

Six times more people getting legal help for domestic violence but thousands more locked out

Earlier today, Community Legal Centres Queensland released figures which showed a six hundred per cent increase in people experiencing domestic violence seeking legal support.

The figures which had been compiled over a five year period, appeared in the report titled, 'Enough is Enough'. The report showed there had been a 125% increase in legal information provided over the phone, 58% increase in face-to-face advice offered by a lawyer and 608% increase in ongoing assistance to people going to court since 2011.

James Farrell, Director, Community Legal Centres Queensland said, 'More and more women experiencing domestic violence are finding their voice and saying 'enough is enough'. One of the first steps they take to address this problem is to call their closest community legal centre. Unfortunately only half of the people who ask for legal help are able to access it. The remaining fifty per cent are turned away because we just don't have the resources we need to provide help for everyone who qualifies.'

"While six times more people got help to understand how they could apply for a protection order or respond to an application, these people have many more legal problems and often can't get the help they need," said Mr Farrell.

"People experiencing family violence can have many other legal problems, including family law, housing, employment and debt. It's vital that these people can address all of their legal problems while they access safety, but the safety net is under threat."

'In July this year the Commonwealth Government will cut almost 30% of funding to community legal centres across Australia. Community Legal Centres Queensland is calling on Malcolm Turnbull and George Brandis to reverse this decision to ensure people experiencing domestic violence are able to get the legal help they need and get the justice they deserve,' Mr Farrell went on to say.

To view a copy of the report, 'Enough is enough' go to: <http://communitylegalqld.org.au/enoughisenough>

Ends

NOTES: Community Legal Centres Queensland Inc (formerly QAILS) is the state-wide peak body representing community legal centres in Queensland. Queensland community legal centres have 40 years of service delivery experience providing free information, advice and referral, casework and representation to the community. www.communitylegalqld.org.au

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