been the negotiation of a new relationship with the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN), which has culminated in the creation of a new national organisation that will operate under a federation model. This new arrangement will facilitate greater collaboration between the states and territories and bring more consistency to advocacy services provided around the country. Seniors Rights Service - particularly our CEO, Russell Westacott - has been a key driver in these negotiations. A representative of Seniors Rights Service is on the Board of the new entity and I have been appointed as the inaugural Chair.

Critically for our organisation, the new arrangement will provide us with a minimum three years' national aged care advocacy funding, allowing us to expand into an additional three sites in regional NSW over the next few years. This is a fantastic result, and one that will allow us to significantly extend our reach and enhance the quality of the advocacy service we provide.

We were also very fortunate this year to secure funding for the provision of legal services around the issue of changes to New South Wales strata law as they relate to older people. Again, I believe this demonstrates government trust in our organisation and our position as a leader in the provision of advice and action on seniors' rights.

Our work addressing the problem of elder abuse continues, and it was pleasing to see Minister Tanya Davies recognise elder abuse as an important issue with a forum at the NSW Parliament. We have been major contributors to a number of recent reviews on the topic, including the latest Australian Law Reform Commission report. I have been proud to see Seniors Rights Service quoted several times in relation to our thoughts about how the law should change to better support older people and reduce their risk of financial, emotional, and other forms of abuse.

Elder abuse will continue to be an issue we work hard at on local, state and national levels, not only in terms of prevention but also in supporting those who are affected. The National Elder Abuse Conference next February, hosted by Seniors Rights Service in Sydney, is another plank in our advocacy work in preventing elder abuse. I would encourage all to attend as we together seek to implement change.

In relation to governance, this last period has seen the retirement of valued Board member Paulo Totaro and the arrival of David Puls, who brings with him welcome expertise in legal and governance matters. Other changes have come about as a result of a decision to create two new committees: one in Finance and Risk, and the other in Community Engagement and Quality. These committees will essentially act as working groups to allow deeper consideration of key issues, further extending the reach of Seniors Rights Service.

We are also examining the option of changing our company structure, moving from an incorporated association to a corporation. With this proposed change, we will continue as a not-for-profit charity focused on our primary mission to promote and support the rights of older people. We are exploring this path with the intention of strengthening, modernising and improving our governance for the future, as well as increasing opportunities to contribute our expertise on a broader scale... not just state-wide but also on a national and an international level.

Working at a grassroots level with older people and their families remains our core business, and I would like to acknowledge the continued dedication and excellent results of our expert staff in this endeavour. In particular, I thank our CEO, Russell Westacott, for his leadership and our chief solicitor, Tom Cowen, who has had an especially challenging year.

It is the quality of our people and their work, combined with the support of our partners, funders and volunteers, that will see us achieve the outcome we are all striving for: a society that respects and values its elders, and promotes and upholds their rights.

**Craig Gear**  
President, Seniors Rights Service

Legal Services  
provided to older people

8,428

Overall clients  
reached in education

27,193

Advocacy services  
provided to recipients  
of Aged Care

3,705





**The last 12 months has been a remarkable time in the history of Seniors Rights Service. During the year, we were not only able to lock in funding for important existing programs but also managed to secure new funding for additional programs, and begin work on a number of key strategic projects that will provide significant new opportunities into the future.**

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Over our organisation's lifespan, the historical centrepiece of service delivery has been the aged care advocacy program. Seniors Rights Service has successfully delivered the Commonwealth Government's National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP) to recipients of aged care services in NSW for more than a quarter of a century. However, during the 2016/17 financial year, the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing decided to test this Commonwealth funding in a competitive marketplace, calling for nationwide expressions of interest from parties wanting to execute the program post 30 June.

I am pleased to report that the outcome of this process proved to be very positive for Seniors Rights Service. We have been extremely active over the past few years in working closely with counterpart aged care advocacy provider organisations in each state and territory and, in February 2017, these nine different organisations formed a single legal entity under the name of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN). It was this entity that successfully bid for the new Commonwealth funded aged care advocacy program to be delivered from July 2017 for the next three-year period. As the NSW service delivery organisation of OPAN, Seniors Rights Service will continue to deliver aged care advocacy services and rights-based education to care recipients and their families across NSW.

We are delighted to now be working in a formal arrangement with other OPAN member organisations across Australia. With service delivery organisations in each state and territory becoming better connected,

national consistency of service delivery will improve for all recipients of Commonwealth-funded aged care services who are in need of advocacy services. Another outcome of this new funding arrangement is that Seniors Rights Service is now in a position to open three new regional offices around NSW. This will substantially improve our state-wide reach and allow us to provide face-to-face support for people seeking advocacy services in these locations.

In the current financial year, we will be adding to our existing presence on the NSW Mid-North and South coasts, both popular retirement destinations, as well as establishing a new presence in the Central West where we will gain better access to Aboriginal communities across the state's west. Early in 2018, we will begin planning for our advocacy representatives to set up in the Northern Rivers area - home to Australia's largest regionally-based older lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) population, and the Riverina - home to Australia's most elderly regionally located culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) populations. Once all these regional offices are operational, we will have a physical strategic presence across the state. This approach aligns perfectly with our 2020 Strategic Plan to maximise our reach and service delivery to identified priority populations.

Our organisation's legal services also expanded this year. Seniors Rights Service successfully negotiated a new funding contract with the NSW Commission of Fair Trading, which has seen us set up a new service designed to provide legal advice and rights-based education to older people living

in strata arrangements. Recent changes to development laws in NSW, which allow for the sale of a strata property if 75% of its residents agree to sell to a developer, can leave older residents who do not want to sell in a precarious situation regarding their home and future accommodation options. We are now providing advice to older residents who find themselves in such a situation.

Seniors Rights Service has also played an active role in the community legal sector's response to proposed cuts to Commonwealth funding. We strongly argued the case that such cuts would be detrimental to some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people across the country - including older people who may be in need of legal services - and worked hard to find efficiencies within our service to limit the impact of the proposed 30% cut. Fortunately, on the eve of the 2017 Federal budget, the government announced the cuts would not go ahead. In fact, our Service gained an additional amount of funding for the new three-year cycle beginning in July 2017. As a result, we are now in a stronger fiscal position to provide improved legal services to older people across the state.

Our community education service continues to grow and is reaching more marginalised and 'hard to reach' communities than ever before. Our organisation is in a unique position whereby all of our core funders, both Commonwealth and State, expect us to provide rights-based education to older people across NSW. This includes education of residents of aged care facilities and retirement villages, and those who receive aged care services at home, as well as broader community engagement with older

people, their family and friends. Our staff are constantly travelling the state to provide activities and events, and collaborate with local networks with strong grassroots community connections. It is impressive that, over the course of this reporting period, more than 27,000 people have attended events at which we have had a presence. And this figure is set to rise, with new funding from NSW Department of Family and Community Services to help us hold some key events in 2018 and beyond.

To complement and enhance all of the organisation's work, Seniors Rights Service established a new position this year: that of Communications and Media Manager. In just six months, this new role has led to some important gains in terms of extending our reach, promoting our new brand, ensuring a greater media presence, and developing new relationships with key stakeholders and strategic partners. A portion of the new funding from NSW Family and Community Services I mentioned above will ensure this new role can continue to promote our brand and services to priority populations.

It is exciting to see this new dimension of the organisation grow and take shape. The work in this area is providing much-needed support across the whole organisation, ensuring that our solicitors and advocates can focus on service delivery, while our communications efforts work alongside our education and community services to raise awareness and bring people to our growing service base.

During the year, the Board has continued to play a strong role in supporting Seniors Rights Service



The Board of Seniors Rights Service looks forward to growing our community engagement and ensuring the rights of all older people are upheld

and offering vital strategic direction. It is extremely important that this high-level governance runs smoothly. It is this direction-setting, alongside thoughtful engagement, that allows the organisation's executive and management to mobilise staff and volunteers to achieve the strong results showcased in this Annual Report.

Before closing, I would like to make special mention of our volunteers. We have a growing base of very capable volunteers who assist our staff across the organisation, providing administrative support, high level project support and guidance, legal support and legal service delivery. This volunteer base helps our organisation perform better and more efficiently, as well as achieve more in terms of service reach. I offer heartfelt thanks to every volunteer who has given their time to ensure Seniors Rights Service is a strong and trusted organisation delivering vital services across NSW.

It has been a pleasure working alongside our Board, staff, volunteers, and external colleagues across the legal and aged care sectors. I very much look forward to the year ahead.

**Russell Westacott**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Seniors Rights Service



## OUR 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

In late 2015, Seniors Rights Service developed its 2020 Strategic Plan, which provides vision and a clear outline of how our organisation will operate in the years ahead. The Plan coincided with our organisation's name change from The Aged-care Rights Service to Seniors Rights Service. Along with renewing our brand, we took the opportunity to re-examine our purpose, strategic principles and priority populations. The process of re-positioning our organisation with a vision to 2020 was consultative and garnered thinking and viewpoints from more than 70 stakeholders - board, staff, volunteers, community, partners, funders and various leaders across the community legal and aged care sectors.

Our organisation's annual work plans have reflected key elements of the 2020 Plan since January 2016. Today - 18 months into the five-year period covered - we can confidently report that more than 30% of the plan has already been executed, with planning underway for another 30% of the vision set out in the document.

### GOAL 1: FOSTER RESPECT FOR SENIORS AND THEIR RIGHTS

The first goal of four in our 2020 Plan is to foster respect for seniors and their rights. We have made substantial progress towards this goal to date, primarily through building strategic alliances.

The major items that have been achieved and are now part of our daily business include stronger partnerships with organisations across NSW and Australia. This key operational plank underpins multiple new areas of work and new achievements. Stronger relationships with local culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community networks in Western Sydney as well as active participation with national leaders in the community legal and aged care sectors mean that we have greater reach and prominence. We continue to explore and expand opportunities to collaborate with significant figures and organisations within the space of delivering rights to older Australians. In doing so we ensure that Seniors Rights Service is able to reach more people and exert greater influence in protecting the rights of some of Australia's most vulnerable people.

### GOAL 2: PROVIDE BEST QUALITY SERVICE

Our aim is to provide an integrated and holistic service that is firmly focused on meeting the needs of our clients. Over the past 18 months, we have set about improving our service by shifting the focus of the delivery of some of our education sessions. A key aspect of our community reach and engagement is via over 840 events this year, attracting more than 27,000 people. Increasingly this body of work

is becoming more tailored for each community we engage with. Our priority populations in particular now play a more active role in determining what the nature of our interaction needs to be. Our education activities have been transformed into more interactive community forums where community members have input into the content of events and the design and development of new approaches.

Early in the 2017/18 year a new Policy and Quality Improvement Coordinator will commence at Seniors Rights Service to ensure ongoing quality improvement is integrated across all services.

### GOAL 3: EXTEND OUR ORGANISATION'S REACH

A priority for this year has been to extend our organisation's reach through technology, marketing and promotion. The organisation now has a Communications and Media Manager and is growing a significant body of work through this position. By utilising various media platforms the organisation's brand and key messages are being promoted to older people across NSW but also to those who work in both the aged care and legal sectors.

Increasingly the organisation is called upon by media to comment on key issues that impact on the lives and rights of older Australians. Also, engagement with marginalised grassroots communities is growing significantly. We continue to cultivate greater community partnership. It is through these mechanisms we are responding to diverse consumer need and ensuring our services are well targeted.

#### GOAL 4: SECURE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY FOR SERVICE GROWTH

We have made strong progress in securing financial sustainability for our organisation this past fiscal year. Not only have we successfully sourced additional funding for our services, we have also significantly expanded the use of pro bono work by law firms and obtained the input of various other volunteers.

One of the most significant areas of funding security for the organisation was being active in the creation of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) whereby this entity successfully secured the new funding round for the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP). Seniors Rights Service is the NSW service delivery organisation for OPAN and therefore our organisation has financial security to execute aged care advocacy into the coming years.

#### WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The board and staff will now review the Strategic Plan and the successes to date to identify areas of improvement, and new and emerging issues that are on the organisation's horizon. The review will ensure Seniors Rights Service keeps moving in the direction that adheres to our purpose and that we continue to promote and uphold the rights of older people.



## WHO WE ARE



**Russell Westacott,**  
Chief Executive Officer

### **Legal**

**Tom Cowen,**  
Manager Legal Service,  
Principal Solicitor

**Kim Boettcher,** Solicitor

**Melissa Chaperlin,** Solicitor

**Robert Lollbach,** Solicitor

**Nalika Padmasena,** Solicitor

**Margaret Small,** Solicitor

**Charlotte Steer,** Solicitor

**Tim Tunbridge,** Solicitor

### **Advocacy**

**Pat Joyce,** Manager Advocacy

**Margaret Crothers,**  
Advocate/Education Officer

**Janette Fitzgerald,** Intake Officer

**Ray Horsburgh,**  
Advocate/Education Officer

**Jill McDonnell,**  
Advocate/Education Officer

**Jenny Samuels,**  
Advocate/Education Officer

### **Education**

**Diana Bernard,** Manager Education and  
Community Services

### **Communications**

**Jane Polkinghorne,** Manager  
Communications and Media

### **Administration**

**Sue Rogers-Harrison,**  
Receptionist/Administrative Support

**Stella She,** Financial Controller

## OUR RECEPTION AND INTAKE

The Reception and Intake team is generally the first point of contact when people need our help. On an average day, the team handles at least 80 calls, ranging from requests for legal or advocacy assistance and enquiries about our community forums or published information resources to questions about who to contact for specific assistance. The team also manages incoming postal, web and email enquiries, as well as greeting visitors to our office. In the past year, Reception and Intake has also become the initial contact point for enquiries referred from the newly-established national Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN).

Our Intake staff manage initial discussions with new clients, to help determine the legal or advocacy services they may require. Clients are then referred to the appropriate Seniors Rights Service advocate or legal staff member. Many calls are complex, and clients at times feel distressed or overwhelmed by the issues they face. Our Reception and Intake team work hard to handle each call with empathy and tact.

