



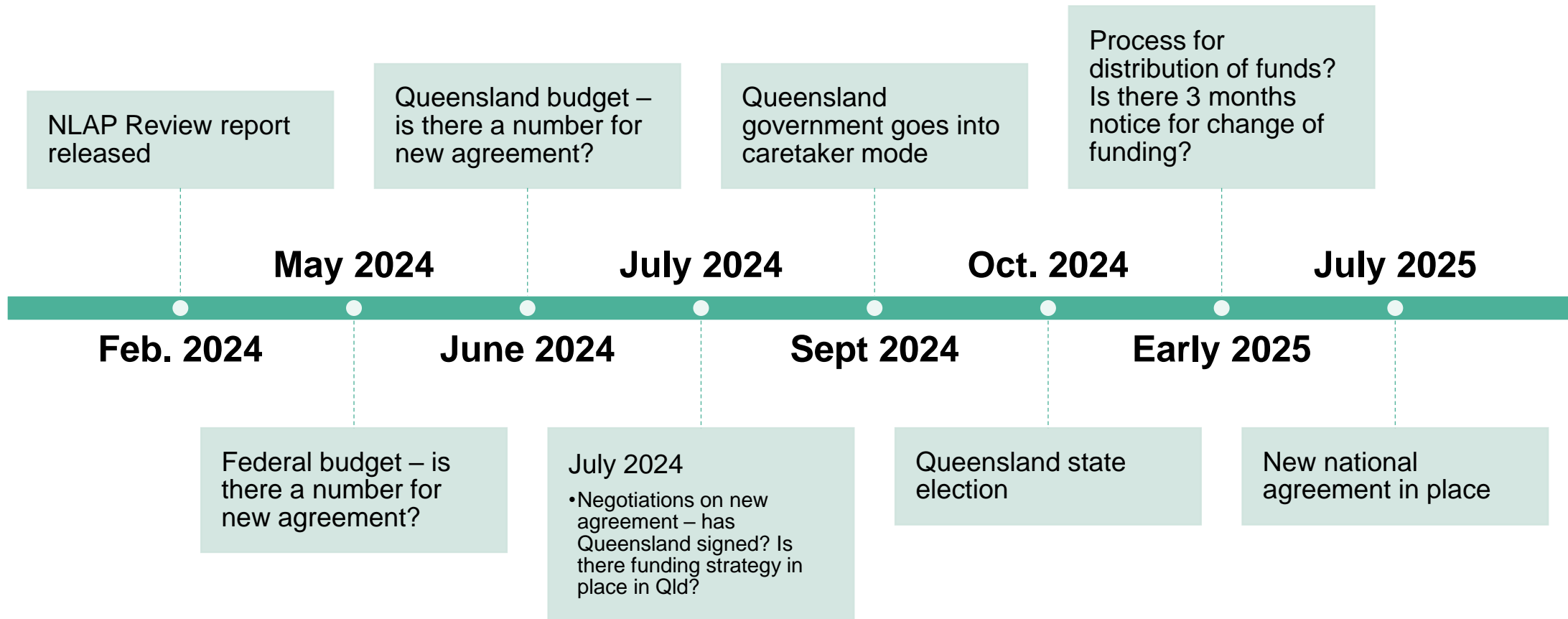
**Community
Legal Centres
Queensland**

Leadership Forum 2024

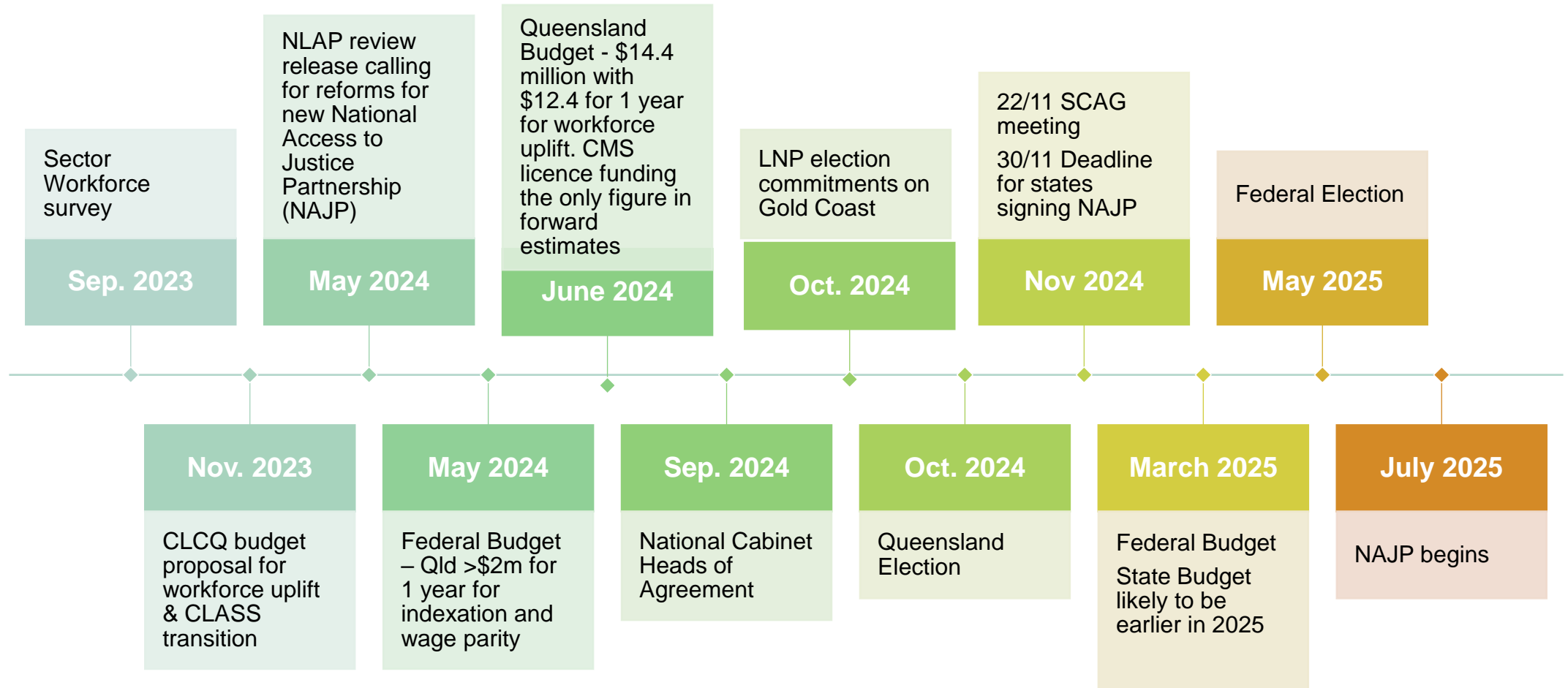
NAJP – Queensland perspective

4 & 5 November 2024

This time last year



Updated timeline



NLAP Review (Dr Mundy)

“No quantitative evidence that either legal need or unmet legal need in Australia are falling”

“Current funding levels are insufficient to meet the legal assistance needs of the Australian community”

“The proportion of funding for each service provider category accounted for by ‘baseline’ funding has fallen”

“....government has treated service providers like sporting clubs tendering for funds to renovate a block of change rooms”

“....the current resourcing level is too low to safely provide services”

“(pay differentials and higher workloads).... (are) causing significant attraction and retention problems for non-government providers”

NLAP Review (Dr Mundy)

- Funding increase in 2025-2026 for civil and family law matters should be \$459 million in 25/26
- Funding distribution models under NLAP should be abandoned
- Re-basing community legal service providers to reflect the true costs of sustainable organization
- Need for national workforce strategy
- Funding for remuneration of CLC workers in 2025-2026 - \$36 million

What we know

- The Heads of Agreement announced \$3.9billion for legal assistance services
 - Only \$800m is new investment
 - \$300m is to reduce pay parity and provide indexation (LACs are excluded by pay parity component)
 - \$500m for an uplift for frontline legal assistance services across the legal assistance sector
 - Back of the envelope calculation (assumptions: CLCs usually get 20%; there are 160 CLC nationally and an even distribution to all CLCs, which is unlikely)
\$500m over 5 years = \$125,000 per annum per CLC
- The Heads of Agreement state:
 - The states will maintain investment over the life of the agreement including any specific subsector
 - The state offer immediate funding certainty to providers within their jurisdiction by a date to be agreed by SCAG in the form of minimum funding allocations for 2024-2026

What we know

- Early indications that Cth will provide clear direction about the allocation of \$800m with little discretion left to the States
- Once one state has signed there is no room for other parties to re-negotiate the NAJP
- No clarity on what process a new LNP Attorney will use for funding distribution
- Language used by LNP politicians during election period is about 'testing the market'
