

27 September 2018

Mr Stewart Little  
General Secretary  
Public Service Association of NSW  
GPO Box 3365  
SYDNEY NSW 2001



Dear Mr Little,

I wish to inform you that Legal Aid NSW is undertaking a Review of its Client Assessment and Referral Service (CARS).

It is a primary outcome of the Legal Aid NSW five year strategic plan to achieve delivery of high quality, targeted services that meet our clients' needs.

The review is intended to align the service with the needs of Legal Aid NSW's priority client groups by:

- Providing a detailed picture of the work currently performed by CARS and other social work service providers within Legal Aid.
- Identifying alternate service delivery models, drawing on national and international examples of multidisciplinary teams / integrated practice within legal assistance services and the costs, potential savings and consequences of adopting these alternate models.
- Identifying the priority client groups for the provision of social work services and how best to deliver those services ensuring access and equity.
- Considering the skill set, training, wellbeing, professional and supervision needs, and most appropriate structure and reporting lines of CARS and other social work staff.

Legal Aid NSW will be consulting with key stakeholder groups during the review:

- CARS Staff
- CARS Manager
- PSA.

CARS staff had the opportunity to provide input into the Terms of Reference (see attached).

The draft report will be completed in November 2018 after all CARS staff have been interviewed. The final report is due for completion in December 2018.

The review will also be an agenda item on the Peak Consultative Committee.

If you have any questions and wish to discuss further please contact Emma Keir, Senior Solicitor.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Monique Hitter", written over a horizontal line.

**Monique Hitter**  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

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## **Review of Client Assessment & Referral Service - Terms of Reference**

### **('CARS Review')**

#### Context

The primary outcome of the Legal Aid NSW five year strategic plan is to achieve delivery of high quality, targeted services that meet our clients' needs. To achieve this Legal Aid has set the following strategic initiatives:

- To review our service models and develop flexible models which best meet the needs of our clients from start to finish
- Develop holistic service models to effectively address the needs of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged clients.

During the first year of the strategic plan Legal Aid will design a high level end to end service model and resolve foundational questions about purpose and priority, design a detailed plan for client pathways and channels and progress work on a service model for priority client groups. Central to this is aligning current resources with the strategic plan.

#### Objective

Review the Client Assessment & Referral Service (CARS) with a view to aligning the service with the needs of Legal Aid's priority client groups.

1. Provide a detailed picture of the work currently performed by CARS and other social work service providers within Legal Aid:
  - a) What services are being provided to clients in each legal program area?
  - b) What do we know about the impact of those services?
  - c) What prompts solicitors to refer to CARS/social workers?
  - d) What is unique about the service/unique about the circumstances of the referral?
2. Identify alternate service delivery models, drawing on national and international examples of multidisciplinary teams / integrated practice within legal assistance services?
3. What are the costs, potential savings and consequences of adopting these alternate models?
4. Identify priority client groups for the provision of social work services and how best to deliver those services ensuring access and equity.
5. Consider the skill set, training, wellbeing, professional and supervision needs, and most appropriate structure and reporting lines of CARS and other social work staff.

#### Outcome

Recommendations outlining a practice framework for provision of social work services to Legal Aid's priority client groups.

