eastern community legal centre

Moments that Matter

Annual Report 2022

HUMAN RIGHTS
FAIRNESS
JUSTICE

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Acknowledgment of Country

Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC) acknowledges the Wurundjeri peoples of the Kulin Nation, the Traditional Owners of the land on which the Centre community lives and works and pay deep respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

ECLC also acknowledges those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including Elders, who came to live on Wurundjeri land as a result of dispossession from their homelands and in more recent times through choice.

ECLC deeply appreciates and celebrates the people, stories, traditions, culture and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and is honoured when they work together with the Centre.

ECLC recognises that colonisation is the significant cause of disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal peoples, and that justice cannot be realised without ensuring the human rights of all Aboriginal peoples.*

* ECLC acknowledges the Oonah Health & Community Services Aboriginal Corporation as the basis for key elements of this statement, used with permission.

Client stories

ECLC highly values the confidentiality and privacy of its clients and yet many wish their stories to be heard. No real names or images are used in this report and some details have been amended to protect privacy.

"Bunjil's Wings" Artwork: Simone Thomson, Wurundjeri/Yorta Yorta Artist
Design: Christie Davis Design
Illustrations: StorySet

CHAIRPERSON & CEO

Moments that Matter

A life event, a chance meeting, a neighbour in need, a hidden story shared. Lives are filled with many moments, but we can identify those that really matter. Times of facing difficult choices. The day when life changed forever. Or the moment a new insight fundamentally changed our perspective.

Every community member's life and experience is unique. Simple stereotypes are unhelpful and mask the complex intersections of individual culture, background, circumstance and journey.

Every day the ECLC team engages with community members at different points in their life. From first contact with the intake team, through extensive client support from multidisciplinary team members, understanding and assistance is the foremost concern. Over this year, expanded education and prevention initiatives have provided more opportunities for broader community engagement. There are deep learning and growth opportunities where these journeys meet – the intersection or crossroads with each other and in this report, with the broad ECLC community.

The year has been truly hybrid with a mix of face-to-face and remote work – increasing contact accompanied by continual logistics. As we acknowledge programs and services don't immediately spring back to 'normal', we understand that for the members of our community, their personal experience will be similar. While some moments will seem like before, there are long-lasting impacts and difficulties that have increased complexity and need for assistance.

The year had many highlights and achievements. In prevention, major democracy and anti-racism initiatives were co-designed and implemented with impressive CaLD community leaders. New projects Hidden Voices and My Generation fostered revitalisation, intergenerational diversity, inclusivity and deep understanding.

In early intervention, Mabels extended into Knox, while essential MARAM training was provided to the legal assistance sector. Integrated practice deepened knowledge with Better Practice Principles co-designed and shared broadly.

In elder abuse, the ELSA and ROSE partnerships published key evaluation findings and received long-term funding. Prevention work continued with collaborative projects developed and lessons shared.

Major storms in mid-2021 caused extensive damage to homes and townships with ECLC co-ordinating the local legal response assisting many residents in partnership with Yarra Ranges Council and many agencies. This event instigated a deeper continuing commitment to climate justice initiatives.

With increasing professional diversity, teams of staff and volunteers provide high quality legal and related assistance on a vast array of issues across the breadth of communities in the East.

The Centre acknowledges and thanks its many community partners and supporters, including all levels of government and funding partners. Within volatile circumstances, the consistent support is reassuring and encouraging enabling shared hopes to be realised.

Although the pandemic reduced the capacity to utilise the superb volunteers, the interruption was used to complete a volunteer strategy review that is now being implemented. Thank you to the volunteers for your vital contribution and we look forward to this being refreshed and expanded.

Despite the difficulties of the year, the teams – staff, volunteers and many partners – consistently collaborated and yielded great achievements – particularly in those key moments. Whether or not co-located, the unity of purpose and exceptional skills and resilience make a real difference to local communities. Thank you for consistently adapting and providing those moments that matter.

The Board sustained its governance and leadership roles and led a review and revision of the Centre's constitution, endorsed by the members. We thank all the Board for their wisdom, insights and commitment. We extend special appreciation to Jose Abalo, who recently retired after twelve years of tremendous service.

As we reflect on the year, from intensive client support through to prevention in the broader community, the stories presented here offer a chance to reflect on the key interactions and intersections – indeed the many moments that matter.

We are emboldened to renew our vision of human rights, fairness and justice so the ECLC community will indeed matter in those moments.

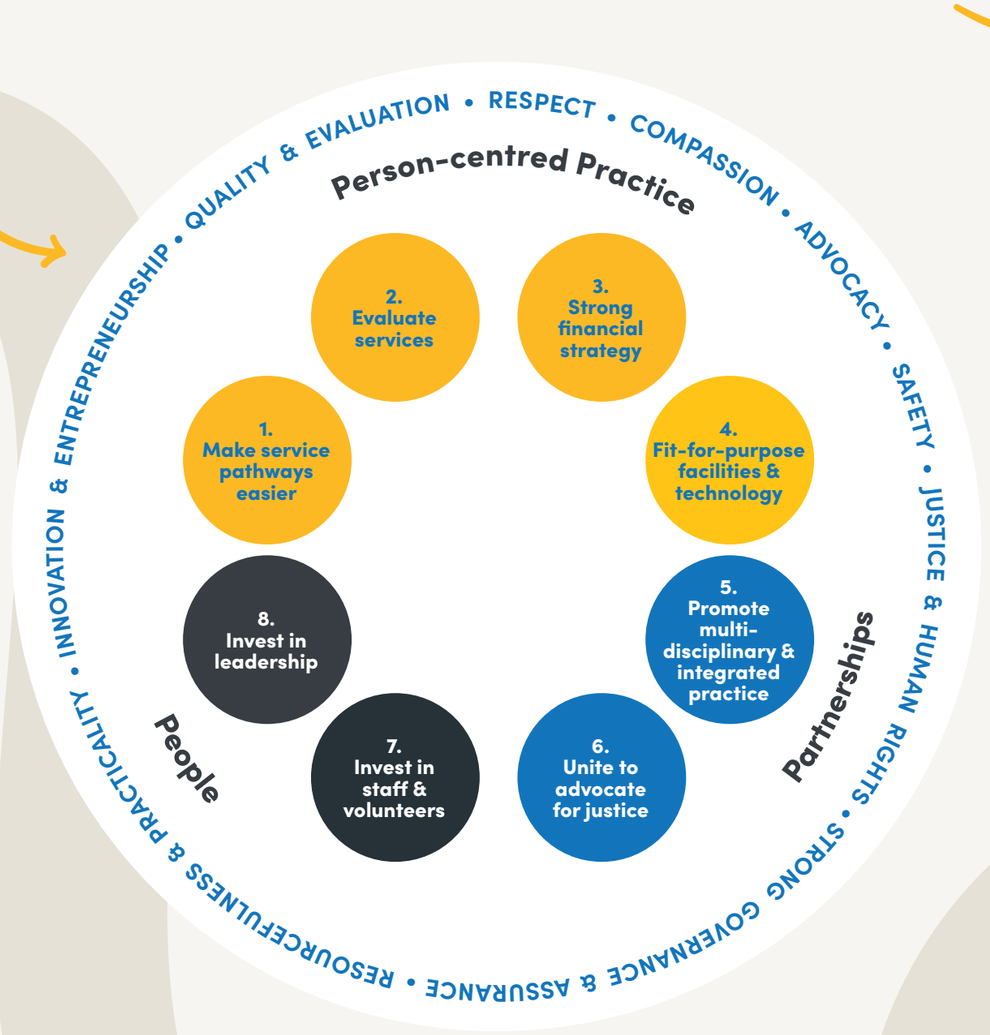
Janet Matton AM
Chairperson

Michael Smith
CEO

Vision and Strategy

Strategic Plan 2020-23

Eastern Community Legal Centre is a multidisciplinary legal service that works to prevent problems, progress fair outcomes and support the wellbeing and resilience of communities and community members in Melbourne's East.