When a caller requires a service we do not provide, the Reception and Intake team call on their extensive knowledge of the various resources available for older people in NSW and Australia. Every effort is made to refer the caller to an external service that can meet their needs.

In the last financial year, Seniors Rights Service distributed over 61,000 brochures providing information on older people's rights and the services available to them

Reception also provides office and administrative support for the entire Seniors Rights Service team. This involves supporting our regional staff on the Mid-North Coast and South Coast of NSW, as well as assisting those of our staff who are travelling throughout NSW. The team are the heart of our organisation.

### Volunteer Board as at June 30, 2017

**Craig Gear**, Board President, MBA, BN, MN (Critical Care), CGA Consulting

**Barbara Anderson**, BA, MA

**Margaret Duckett**, BSc, MSc (Med), MScSoc, UNSW FAIDC

**Elaine Leong**, BA LLB, BA Comms (Hon), Grad Dip Legal Prac, GAICD

**Amanda Terranova**, PMP, AIMM

**Patti Warn**, BA (Uni of TAS)

We gratefully acknowledge the service of Paolo Totaro and Jacqueline Townsend, who both retired from the Board during the 2016-2017 FY.

We also welcome new Board member **David Puls**, who joined the Board in August 2017.

### Legal, Advocacy and Administrative Volunteers

**Christine Ai, Sandra Clark, Max Dalton, Tony Do, Rosalie Gibson, Millie Ituwabu, Kate Kennedy, Carol (Bo Bae) Lee, Carolina Mazza, Sharni Nichols, Shirley Robinson, Anna Scheible, Jenny Templeman, Jessica Vines, Dinusha Wijesuriya.**

We also thank the law firms **Baker McKenzie, Henry Davis York, Holding Redlich and Wotton Kearney** for their generosity in providing pro bono support to our organisation. These pro bono partnerships provide enormous benefits to our clients. We are very grateful for the contributions of every staff member involved, and particularly thank the Pro Bono Coordinators for their assistance in organising each program.

### We gratefully acknowledge and thank the following funders

Without the support of these funding bodies Seniors Rights Service would not be able to achieve its goals.

**Commonwealth Department of Health**

**Legal Aid (NSW)**

**NSW Fair Trading**

**Family & Community Services (NSW)**

**Commonwealth Attorney General's Department**

OUR LEGAL  
SERVICES  
YOUR RIGHTS  
YOUR VOICE





## OUR LEGAL SERVICES

**This year the legal division of Seniors Rights Service has experienced impressive expansion and change. We have expanded our pro-bono legal advice clinic, now supported by four major NSW private practices, and we have added a new service: the Strata Collective Sales and Advocacy Service, employing two new solicitors.**

The legal services provided by Seniors Rights Service over the past year have been in consistently high demand. Despite the pressures placed on our relatively small team, we have succeeded in maintaining an excellent standard, and it is a source of great satisfaction to know that we have been able to provide reliable help to many older Australians in need.

### **DURING THE 2016-2017 FINANCIAL YEAR, LEGAL SERVICES:**

- provided 2840 callers with direct legal assistance and advice
- undertook 75 community legal education projects
- opened 30 new legal cases involving court or tribunal work (see the case studies that follow this report)
- escalated 139 advices to legal minor assistances where further work such as writing letters, contacting other parties or attending meetings was required
- offered legal education sessions attended by 2419 people (also noted in the education report)
- facilitated community forums around planning ahead issues attended by 3169 people (also noted in the education report).

### **IMPROVING LAWS THAT AFFECT OLDER PEOPLE**

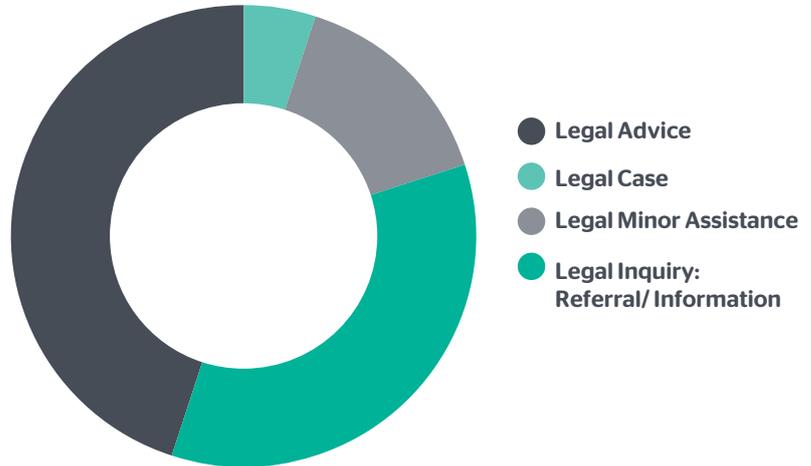
Seniors Rights Service is unique in offering both legal services for older people and aged care advocacy services all under one roof. As the only organisation in NSW offering this comprehensive service, we are in an ideal position to provide input on reviews and enquiries into issues that affect older people in this state. As such, we have been involved in a number of activities during the last financial year that have led to significant legal and regulatory changes.

- We were a key player in the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) Inquiry and subsequent report on elder abuse, released in June 2017. Seniors Rights Service contributed to a joint national submission by the Older Persons Legal Service Network (OPLSN), and a submission prepared in collaboration with the University of Newcastle, as well as completing our own submission. We also reviewed the final ALRC report, including providing comments on the recommendations arising from the Inquiry.

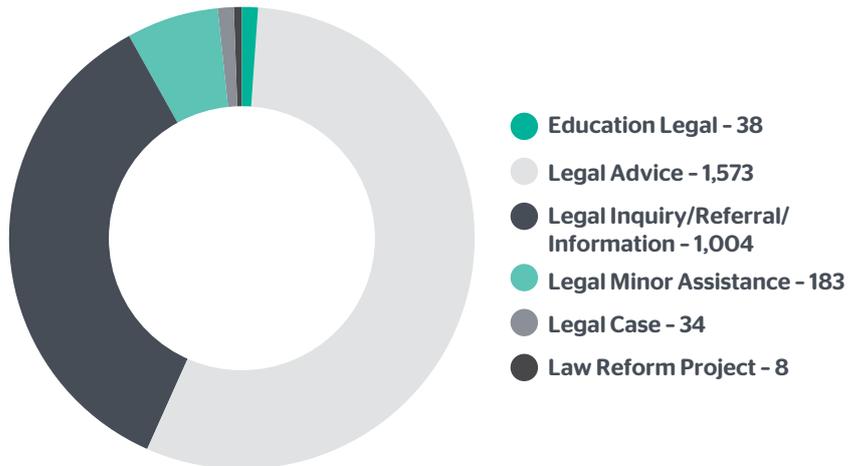


- We played an active role in the review of NSW Retirement Village regulations. As a result of the increasing number of instances of operators acting unfairly towards residents - several of which have been reported recently in the media - consideration is now being given to a review of the Retirement Villages Act.
- We collaborated with the Tenants Union NSW to campaign to make rents fairer (the Fair Rent Collaboration) for older people, participating in the review of the NSW Residential Tenancies Act.
- We attended a public consultation to inform a review of the Guardianship Act. This involved examining different supported decision-making models, and consulting in relation to amendments that should be made to the laws regulating medical and dental decisions for people lacking capacity.
- We made an important contribution to the National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy regarding older people in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) populations.

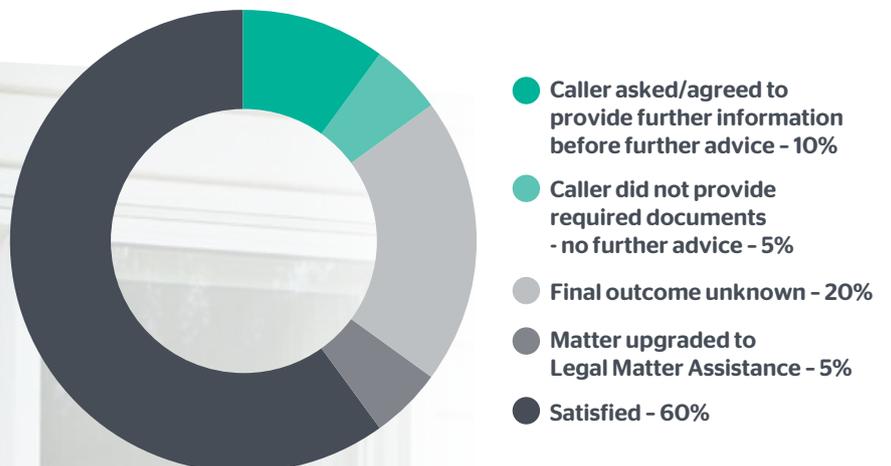
### Strata Collective Sales and Advocacy Service Legal Activity Nov 16-Jun 17



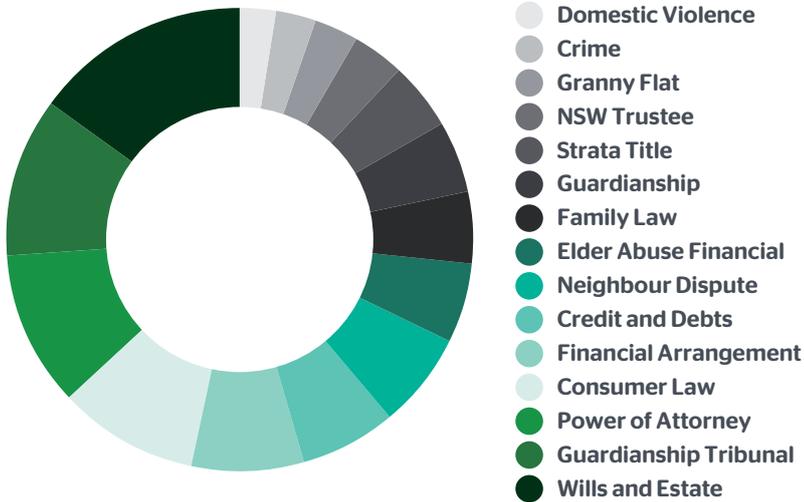
### Legal Service Work Type 2016-2017



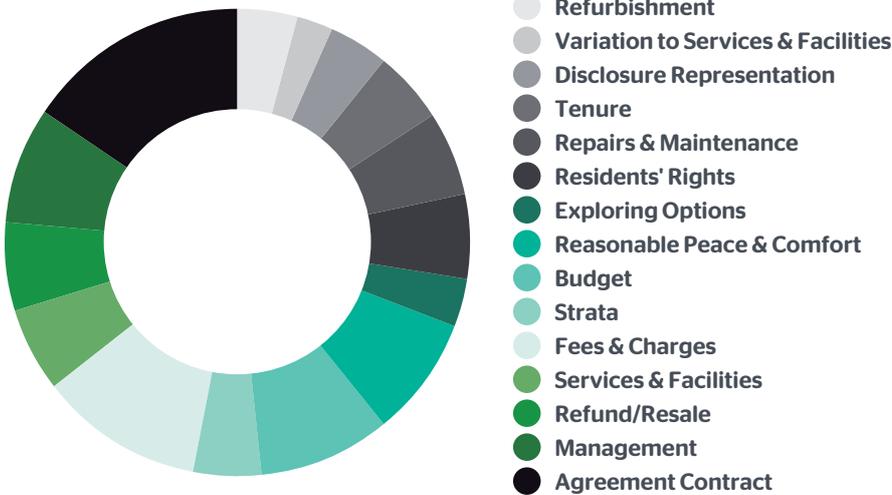
### Outcomes of Legal Issues 2016-2017



### Top 15 Issues Raised by Clients - General Legal Service



### Top 15 Issues Raised by Clients - Retirement Villages



### OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

As well as playing a key role in legal reform, outlined above, our Legal Services team were involved in a number of other important projects during the financial year.

- In November, we started a new service specifically for older people in strata living arrangements: the Strata Collective Sales and Advocacy Service. This came about as a result of changes to development laws, which allow the sale of any strata complex where 75% or more of the owners decide they want to sell. In response, the Office of Fair Trading funded Seniors Rights Service to provide legal advice to older people who are negatively impacted by the new arrangements. Since its launch, more than 20 people have used the new service.
- Our partnerships with four commercial law firms - Henry Davis York, Holding Redlich, Wotton Kearney, and Baker McKenzie - have proven very valuable. Solicitors from these firms worked with us to develop their knowledge of legal issues faced by older people while helping us deal with enquiries from



the public. Their pro bono services also aided our contribution to the Australian Law Reform Commission Inquiry and recommendations. Henry Davis York has been particularly generous in offering pro bono assistance to the board and senior management of Seniors Rights Service.

- The Bar Association of NSW also provided us with invaluable pro bono assistance in running Supreme Court matters, providing counsel advice and appearance on behalf of our clients free of charge.
- We continued the Community Legal Centre Accreditation process, which this year included familiarising ourselves with the new Cultural Safety Handbook, designed to raise awareness of relevant cultural issues when working with Aboriginal clients.
- We continued our strong engagement with NSW multicultural communities.
- We have been an active contributor to the Supported Decision Making Working Group, which is developing a national policy framework on supported decision-making for aged care providers. Part of a research project at the University of Western

Australia, this important policy document looks at the need to define the supported decision makers' role and to provide appropriate training for staff in this area.

- We continued to participate in the National Network of Older Persons Legal Service, which aims to develop nationwide consistent responses to the generic problems faced by older people in Australia, and contributed to the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP) report which advocates for an international convention for the rights of older people.

### OUR ROLE IN COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Our Service provided more than 400 community legal educational activities during the year, presenting to a range of audiences including residents and staff of retirement villages, the NSW Police, local Councils, and hospitals.

We continued to develop and deliver specialised education aimed at addressing the concerns of other disadvantaged groups, including culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) older people. Among many other events, we presented a

seminar on elder abuse to an Arabic multi-cultural aged care forum, and gave talks on 'planning ahead' to seniors in the Greek, Chinese and Italian communities.

We have also continued to grow our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (A&TSI) populations. Our involvement with several relevant networks - including the Rural Regional Remote (RRR) network, Aboriginal Legal Access Program, and A&TSI Rights Working Group - has been key to our Service reaching some of the vulnerable and marginalised older people in NSW. This year we visited A&TSI communities in several regional areas of the state, including those living in and around Young, Walgett, Moree, Yass, Liverpool and Dubbo where we ran educational sessions and distributed educational materials.

