

MEDIA RELEASE

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UN Special Rapporteur requests additional information on NSW victim's compensation scheme

Community Legal Centres NSW (CLCNSW) last week provided additional information to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women about the recent changes to the NSW victim's compensation scheme.

Last year, over 30 leading legal, human rights, health, community and women's organisations filed a complaint with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences about the recent changes to the NSW victim's compensation scheme.

The Special Rapporteur's office has requested additional information. Community Legal Centres prepared a report on their experiences helping clients in the first 12 months of the new NSW victim's compensation scheme. This report has been sent to the United Nations and the NSW Attorney General.

"Community Legal Centres have had victims of domestic violence and sexual assault respond with tears, frustration and anger at the failure of Government to protect them from further injustice," said Nassim Arrage, Chairperson, CLCNSW. "One client said 'why should I expect anything different, no one else has ever cared about me'."

"These changes are a huge step backwards in the struggle against sexual assault and domestic violence," said Nassim Arrage. "We look forward to the NSW Attorney General Brad Hazzard, making the changes that are needed to right this injustice after the evidence of the first 12 months of the scheme are in."

"This law is having significant detrimental effects on the human rights of thousands of victims already in the system," said Nassim Arrage.

Rachael Martin, convenor of CLCNSW Victims Compensation Committee said, 'The changes fail to explicitly recognise the profound psychological harm done to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.'

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More information:

http://www.clcnsw.org.au/cb_pages/victims_compensation_review.php

About Community Legal Centres NSW Inc.

Community Legal Centres NSW Inc. (CLCNSW) is the peak body for community legal centres (CLCs) in NSW. It has 40 member organisations including generalist and specialist CLCs. CLCs deliver legal services to economically and socially disadvantaged individuals and communities. CLCNSW's policy work on victim's compensation has been developed by its Victims Compensation Committee, which comprises CLCs that represent clients in victims compensation applications.