HUMAN RIGHTS
FAIRNESS
JUSTICE

Priority communities

- Children and young people
- People experiencing or at risk of family violence
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Older people experiencing or at risk of elder abuse
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer people
- People who experience language or cultural barriers
- People experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- People with a disability or mental illness

Acronyms

ACVE	Amplifying Community Voices in the East Project
AIRR Team	Assessment Intake Referral & Response
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CLE	Community Legal Education
DSLS	Deakin Student Legal Service
EEAN	Eastern Elder Abuse Network
EEP	Enhanced Entry Project
ELSA	Engaging and Living Safely and Autonomously
HJP	Health Justice Partnership
HEAL	Holistic Empowerment Advocacy Legal
IOSS	Intervention Order Support Service (Ringwood Magistrates' Court)
MARAM	Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment & Management Framework
OPERA	Older People, Equity, Respect and Ageing
ROSE	Rights of Seniors in the East
SAGE	Support Advice Guidance Empowerment
TFER	Together For Equality & Respect partnership
WELS	Women Engaging and Living Safely
WEEAD	World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
YRIPP	Youth Referral and Independent Person Program (CMY)

Services and Programs

ECLC continues to evolve a range of universal and targeted programs, utilising multidisciplinary approaches. The table shows an overview of key activity across the prevention continuum.

Major response programs include:

AIRR

The intake team (AIRR - Assessment, Intake, Referral, and Response) provide a person-centred, trauma informed intake approach. The team conduct an enhanced triage & assessment to identify and understand each person's inter-related social and legal needs. Community members are then supported into appropriate pathways to legal assistance, and other relevant social and financial support services.

Legal Programs

Community Law

Community Law – community law practice including the night service, generalist appointments, Intervention Order Support Service (at Ringwood Magistrates' Court) and Deakin Student Legal Service

IOSS - specialist family violence Community Lawyers provide assistance at the Ringwood Magistrates' Court as part of the Intervention Order Support Service

Deakin Student Legal Service

Deakin Student Legal Service - legal advice, information, referral and education to currently enrolled Deakin University students

Family Violence

Mabels

Mabels – an HJP with a community lawyer with a family violence advocate and Aboriginal Liaison Officer within maternal and child health services to allow for early intervention for women experiencing family violence.

SAGE

SAGE – a legal program with a community lawyer, family violence advocate and financial counsellor who can provide a holistic response to the intertwined needs of women experiencing family violence.

WELS

WELS – an HJP with a community lawyer within Eastern Health's maternity services for helping women during pregnancy, a time when they are at an increased risk of experiencing family violence.

Elder Abuse

ROSE

ROSE – a legal program with a community lawyer, elder abuse advocate and financial counsellor to provide a holistic response to older people experiencing or at risk of elder abuse.

ELSA

ELSA – an HJP with a community lawyer, financial counsellor and an advocate within Eastern Health to provide a holistic response for older people experiencing or at risk of elder abuse.

Complex Needs

heal

HEAL – a program with a community lawyer and client advocate to provide co-ordinated legal and other support in response to interrelated legal and psychosocial needs of people experiencing mental health issues; alcohol or other drug related issues; or at risk of or experiencing homelessness, working closely with key local services

	Primary Prevention Population approach		**Secondary Prevention** Early Intervention		**Tertiary Prevention** Response
Community Engagement		Professional development sessions Partnership projects Hidden Voices	Communications Newsletters Social media Marketing	AIRR: information service Community Legal Education Information resources: - fact sheets - guides - videos Strengthening Intake In Legal Assistance Project	AIRR: Intake and referral
Community Law	Law Reform submissions Strategic advocacy	The Orange Door collaboration Systems Reform Integrated Practice Project / Better Practice Principle	Lilydale Youth Hub	Deakin Student Legal Service Early Resolution Service	Advice & Casework Intervention Order Support Service HEAL
Violence Against Women/ Family Violence	Matter of Respect Gender Equity – TFER Partnership	Mabels & WELS – professional development and capacity building Adapted MARAM training	Mabels 	WELS	SAGE
Seniors/ Elder Abuse	Preventing Abuse of Older People Framework OPERA EEAN: Prevention WG	My Generation Professional Development Research & Evaluation	WEEAD Every Age Counts campaign	ELSA EEAN: Response WG	ROSE
CaLD Communities		Engaging Communities in Democracy Amplifying Community Voices	You, Me and MPs Toolkit	Community Legal Education Information resources: - fact sheets - guides - videos	

Community Law

ECLC's foundation has always been the community law practice. The team of employed staff and both legal and paralegal volunteers provide an agile response to broad community needs.

With the emergence of specialised programs across the Centre, the team has been titled as Community Law, incorporating the work of the volunteer day and night services, generalist legal service team, Intervention Order Support Service (IOSS) at Ringwood Magistrates' Court and Deakin Student Legal Service.

The team has continued to accept referrals and support clients throughout the pandemic, taking advantage of remote interviews to provide additional flexibility. It has maintained close relationships with key agencies and reached out to new community partners.

The community law practice focuses on a range of matters including family violence, family law, debt and civil, infringements, minor criminal law, crimes compensation (victims of crime), property damage due to motor vehicle accidents and neighbourhood disputes.

Leah's Story

Leah, an international student living in Australia for around two years, came to DSLS for advice after she moved into a share house.

The head tenant started making unreasonable demands of Leah. Within three weeks, the head tenant asked Leah to move out because they said it was unsafe for her to stay. Leah was also advised that the bond she'd paid would be withheld for professional cleaning.

ECLC's community lawyer found that no bond had been lodged for the share house. The lawyer advised Leah that the rental provider was in breach of tenancy laws. Leah took the information she'd been provided and spoke with the head tenant again, preparing a letter in case her bond wasn't returned. On the day Leah moved out, the head tenant returned the full bond to her and she was satisfied with the resolution of her tenancy.

Supporting University Students

Deakin Student Legal Service

ECLC's Deakin Student Legal Service (DSLS) provides free and confidential legal advice, information, referral and education to currently enrolled Deakin University students.

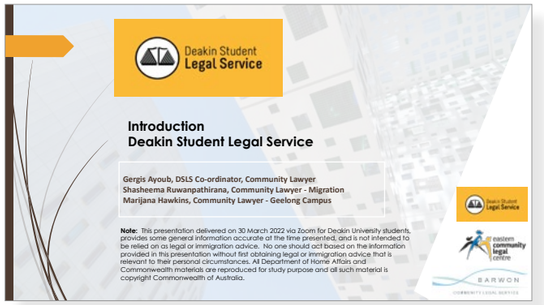
This service was of particular importance during the Covid-19 pandemic as international students found themselves most impacted by the pandemic including travel and visa difficulties, the suspension of in person classes and a lack of income support.

DSLS faced increased demand during the pandemic and continues to be an important resource for tertiary students. Although working remotely, the team provided additional legal information sessions and blogs including visa issues, employment, tenancy, family violence and scams.

More positively, students rapidly adapted to remote service delivery which enabled access to services to be maintained.

This year visa/migration issues were dominant, as well as tenancy and employment issues, that were exacerbated by the pandemic.

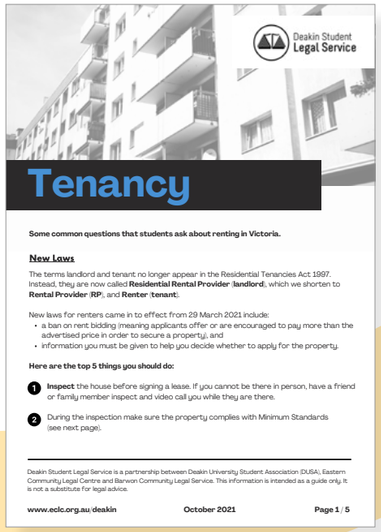
DSLS is a partnership with Deakin University Student Association (DUSA) and Barwon Community Legal Service (BCLS).