**Tom Cowen**  
Manager Legal Services

**Nalika Padmasena**  
Acting Principal Solicitor

We provided  
**8,428**

Legal services to older people  
in the past 12 months

2,840 callers provided with legal  
assistance & advice  
2,419 attendees at legal education  
3,169 attendees at community  
legal forums



# LEGAL CASE STUDIES

## LEGAL CASE STUDY 1

A home care service provider contacted us about a retirement village resident who was facing homelessness due to the operator filing an application before the Tribunal to terminate the resident's contract. The application was made on the basis that the client had breached village rules by continuously smoking in his unit, and that his behaviour was considered a risk to himself, other residents and staff.

We were contacted one week before the Tribunal conciliation hearing. We advised the client of his rights and obligations under the contract and the Act, and represented him at the Conciliation hearing. We negotiated with the operator to withdraw the matter and entered a consent order for the resident to continue living in the unit on the condition that he does not smoke in the room and seeks assistance from his doctor to quit smoking.

## LEGAL CASE STUDY 2

A caller rang our Service because she was worried about the price she was being offered for her home of 30 years. The suggested valuation under the collective re-development proposal was not enough to allow her to find somewhere equivalent to live. We advised her that the Minutes of the last meeting of the Owners' Corporation showed approval for the costs of independent legal advice and independent valuation to be met by the developers. We referred the caller to several private lawyers specialising in this area of practice, and she was able to choose a lawyer to protect her interests.

## LEGAL CASE STUDY 3

We were contacted in relation to a retirement village issue where the operator had negotiated with a group of residents individually to arrange for them to move to another aged care facility. About 12 residents who were on assisted care residence contracts were told that the assisted care section was creating a financial burden for the organisation, and plans were underway to redevelop the village to provide more self-care accommodation. The operator was planning to submit a development application to the local Council. Until that point, the operator had failed to take any steps to notify residents of his intentions or to seek approval from the residents for the variation of various services and facilities.

We attended a meeting with the operator and the residents, and advocated on behalf of the residents. The residents are now aware of their rights and available options. Our Service continues to support this group in protecting their rights under the contractual arrangement.

## LEGAL CASE STUDY 4

A client's husband passed away suddenly while living in residential aged care. The client was unsure of the cause of death and wanted to see the aged care plan and medical records of her husband from two weeks prior to his death. The aged care home refused to release the records. We gained access to the records under privacy legislation and access to information legislation. The client was provided with the documents and on reviewing these, decided there was no need to take further action.

## LEGAL CASE STUDY 5

A grandmother had a very close relationship with her paternal granddaughter, who had come to live with her after separating from her husband. The granddaughter took her own life, as well as that of her child, in tragic circumstances. The granddaughter had a superannuation fund death benefit valued at about \$220,000, which her mother claimed in full. We acted for the grandmother in preparing statutory declarations and in making a submission to the Trustee of the fund, who amended its decision so that the death benefit was awarded to our client and the mother in equal shares.

## LEGAL CASE STUDY 6

An older man who was confined to a wheelchair was living on Centrelink benefits, and wanted to sell his only asset: a vacant block of land in western Sydney. His son, who owned a one per cent share of the land, lodged a caveat over the title to the land, claiming an interest following an alleged repayment of a mortgage. Our client denied that his son had ever repaid the mortgage. We acted for the client in lodging and serving a lapsing notice on the son, and the caveat was removed. We then gave further advice to our client regarding a Supreme Court action under section 66G of the Conveyancing Act for a sale of the land.



## LEGAL CASE STUDY 7

A caller with Power of Attorney for her brother, who lives in aged care in regional NSW, rang us to advise that an aged care nurse had stolen thousands of dollars in cash using his ATM card. The nurse had been charged with theft and a court order made for the amount stolen to be repaid. However, the nurse had relocated interstate and declined to pay the debt. The caller was advised of the time limit of 12 years to enforce the debt by examination summons or garnishee of wages, and to obtain a solicitor to assist with Court action. The nurse is still working in aged care. We advised the caller to report the nurse to the Aged Care Complaints Commission.

## LEGAL CASE STUDY 8

We were contacted by a Mandarin-speaking older woman with three daughters and one son. She had appointed one of her daughters as Power of Attorney. The daughter had not assisted her mother when she was recently admitted to hospital, and the client had revoked the Power of Attorney. The daughter lodged an application for a financial management order over her mother. The mother showed some knowledge of financial affairs with the assistance of an interpreter. We advised her on the law and helped her prepare for a NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) hearing.

## LEGAL CASE STUDY 9

Our client, a 76-year-old woman who does not speak or read English, came to Australia in 2014 sponsored by her daughters under an aged parent visa. In May 2015, one of the daughters took her mother to the bank and arranged for her to withdraw the entire balance of her bank account: the sum of \$227,000. The money was taken by the daughter who claimed that the money was a “wedding gift”. The mother was later evicted from the daughter’s home and started living at a local hospital.

In September 2015, NCAT Guardianship Division appointed the NSW Trustee as the manager of our client’s financial affairs, with a view to action being taken to recover the monies which had been misappropriated. However, the NSW Trustee failed to take any significant action. In December 2016, we made an application to NCAT Administrative Division who directed that the NSW Trustee reconsider its lack of action. The NCAT application was resolved after the NSW Trustee and Public Guardian engaged the services of a private law firm to advise and take action.

## LEGAL CASE STUDY 10

An aged care resident under the management of the NSW Trustee and Public Guardian was upset with the NSW Trustee for not reporting on the sale of her property. The client had not been receiving financial statements from the NSW Trustee and Public Guardian. The client was also upset with one of her daughters, who had contacted the Public Guardian seeking to restrict her mother’s social activities, and whose visits the mother found very stressful.

The client claimed she had capacity to make her own guardianship decisions, and said she wanted a long-term family friend to be her private manager under the supervision of the NSW Trustee and Public Guardian. We helped the client obtain information about her financial affairs from the NSW Trustee, and to write to the Public Guardian seeking the right to access her friends outside the aged care facility. We also helped the client complete an application to review the financial management order and guardianship order, so she could apply to have her friend appointed as private manager and guardian.

### A RECENT CLIENT QUOTE

“It was really beneficial to learn of the legal issues and differences between types of documents. The lawyer made it clear and understandable. Most helpful! Thank you.”

OUR ADVOCACY  
SERVICES  
YOUR RIGHTS  
YOUR VOICE





## OUR ADVOCACY SERVICES

**The role of aged care advocates is changing. There is a widening gap between the needs of older people for services that allow them to stay living at home, and putting those services in place for them. We hear from many older people that they have been waiting many months for a high-level home care package. Without it to support them they cannot cope, with or without a carer, and have needed to enter residential aged care prematurely. A growing number of older people do not have families or friends to help them navigate the system, and advocates are needing to meet more older clients face-to-face to assist with accessing the My Aged Care gateway to find out what services are available to them.**

### IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Our Advocacy service assists with a wide range of issues affecting older people. The most common of these are to do with accessing home care, contracts and care agreements, explaining basic fee structures (including exit fees and unlawful fees), personal care and quality of care, Consumer Directed Care and choices, respite, and transport for medical, social and cultural needs.

We value the many networks, collaboratives and partners we work with to raise issues about aged care, and who help inform the government and the community to improve outcomes for older people. Many of these networks focus on vulnerable older people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (A&TSI),

culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities, as well as those who are homeless, live in rural and remote areas, or have previously experienced institutionalised care.

This year, our advocates have spoken to many people about their rights as consumers to be able to access or improve the care and services they are receiving.

### Highlights of the year

**We visited 219 aged care homes** and spoke to residents and their families about rights and responsibilities

**Presented at dozens of metropolitan and regional forums across NSW,** made possible by our advocates based on the Mid North Coast and South Coast



We provided  
**3,705**  
 Advocacy services to recipients of Aged Care in the past 12 months

**Spoke to aged care staff in 165 aged care homes and nurses' forums,** and presented at the Better Practice Conference in Sydney.

Assisting older people or their families to contact an advocate early-on in the complaints process can be so helpful in resolving issues promptly. Yet, many staff and managers say they have not heard of us or do not understand the role of independent advocacy. There is clearly more work to be done in spreading the word about the services we provide.



**OUR ADVOCACY WORK - QUICK FACTS**

<b>Advocacy</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1656</b>
	Self-advocacy	582
	Assisted advocacy	108
	Representation and face to face	80
	General advocacy	886
<b>Enquiries</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1034</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>664</b>
	Sessions for residents and families	219
	Sessions to residential staff	145
	Home Care recipients	46
	Home Care staff	45
	Home Support recipients	39
	Home Support staff	24
	Community	146
<b>Advocacy for special needs groups</b>	Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander	5
	CALD	126
	LGBTI	1
<b>Information resources posted</b>		<b>994</b>
<b>Who made contact</b>	Residential care	94
	Home Care/Consumer Directed Care	8
	Home Support Program	10
	Allied Health worker	43
	Industry staff	13
	Quality Agency	19
	Education community	45
	Elder Abuse Helpline and Resource Unit	29
	My Aged Care	210
<b>Geographical area all contacts</b>	<b>Advocacy</b>	
	Metro	986
	Regional/Rural	511
	Remote	11
<b>Issues</b>	Abuse	148
	Assessment & access to services	260
	Alternative decision-making	76
	Decision making	63
	Care planning	94
	Complaints	47
	Contracts	59
	Financial	408
	Duty of care	147
	Management and staffing	48
	Medications	25
	Mobility	18
	Tenure	35
	Quality of care	165
<b>Referrals to Aged Care Complaints Commissioner</b>	Referrals to	156
	Referred by	24



## SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE TO VOICE THEIR CONCERNS

Older people deserve to have support to voice their concerns and wishes.

This year we contributed to a number of policy discussions with aged care forums and with the government. Our advocates worked with the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner to elevate complaints and support staff to inform residents of sanctions imposed on facilities that are not meeting the required standards. We also worked with the Quality Agency to ensure all aged care clients receive appropriate quality care, and met with the government to discuss issues and trends in both community and residential care settings.

Our message to aged care providers is to encourage care recipients and their representatives to raise small issues early. Older people, especially those in aged care homes, are often frightened to speak up for themselves. Each year, some providers decline to have us enter their facilities and perform our role in advising residents and their families, and staff, about residents' rights and the internal and external complaints process.

We would like to see advocacy education by Commonwealth-funded advocacy services become mandatory for all staff. Hopefully this will be possible and easy to achieve now that all states and territories are under the umbrella of the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN).

If all aged care workers are educated about their role in assisting in the advocacy process, they will be able to assist unhappy residents to speak to management or contact an advocate.

Advocates can listen to the residents' concerns and help them understand their rights, choices and responsibilities.

## HELPING PREVENT ELDER ABUSE

If everyone is aware of the signs of intentional or unintentional abuse or neglect in aged care, it can be prevented.

Last year we presented a joint session for Benchmark legal webinars, providing information about both the legal and non-legal aspects of elder abuse. We also contributed to discussions and research that we hope will help older people to have their wishes heard, and inform and assist care providers - often the people who know the older person best - through our participation in a 'supported decision-making' interest group with professionals and academics from Albany Rural Campus, University of Western Australia.

For the next six months, we will be supervising two Master of Social Work students from Western Sydney University. We hope this experience will benefit both the students and our organisation, and we look forward to exploring how best to use their skills to support our clients. Advocates are aware that there is a gap in services and that there is a need for case-management and case coordination of individuals, which currently we are not funded to provide. As well as feeding back this shortfall in support for older people, Seniors Rights Service is exploring how social work professionals might help address these issues.

## WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Enhancing the work of our advocates, our solicitor colleagues have been extremely helpful this year in providing advice to older people and their representatives, as well as providing legal information to professionals and community workers concerned about older, vulnerable individuals. These internal referrals have meant we provide a comprehensive service to all our clients. We can always find a service to assist our callers in some way.

**Pat Joyce**  
Manager Advocacy

### Greatest advocacy issues

1. Financial issues
2. Assessment & access to services
3. Quality of care
4. Abuse
5. Duty of care

# OUR ADVOCACY ON THE MID-NORTH COAST

The Mid North Coast region of NSW covers a distance of about 400 kilometres, from Seal Rocks in the south to Woolgoolga in the north. This region is a very popular destination for retirees looking for a 'sea change' or a 'tree change', particularly those moving north from Sydney. In a region with a high proportion of residents aged over 60, there are a high number of aged care homes, as well as more than two dozen different organisations that provide in-home aged care.



Seniors Rights Service is becoming well-recognised in this region as a provider of legal and advocacy services for older people, and we try to maintain as high a profile as possible through attendance at local events and activities, and participation in relevant groups and networks. This year we travelled far and wide to present more than 60 educational sessions to residents and staff of aged care facilities, as well as community groups, local professionals, and senior citizen and carer organisations.

A major issue on the North coast, as elsewhere, is the growing incidence of dementia. This is causing much

concern in the region. Our Service is actively involved in the community's efforts to address this issue through our representation on the Port Macquarie Dementia-Friendly Steering Committee. While we advocate for the rights of all older people, we must be particularly vigilant about financial and other exploitation of people with dementia, who represent such a vulnerable population.

**Jill McDonnell**  
Mid-North Coast Area Regional Advocate/Educator





TIME FOR TEA



### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

'Time for Tea', two morning teas we ran in association with the Hastings Elder Abuse Prevention Network in the towns of Wauchope and Laurieton on Elder Abuse Awareness Day. We worked with a number of community groups and individuals in these communities to plan, promote, and present the events, which were open to all who were interested in finding out more about seniors' safety, rights and services.

Participating in an **Elder Abuse Awareness Day Forum in Port Macquarie**, run by the Older Women's Network, where we spoke about Seniors Rights Service, different kinds of elder abuse, and how to prevent it.

Attending two dementia-related community events in Port Macquarie: the opening of NSW's first '**dementia sensory garden**' at the Alzheimer's Australia NSW mid-north coast premises, and the opening of **St George Bank's 'dementia-friendly branch'** - also a first for NSW.