- Likely that the Cth will provide direction about distribution models for their part of the funding

Feedback from 2023 Leadership Forum – Funding Strategy

- **Status quo funding pool**

If there is no new funding then currently funded CLCs should be funded at the same level and there is a negotiation process to change what is delivered for the funding, given the significant increases to the costs of providing services. Given the inevitable cuts to services, funded CLCs need to be able to make judgment calls about which legal need they can meet

- **Increased funds that are not programmatic**

Given the workforce challenges and the increasing costs of providing the existing services, priority must be given to ensuring currently funded services are sustainable.

If there are additional funds left over after sustainability is met then CLCs should be able to make the case for funding for additional services.

No clear view about tender vs direct allocation, but evidence needs to be the driver.

Funding is needed to fix the CLASS replacement issue.

Feedback from 2023 Leadership Forum – Funding Strategy

- **Rules of engagement if tender processes**

Transparency of costing models, to avoid undercutting – can there be agreement on what the costing structure looks like to cover appropriate wages, overheads, redundancies, loading for RRR etc.

Agreement to fund existing services and only when there is excess to properly fund services then tender processes.

CLCQ support collaborative processes to see how CLCs can work together

Based on the ongoing sector conversation: Messages to government

- There is no time for 're-commissioning processes' particularly in the environment where there are no additional funds for services
- The workforce and service consequences of any delay in funding certainty, including contracts that are less than 5 years
- The consequences of not maintaining the workforce uplift allocation on services to the community
- It's inefficient to have different distribution models for Cth and State funds (this has happened in other jurisdictions)
- What has worked in Queensland – dealing with all partnership funds in a single distribution process and 5-year funding agreements
- Principles outlined in workforce session

Questions/Discussion

- Strategy
- Messages
- Funding distribution methodology and processes



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Thank you

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