Deakin Student Legal Service

Introduction
Deakin Student Legal Service

Gergis Ayoub, DSLS Co-ordinator, Community Lawyer
Shasheema Ruwanpathirana, Community Lawyer - Migration
Marijana Hawkins, Community Lawyer - Geelong Campus

Note: This presentation delivered on 30 March 2022 via Zoom for Deakin University students, provides some general information accurate at the time presented, and is not intended to be relied on as legal or immigration advice. No one should act based on the information provided in this presentation without first obtaining legal or immigration advice that is relevant to their personal circumstances. All Department of Home Affairs and Commonwealth materials are reproduced for study purpose and all such material is copyright Commonwealth of Australia.


Deakin Student Legal Service

Tenancy

Some common questions that students ask about renting in Victoria.

New Laws

The terms landlord and tenant no longer appear in the Residential Tenancies Act 1997. Instead, they are now called **Residential Rental Provider** (**landlord**), which we shorten to **Rental Provider** (**RP**), and **Renter** (**tenant**).

New laws for renters came in to effect from 29 March 2021 include:
- a ban on rent bidding (meaning applicants offer or are encouraged to pay more than the advertised price in order to secure a property), and
- information you must be given to help you decide whether to apply for the property.

Here are the top 5 things you should do:

1. **Inspect** the house before signing a lease. If you cannot be there in person, have a friend or family member inspect and video call you while they are there.
2. During the inspection make sure the property complies with Minimum Standards (see next page).

Deakin Student Legal Service is a partnership between Deakin University Student Association (DUSA), Eastern Community Legal Centre and Barwon Community Legal Service. This information is intended as a guide only. It is not a substitute for legal advice.

www.eclc.org.au/deakin October 2021 Page 1 / 5

Early Resolution Service

Since May 2021, ECLC has been participating in an Early Resolution Service (ERS) pilot for Family Violence Intervention Order (FVIO) matters at Ringwood Magistrates' Court, funded by the Victorian Government.

The purpose of the ERS is to provide legal assistance to people with family violence legal needs prior to their court hearings and resolve them where possible. Where appropriate, the lawyer will also engage in negotiations with the other party and communicate the outcome before court. This assistance greatly reduces the stress and anxiety of the entire process, while seeking to alleviate pressure on existing duty lawyer services at court.

The ERS has proven highly successful and demonstrated the value and effectiveness of opportunities and systems to provide support as early as possible to people engaging with Court processes, particularly in family violence.

ECLC

has received
1,241
referrals

conducted
163
ERS
appointments

has referred
774
cases to the Intervention Order Support Service
(on the court day)

One third
(471)

of those referrals have been received since January 2022 alone, highlighting the increase in demand for assistance.

Legal Services in The Orange Door Network

ECLC has been working closely with the new Orange Door Networks that have opened in the East in the last 12 months. Beginning with The Orange Door, Inner East (Box Hill) that opened in September 2021, it is the main entry point for people seeking family violence support and living in the local government areas (LGA's) of Boroondara, Manningham, Monash and Whitehorse.

This partnership has ensured that more people seeking family violence support can have easier access to legal help via Orange Door Triage services.

The Centre also welcomed the expansion of the partnership with The Orange Door Outer East (Croydon) servicing Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges residents.

Jamie's Story

Jamie* was referred to ECLC through the Early Resolution Service (ERS). Jamie was a Respondent in a Family Violence Intervention Order application protecting their mum. The application was taken out by Victoria Police. There was a complex history of family violence between the parties, as well as the loss of two siblings and recent death of Jamie's father. Jamie also experienced mental ill health. At the last incident of family violence when Victoria Police took out the application, Jamie was admitted to hospital, received a diagnosis and commenced new medication.

All Jamie wanted was to be able to return home to live with their mum. Mum also wanted this. Victoria Police were very concerned due to the history of family violence and Jamie previously not taking their medication.

Through ERS, ECLC's community lawyer was able to assist Jamie to achieve the outcome they wanted. ECLC negotiated directly with Victoria Police to determine what they needed to see from Jamie in order to feel that Mum would be safe if Jamie returned home. The lawyer was then able to communicate directly with Jamie's treating team to obtain a letter showing what was needed.

ERS was successful in Jamie's case as the team was able to negotiate with Victoria Police early to determine what they needed, write to Jamie's treating team, follow up and negotiate before the next Court date. This is not possible on a duty lawyer day. The negotiations were completed well before the next Court date, reducing difficulty and stress for all involved.

Jamie was happy with the outcome and they were able to live with their mum again.

Family Violence

Providing a Continuum of Support

ECLC has become a leader in a range of family violence approaches, from prevention and gender equality campaigns to integrated practice, health justice partnerships and sector training programs. Teams work across the continuum of primary prevention, early intervention and crisis response. Throughout the pandemic, the number of people experiencing violence has increased and access to support services became more difficult. Over the past year, staff have seen more serious and more complex situations and had to go to greater lengths to enable access to confidential information and support.

Mabels

Mabels

Mabels is an award-winning health justice partnership with Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service (BWAHS) and three Victorian local councils. The program, which began in early 2015, provides an opportunity for early intervention in a trusted health setting for women experiencing family violence.

In early 2021, the partnership was delighted to receive state government support to extend and expand into a third municipality.

Victorian Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes said, ***"Seeking help for family violence can be incredibly intimidating – this program gives women a safe, comfortable and non-judgemental environment to take those first steps and get the support they need."***

Read more at **www.eclc.org.au/Mabels**

WELS

Women Engaging and Living Safely (WELS)

WELS is a health justice partnership with Eastern Health and Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service that works with maternity services to identify, inform and support women experiencing family violence during pregnancy.

Read more at **www.eclc.org.au/WELS**

SAGE

Support Advice Guidance Empowerment (SAGE)

SAGE is an integrated practice service providing legal and family violence support to women experiencing, or at risk of, family violence. It provides advocacy, family violence support and financial counselling in one service. SAGE prioritises women and children with increased vulnerability or barriers to accessing legal support.

Through the year SAGE and related programs utilised increased Commonwealth funding to expand mental health, outreach and other holistic supports.

Read more at **www.eclc.org.au/SAGE**

Intervention Order Support Service (IOSS)

IOSS operates at the Ringwood Magistrates' Court, where community lawyers and trained paralegals provide information and specialist legal assistance to people engaging in the Family Violence Intervention Order process. ECLC works closely with key agency partners and the Court. This year the Early Resolution Service expanded this work and enabled better and earlier outcomes for clients.

Read more at **www.eclc.org.au/IOSS**

Training and sector development

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) training

ECLC, in partnership with Safe and Equal and with the support of Family Safety Victoria. developed and delivered MARAM training adapted for community service professionals (particularly family violence advocates) in the legal assistance sector.

Participant feedback was highly positive with many comments about how understanding the MARAM framework caused them to reflect on their own practice and that of their services. The project was instigated and funded by the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Family Violence Partnership.

Read more at **www.eclc.org.au/MARAM**

The opening of The Orange Door in the Inner East (Box Hill) and later, the Outer East (Croydon), has improved and broadened family violence intake pathways. ECLC provided training to the new services' staff and continues to work closely and accept referrals. This has significantly increased demand for legal support, without any additional resources yet provided.

Primary prevention work

ECLC is an active member of Together for Equality and Respect and actively participates in a range of primary prevention campaigns, including the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence and programs like Matter of Respect and Respectful Relationships.