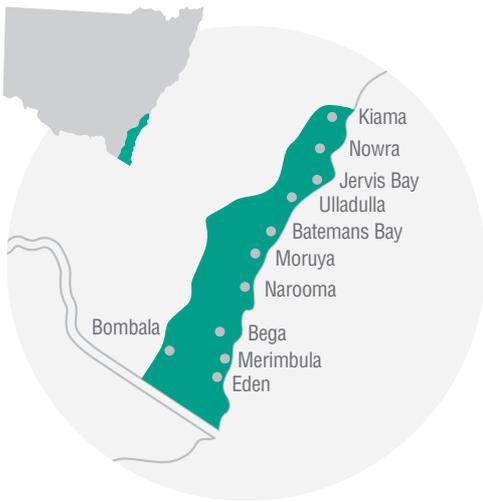
TIME FOR TEA



ATTENDEES AT CLCNSW RRR ROADSHOW AT PORT MACQUARIE WITH FIONA MCLEOD, PRESIDENT LAW COUNCIL AUSTRALIA

# OUR ADVOCACY ON THE SOUTH COAST

**Seniors Rights Service exists for all older people in NSW, and our aim is to reach as many of our target audience as possible in different geographical areas of the state.**



The South coast of NSW is extensive - covering from Kiama in the north, to Eden in the south - and is a challenging area to service. This region has one of the fastest growing ageing populations in the state, with some localities having particularly high populations of people aged over 60 years. Many people move out of cities to regional areas seeking more affordable housing and a lower cost of living, and there are a number of low socio-economic areas along the coast. The region is also home to a number of large Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (A&TSI) communities, such as those in the Eurobodalla and Shoalhaven.

This year we continued to build our profile and extend our reach in the South coast region. An increasing number of local aged care and community services are referring older people to Seniors Rights Service for face to face advocacy, and it is pleasing to see a growing number of people taking advantage of and benefiting from the service we provide. Education is another very important service we offer in the region, and this year we were able to deliver almost 200 education and information sessions on the south coast. As well as presenting regularly to aged care providers and recipients, community groups,



seniors groups and special interest groups, we attended a number of forums, symposia and Expos. We also continued to actively participate in local networks of relevant services and interagency groups in the region.

**Margaret Crothers**

Southern NSW Area Regional Advocate/Educator

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR**

**Working with dedicated aged care and community workers in the region**, who have been very responsive to requests for assistance to support older people.

**Receiving an increasing number of referrals** by local aged care services and providers for face to face advocacy, to meet with older disadvantaged people who need help.

**Working with elder abuse prevention networks** to plan and provide information days for older people, to let them know about the support services that are available, and

to raise their awareness of elder abuse and how to prevent it.

**Travelling to the Bega area to provide local communities with help and information**, in collaboration with the Good Service Mob and other groups (and the final road trip of Seniors Rights Service solicitor Meg Small before her retirement).

**429**  
advocacy services provided  
**194**  
education sessions delivered



ATTENDEES AT THE EUROBODALLA AGED CARE INTERAGENCY MEETING, CHAIRED BY SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE



MARGARET SMALL, MARGARET CROTHERS AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM LEGAL AID



## ADVOCACY CASE STUDIES

### ADVOCACY CASE STUDY 1

A woman had just moved into an aged care home. The family were concerned because her agreement stated she would be charged for an 'assets replacement fee' and a 'premium service' to have a registered nurse on duty, a fire safety officer allocated on each shift, fine food and wine, and high cotton count on the bedsheets. This was not an Extra Service facility, and there is no such price category approved by the government. Our advocacy staff advised the caller of their consumer and contract rights, and to meet with the provider and have these fees removed from the agreement before they signed it. The issue was referred to the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner as well as the Aged Care Pricing Commissioner, as this was seen as a systemic issue which needs monitoring.

### ADVOCACY CASE STUDY 2

A staff member in an aged care home had cancelled a resident's specialist medical appointment, which was difficult to reschedule, without reason. We advised the resident of their rights and discussed other issues such as transport, the Taxi Subsidy Scheme, and financial hardship application. The resident also had concerns about the person they had appointed as their Power of Attorney. They were referred to a solicitor in our Legal Service team for advice on this matter.

### ADVOCACY CASE STUDY 3

An older couple living in Sydney received a one-hour service each week to help with cleaning and shopping. One person in the couple had been assessed as needing a Level 4 high care package, but was still waiting after nine months for one to become available. The couple were desperate for more assistance but could not afford to pay private care workers. We discussed emergency options and advised them to consider the option of respite to allow each to rest, as it was a struggle to keep going with so little support. Our advocate assisted them to contact My Aged Care and an Aged Care Assessment Team for urgent respite or placement in an aged care home. A family friend also contacted our advocate and was advised to speak with their local member, as they felt concerned that no one was assisting the couple.

### ADVOCACY CASE STUDY 4

A resident of an aged care home contacted our advocacy service as she had concerns about the food being served. With her authority, our advocate contacted the manager at the home and arranged a meeting. The manager, who was new, had recently employed a new chef. We suggested a meeting with our client and several other residents who had concerns, and the new chef and manager. The issue was immediately resolved and changes put in place to address the residents' requests. The residents felt supported by the new manager and that they would be able to approach her with any concerns in the future.

OUR EDUCATION  
SERVICES  
YOUR RIGHTS  
YOUR VOICE



## OUR EDUCATION SERVICES

**Education is integral to Seniors Rights Service and the role it plays in the NSW community. In effect, the education we provide works as a preventive strategy, protecting against abuse by informing older people of their rights and raising awareness.**

In the past year, we were proud to provide face-to-face education and educational materials to more than 27,000 older people and their representatives in metropolitan, regional and rural areas across the state. A significant number of the referrals Seniors Rights Service receives for legal and advocacy services come about as a result of exposure to our organisation through these educational events and materials.

### EXTENDING OUR REACH

We seek to provide a diverse education service and to respond intuitively to evolving community needs and issues. We are always striving to extend our reach among vulnerable and disadvantaged older people – those who most need our help. It has therefore been very gratifying to see

a significant increase in the number of people from priority populations engaged by the Service over the last 12 months, especially older people in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) populations. Through strategic partnerships and ‘word of mouth’ we have become a trusted source of rights-based information and education for older people in these communities.

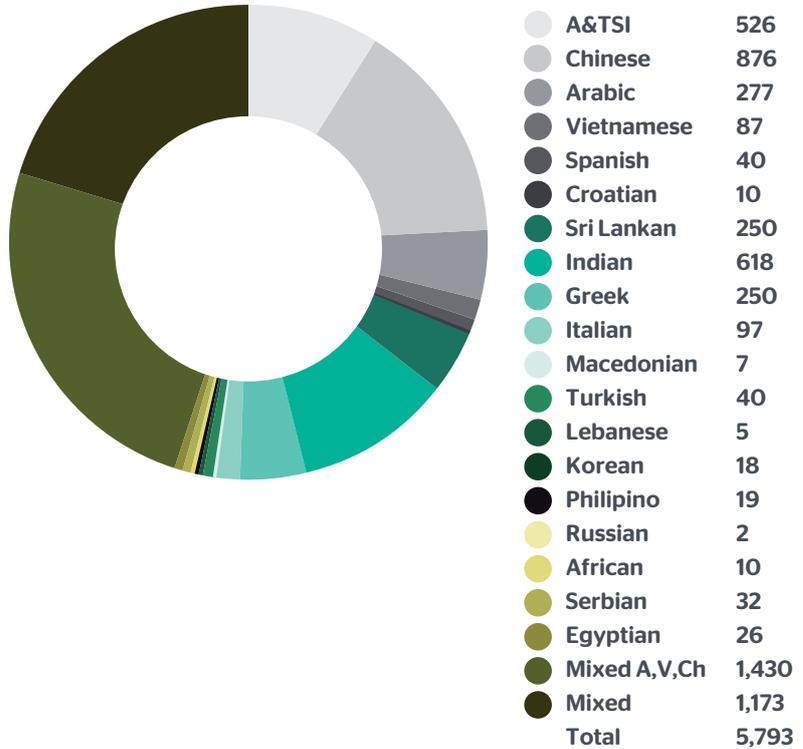
During the past year, we were able to increase the percentage of CALD attendees at our educational forums from 17% up to 24% of total attendees – a significant achievement. We have been able to engage with the CALD population through our presence at a number of key multicultural events, including the Multicultural Eid Festival and Fair: an annual event celebrated at the end of Ramadan. Held in July 2016



at the Fairfield Showground in Sydney, this extremely popular event attracted upwards of 5000 attendees, with an estimated 400 people visiting our stand.

It is not enough to be engaging with people living in metropolitan areas; we also need to be actively reaching out to those who live in regional, rural and remote areas. These communities tend to have more limited resources and less access to assistance, but no less of a need for our services. In 2016-17 we continued our rural education program, completing trips to several regional areas. These included Bombala, Cooma, Queanbeyan, Yass, Wollongong, Goulburn, Lismore, Casino, Cowra, Forbes, Parkes, Brewarrina, Bourke, Cobar, Walgett, Mudgee, Kempsey, Wagga Wagga, Bega, Tumut, Gundagai, Grafton, Newcastle and the Central Coast.

### Breakdown of CALD Audience



ATTENDEES AT WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY BANKSTOWN



ROBERT LOLLBACH ADVISES VISITORS AT THE ROYAL EASTER SHOW

DIANA BERNARD AND NALIKA PADMASENA AT WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY



PAT JOYCE AT RETIREMENT EXPO 2016



SYDNEY GAY AND LESBIAN MARDI GRAS FAIR DAY



### TAILORING OUR APPROACH

We do not believe in a 'one size fits all' approach; rather, we take care to tailor our work to suit different populations and groups. A wonderful illustration of this came about when we collaborated with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (A&TSI) community to develop a new culturally appropriate educational brochure, specifically targeted to A&TSI clients. After consulting with recognised elders in both urban and rural Aboriginal groups, and engaging a local Aboriginal artist to come up with an engaging design and photograph some regional elders, we were able to produce a brochure that is now widely used and receives consistently positive feedback from the A&TSI community.

We worked closely with the A&TSI community in the far west region of NSW this year, where we met with Aboriginal communities in Bourke and Brewarrina to discuss home

care, legal issues and seniors' rights. These sessions were at the invitation of the local Aboriginal organisation Thiyama-Li and in collaboration with the Cooperative Legal Service Delivery Program, a section of Legal Aid devoted to remote communities. During the sessions, a number of issues were highlighted by Aboriginal people, such as accessing home care, debt, duty of care, and lack of services. Our new A&TSI brochure, mentioned above, was well-received by this community, who said it "spoke their language." We further extended our reach to Indigenous communities through a series of forums hosted by the Good Service Mob in March in the Port Macquarie, Kempsey, Taree and Doonside areas, and through our attendance at events held during NAIDOC week in July.

As well as increasing the number of people from CALD and A&TSI populations reached by our Service, we have been working to expand our contact with the Lesbian, Gay,



Our education and outreach efforts reached

**27,193**

older people this financial year

Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) community. We again had a presence at some major LGBTI events this year, including Fair Day - the event that kick-starts the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Mardi season and attracts tens of thousands of people, with an estimated 500 people visiting our stand - and Afternoon Delight, the LGBTI event held during Seniors Week, at which we engaged with about 400 people. We also provided a number of educational sessions on legal and advocacy issues tailored to LGBTI audiences during the year.

## SUMMARY OF EDUCATION 1/7/15 TO 30/6/16

Service	Sessions	Attendees
Aged care services	509	6,891
General legal sessions	55	2,004
Retirement village resident sessions	20	415
Community groups	146	4,197
Carer specific groups	8	379
Professionals	15	302
Relevant student groups (Uni/TAFE)	10	147
Expos	34	8,155
Events	49	4,703
<b>Total</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>27,193</b>

## LOCATION AND ATTENDEE IDENTIFICATION 2016-2017

Location	Sessions	Attendees	CALD	A&TSI	LGBTI
Metropolitan	369	16,812	5,074	387	1,060
Rural/Regional	451	9,945	736	254	0
Remote	35	436	0	206	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>27,193</b>	<b>5,810</b>	<b>847</b>	<b>1060</b>

## SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS 2016-2017

National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC), Fremantle, August 2016

Better Practice Conference, Sydney, August 2016

Human Rights and Social Justice Conference, Gold Coast, March 2017

CALDWAYS Conference: 'Communicating Services to older CALD communities', Sydney June 2017

Regional Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) Conference, Cessnock, June 2017

UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing - 8th session: 'Convention on the Rights of Older People', New York, June 2017



ATTENDEES AT SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE PRESENTATION TO PROBUS, CAMPBELLTOWN



ATTENDEES AT SENIORS LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM



RAY HORSBURG WITH VISITORS TO THE MULTICULTURAL SENIORS WELLNESS EXPO IN BULLI

## EDUCATING TO PREVENT ELDER ABUSE

Elder abuse is becoming more visible and is an increasingly pressing issue in NSW. The demand for elder abuse education is growing in parallel, and we now find ourselves regularly providing sessions for a range of audiences, including staff and residents in the aged care facilities, police trainees, social workers, allied health professionals, Council staff, and community groups.

During the year we collaborated with the Older Women's Network (OWN), made up of 19 different groups around the state, to provide elder abuse forums specifically tailored to older women. We have a well-established relationship with the OWN, having previously partnered with them to run a series of wellness sessions for older women. The NSW Police and the Elder Abuse Hotline and Resource Unit were also invited to collaborate. Together, we presented a series of 12 sessions

on elder abuse in several metropolitan and regional locations across the state.

Titled 'Elder Abuse: Speaking of the Unspoken,' these sessions examined how various groups view elder abuse, what elder abuse means, and potential solutions to the problem. A number of important issues came to light during the course of the events. These included the vulnerability of older women who are isolated due to health issues or language barriers, increasing financial abuse of the elderly due to the cost of housing, financial issues around abuse of Power of Attorney and the use of credit cards, the need for education of older widowed women to equip them to deal with financial management, and the need to educate potential abusers such as adult children.

