

First Nations Sector Strategy: Consultation Session

2023 Community Legal Centres Queensland
Leadership Forum – 8 November



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, the **Turrbal and Jagera peoples**. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture.

We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to fostering a culture of learning from, and working with, First Nations peoples in the spirit of reconciliation and access to justice.


We pay our deepest respects to Elders past and present and extend this respect to the First Nations people attending today.

We also recognise the responsibility we all carry now to work together towards elevating First Nations voices and promoting healing and reconciliation as we actively work towards Treaty and Truth-telling.






First Nations Strategy for CLC sector in Qld

- Identify priorities for building the capability of 'mainstream' CLCs to work for and with First Nations peoples.
 - Support the recruitment and retention of First Nations peoples as part of the CLC workforce in Qld
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So far we
have ...

- Held 9 discrete consultation / engagement sessions
 - Held a sector wide First Nations employee network event in Brisbane: “Wunya” – attended by more than 40 First Nations CLC sector workers from across Qld
 - Provided regular briefings for the project steering group – the CLCQ First Nations Reference Group (including our first in-person meeting)
 - Developed project resources to support engagement and capture outcomes
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Consultation themes /domains



Key issues facing First Nations people



CLC sector culture and cultural capability



Workforce development, including factors affecting recruitment and retention



Implementation issues (including data and evaluation)

What we are doing today

- Beginning of engagement with the wider CLC sector in Qld on key issues – group discussions today, individual meetings with CLCs as the second stage
- Understand what CLCs see as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges in working for and with First Nations peoples
- Understanding the change factors that could lead to improved outcomes in the sector in terms of capacity and capability
- Change factors that would help the recruitment and retention outcomes for First Nations workers
- Potential role for CLCQ



Key messages from consultations

- Longer term funding is needed to support best practice models:
 - effective service planning and development,
 - integrated services and case management,
 - recognition of staff workloads,
 - Recognition of cultural expertise, seniority and community profile.
- Cultural harm is done to workers when resources can't meet demand
- Cultural capability and competence are key
- Allies and champions are essential
- A humanist approach that centres people first should be encouraged (focus on what the client needs **not** what the service needs)
- Relationships and accountability are the foundation for building trust with clients, communities and stakeholders

Key messages from consultations

- Empower First Nations workers to take the space to do their work
- Recognise potential structural barriers – eg how lawyers are taught to be ‘professional’
- Recruitment of First Nations staff needs to be culturally informed / appropriate at all stages of the recruitment and selection cycle (not just at interview).
- Do not employ only 1 First Nations staff member.
- Head, hand, heart:
 - think about how to make the change,
 - develop a strategy or plan to drive/guide the change
 - engage people to want to be a part of the change

Learnings about Cultural Safety

- Recognise the cultural context and load that First Nations workers carry (and support this organisationally).
- Take a holistic approach to culture, cultural loading and cultural ceremonies
- Respond to cultural needs, be culturally aware, and recognise that for First Nations workers it's not just 9-5
- Give opportunities and support (including time and resources) for skill development, gaining of credentials, career pathways/ progression
- Create space for people to express their needs within the workplace & provide culturally appropriate support for dealing with workplace issues
- Show people are valued through organisational actions and approaches. Not just saying it.
- This means: treat people respectfully, take them seriously, support contributions to improvement and change by listening, responding, being accountable.

Feedback on areas for improvement in CLCs

Cultural and community factors

Improve cultural awareness, cultural capability, and skills in being culturally appropriate. Avoid tokenism

Build culturally safe workplaces and services (includes but not limited to cultural safety training)

Support cultural practices and obligations of First Nations workers, respect lore

Support cultural engagement, utilise cultural services

Support and encourage the progression of First Nations staff, including into leadership roles

Work WITH community not FOR them

Feedback on areas for improvement in CLCs

Professional and workplace factors

- Recognise cultural expertise and skill, consider cultural pay top-up
- Make an effort to learn and be informed, build relationships
- Empower employees, invest resources, be genuine
- Provide/facilitate appropriate training & education that supports professional development and career progression pathways
- Ensure CLC policies, procedures and practices are relevant for First Nations people and support good practice across all systems
- Be curious, develop self awareness



Consultation Session



Consultation Domain 1

Cultural capability/ capacity: Working for and with First Nations peoples



Willingness and capacity to work with and for First Nations people



Exploring engagement with the First Nations community to foster connection and understanding,



Providing appropriate services and support to First Nations people and communities



'Culturally capable' - both organisationally and individually



Approaches for how mainstream organisations ought to engage with First Nations organisations and individuals on these questions

Discussion

What do you see as the strengths in the sector of working for and with First Nations people – both clients and staff?
What do we do well?

What initiatives or support would have the most impact in helping 'mainstream' CLCs to better work for and with First Nations peoples? Tell us why.

What are the key things that would help you as a manager to feel more confident in leading your centre to improved outcomes in working for and with First Nations people?

What support could CLCQ provide that would be valuable?

Consultation Domain 2: First Nations Workforce



Exploring challenges and opportunities in recruitment and retention



Essential elements to creation of a culturally safe workplace / environment



Success stories; crashing & burning



Needs and requirements to do this work better; Ideas and suggestions for what works (First Nations organisations)



Policy framework of scaffolding First Nations staff; exploration of attitudes and views

Discussion:

Recruitment and Retention



What are the key barriers to achieving better First Nations employment outcomes in the sector?



If resources were plentiful, what would you prioritise to improve the recruitment and retention of First Nations workers?



How could CLCQ best help to improve outcomes?

Discussion:

Cultural and psychological safety - **Strategy**

What are some of the key tools that support cultural and psychological safety in the workplace?

As a manager, how do you know if you have succeeded in creating a culturally and psychologically safe workplace? What measures are of most value in assessing this, and

What outcomes does First Nations cultural awareness training change in your organisations – what impact does it have in practical terms?

Discussion: Cultural and psychological safety - **Leadership**

What has been/is of most value in developing your own skills for leading a workplace that people experience as culturally and psychologically safe?

How do you hold yourself accountable for the safety of your workforce – including First Nations workers?

Discussion:

Cultural and
psychological
safety:

**Opportunities for
Improvements**

In reflecting on cultural safety for First Nations people, in what ways can CLCs improve the experiences of First Nations workers and clients?

What role can CLCQ play in supporting CLCs to improve cultural safety for First Nations workers and clients?

Where to from here?

Thank you for participating today

Project next steps

- Further engagement with 'mainstream' CLCs one-on-one - over next 4-6 months
- Development of draft strategy for consideration by First Nations Reference Group (first half 2024)
- Finalisation and strategy launch – second half 2024