The MARAM Framework and the legal assistance sector Outcomes Report

Key findings

- As non-prescribed services, legal assistance services are still an important component of the family violence service system and should be included in the MARAM Framework/training
- Legal assistance services play a critical role in intervening and responding to family violence and commonly identify risk assessment and management as an integral part of their role
- Legal assistance services commonly employ a range of community service professionals in roles that identify, assess and manage risk, but who are not eligible for MARAM training
- By adapting training to the multidisciplinary needs of legal assistance services, there are opportunities to improve child focused practice
- Community Legal Centres present unique opportunities and challenges in aligning their practice to the MARAM Framework

Integrated Practice Partnerships

ECLC works in partnership with a wide range of organisations to ensure people can access legal and advocacy support through their trusted services and networks.

This includes integrated practice partnerships with health and community services, local councils and community groups throughout Melbourne's East.

Existing partnerships support women, children and older people experiencing violence; as well as people experiencing homelessness, mental illness, and drug/alcohol issues.

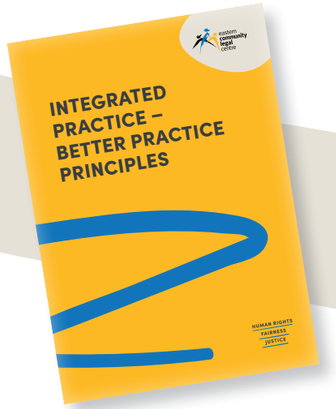
Integrated practice is the backbone of ECLC's multidisciplinary service response and helps reach more people in more places and provide the flexible support and referrals they need.

Integrated Practice - Better Practice Principles

ECLC drew on its expertise in integrated services provision and brought together other CLC leaders to develop a set of principles for implementing integrated practice programs.

ECLC launched the 'Integrated Practice - Better Practice Principles' report, outlining the key principles for this approach project.

For more information, visit **www.eclc.org.au/integratedpractice**



Multidisciplinary Legal Service

One of the most significant steps in ECLC's evolution and growth has been moving from a general practice model to the introduction of specialised integrated practice programs.

This move has not only unlocked partnership opportunities, but it has increased positive impact in the lives of community members across Melbourne's East.

In a relatively short period, the Centre has formed or extended partnerships with key health and community services and has become recognised as a national leader in integrated legal, health, financial and social support models.

Integrated practice in a community legal setting involves community lawyers and other community service professionals working together to respond to the sometimes complex needs of community members. This allows individuals to receive assistance not only with legal issues, but potentially with other social, emotional and financial issues which may be impacting their lives and potentially exacerbating or compounding their legal issues.

Integrated practice is often the best model for meeting people's complex needs. It enables a sophisticated approach that sees them as a whole person rather than a list of individual issues that can only be addressed separately.

It can also reveal barriers to access that might not be seen via a siloed approach. Integrated practice models open the door to breaking down persistent structural and systematic barriers preventing access to the assistance people need.

Integrated practice can be critical to an effective early intervention or trauma-informed response, policy reform and systemic advocacy. Strong and trusted partnerships with local health and community services are the foundation for shared success that continues to deepen. While bringing together professionals from different fields to collaborate, innovate and/or work in the same team can be challenging at times, this model offers the best outcome for each person being supported.

Mabels

Mabels is an award-winning Health Justice Partnership between ECLC, Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service (BWAHS) and three local Victorian government councils. The program, which began in early 2015 provides an opportunity for early intervention for women experiencing family violence. Mabels enables women to receive information, advice and assistance at a much earlier point in their experience of family violence than they may have otherwise, and empowers them to navigate or use the legal system to seek protection for themselves and their children.

Following considerable partnership advocacy and recognising the important role Mabels plays in the early intervention of family violence for women and their children, Mabels received state government funding to expand into a third local government area. Mabels is now able to offer early intervention family violence support and advocacy to all women and children accessing universal health services in the outer eastern region of Melbourne.

The expansion of the Mabels program was officially launched in November 2021 with the program already providing 62 appointments for 24 women and their children referred to the program to end of June 2022, highlighting its importance and value.

> "This was a fantastic service who helped me and my family during a very tough time."
>
> - MABELS CLIENT

Mabels in regional area

In June 2022 Mabels received philanthropic funding and support from the Cybec Foundation to extend its partnership with a regional CLC and their local MCH service and community organisations, to expand the Mabels program.

As well as providing service delivery to women and children within this community, the Mabels partnership also seeks to identify key lessons and recommendations on the implementation and contextualisation of Mabels within a regional and remote area. This will support the long-term goal of a staged state-wide rollout of Mabels across Victoria, particularly into rural and regional areas.

Lowanna's Story

Lowanna and her two children, Jarrah and Willow, met ECLC's team through the Mabels program who assisted her to apply for a Family Violence Intervention Order against Willow's father, Simon. The team then referred her to the SAGE program for more complex support.

Lowanna, an Aboriginal woman, was experiencing multiple stressors adversely impacting her capacity to engage with legal processes. Lowanna had a diagnosis of complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), primarily due to extreme childhood neglect, emotional and sexual abuse. Lowanna's PTSD symptoms had since been exacerbated by persistent family violence perpetrated by Simon.

Lowanna was extremely fearful of losing care of Willow due to previous Family Law proceedings which had resulted in her oldest child Jarrah living with the father. Simon had also repeatedly threatened to have Willow removed from Lowanna's care and had made numerous unsubstantiated reports to police and child protection alleging she was using methamphetamines and leaving Willow unattended. The repeated contact from police and child protection was particularly distressing for Lowanna because of her own childhood experiences of not having been supported by either agency when in need of protection.

Lowanna's PTSD symptoms were usually triggered when approaching legal appointments and court events which led to a significant degree of avoidance at critical times when instructions were needed. Consequently, the SAGE Family Violence Advocate and Community Lawyer invested substantial effort in building trust and rapport with Lowanna. This required being sufficiently flexible to schedule appointments on short notice on the rare occasions she was able to engage and maintaining extensive follow-up when she was not. It also meant appointments had to be cut short when Lowanna felt unable to safely manage her distress, and considerable time was spent developing a plan to help her feel supported in her engagement.

ECLC's Advocate worked hard in supporting Lowanna's re-engagement with a local Aboriginal support service to facilitate cultural safety and effective collaboration. This included arranging joint attendances at critical legal appointments and court events. Despite this support, Lowanna found it too distressing to provide the level of detail the lawyer needed in order to prepare Further and Better Particulars for her Intervention Order application.

Consequently, with permission, the advocate arranged to secure key information from agencies previously involved with Lowanna. Liaison was also undertaken with Lowanna's trauma counsellor to facilitate arrangements for particularly distressing content to be provided with her direct support and strategies to support Lowanna through the legal proceedings and enhance her emotional safety.

As a result, the SAGE lawyer was ultimately able to file very detailed Further and Better Particulars, resulting in Lowanna securing a further 12-month Intervention Order protecting herself and the children. This also assisted Lowanna in her subsequent family law proceedings, with the SAGE lawyer being able to negotiate Final Parenting Orders in accordance with her wishes, without the need for a contested final hearing.

This example highlights the comprehensive and trauma-informed support that specialist integrated services provide women experiencing family violence in facilitating their engagement with the legal system. The extensive collaboration with the client's Aboriginal support service also highlights the improved safety, legal and psycho-social outcomes that can result for Aboriginal women when integrated service delivery incorporates an experience of cultural safety and connection.

Elder Abuse Prevention

My Money

My Money is a financial literacy program to help promote women's independence and address financial barriers to equality. It's important that everyone feels confident when it comes to managing their money. With so many conflicting messages from banks, investment advisors and other companies, it can be hard to know where to find reliable and accurate information.

Developed by experienced Financial Counsellors, the My Money workshops were delivered online over a period of 5 weeks. Women of all ages and stages of life attended the workshops to hear about topics such as Budget and Bills, Superannuation and Insurance, Managing Debt, Avoiding Scams and Planning Your Future.

My Money was a collaboration with project partners Women's Health East, Outer East Primary Care Partnership, Knox City Council, Maroondah City Council and Yarra Ranges Council.