In addition to these forums, our education staff attended a major event held in collaboration with the Elder Abuse Hotline and Resource Unit in Bankstown for Elder Abuse

Awareness Day, with the aim of facilitating a better understanding of elder abuse among older residents in South Western Sydney. The Member for Holsworthy, Melanie Gibbons MP, spoke at the event, focusing on challenging ageist attitudes and reflecting on the enormous contribution of older people to our society. Close to 200 people from diverse cultures attended, with interpreters on hand to help those speaking languages other than English.

We were also pleased to be able to accommodate a request from the Arab Council of Australia to address the Arab Community Workers Network and to speak to older Arabic women's groups on the issue of elder abuse. Additionally, we are collaborating with the Indian community to run a number of community forums, including a large event targeting the Punjabi/Sikh community planned for November. These approaches came about as



unexpected and welcome outcomes of the involvement of Seniors Rights Service in a scoping project commissioned by the Department of Family and Community Services to understand the issue of elder abuse in CALD communities (see separate project report in this Annual Report).

### MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The positive feedback our Education and Community Services team is lucky enough to regularly receive from the people who participate in our events, activities and programs tells us that we are succeeding in many of our key endeavours. Through the services we provide, we are proud to be making a difference to the lives of the older people in our community – first and foremost in helping them understand their rights, and secondly in letting them know how to get help when they need it.

**Diana Bernard**  
Manager Education  
and Community Services

## SENIORS LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROJECT

In 2016, Seniors Rights Service was awarded a Liveable Communities Grant from the NSW Government to develop a pilot peer training course in collaboration with South Western Sydney (Granville) TAFE. It was anticipated that, in the future, the pilot could be expanded into a Peer Education or Train the Trainer course.

Our main aim was to build the capacity of older community leaders to act as advocates for seniors in their communities, by developing the leaders' understanding of seniors' rights, raising awareness of these rights among their peers, recognising elder abuse, and referring peers to appropriate community services such as Seniors Rights Service.

An accredited Vocational Education and Training (VET) pilot course with five units was developed, titled 'Empowerment of Older People'. Twenty-three people representing a diverse range of community agencies participated in the course, which ran one day a week over ten weeks in May-June 2016.

At the end of the ten weeks, TAFE and Seniors Rights Service staff identified a need for an additional component to the training, which focused on developing relevant practical skills such as interpersonal skills. This led to Part II of the course being developed, which ran for another six weeks in October-November 2016.

Evaluation of both parts of the course was carried out by an independent contractor, featuring pre- and post-course surveys as well as in-depth qualitative

assessment of student and teacher experiences through interviews and focus group discussions. Overall, feedback was very positive, with participants indicating that the course had helped them to become more effective leaders and better able to help seniors in their communities. Many indicated that a highlight was learning about the breadth and depth of support services available to seniors.

A series of recommendations were made for how to improve the training course, to assist with the long-term vision of rolling it out for adoption by other educational institutions across NSW. These recommendations included extending the length of the course, offering more practical experience via workshops and on-the-job training, more clearly determining students' levels of knowledge and experience in the community services sector and identifying students' overall goals relating to advocacy, to allow teachers to adapt the course content accordingly (potentially offering tailored courses aimed at different levels).



OUR  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND MEDIA  
YOUR RIGHTS  
YOUR VOICE



# OUR COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA

**This year, Seniors Rights Service has focused on developing and consolidating a consistent approach to communications, marketing and media through employing a Communications and Media Manager. Our organisation now has the ability to react immediately to current events through press releases and social media in quick response to news such as the ABC 4 Corners and the Fairfax Media investigation into retirement villages.**

With regular media releases and consistent engagement with mainstream media, Seniors Rights Service has further increased its profile as the organisation working for the rights of older people. Over the year, CEO Russell Westacott was called on regularly for comment on issues such as the treatment of older people in retirement villages and aged care facilities, elder abuse in all its forms, and government inquiries relevant to older people. Through this profile building, our Service provided intellectual, ethical and legal leadership on key issues facing older people. We have responded to reports of concern to seniors and those who work in the sector that have made it into the public arena with prompt media releases and a willingness to engage with the media on request.

The past year has seen an increased editorial presence of our Service in publications in and for the aged care sector. This includes regular contributions to the NSW Seniors Card newsletter, editorials in *The Senior*, a contribution to *The Land*, articles in the new publication *The North Coast Seniors Revolution*, editorials for *LOTL (Lesbians on the Loose)* and *Go55s*, and a report in *The Last Post*. Through regular contributions to publications in print and online that target older people and those who work in relevant sectors, we are able to provide up to date and targeted information and news for specific communities and audiences.

## EXPANDING OUR ONLINE PRESENCE

In 2015, Senior Rights Service launched its new website. Since that time, the site has developed into an excellent resource for older

people, hosting electronic versions of the organisation's brochures, downloadable information sheets, and regularly updated relevant contact and links pages. We are now in the process of setting up to develop and deliver dynamic and interactive online material, including short videos and webinars. This will even better position our site as the online hub for older people to learn about their rights and to be empowered to make decisions that are to their benefit. Over the past year, more than 12,000 people have accessed our site, with 74% of those being new visitors. With the addition of Google Adwords, the website will see further increases in traffic in the coming year.

Substantial effort is also being put into increasing our social media profile. Targeted campaigns on Facebook and Twitter have promoted Seniors Rights Service as an organisation working tirelessly for the rights of older people, and we are now better prepared to help those who look online for information and services. In the past six months, we have seen a 10% increase in Facebook followers and 395% increase in followers on Twitter. A new Instagram account has also been set up, which we will use to promote older people as active and engaged members of the community.

## EDUCATIONAL AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Over the past year, Seniors Rights Service has provided many thousands of brochures, booklets and information sheets to assist older people. Our educational and promotional materials are continuously being improved as we respond to the shifting needs and demographics of older people.

We take our commitment to working for all older people seriously, and with this in mind, produce targeted and tested materials that will reach as many people as possible. We make particular efforts to reach priority populations, as outlined in the 2020 Strategic Plan.

As an example, we recently launched 'Rights for Elders' - a brochure designed specifically for older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (A&TSI) people. This new brochure has received excellent feedback from the A&TSI community who tell us they like its language and look. The brochure is being sent out across NSW to land councils and other organisations with the intention of providing legal advice, advocacy and education to A&TSI elders. We also recently created a new brochure and developed a marketing plan to promote our Strata and Collective Sales Advocacy Service, a new service being funded by NSW Fair Trading.

Throughout the year, Seniors Rights Service has promoted itself in metropolitan areas and to regional, rural and remote older people with a combination of elegant advertising and targeted editorial. We understand that our business is to help older people and this remains our priority in all promotional activities.

### COMING UP

The establishment of a new Communication and Media position at Seniors Rights Service coincided with initial planning for the 5th National Elder Abuse Conference, which we will be hosting in February 2018. We are working closely with the organisers Catalyst Events to ensure the success of the upcoming conference, with a coordinated and integrated approach to marketing.

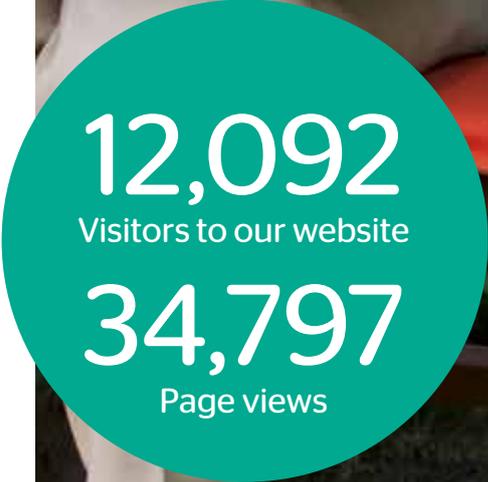
A variety of communications projects are currently in development. A number of these have been funded by NSW Family and Community Services and will be directed to increasing our priority populations' access to, awareness and use of the services we provide.

We are in the process of developing a new quarterly newsletter: 'Your Rights. Your Voice.' The first issue will coincide with and promote our 2017 Annual General Meeting and launch of our current Annual Report. The newsletter will build into a vital resource, with case studies, reports and photos from community events, information on upcoming forums, and information about important Seniors Rights Service projects.

We are also in the initial stages of planning a series of integrated legal, advocacy and education community forums for older lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people. By collaborating with relevant groups and organisations in different metropolitan and regional centres, the forums will inform, engage and empower LGBTI elders as they transition into accessing aged care services.

To ensure we are informing all communities about their rights and the availability of free and confidential legal advice, advocacy and education, Seniors Rights Service is developing targeted radio campaigns. Once the materials have been produced, we will run informative multilingual segments across the SBS radio network, as well as various language-based community radio stations and programs.

**Jane Polkinghorne**  
Manager Communications and Media



# SOME MEDIA COVERAGE OF OUR WORK 2016 – 2017



Media Outlet	Date Published	Headline/Program	Potential Reach
SBS website	July 2016 onwards	Seniors assert their rights (interview)	250,000 per week
'Today' Program Channel 9	July 2016	Brief interview regarding aged-care issues	National peak morning reach, approx. 327,000
Australian Ageing Agenda	August 2016	Advocacy agencies sign network agreement ahead of decision on program delivery	National reach across ageing sector/industry: >80,000
Hills Shire Times press release	26 August 2016	Elder Abuse information and quotes	145,000 readers per month in Hills District, Sydney
ABC Radio National - Life Matters	September 2016	Life Matters - Family Financial Abuse and Granny Flat Arrangement	163,000 daily listeners
ABC Radio National Website	September 2016	Story on Elder Abuse on Radio National that referenced listeners to their website for information about Seniors Rights Service	Estimated 460,000 weekly visitors to ABC website
National LGBTI Health Alliance Newsletter	October 2016	Older Persons Advocacy Network	LGBTI sector, ageing sector
GOALL Growing Older and Loving Life publication	November 2016	Editorial on planning ahead	4,000 to 5,000 per quarter
Last Post (veterans' magazine and website)	November 2016 Remembrance Day issue	Editorial on Seniors Rights Service	50,000 per bi-annual issue
Blue Mountains Radio	November/ December 2016	Free promotion, scenarios plus phone number	87,000 listeners in region
Hills Shire Times	November 2016	Free editorial - Lawyer named shining star (India Club)	78,000 weekly
ABC News	Jan 25 2017	Interview with CEO on elder abuse on ABC TV National News and website	700,000 nightly viewers nationally Estimated 460,000 weekly visitors to ABC website
ABC South East Regional Radio	Jan 25 2017	Interview with CEO on elder abuse	320,000 listeners in region
ABC North Coast News: Morning Radio	Feb 2017	Interview with CEO on dementia	500,000 listeners in region



Various media outlets contact Seniors Rights Service to request comment for stories related to aged care and elder abuse.

Here are some examples of media stories that have referenced the work of Seniors Rights Service.

Media Outlet	Date Published	Headline/Program	Potential Reach
<b>The Daily Telegraph</b>	Feb 24 2017	Interview with CEO quoted on access to aged care and excessive bond prices	The Daily Telegraph has an estimated daily readership of 639,000+
<b>2GB Radio</b>	March 4 2017	Interview on access to aged care and bond prices in response to The Daily Telegraph story	2GB has a weekend listenership of 331,000
<b>World Elder Abuse Awareness Day press release</b>	April 2017	Press release sent to mainstream and regional media, community organisations and industry	
<b>The Last Post, ANZAC Day edition.</b>	April 2017	Editorial on how SRS is able to help veterans	45,000 readers per issue
<b>Radio National, Life Matters</b>	May 2017	Discussion on OPAN	163,000 daily listeners
<b>The Australian Newspaper</b>	May 2017	The Australian Weekend Magazine interview with CEO on elder abuse for extended essay by Trent Dalton	Circulation 223,426, readership 484,000
<b>The Independent, Hastings and Macleay</b>	May 2017	Editorial on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in relation to mid-north coast forums	Circulation 18,000, readership approx. 36,000
<b>The Senior newspaper</b>	May 2017	Article on elder abuse awareness and how SRS can help. Mentioned 2018 conference	346,619 NSW monthly readership
<b>Sydney Morning Herald</b>	May/June 2017	Interview with CEO in relation to over-medication in aged care	650,000 per print issue, over 4 million monthly online readers
<b>BenchTV</b>	June 2017	The video platform of successful legal bulletin BenchmarkTV, currently goes out to over 30,000 practitioners in Australia.	30,000 legal practitioners nationally
<b>NSW Seniors Card e-newsletter</b>	June 2017	Editorial on SRS services	346,000 readers monthly
<b>Port Macquarie News 3 x weekly newspaper mid-north coast NSW</b>	15 June 2017	Article on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and SRS forums on mid-north coast. <a href="http://www.portnews.com.au/story/4688770/time-to-talk-about-elder-abuse/">http://www.portnews.com.au/story/4688770/time-to-talk-about-elder-abuse/</a>	Online: 43,000 people per month Print: 13,400 average issue readership, 3 x week
<b>ABC Mid-North Coast Breakfast with Michael Spooner</b>	1 June 2017	Interview with advocate Jill McDonnell on elder abuse forums on NSW Mid North Coast	Over 150,000 daily listeners

## PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS 2016 - 2017

Medium	Location	Potential Reach & Frequency
<b>Parkes Elvis Festival media campaign</b>	Parkes, western NSW	25,000 visitors to Parkes, 1 million visitors to Parkes Champion Post website
<b>Sydney Mardi Gras Fair Day</b>	Sydney	80,000 at event, 600 visited SRS stand
<b>2CH radio advertisements</b>	Sydney	3 campaign reaches
<b>Sydney Star Observer / fg magazine</b>	Sydney	80,000 readership, 2 ads: Mardi Gras festival guide and 'Generations' edition for older LGBTI
<b>Afternoon Delight LGBTI seniors film event</b>	Sydney	500 attendees, handed out SRS pamphlets, pens, bags
<b>NSW Seniors Card e-newsletter</b>	NSW	NSW Seniors Card has 1.4 million members, with 250,000 receiving monthly e-newsletter: 2 editorials
<b>Young at Heart Film Festival</b>	Sydney	Annual film festival for seniors with 3500 attendees. Video ad and in program
<b>The Last Post (veterans)</b>	National	50,000 readers per issue, 2 ads, 2 editorials
<b>Leichhardt Council's International Women's Day/ Seniors Week event</b>	Sydney	Participation in event with over 500 attendees who visited our stall
<b>The Senior</b>	NSW, ACT	1.3 million readers. Ads and editorial on elder abuse and how Seniors Rights Service can help
<b>Older Women's Network (OWN) forums</b>	NSW	Series of elder abuse forums in metropolitan and regional areas in collaboration with OWN for older women
<b>Seniors Retirement Expo</b>	Sydney	18,000 attendees, 2100 visited stand
<b>Royal Easter Show - Seniors Day</b>	Sydney	70,000 attendees on day, 1700 visited stand
<b>DPS Guide to Aged Care Services</b>	NSW, ACT	42,000 distributed across aged-care industry, 1 ad, 1 editorial
<b>Legal Topics for Older People Diary w/Legal Aid</b>	NSW	80,000 distributed across state
<b>Go55s</b>	NSW	Readership of 35,000. 2 ads and editorial
<b>5th National Elder Abuse Conference</b>	National	Promotions in social media, editorials, newsletter, various ads
<b>Facebook &amp; Twitter</b>	National	Building social media profiles with ongoing ad campaigns, regular postings and updates
<b>Press releases - various</b>	National	Throughout year: ABC retirement village investigations, ALRC Elder Abuse Inquiry, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, Seniors Week
<b>The Big Issue</b>	National (excluding VIC)	27,142 copies sold fortnightly, 175,000 readership (fortnightly)
<b>SRS Brochure distribution including new A&amp;TSI, Strata Legal Service brochures</b>	NSW	Over 61,000 distributed
<b>World Elder Abuse Awareness Day</b>	NSW	Presented and participated in over 15 events throughout Sydney, south coast and mid-north coast



# 5<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL ELDER ABUSE CONFERENCE

**On 19-20 February 2018, Seniors Rights Service will host the 5th National Elder Abuse Conference, Together Making Change, at the Sofitel Sydney Wentworth Hotel.**

The conference is occurring in the context of increasing awareness of the problem and scope of elder abuse in Australia and internationally. Seniors Rights Service has been instrumental in raising awareness of this issue through its work across many levels to address elder abuse. Our advocates, solicitors and intake teams advise and assist people every day who report experiencing elder abuse. On a policy level, our organisation has participated in federal and state inquiries into elder abuse, and our CEO is regularly contacted for comment in the media.

Seniors Rights Service understands that long-term, multi-faceted, culturally appropriate approaches are needed to prevent elder abuse. From this position, we are seeking broad representation at the conference, from community, government and media, policy-makers, and those who work with people who have experienced elder abuse.

The conference is being developed through a collaborative National Steering Committee, comprising key staff from organisations across the

country with specialist knowledge and commitment to the prevention of the abuse of older people. The Conference Program Sub-Committee is developing a dynamic and interactive program that includes innovative projects, emerging research and data, personal stories from those working on the front line or people directly impacted by elder abuse, panels, Q&As, debates and film screenings, as well as more traditional conference presentations.

**A number of high profile presenters are confirmed to address the conference, including:**

- The Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP, Commonwealth Minister for Aged Care
- The Hon Dr Kay Patterson AO, Age Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission
- The Hon Tanya Davies MP, NSW Minister for Ageing
- Prof Rebecca Morgan, Stetson University, FL, USA
- The Hon Anna Bligh AC, CEO Australian Bankers Association
- Dr Jane Barratt, Secretary General, International Federation on Ageing
- Virginia Trioli, television and radio host, who will MC the event.



Seniors Rights Service is working closely with event management company Catalyst Events to ensure the success of the event. Our staff are hard at work promoting the conference in their various networks, from community grassroots organisations through to interagency networks, as well as through their regular work at education sessions and community engagement forums. In addition, many have submitted abstracts and will be involved in sessions as presenters, chairs and moderators.

Leading up to the event, we will be hosting a number of community forums to raise awareness of elder abuse and the rights of older people, and to generate interest in the upcoming conference. One such forum will be held at Penrith Panthers on Sunday 18 February, the day before the conference begins. With a stimulating blend of entertainment and education, we hope this event will engage communities of older people living in Western Sydney.



# OUR COMMITMENT TO CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

**It is extremely important to the team at Seniors Rights Service that our customers are satisfied with the services we provide. We use a variety of methods to engage with our customers and obtain feedback about what we do well and where we could improve.**

Much of the feedback we receive comes via our client surveys and community forum feedback forms. All recipients of our Advocacy services and a representative sample of recipients of our Legal services are invited to complete a written survey, where they are asked to rate their satisfaction level with Seniors Rights Service and offer written comments if they wish to do so. Similarly, participants at our community forums are asked to complete a feedback form, rate their satisfaction level and provide comments.

Sometimes it is not appropriate to ask forum participants to complete written feedback; for example, when presenting at aged care facilities where clients may have limited capacity. In these instances, the facilitator runs an open Question and Answer session or requests a show of hands to gain feedback instead. Other sources of information on customer satisfaction levels include thank-you cards, letters and email messages from customers, feedback provided by clients who have telephoned managers to complain or compliment staff, and comments provided via social media.

This financial year, we received more than 1,100 completed surveys and education feedback forms from our customers. Of the respondents, 90% indicated they were satisfied with our services. This is a very pleasing response and indicates that a large majority of our clients are happy with our work. This finding is supported by the feedback received via other forms of communication.

Seniors Rights Service is committed to quality improvement. As well as continuously assessing customer

satisfaction, we work to ensure that all projects such as the Seniors Leadership Training Project (see the separate article on this project) are properly evaluated, so as to inform and improve our future work. We plan to establish a new Policy and Quality Improvement Coordinator role early in the current financial year, to facilitate all quality improvement work throughout our organisation.

## COMMENTS FROM OUR COMMUNITY FORUM PARTICIPANTS

- “I thought it was a most sensitive and intuitive presentation. The presenter was really interested in the audience needs and responded with excellent information and understanding.”
- “It was really beneficial to learn of the legal issues and differences between types of documents. The lawyer made it clear and understandable. Most helpful! Thank you.”
- “It made me aware of the processes that are available to handle any problems with aged care. It was very informative.”
- “It’s good to have the presentation both in Chinese and Mandarin”
- “We all found [the education session] very informative and helpful and are grateful for the insight that you gave us to prepare for our future.”
- “[Your presentation] was greatly appreciated and actually very enjoyable. Mainly because of your light-hearted presentation of what is a massive subject it made it seem just a bit less scary. I know that I personally was made far more aware of what is and is not available as we approach older age.”

## COMMENTS FROM CLIENTS OF OUR ADVOCACY SERVICES

- “Speaking with Seniors Rights Service a few times gave me the confidence to ask questions where before I probably would have let it go. Thank you so much for your support.”
- “I am a Social Worker in a private hospital and I use your service regularly. I always find it beneficial.”
- “[Staff member] has been very helpful. But the problems are not yet fixed!”
- “SRS was extremely useful. Best source of information I found. [Staff member] asked [the client] questions, summed up her position very clearly for her and described her options - wonderful.”
- “In particular, I was most impressed by the professional knowledge and competence of [staff member]”
- “I certainly won’t feel alone anymore if a similar problem occurs.”
- “I was very disappointed not with the Seniors Rights Service, but because I didn’t get anywhere. Someone’s word against mine. But that’s how law works, I guess.”
- “I was completely satisfied with the help I received, would use it again and have recommended it to others.”

## COMMENTS FROM CLIENTS OF OUR LEGAL SERVICES

- “We would like to express our great appreciation and thanks for all the help you provided to us regarding this matter. We were successfully able to have the agenda items relating to the sale to the developer withdrawn from consideration. This is thanks to your advice, the

summary letter that you emailed and the very fast dispatch and receipt of the supporting sections of the legislation concerning a Strata Renewal Proposal and all the requirements that were not met.”

- “The residents of our retirement village were really unaware of our Seniors Rights until we contacted Seniors Rights Service - You have given us a voice.”
- “They investigated the issue and came back with information which showed nothing could be done.”
- “Courteous, attentive, prompt. I couldn’t speak more highly of the other person at the end of the phone. Thank you.”
- “Aged-care Rights are very necessary, as seniors do not have many options to turn to for assistance.”
- “Simply because I made a call to Seniors Rights Service, that brought about a resolution.”
- “Excellent advice, very professional of course. Would be even better if there were more staff available to give advice.”
- “Thank you [staff member] for persisting in trying to contact me. Following your advice, I contacted the retirement home with which I had an issue and obtained a partly-satisfactory resolution .... I don’t have the emotional stamina to pursue the matter further. Very grateful for your advice.”



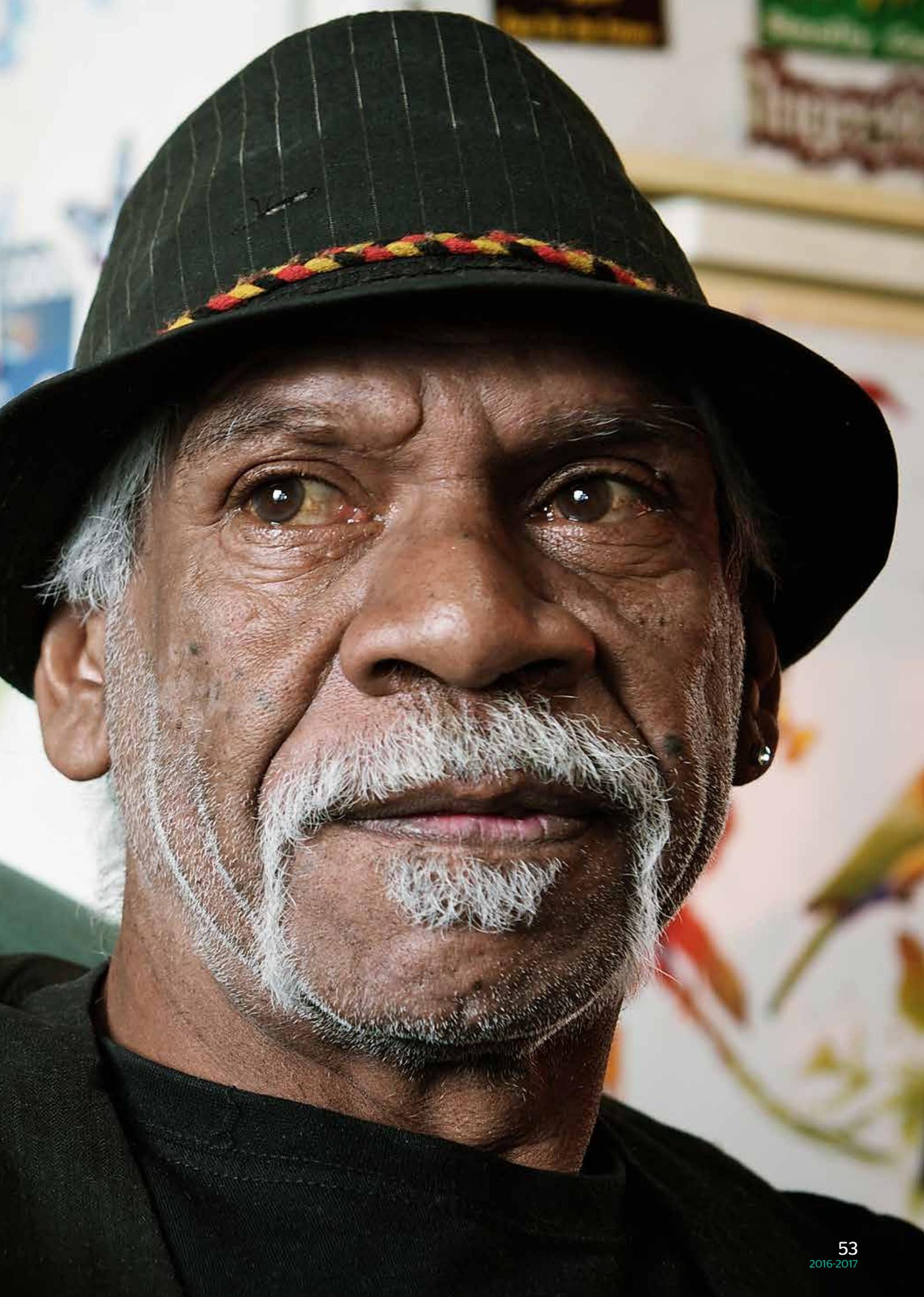
We are pleased that feedback from over 1,100 clients of our legal, advocacy and education services provided an overall client satisfaction rating of

**90%**

for the 2016/17 year



OUR PRIORITY  
POPULATIONS  
YOUR RIGHTS  
YOUR VOICE



# OUR WORK WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE

NSW is home to a large population of people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (A&TSI) heritage. Many people from this background are marginalised in contemporary society, and a targeted approach is needed to effectively engage with this population. Seniors Rights Service reaches out to A&TSI communities in a number of ways.

## ROAD TRIPS TO REGIONAL, RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS

Our legal, advocacy and education staff go on a number of trips each year with the aim of connecting with A&TSI communities in different areas of the state. These trips are planned in consultation with local elders, and often in collaboration with other organisations who have an established working relationship with these communities, such as those providing social services. This year, we travelled to meet with Aboriginal communities in several regions, including Bourke and Brewarrina, Young, Walgett, Moree, Yass and Dubbo.

## TARGETED EVENTS AND MEETINGS

We actively engage with A&TSI communities through targeted events and meetings held in both regional and metropolitan areas of NSW. These include major events on the A&TSI calendar, such as NAIDOC week, as well as planned education sessions with Aboriginal elders. These focus on building awareness of the rights of older people, the importance of planning ahead, informed decision-making regarding legal issues, and options in terms of service provision, including referral pathways to other providers.

## KEY PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

Seniors Rights Service works with a number of other organisations who provide targeted services to the A&TSI population. For example, we are a partner in the Good Service Mob, which links Aboriginal communities to multiple services and helps ensure



sustainable service delivery. Last year we participated in a series of forums hosted by the Good Service Mob in the Port Macquarie, Kempsey, Taree and Doonside areas. We also collaborated with Cooperative Legal Services Delivery in a range of rural locations including the Far West to provide both legal information and advocacy assistance to A&TSI community members and residents in aged care services.

## CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE MATERIALS

This year we consulted and collaborated with the A&TSI community to develop a culturally appropriate educational brochure targeted to people of Aboriginal heritage. As well as ensuring our educational materials are distributed to A&TSI people through a variety of channels, Seniors Rights Service also advertises in the Koori Mail, which reaches an estimated 80,000 people in NSW.

# OUR WORK WITH CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE PEOPLE

**Seniors Rights Service works hard to ensure it reaches people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and addresses their specific needs.**

## REACHING CALD COMMUNITIES - HOW ARE WE DOING?

Our records show that last financial year, older people from CALD backgrounds made up about 24% of those attending our educational forums, 9% of clients who used our advocacy service, and 9% of those using our legal service.

While approximately 25% of people aged over 65 years of age in NSW are from CALD backgrounds, CALD people only make up about 10% of all those who receive aged care services from the Commonwealth government. Relative to the latter figure, we appear to be doing

reasonably well, although there is certainly room for improvement.

We want to make sure that those who access our services truly reflect the diverse population of older people across NSW. We will therefore be looking to increase these figures next year, particularly in terms of our legal services. In the 2017/18 financial year we will be strategically targeting older people from CALD communities so that engagement with our legal services increases.

## PROVIDING TARGETED EDUCATION

During 2016-17 we participated in a range of educational projects, activities and events targeted to people from CALD backgrounds.

- We ran several legal education sessions catering to CALD older people, including a seminar on elder abuse at a multicultural aged care

forum, and talks on 'planning ahead' to seniors in the Greek, Chinese and Italian communities.

- In collaboration with the Arab Council of Australia, we addressed the Arab Community Workers Network and spoke to older Arabic women's groups on the issue of elder abuse.
- We had a presence at a number of key multicultural events to raise awareness of seniors' rights and the services we provide to older people. One such event was the Multicultural Eid Festival and Fair, celebrated in Sydney at the end of Ramadan.
- We worked with Migrant Resource Centres throughout Sydney, providing face-to-face education to small groups and ensuring information about our Service is distributed by these centres to their local communities.

## PREVENTING ELDER ABUSE IN CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Elder abuse is a growing issue within our society, and it is clear that more needs to be done to address the problem - particularly within marginalised communities. Late in 2016, representatives from the NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) met with Senior Rights Service to discuss the potential of conducting a research project to identify best practice elder abuse prevention strategies in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. Subsequently, Seniors

Rights Service was commissioned to lead a scoping project in close collaboration with Ethnic Communities Council of NSW, Elder Abuse Helpline and Resource Unit, and the Council of the Ageing NSW.

A consultant was hired and 12 community consultations were organised with six CALD communities across NSW. Interviews were also conducted with community workers around Australia who are involved in elder abuse prevention responses, particularly those that have a focus within specific CALD communities. In addition, a literature review was done to identify best practice programmatic responses in other English-speaking

countries - including the UK, Canada and New Zealand - regarding elder abuse prevention in CALD communities.

Following completion of the scoping project in June 2017 a report was submitted to FACS that includes a series of recommendations about how projects and programs targeting elder abuse in CALD communities in NSW might be funded and focused in the coming years. This project - including its design, methodology, findings and recommendations - will feature at the 5th National Elder Abuse Conference, which Seniors Rights Service is hosting in Sydney in February 2018.

## OUR WORK WITH THE LGBTI COMMUNITY

Seniors Rights Service recognises that older lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people represent a marginalised community with needs that often go unmet by mainstream programs and services. We therefore take a strategic and targeted approach to providing an effective service for members of this demographic.

This year we again had a presence at major LGBTI events - including the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Fair Day, and Afternoon Delight, the LGBTI Seniors Week event - and provided a number of educational sessions tailored to LGBTI audiences during the year.

- We ran a series of advertisements to raise awareness of our services in the Sydney Star Observer, one of Australia's most popular LGBTI newspapers.
- On a national level, we engaged with the National LGBTI Health Alliance to help shape best-practice aged care advocacy services to LGBTI people across the country. We also made an important contribution to the National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy regarding the care of older LGBTI people.

- We collaborated with the AIDS Council of New South Wales (ACON) to shine a light on the issue of lack of culturally appropriate aged care services for LGBTI people. We hope this coming year to continue to collaborate with ACON on a number of exciting community events targeting older LGBTI people.

We take a strategic approach to engaging with the LGBTI community



JANE POLKINGHORNE AT THE SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE STAND AT THE SYDNEY GAY AND LESBIAN MARDI GRAS FAIR DAY

# OUR WORK IN REGIONAL, RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS

Seniors Rights Service endeavours to make itself accessible to older people living in all parts of NSW, including hard-to-reach locations.

## TRAVELLING FAR AND WIDE

Each year we travel a large number of miles on road trips dedicated to extending our geographical reach. When we visit a region, we base ourselves in a central town and blitz the entire area, attempting to visit as many locations as possible where older people can be found. Typically we visit aged care residential facilities and retirement villages in the area, as well as holding community forums in venues such as bowling clubs and other social clubs. We also target related community services including local GPs and home care providers in the area. Frequently, we collaborate with other organisations working in the area, such as Cooperative Legal Service Delivery.

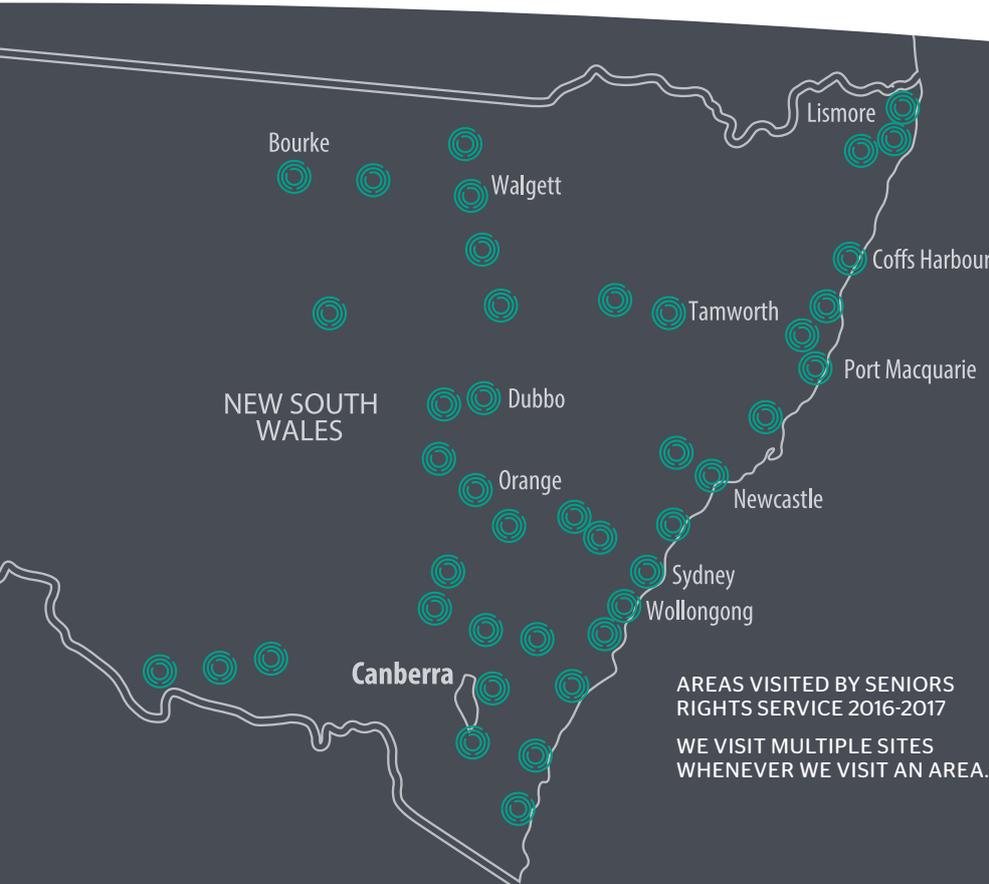
In 2016-17, our staff visited many aged care residential facilities and delivered dozens of education sessions in regional, rural and remote areas of the state.

Our reach this year extended as far north as Lismore and Casino, as far south as Bega and Bombala, and out west to Brewarrina, Bourke, Cobar and Walgett. Other locations we travelled to included Cooma, Queanbeyan, Yass, Wollongong, Goulburn, Cowra, Forbes, Parkes, Mudgee, Kempsey, Wagga Wagga, Tumut, Gundagai, Grafton, Newcastle and the Central Coast.

## OUR PLANS FOR EXPANSION

Next year we are looking forward to significantly expanding our regional presence. Not only will we be adding to our existing presence on the Mid-North and South Coast regions, we will also be establishing a new presence in the Central West. Following this, we intend to set up new offices in the Northern Rivers and Riverina areas.

This expansion will give us a physical presence across the state, allowing us to provide face-to-face support for vulnerable older people in need of our help, wherever they may be.



We want to reach older people in need of our help, wherever they may be

AREAS VISITED BY SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE 2016-2017  
WE VISIT MULTIPLE SITES WHENEVER WE VISIT AN AREA.

## OUR WORK IN WESTERN SYDNEY

**Western Sydney is a region of great diversity with an ever-expanding population. It is made up of several different demographic groups, including many non-English speaking people and those from lower socioeconomic status backgrounds. The region's growth is reflected in the increasing number of aged care providers and facilities in the area. .**

Seniors Rights Service is committed to effectively servicing the growing number of older people living in Western Sydney. During the year, we aimed to engage with the full diversity of communities represented in this area.

- We engaged with older residents in Bankstown for Elder Abuse Awareness Day, with the aim of facilitating a better understanding of elder abuse. Close to 200 people from diverse cultures attended, with interpreters on hand to help those speaking languages other than English.
- We continued our collaboration with South West Sydney Granville TAFE to deliver a training course targeting community leaders in Western Sydney, the Peer Leadership Training Project. Through this project we aim to build the capacity of participants to act as peer support advocates for seniors in their respective communities.
- We engaged with SEVA International, Community Migrant Resource Centre, India Club, Harman Foundation and United Indians Association as guest speakers, expert panel members and as a partner organisation. These activities ranged from Elder Abuse Forums to setting up a working group for combating issues on Domestic

We are committed to effectively servicing the Western Sydney region

Violence, Mental Health Issues and Aged Care Information. We also spoke at the Women Leadership Training Forum and the International Women's Day at Holroyd Centre.

- One of the staff is an appointed member of the Multicultural NSW Sydney West Regional Advisory Council and an appointed member in the Blacktown City Council Senior Citizens Advisory Council and Multicultural Advisory Council.
- We collaborated with Financial Information Service Officers (FISO) to deliver information around financial planning and financial abuse prevention to their clients in Parramatta and Cabramatta.
- We worked with many Anglo, Chinese, Vietnamese and Arabic groups around financial elder abuse prevention, creating a better understanding of such issues in Western Sydney's culturally diverse communities.



# OUR INTERNATIONAL WORK

Seniors Rights Service is a founding member of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP) Australia. GAROP Australia was formed in February 2014 as a result of recommendations made in the Chairman's report from the UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (4th Session), New York, 2013, to form regional 'circles of friends'.



## THE PURPOSES OF GAROP AUSTRALIA ARE TO:

- build and strengthen bridges within and across sectors to protect the rights of older Australians
- advocate for the implementation of an international convention on the rights of older people
- provide a forum for civil society engagement on this issue
- strengthen current and future advocacy efforts nationally and regionally
- gather and disseminate educational resources on older people and human rights.

## LATEST NEWS

The membership of GAROP Australia has strengthened over the last year with a number of new organisations joining the alliance. The current membership consists of Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association (ASCCA), the Older Women's Network Australia (OWNA), Council on the Ageing (COTA) Australia, Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia (FECCA), National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC), Seniors Rights Service, Australian Research Network on Law and Ageing (ARNLA), Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG), International Commission of Jurists Australia (as an observer), National Seniors, and National LGBTI

Health Alliance.

Member organisations came together for a face-to-face meeting at the Australian Human Rights Commission on 27 June 2017. The Hon Dr Kay Patterson AO also briefly met with the group to discuss its plans and aspirations. Following discussion about the upcoming United Nations Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (8th Session), members resolved to draft a media release in support of the Session. The members' statement was published on the GAROP Australia and Seniors Rights Service websites as well as on social media, and shared by many, including the international chapter of GAROP. We hope to continue our work with both national and international organisations to raise awareness and strengthen our voices.

For more information about GAROP, please go to: [www.rightsofolderpeople.org](http://www.rightsofolderpeople.org)



# SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE INCORPORATED ABN 98 052 960 862

## FINANCIAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

CONTENTS:	PAGE	BOARD'S DECLARATION
Board's Declaration	60	As detailed in Note 2 to the Financial Report it is the Board's opinion that the Organisation should adopt the preparation of general purpose financial reports to assist all possible users of these statements. Accordingly this is a general purpose Financial Report that has been prepared to meet the Organisation's reporting requirements to the Members.
Auditor's Report	61	
Lead Auditor's Independence Declaration	62	
Statement of Profit or Loss	62	The Financial Report has been prepared in accordance with Accounting Standard APES 205 Conformity with Accounting Standards and other Australian Accounting Standards and mandatory professional reporting requirements to the extent described in Note 2 to the Financial Report.
Statement of Financial Position	63	
Notes to the Financial Statements	64-65	
Statement of Cash Flows	66	The Board declares that the Financial Report and Notes set out on pages 64 to 67:
Detailed Income and Expenditure Statement	67	a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements as detailed above; and, b) give a true and fair view of the Organisation's financial position as at 30 June, 2017 and of its performance as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows for the financial year then ended.

In the Board's opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Organisation will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

**Signed** in accordance with a resolution of the Board.



**CRAIG GEAR**  
Board Member - Chairperson



**MARGARET DUCKETT**  
Board Member

Sydney  
26th day of September, 2017

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

### REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL REPORT

**Audit Opinion** We have audited the financial report of Seniors Rights Service Incorporated, which comprises the statement of profit or loss, statement of financial position, notes to the financial statements including a summary of significant accounting policies, statement of cash flow and board's declaration for the year ended 30 June 2017 as set out on pages 64 to 67.

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

(a) giving a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2017 and of its financial performance for the year 30 June 2017 then ended; and

(b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards 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 organisation in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001* and 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.

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements and the *Corporations Act 2001*. We confirm that the independence declaration provided to the committee members of Seniors Rights Service Incorporated would be on the same terms if provided to the committee members as at the date of this auditor's report.

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

### Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor's Report

The organisation is responsible for the other information which comprises the information included in the 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.

### Board's responsibilities for the Financial Report

The Board is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies described in Note 2 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The board's responsibility also includes establishing

and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

### 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.

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 Organisation'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 organisation'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 Organisation 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.

### CCS PARTNERS Chartered Accountants



#### EMANUEL P CALLIGEROS

Partner

Date: 26th day of September 2017

154 Elizabeth Street, SYDNEY NSW 2000

## LEAD AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

To the Members of **Seniors Rights Service Incorporated**.

As lead engagement partner for the audit of **Seniors Rights Service Incorporated** for the year ended 30 June 2017, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief there have been:

- i. no contraventions of the independence requirements of the Corporations Act in relation to the audit; and
- ii. no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

### CCS PARTNERS

Chartered Accountants



**EMANUEL P CALLIGEROS**

Partner

Date: 26th day of September 2017

154 Elizabeth Street, SYDNEY NSW 2000

## STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>ORDINARY ACTIVITIES</b>			
Revenue from Ordinary Activities		2,220,982	1,956,610
Transfer (to)/from Grants Unexpended (Net)	9	(35,000)	(39,091)
	6	2,185,982	1,917,519
Employee Benefit Expense		(1,498,756)	(1,376,849)
Depreciation & Asset Acquisitions		(12,183)	(14,009)
Other Expenditure from Ordinary Activities		(645,257)	(545,780)
<b>Net Surplus (Deficit) from Ordinary Activities</b>		<b>29,786</b>	<b>(19,199)</b>
<b>Add/(Less):</b>			
Profit on Sale of Vehicles		-	3,403
Transfer (to)/from Reserve for Replacement Assets	3	(20,000)	-
Transfer (to)/from Provision - Contingent Liabilities		-	-
		<b>9,786</b>	<b>(15,796)</b>
<b>Add:</b>			
<b>RETAINED EARNINGS - Balance 1 July, 2016</b>		<b>156,498</b>	<b>172,294</b>
<b>RETAINED EARNINGS - Balance 30 June, 2017</b>		<b>166,284</b>	<b>156,498</b>

This Statement of Profit or Loss is to be read in conjunction with the Notes to the Financial Statements as set on pages 64-65.

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>FUNDS &amp; PROVISIONS</b>			
Retained Earnings		166,284	156,499
Provision for Contingencies		-	-
<b>TOTAL FUNDS &amp; PROVISIONS</b>		<b>166,284</b>	<b>156,499</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash at Bank & on Deposit		627,660	523,663
Other Debtors & Receivables		9,861	66,538
Prepayments		3,558	4,954
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>641,079</b>	<b>595,155</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Furniture & Equipment - at Cost		198,151	198,151
Less Amounts Expensed & Provision for Depreciation		(163,704)	(151,521)
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>34,447</b>	<b>46,630</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>675,526</b>	<b>641,785</b>
<b>Less:</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Payables		148,462	163,066
Provision for Staff Entitlements	5	277,780	255,129
Reserve for Replacement Assets	8	48,000	28,000
Grants in Advance & Unexpended	9	35,000	39,091
<b>Net Current Liabilities</b>		<b>509,242</b>	<b>485,286</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>166,284</b>	<b>156,499</b>

This Statement of Financial Position is to be read in conjunction with the Notes to the Financial Statements as set on pages 64-65.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### 1) ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Organisation is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1984. Its main aim is to provide relief and services to the needs of older people in New South Wales who are vulnerable, socially or economically disadvantaged, exploited or abused. Funds are supplied to the Organisation in the form of Grants received from the Federal and State Governments and other interested bodies. The income and assets of the Organisation are applied solely towards the promotion of the aims for which it was established and no portion, thereof, is to be applied to the benefit of the members or to that of any interested person.

### 2) SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) The Organisation has adopted general purpose financial reports to assist all possible users of these statements. The Board has determined that the accounting policies adopted are appropriate to meet the needs of the Members. The Organisation has applied Accounting Standard APES 205 Conformity with Accounting Standards, which amended the application clauses of all standards existing at the date of its issue so that they now apply only to entities that qualify as reporting entities. However, the Financial Report has been prepared in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB 101: Presentation of Financial Statements and other applicable Australian Accounting Standards and Urgent Issues Group, Consensus Views, with the exception of the disclosure requirements in the following:

- AASB 8 - Operating Segments
- AASB 124 - Related Party Disclosures

The Financial Report has been prepared in accordance with the historical cost accounting convention. The accounting policies are consistent with those of the previous year.

### b) Fixed Assets & Depreciation

Fixed Assets are depreciated on the prime cost basis so as to write off the cost of the assets over their estimated useful lives. The cost of assets funded by specific grants are written off to match the grants received.

### c) Employee Entitlements

Provision is made for the organisation's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee entitlements that are entitled to be taken within one year have been measured at amounts payable at balance date plus related on-costs. Employee benefits payable later than in one year have been measured at balance date value plus related on-costs.

Provisions for parenting leave and redundancy are made due to statutory obligations and factors that may be impacted by changes to grant funding. Current wage rates are used in the calculation of these provisions.

### d) Comparatives

Comparatives have been adjusted where necessary to conform with presentation in the current period.

### e) Revenue Recognition - Grant Funding

The organization receives grants which may relate to activities and expenditure over a number of financial years. Any grants unexpended at year end are carried forward to the subsequent year.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CON'T)

	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>3) RESERVE FOR REPLACEMENT ASSETS</b>		
Balance - 1 July, 2016	28,000	28,000
Add Transfer from Net Surplus	20,000	-
<b>Balance - 30 June, 2017</b>	<b>48,000</b>	<b>28,000</b>
<b>4) INCOME TAX</b>		
The Organisation has been recognised by the Australian Taxation Office as an Income Tax exempt charitable entity. No provision for taxation has been raised in the Financial Report.		
<b>5) PROVISION FOR STAFF ENTITLEMENTS</b>		
Provision for Parenting Leave	28,809	26,940
Provision for Long Service Leave	165,966	146,411
Provision for Redundancy/Staff Payout	83,005	81,778
Provision for Relief Staff	-	-
	<b>277,780</b>	<b>255,129</b>

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CON'T)

	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>6) OPERATING RESULTS</b>		
The Surplus (deficit) of Income and Expenditure for the year is arrived at:		
- After Crediting:		
i) Grants Received - Recurrent & RVRA Funding	2,103,454	1,844,546
- One-off funding	51,364	35,000
ii) Interest Received	19,136	21,273
iii) Other Income	12,028	16,700
<b>Gross Revenue</b>	<b>2,185,982</b>	<b>1,917,519</b>
- After Charging:		
iv) Auditor's Remuneration (Refer to Note 7)	11,890	11,220
v) Office Asset Equipment acquired during the year expensed through the Statement of Profit or Loss (a)	34,346	1,149
vi) Long Service, Annual & Sick Leave Provisions	6,459	28,735
vii) Depreciation of Non-Current Assets	12,183	12,860
- and charging extra and one-off costs		
viii) Advertising	32,958	35,106
ix) Conference & Workshop Expenses	34,205	14,643
x) Legal, Consultants & Support Fees	58,463	44,553
xi) Website & Computer Software Upgrades	12,984	14,926
xii) Funding to RVRA - Auspices Funding (3 years)	25,000	25,000
xiii) Postage, Printing, Stationery & Publications	53,741	44,530
xiv) Printing & Publications including ALRC - Elder Abuse Inquiry (b)	32,815	-
(a) The cost of new office equipment acquisitions to facilitate new and additional grants has been expensed to match the grants received.		
(b) Design and print of Elder Abuse Inquiry report, Annual Report and Elder Abuse conference material.		
<b>7) AUDITOR'S REMUNERATION</b>		
Amounts received or due and receivable by the Organisation's Auditor for:		
- Audit of the Financial Report	10,000	9,720
- Other Services	1,890	1,500
The Auditor received no other benefits from the Organisation.		
<b>8) RESERVE FOR REPLACEMENT ASSETS</b>		
A reserve is made for approved future capital expenditure	48,000	28,000
<b>9) GRANTS IN ADVANCE AND UNEXPENDED</b>		
Family & Community Services (FACS)		
-2017 Grant unexpended - Carried forward		
Grant for Elder Abuse Conference	35,000	-
Legal Aid (NSW)		
GIA - Liveable Communities Grant	-	39,091
<b>Net movement for the year</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>39,091</b>
<b>10) LEASE RENTAL COMMITMENTS</b>		
Future lease rentals are payable as follows:		
Not later than one year	170,303	110,587
Later than one year but not later than two years	177,116	-
Later than two years but not later than five years	440,454	-
	<b>787,873</b>	<b>110,587</b>
The organisation signed a new lease commencing 1 November 2016 which included a rent free period for the first three months. The new lease is for 5 years to 31 October 2021 and has a 3 year option.		
<b>11) SEGMENT INFORMATION</b>		
The organisation predominantly operates in the seniors aged care rights industry within Australia.		

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS		
	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Cash Received from Government Grants & Funding	2,227,754	1,830,731
Cash Payments for Operating Activities	(2,142,893)	(1,904,156)
<b>Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities (Note 2)</b>	<b>84,861</b>	<b>(73,425)</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES</b>		
Interest Received	19,136	21,273
Proceeds on Sale of Vehicles	-	19,000
Payments for Plant & Vehicles	-	(36,533)
<b>Net Cash Inflow from Investment Activities</b>	<b>19,136</b>	<b>3,740</b>
<b>INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH HELD</b>	<b>103,997</b>	<b>(69,685)</b>
<b>Cash Balance at Beginning of Year (Note 1)</b>	<b>523,663</b>	<b>593,348</b>
<b>CASH BALANCE AT END OF YEAR (Note 1)</b>	<b>627,660</b>	<b>523,663</b>
<b>Note 1: Reconciliation of Cash</b>	<b>Cash at End of Year</b>	<b>Cash at End of Year</b>
Cash at Bank & on Short-Term Deposit	627,260	523,263
Cash in Hand	400	400
	<b>627,660</b>	<b>523,663</b>
<b>Note 2: Reconciliation of Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities to Operating Surplus (Deficit)</b>		
Operating Surplus (Deficit) for the Year	9,786	(15,796)
<b>Add/(Less):</b>		
Depreciation	12,183	12,860
Profit on Sale of Vehicles	-	(3,403)
(Increase)/Decrease in Other Current Assets	58,072	(66,088)
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	(14,604)	7,985
Increase/(Decrease) in Provisions	22,651	18,714
(Increase) in Investment Activity (Interest)	(19,136)	(21,273)
Increase/(Decrease) in Grants in Advance	(4,091)	(6,424)
Increase/(Decrease) in Reserves	20,000	-
<b>Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities</b>	<b>84,861</b>	<b>(73,425)</b>

## DETAILED INCOME &amp; EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>INCOME</b>		
Grants Received - Recurrent (Including RVRA Funding)	2,103,454	1,844,546
One-off Funding	51,364	35,000
Interest Received	19,136	21,273
Sundry Income	12,028	16,700
<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>2,185,982</b>	<b>1,917,519</b>
<b>Less EXPENDITURE</b>		
Accounting & Audit Fees	11,890	11,220
Advertising	32,958	35,106
Bank Charges	1,620	1,260
Bookkeeping	-	-
Conferences, Expos, Seminars & Workshop Expenses	34,205	14,643
Depreciation & Scrapped Assets	12,183	12,860
Disbursement	371	-
Funding to RVRA - (Auspices Funding)	25,000	25,000
Insurances	5,366	5,603
Interest	-	-
Legal, Consultants & Support Fees	58,463	44,553
Long Service, Annual & Sick Leave Provisions	6,459	28,735
Motor Vehicle Costs	7,274	7,823
Office Asset Equipment Acquisitions	34,346	1,149
Office Expenses & Amenities	20,916	26,286
Post, Printing, Stationery & Publications (Note 6 xiii & xiv)	86,556	44,530
Reference Literature & Software	4,668	4,136
Rent & Outgoings	132,172	169,757
Repairs & Maintenance	68,448	13,765
Salaries - Permanent & Relief Staff (including Workers Compensation Insurance)	1,371,618	1,259,472
Solicitor's Expenses	2,933	2,220
Subscriptions	16,756	14,115
Superannuation	127,138	117,377
TARS - Strategic Planning (Tri-Annual Expense)	-	13,504
Telephone & Internet	23,501	20,990
Travel & Accommodation	46,591	35,147
Utilities (including Cleaning)	11,780	12,541
Website & Computer Expenses	12,984	14,926
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>2,156,196</b>	<b>1,936,718</b>
<b>Add/(Less):</b>		
Profit on Sale of Motor Vehicles	-	3,403
Transfer to Reserve for Replacement Assets	(20,000)	-
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFICIT) for the Year</b>	<b>9,786</b>	<b>(15,796)</b>

# YOUR RIGHTS YOUR VOICE LEGAL ADVOCACY EDUCATION

The staff and board of Seniors Rights Service would like to thank all of the organisation's supporters.

We rely on volunteers, media, funders, policy-makers, partners, friends, politicians and people in the community to help us spread the word in ensuring older people's rights are upheld and their interests foregrounded.

Undoubtedly, it is due to this support that Seniors Rights Service continues to grow and deliver vital services to vulnerable older people. Please share any knowledge or information you have gained from this report to others.

Seniors Rights Service looks forward to making a meaningful difference in the lives of older people in the months and years ahead. We ask that you continue to include us in conversations in your own community and refer to us when an older person needs assistance.



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