Framing Age Message Guide

The Framing Age Message Guide was developed by a consortium of multi-agency Elder Abuse Prevention Networks (including ECLC), led by Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership. Mark Chenery from Common Cause Australia was engaged to conduct the research and help better understand how to communicate about ageing and ageism in a way that resonates well with people.

The EEAN also engaged Mark to deliver 2 Masterclasses for EEAN members to help facilitate a deeper understanding of how to apply the learnings and help build capacity within the region.

Elder Abuse Early Intervention and Response

Everybody has the right to feel safe, to be treated with dignity and respect, and to make their own decisions. Some older people are denied these rights, often by the people who are closest to them.

ECLC's Elder Abuse Response Services, ELSA (Engaging & Living Safely & Autonomously) and ROSE (Rights of Seniors in the East) provide free and confidential legal advice and assistance to older people experiencing or at risk of elder abuse.

ELSA

Engaging and Living Safely and Autonomously (ELSA) ELSA is a health justice partnership with Eastern Health. ELSA facilitates early identification and responses to older people with increased vulnerability, experiencing or at risk of elder abuse via local health services. ELSA utilises a co-case management model in a strong partnership, providing support from a community lawyer, financial counsellor and an advocate.

Read more at **www.eclc.org.au/ELSA**

ROSE

Rights of Seniors in the East (ROSE) ROSE is a legal program that provides integrated legal, financial and social support services for seniors experiencing or at risk of elder abuse. It provides advice, ongoing case management support and referrals based on the client's wishes and needs. ROSE also receives referrals from other services and provides secondary consultations as needed. ROSE also partners closely with Oonah Belonging Place.

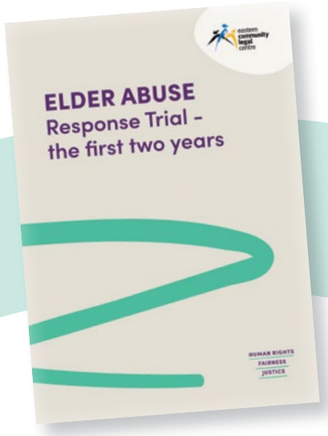
Read more at **www.eclc.org.au/ROSE**

Midterm Evaluation

ELSA and ROSE are the only Victorian program in the Commonwealth Government's Elder Abuse Service Trials under the National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians.

ECLC commissioned an independent evaluation of these programs through RMIT University and the National Ageing Research Institute. The recent **Mid-term Evaluation** looked at the effectiveness and efficiency of the response programs in their first two years.

It found that the programs were implemented successfully, were ***"highly valued by both clients and professional stakeholders"*** and resulted in ***"clients overwhelmingly reporting their needs had been met"*** despite being rolled out in the midst of COVID-19 and ongoing lockdowns in Victoria.



ECLC released both the Mid-term Evaluation and a summary – Elder Abuse Response Trial – the first two years – which provides an overview of the Elder Abuse Response Programs and key lessons learned. It demonstrates the strong value of integrated practice in the elder abuse context.

Read more at **www.eclc.org.au/elderabuse**

Elder Abuse Conference

ECLC was pleased to be able to attend the **7th National Elder Abuse Conference, 'Walk the Talk'** in Tasmania in February this year. The yearly conference brings together individuals and organisations to discuss, learn and improve approaches within the elder abuse space.

This year, ECLC had the privilege to present in three segments at the conference on 'Breaking the cycle of abuse: Collaborating across the elder abuse prevention continuum'. ECLC's multidisciplinary team led the presentation and panel discussion showcasing our distinct approach to preventing elder abuse by working across the prevention continuum from primary prevention work on ageism, to early intervention initiatives, through to elder abuse response. This work provides a unique, evidence informed contribution to the UN's Decade of Healthy Ageing.

The Centre also presented 'One size doesn't fit all: How health justice partnerships deliver client-centred care' along with colleagues from **Justice Connect** and **Caxton Legal Centre**. The panel discussed how access to timely legal advice was a social determinant of health. They also discussed how health justice partnerships assist people at the intersection of ageing, health and law realise their rights to autonomy, safety and self-determination.

'Celebrate ageing: Know your rights and live your life' workshop

In May this year, ECLC was proud to be able to present, 'Celebrate ageing: Know your rights and live your life' workshop in collaboration with Maroondah Council and Women's Health East. The workshop also included Dr Catherine Barrett, Founder and Director of charity Celebrate Ageing, who shared her thoughts on how we can work together to foster respect so that everyone can know their rights and live their best life!

Barbara's Story

Barbara was identified as someone who might be experiencing abuse when she was admitted to an Emergency department with serious injuries caused by her adult son, living at home.

Clinicians arranged for her to speak to the hospital social worker while she was a patient and she disclosed details of her situation for the first time due to the high level of trust with hospital staff.

"He was very controlling. We could never criticise him for anything or we would get bashed. He's emptied our bank accounts completely, stolen all the jewellery, sold tools... anything of value."

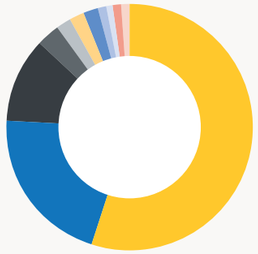
"As parents, you live for your children and you think it's going to get better... but it didn't. That was the realisation, that we had to get him away from us."

"When I spoke to Paul (ELSA Community Lawyer) and told him what happened, he reassured me that there would have to be something to stop him and that we were doing the right thing. To have Paul there, he was great."

Paul worked with the Eastern Health and ECLC teams to facilitate social, legal and financial counselling support to enable Barbara and her husband to protect themselves from their son's violent and controlling behaviour.

Statistics

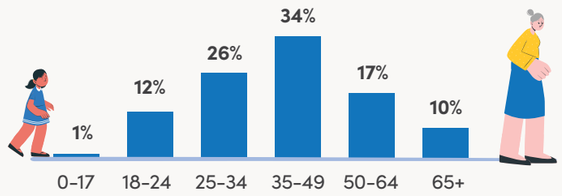
55%	Family Violence	2%	Criminal law	1%	Motor vehicle accidents
21%	Family law	2%	Consumer	1%	Victims of crime
11%	Other Civil	1%	Credit and debt		
3%	Traffic	1%	Wills and estates		
2%	Neighbour disputes				



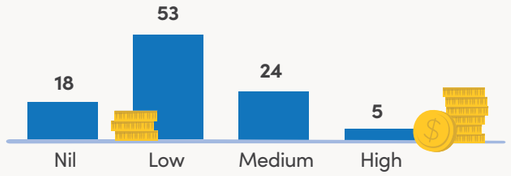
Total Number of Clients: 2023

New Clients	1524
Repeat Clients	500
Existing Clients	373

Age (%)



Income (%)



Duty Lawyer (IOSS)

657 Clients

Client Demographics

67% People Experiencing Family Violence

55% People Experiencing Financial Disadvantage

22% Disclosed having a disability or Mental illness

5% Were at risk of homelessness

28% Culturally or Linguistically Diverse backgrounds

6% Required assistance of an interpreter

2% Identified as Indigenous Australians

Recovering from the Yarra Ranges Storm

ECLC's response to the June 2021 storm event extended through all of 2021-22 and continues to be a major focus, following the significant impact on communities in the Outer East and particularly the Dandenong Ranges.

As the local lead for Disaster Legal Help, ECLC has led a major storm response, working closely with Yarra Ranges Council, Bushfire Recovery Victoria, government, legal and other community services to lead the legal help response.

To date, ECLC has assisted over 90 clients on a range of storm-related matters who were impacted during this time. ECLC's broader response includes;

- Attending regular community meetings, drop-ins and recovery hubs across the Yarra Ranges.
- Developing and utilising a Disaster Legal Health Check
- Ensuring a trauma-informed response

The Centre continues to provide legal support and assistance to communities impacted as a result of the storms and where possible support the response effort. Legal issues identified relate to Insurance, accommodation, tree damage and some family violence. Family violence issues often follow a disaster. More work continues through active participation in community and partnership/ stakeholder meetings, drop-ins organised by Yarra Ranges Council and Recovery Hubs and other events/activities to engage with those effected by storms and assist with legal-related problems.

John's Story

John was referred to ECLC through Anglicare's Storms Recovery Support Program.

John was very concerned about a tree that he believed might have been compromised in the recent storm and was overhanging his older neighbour's property. He was seeking advice to understand what his liability in such a situation might be.

However, John was significantly impacted by the damage caused to his own property in the storm and was not yet ready to proceed with legal help. He agreed to have some follow up calls with ECLC to track how things were going.

In the end, John accepted an appointment at which he reported he was able to get all his questions answered by the community lawyer. John remarked that but for the follow up calls, he would not have proceeded with seeking the advice.

Quality Improvement

Strengthening Intake Quality in Legal Assistance Project

In late 2021 ECLC was awarded an Innovation Grant from the Victoria Law Foundation, further building on its sector-leading Enhanced Entry Intake & Triage approach.

The project aims to improve community access to legal services by using data to identify barriers and help-seeking behaviour. The main components are:

- to develop tools to assess client capability to manage legal problems, and
- to build organisational capability to collect and analyse data to improve service delivery
- share findings and insights with the legal assistance sector.

The project includes undertaking research in developing a best-practice Quality and Capability Framework for intake and triage services, while connecting with Beyond CX and Justice Connect to incorporate best practice processes and metrics.

Person-Centred Journey Mapping

As part of ECLC's strategic commitment to making service pathways easier for community members, together with the practice of continuous improvement, the Centre engaged consultants Mesh to support internal research to document the current experience of clients engaging with ECLC's services and the broader engagement with partner organisations.

The project applied Human Centred Design methodology to explore and document the lived experience of clients and the underpinning systems and processes that support the client experience.

The outcomes highlighted key moments that matter in a help seeker/client journey, including:

- Ensuring proactive support
- Critical role of client advocate
- Flexibility in approach in service delivery
- Ongoing collaboration with partner and referral organisations
- Adequate resourcing

Federal Election Candidates Forum:

In May, ECLC hosted a **Federal Election Candidates Forum** with a focus on the Chisholm electorate. Four Candidates participated: Carina Garland (ALP), Ryan Dare (Aust. Citizens Party), Wayne Tseng (Ind.) and Bill Pheasant (Greens).

The Forum was conducted face-to-face at Box Hill Town Hall and online via zoom link. It was a truly democratic experience as Candidates responded to relevant issues including housing, disability, family violence, employment and peace.

ECLC was pleased to have guests from across diverse communities participate, building on the Engaging Communities in Democracy project and facilitated by Community Advocate, Dilnaz Billimoria.

Community Engagement

Engaging Communities in Democracy

In 2021/22 ECLC continued to prioritise working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) and faith communities to improve understanding and engagement with the Victorian Parliament and its processes.

The **'Engaging Communities in Democracy' (ECD)** project aimed to support these communities to engage with the parliamentary system of government and law-making, and to give community members the confidence to raise issues with their local Members of Parliament.

The final outcome of the project was the development of the **You Me & MPs Toolkit** which was codesigned with the ECD Project Advisory Committee, with feedback from local MP's and Electorate Officers.

The Toolkit includes:

- Animated videos on the role of an MP and how to contact an MP
- Short interviews with community members and Parliamentary staff on their experiences
- Tools on how to engage and interact with Local Parliamentary Representatives

The toolkit is available now at **www.engagingcommunities.eclc.org.au** and the video, 'You, Me & MPs' has been translated into 10 languages.

> ***"We are confident that this work will contribute to better understanding of Parliament across many communities and will encourage greater participation in our democracy."***
>
> – President of the Legislative Council, Nazih Elasmar

> ***"We are so pleased to have partnered with Parliament on the Engaging Communities in Democracy project and believe the toolkit will help the communities feel more included and better equipped to understand the parliamentary system - across Victoria and nationally."***
>
> - ECLC CEO, Michael Smith

Hidden Voices

Lived experience storytelling to foster inclusion and healing

ECLC led and celebrated the 'Hidden Voices' project culminating in four major events held at Lilydale Community House, Yarra Ranges Museum and Box Hill Institute.

The project provided a safe space for local community members to talk about their lived experience stories on a range of topics in small group settings. Topics included family violence, volunteering in indigenous services, sexual assault, identifying community gaps and establishing services, experiencing language barriers and accessing disability services, ageism and women in local business.

Members of the community listened eagerly and were given the opportunity to ask story tellers questions which allowed for thought provoking conversation and insight into lived experiences that are authentic, vulnerable and empowering.

The project was supported by the Lilydale Revitalisation Board, Victorian Government and project partners as a unique space to foster inclusion in the Lilydale area. For more information, visit eclc.org.au/hiddenvoices

> "I have become more confident telling my story...I have also developed a better understanding of myself...I have been able to reflect on all the things that have shaped me to become the adult I am today with a firm sense of social justice and a need to help others."
>
> - MARTINA

My Generation

My Generation aimed to address ageism and age discrimination through intergenerational art workshops conducted in the Boronia area.

Community Artist Alisa Tanaka-King led a series of imaginative intergenerational art workshops, connecting primary school children (year levels 4, 5 & 6) with community members aged 60 + (or 50 + for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants). Project activities took place over June to September where participants worked together to create a series of art. This artwork was then utilised to decorate a pathway outside Boronia Progress Hall. A documentary, 'Art is for everyone' capturing the essence of the project was also created.

My Generation was celebrated with 3 major events – an art exhibition, a documentary screening of official 'Art is for everyone' and an evening of storytelling, dining and art.

For more information and to view the **'Art is for everyone'** documentary, visit www.eclc.org.au/mygeneration

Amplifying Community Voices

ECLC was proud to be able to support Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) community leaders to become Anti-racism Advocates in an initiative in partnership with IndianCare, the Centre for Holistic Health (CHH) and the Communities' Council on Ethnic Issues (CCOEI).

The Amplifying Community Voices in the East (ACVE) project supported community leaders to participate in workshops which focus on challenging racism and sharing their voices and experiences of racial discrimination. Capacity building sessions were provided by the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) and Democracy in Colour, and were developed in consultation with the leaders, providing them with knowledge on Australia's Human Rights Framework, advocacy techniques and using their knowledge and lived experiences to speak out against racism. ECLC also supported the community leaders to develop a video, 'Voices of Change – Action against Racism' to educate community members on how to identify and report incidents of racial or religious discrimination or vilification.

Project participant, Dr Chris Mallika Bhadra believes the project presents an important opportunity to raise the issue of racism for those who may not otherwise have a voice.

> *"I want to create a platform for people who can't speak for themselves and racism is a big issue. If I can just help amplify the voice of just one person, I feel something is accomplished."*
>
> - Dr Chris Mallika Bhadr, Anti-Racism Advocate

> *"Combatting racism requires strong advocates. It has been great to see how the ECLC's Amplifying Community Voices in the East program has been able to build the capacity of community leaders from our culturally diverse communities to become Anti-racism Ambassadors."*
>
> - Paul Hamer, Local Member for Box Hill

For more information, visit www.eclc.org.au/acve

> "These sort of projects are really important for our community to see ourselves as something that is valuable and their ideas are valued, and they can be a really positive contributor to their community."
>
> - BORONIA K-12 COLLEGE

Partnerships

ECLC works with its service partners in the region and other legal assistance organisations more broadly to extend the benefits of programs and projects to more members of its community.

ECLC thanks its many funding, government, community and agency partners for their collaborations and creating stronger communities across Melbourne's eastern suburbs.

- Anchor
- Anglicare Victoria
- ARC Justice
- At Your Will
- Attorney-General's Department
- Australian Chin Association
- Australian Government
- Australian Iranian Society of Victoria (AISOV)
- Bahai Association of Victoria
- Balwyn Welfare Association
- Barwon Community Legal Service
- Besen Family Foundation
- Better Place Australia
- Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service
- Boroondara Interfaith Network
- Box Hill Institute
- Centre for Holistic Health
- Centre for Innovative Justice (RMIT)
- Centre for Multicultural Youth
- Centrelink (Services Australia)
- Chin Community Victoria Inc.
- Chinese Community Social Services Centre
- Chinese Health Foundation of Australia
- Cire Services
- City of Boroondara
- City of Whitehorse
- Communities' Council on Ethnic Issues
- Community Legal Centres Australia
- Court Network
- Craig Family Centre
- Cybec Foundation
- Dawood Bohra Community Group
- Deakin University Student Association
- Democracy In Colour
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions
- Department of Justice and Community Safety
- Devenish Lawyers
- EACH
- Eastern Health
- Eastern Karen Community Association of Victoria (EKCAV)
- Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network
- Eastern Mental Health Service Coordination Alliance (EMHSCA)
- Eastern Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee
- Eastern Regional Libraries
- EastLink
- Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS)
- Elcom
- EMR Regional Family Violence Partnership
- Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria
- Family Access Network
- Federation of Community Legal Centres
- Financial Counselling Vic
- Foundation House
- Gateway LLEN
- Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers
- Glen Park Community House
- Hall & Wilcox
- Healesville Living and Learning Centre
- Health Justice Australia
- healthAbility
- HICCI (Healesville Interchurch Community Care Inc.)
- Holding Redlich
- Hume Riverina Community Legal Service
- IAEC Education, Migration
- Indian Senior Citizens Association of Victoria
- IndianCare
- Inner East PCP
- Inspiro Community Health Service
- JH Legal
- Justice Connect
- Kevcom
- knowmore
- Knox City Council
- Knox Infolink
- Knox Leisureworks
- Lander & Rogers
- Lilydale Community House
- Lilydale Youth Hub
- Living and Learning @ Ajani
- Maddocks
- Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre
- Manningham City Council
- Manningham Interfaith Network
- Maroondah City Council
- Maroondah Interfaith Network
- Maurice Blackburn Lawyers
- Migrant Information Centre (Eastern)
- MinterEllison
- Moores
- Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Norton Rose Fulbright
- Office of the Public Advocate
- Oonah Health & Community Services Aboriginal Corporation
- Outer East Primary Care Partnership
- Parliament of Victoria
- Phillips Ormonde Fitzpatrick
- Phyllis Connor Memorial Trust
- Pyrios
- Ringwood Family Relationship Centre (EACH)
- Ringwood Magistrates' Court
- RMIT
- Robinson Gill Lawyers
- Safe and Equal (formerly Domestic Violence Victoria)
- Seniors Rights Victoria
- South-East Monash Legal Service
- Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership
- Sri Guru Nanak Satsang Sabha Blackburn Gurdwara
- SSI (Settlement Services International)
- Swinburne Student Union
- Swinburne University
- The Basin Community House
- The University of Melbourne
- Together For Equality & Respect
- Uniting Vic.Tas
- Victoria Law Foundation
- Victoria Legal Aid
- Victoria Police
- Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency
- Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission
- Victorian Government
- Victorian Legal Services Board + Commissioner
- Victorian Multicultural Commission
- Victorian Primary Care Partnership
- Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service
- West Heidelberg Legal Service
- Whitehorse Interfaith Network
- Whitehorse Emergency Relief and Support
- Women's Health East
- Women's Legal Service Victoria
- Worawa Aboriginal College
- Yarra Ranges Council
- Yarra Ranges Regional Museum
- YX Ball Financial P/L
- Zoroastrian Faith Group

Volunteers

With the pandemic continuing through the 2021-2022 period, ECLC navigated the challenges in operating the diverse many volunteer programs in an often changing and uncertain environment. Wherever possible, remote volunteer opportunities were expanded to support the continuation of the crucial work of volunteers for the community.

Despite the challenges, the commitment shown by the volunteers remained constant. Whether actively engaged remotely, or unable to do so but maintaining connection, the dedication and enthusiasm of the volunteer team has been unwavering, with care and consideration of the community always at the forefront.

With the easing of restrictions and the finalisation of a volunteer strategy review, ECLC has commenced implementing several exciting initiatives, with the return of valuable programs leading the way.

The team looks ahead with great anticipation to the reinvigoration of all volunteer programs, and the expansion and developments to come. Most of all, we look forward to welcoming our volunteers back on site to continue their incredible work for our communities.

- Alexander Marinis
- Amy Yu
- Anastasia Misarvidis-Tyshing
- Andrew Taylor
- Anna Chen
- Antony Colafella
- Ben Freeman
- Brendan McCarthy
- Briana Jackman
- Carla Panozzo
- Carolyn Ford
- Cecilia Clark
- Christine Kim
- Christopher Mitchell
- Clement Wong
- Connor Miscamble
- Courtney Salter
- Crystal Pei
- David Goddard
- David Lim
- Dean Pavitt
- Denise O'Shannassy
- Dilnaz Billimoria
- Donna Farrell
- Eddie Thomson
- Elisabeth Blackwell
- Eliza Sinclair
- Emily Cook
- Frances Jackson
- Gavin Wiltshire
- Helen Gay
- Hillary Tsang
- Ian Fieldhouse
- Isabella Kang
- Jacinta Richards
- Jana Andritsos
- Jonathan Green
- Karen Jones
- Karin Costenoble
- Karly Banks
- Lauren Crome
- Leigh Crosbie
- Lily Angelovski
- Lisa Bradley
- Lucas Nicoll
- Maiysha Moin
- Margaret (Marg) Willis
- Mark Tomisich
- Markus Tan
- Mary Pirozek
- Michael King
- Molly Grant
- Mudit Dhami
- Naseef Abdulla
- Natasha Russo
- Nick Carstein
- Pamela McNulty
- Paul Thompson
- Peter Nicholas
- Rachael Lim
- Rhonda Goodall
- Ruth Ong
- Saarah Ozeer
- Samyuktha Ganesh
- Sarah-Jane Mills
- Sophie McIntyre
- Tess Meaden
- Thomas Oliver
- Tony Daquino
- Victor Tse
- Zoe Pace

Volunteer Profile: David Goddard

David Goddard has been practising in the areas of family law, criminal law and intervention orders since coming to the Bar in 2004. He has appeared in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia the Magistrates', Children's, County and Supreme Courts, as well as VCAT.

David is also one of ECLC's experienced volunteers who started with the night service in 2013. Since then, he has provided advice to countless clients in the areas of family law, Intervention Orders and criminal law.

As a barrister, David has always been concerned about the unequal access to justice in the community. This led David to ECLC because he wanted to give something back to the community from his legal training/ qualifications. He was initially doing a lot of legal aid and pro-bono work as a barrister when he first came to the Bar, but for various reasons, he started cutting back and thought volunteering was another great way of giving back.

Currently, David volunteers one evening per month at ECLC and believes that volunteer work is really fulfilling. "Overall, it has been rewarding. ECLC is well-run and organised. Concerns or feedback are taken on board and volunteers are well-supported."

> *"I would recommend volunteering to others. Our society relies upon people volunteering generally to generate a sense of community. Within the legal profession, volunteering can promote access to justice."*

David also believes volunteering reflects well on the legal profession which is generally not highly regarded in the community. "I also think it gives the volunteer an opportunity to learn from their clients and from their colleagues and develop skills as a lawyer that they may not have in their usual employment," he added.

Director - Legal Services, Belinda Lo said, "ECLC is so lucky to have a volunteer like David Goddard. He is patient, kind and really generous with his knowledge. He has volunteered at ECLC for many years, assisting numerous clients to understand their rights in many areas of law. He has a really strong commitment to access to justice for communities experiencing marginalisation."

Board and Staff

ECLC has a highly professional, multitalented and passionate team of full-time and part-time staff, and a dedicated team of over 70 volunteers. Each team member plays an important role in supporting our community.

Board

- Janet Matton AM – Chairperson
- Christine Cowin – Deputy Chairperson
- Dr Guy Masters – Secretary
- Luong Ta – Treasurer
- Elke Smirl
- Jose Abalo (to Sept 2022)
- Katherine Dowson
- Tabitha Lovett
- Ali Besiroglu (from July 2022)
- Donna Hayes (from Sept 2022)
- Lucy Duncan – Observer (Melbourne Observership Program)

Patron

- Hon. Justice Jennifer Coate AO

Staff

Chief Executive Officer
- Michael Smith

Directors

Legal Services (Principal Lawyer)
- Belinda Lo

Family Violence Initiatives (Principal Integrated Practice)
- Marika Manioudakis

Partnerships & Community Engagement
- Donna Askew

People & Shared Services
- Emma Pryce-Baxter

Executive Assistant
- Emma O'Brien

Community Law

Managing Lawyers
- Connie Chen
- Deborah Miller

Deakin Student Legal Service Co-ordinator
- Gergis Ayoub

Senior Community Lawyer
- Jarm Nguyen

Community Lawyers
- Andrea van der Kuijlen
- Cassandra Meade
- Charuka Samarasekara
- Danielle Bon
- Shasheema Ruwanpathirana

Elder Abuse

Managing Lawyer
- Claire Thurstans
- Shahaan Murray

Partnership Co-ordinator
- Nikki Harris-Allan (Eastern Health)

Community Lawyers
- Mdu Radebe
- Paul Were

Advocates
- Jenny Stewart
- Melissa Reed (Eastern Health)

FInancial Counselling Lead
- Katrina Barrett

Intake and Administration
- Kelly Reid

Family Violence Initiatives

Principal Lawyer
- Megan Ross

Program Manager (Principal Practitioner)
- Trish Reck

Co-ordinators
- Susan Amos
- Nicole Bechard
- Christina Burke
- Ruth Howland

Mabels, SAGE, WELS

Community Lawyers
- Erin Fradd
- Katrina Markwick

Advocates
- Fiona Link-Freeman
- Frances Butare
- Hester Chee
- Kathy Ho
- Rina McInnes

Intake and Administration
- Holly Phillips-Kliska
- Jess Spargo

Partnerships & Community Engagement

Managers
- Kate Gibson (Primary Prevention & Education)
- Deborah Goon (Communications, Digital & Media)
- Jacinta Maloney

Marketing & Design Lead
- Naomi Hynes

Community Engagement Leads
- Anita Koochew
- Capella Henderson
- Iresha Buthgamuwa
- Jill Exon

Projects
- Alistair Montfort
- Diana Thomas
- Kate Johnson
- Priya Pavri

YRIPP (CMY)
- Nhu Ngoc Tran

Assessment, Intake, Referral and Response

Manager
- Sonia Jolley
- Kathryn Barnett

Team Leader
- Kathryn Barnett
- Kichelle McFarlane

Intake and Administration
- Alistair Montfort
- Effie Kapnias
- Emily La
- Emma Costa
- Freya Pollard
- Kapia Manakau
- Kerry Shepherd
- Kichelle McFarlane
- Mariam Guirguis
- Samuel Dixon
- Suzanne Cleary

People & Shared Services

Shared Services Manager
- Susan Learner

Digital Workplace
- Kathy Pullman
- Shae Anderson

Quality and Evaluation Manager
- Chalita Ugrinovksi

Data Analyst
- Vrinda Fernando

People, Volunteers and Projects
- Stephanie Streets
- Trish Cameron

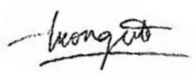
Financial Summary

In 2021/22 it is pleasing to continue to see the growth in service provision, reliability and resilience of ECLC. Revenue reported increased by over 22% to $6,339,329 which reflects increased funding and grants received from many sources to expand and maintain the services ECLC provides to the Eastern community directly and through partnership arrangements. ECLC reported an operating deficit of $2,245 after reporting an operating surplus of $132,451 in the previous financial year.

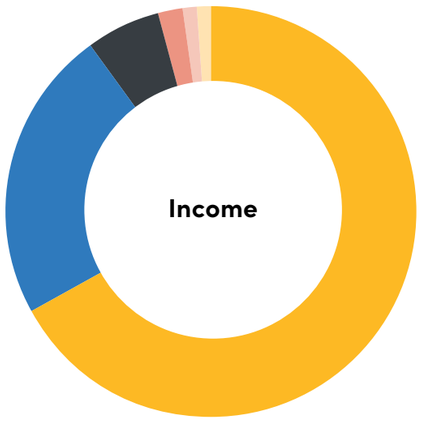
ECLC continues to remain financially stable and practice disciplined cost management in line with increasing revenue and services but pleasingly over the last few years have also taken the opportunity to reinvest into ICT and other systems to better prepare for the future

ECLC Net assets/Reserves as at 30th June 2022 remained stable at $445,420. Cashflow remains in a good position with Cash (and Cash equivalent asset) on hand increasing by $645,230 to $1,761,965 which shows more funding has been received by ECLC in advance of completing and delivering designated services and programs.

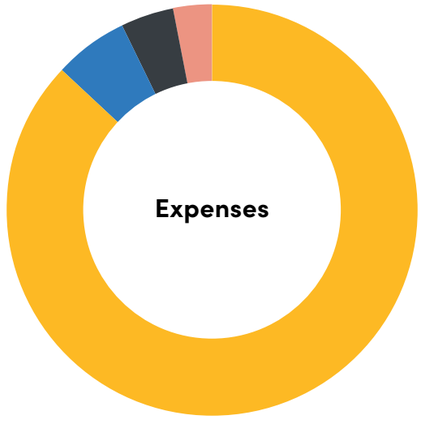
On behalf of the members of ECLC, I would like to thank the Board and Management for their prudent financial management and continuing provision of important essential services to the Eastern community.



Luong Ta
Treasurer



- **67%** AGD/VLA
- **23%** State Govt
- **6%** Community Partnerships
- **2%** Local Government
- **2%** Donations/Philanthropy
- **1%** Other



- **87%** Staffing
- **6%** Program
- **4%** Property & Equipment
- **3%** Administration

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income
For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

	2022 $	2021 $
Revenue	6,339,329	5,164,782
Finance income	2,138	4,137
Employee benefits expense	(5,098,887)	(4,348,123)
Property and equipment expenses	(276,216)	(231,703)
Administration expenses	(636,322)	(170,800)
Program expenses	(330,507)	(283,266)
Finance expenses	(1,780)	(2,576)
Surplus for the year	**(2,245)**	**132,451**

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2022

	2022 $	2021 $
Assets		
Current Assets	2,851,624	2,609,815
Non-Current Assets	256,294	393,040
Total Assets	**3,107,918**	**3,002,855**
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities	2,524,662	2,338,965
Non-Current Liabilities	137,836	216,225
Total Liabilities	**2,662,498**	**2,555,190**
Net Assets	**445,420**	**447,665**
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	445,420	447,665
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS	**445,420**	**447,665**

The full Audited Financial Statements are publicly available at www.eclc.org.au and on the ACNC website.

Contact us

Box Hill Office

Suite 3, Town Hall Hub
27 Bank Street
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Inner East: serving the communities of Boroondara, Manningham and Whitehorse

Boronia Office

Suite B, 6 Floriston Road
(PO Box 747)
Boronia VIC 3155

Outer East: serving the communities of Knox and Maroondah

Healesville Office

Healesville Community Link
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Healesville VIC 3777

Yarra Ranges: serving the communities of the Yarra Ranges

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eastern community legal centre