



ANNUAL REPORT

24-25



ALA provides high quality, independent social and legal advocacy to people in need. We are committed to servicing regional, rural and remote communities as well as metropolitan communities and we focus on empowering clients to navigate the legal and social systems to achieve fair outcomes.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge and pay our respect to the traditional custodians of the lands and waters of NSW, and all Aboriginal Elders, past, present and emerging.

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and waters of New South Wales, and their continuing cultural, spiritual customs and practices. We celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationship to Country and acknowledge the significance of their cultures in Australia.

Annual Report

What's Inside:

08

Advocacy Law
Alliance People

10

Chairperson's
Report

11

Treasurer's
Report

12

CEO's Report

16

Disability
Advocacy NSW

38

Mid North Coast
Legal Centre



ABOUT

ALA

Our Vision

All people should have the right to equity and fairness.

Our Mission

To provide high quality social and legal advocacy to people in need. We are committed to servicing regional, rural and remote communities as well as metropolitan communities and we focus on empowering clients to navigate the legal and social systems to achieve fair outcomes.

Our Values



Courageous:

We have the courage to do what's right.



Caring:

We care about our people and the work we do.



Creative:

We use innovation, evidence and curiosity to continually strive to improve.



Connected:

We are better together.

Our Strategic Goals (2023-26):

1. Deliver high quality, targeted services that meet our clients' needs.
2. Maintain positive workplace culture that is flexible, safe and diverse.
3. Capitalise on funding opportunities to improve access to our services.
4. Continue to enhance our leadership and management support capabilities.
5. Utilise our influence to inform government priorities on disability and law reform.
6. Practice excellent organisational governance.

Funding

Disability Advocacy NSW:

Department of Social Services (DSS)

National Disability Advocacy Program, NDIS Appeals, Disability Advocacy Support Helpline.

NSW Department of Community and Justice

Disability Advocacy Futures Program (DAFP)

icare

Advocacy for people in the lifetime care and support scheme

Mid North Coast Legal Centre:

Commonwealth Attorney General's Department

Community Legal Centres Program, Legal Aid NSW

NSW Department of Communities and Justice

ALA THANKS ALL OF THESE ORGANISATIONS FOR THEIR SUPPORT THIS YEAR.





ALA People

ALA Board

Our volunteer Board of Management oversee the governance of our organisation to ensure Advocacy Law Alliance is financially stable, has a clear strategic direction and has the greatest impact possible for the communities we serve.

I hold a Social Science Degree, a Graduate Certificate in Adult Education and a Certificate in Community Services, Advocacy. I am the Manager of a small community organisation and have worked in the field of advocacy for more than 20 years. I have experience on Boards of both large and small community organisations and so have experience on both sides of the fence. I have a commitment to social justice and a particular passion about ensuring all our community members have access to the services they need.

NICOLE GRGAS
Chairperson

I am a professional member of the Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand and the Australian Restructuring and Turnaround Association, and hold a Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in financial and management accounting. I place great value on the work ALA does and feel privileged to be part of that work.

HAYDEN ASPER
Director

As someone born with a low vision condition called Achromatopsia, I am acutely aware of the challenges associated living with a disability. This was my primary motivation for joining the ALA Board, and this experience has been profoundly rewarding. I studied a Bachelor of Arts and a Juris Doctor at University and currently work in London with global investment consulting firm WTW. Volunteering for the ALA Board combines two key personal passions of mine, namely, advocating for people with disabilities, and ensuring fairness before the law.

TOBY THOMAS
Treasurer

I am a practicing Solicitor based in Newcastle, NSW. I hold a Bachelor of Laws and am an Accredited Specialist in Commercial Litigation. I am proud to be able to contribute to the important work done by ALA using my skills and experience as a Solicitor and look forward to continuing to do so.

JACK LINDGREN
Director



RACHEL SOWDEN

I have four children who are Aboriginal, two who have autism and three who have mental health diagnoses. I am determined that all people in NSW regardless of postcode have access to supports required to live a full life with choice and voice. Having lived the past 23 years in rural and remote locations across NSW, I am familiar with the challenges of obtaining equitable access to services and supports outside of metropolitan locations. I have long held advocacy roles in education and mental health particularly in rural settings, with a focus on young people and people with invisible disabilities.

I believe that people who are disadvantaged before the law deserve excellent representation and access to fearless advocacy. As the mother of a child with an intellectual disability and ASD who is navigating the brave new world of the NDIS, education and health systems, I know firsthand the need for strong disability advocacy services to assist people engaging with these systems. I have served on several boards in disability and health related organisations.

ROSS CASEY

I worked for Disability Advocacy NSW in Broken Hill between 2017 and 2020, as the organisation's first advocate in the Far West NSW region. I hold Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Justice degrees. I currently work in the public service for the Federal regulator of NDIS supports and services. I am excited to be back involved with ALA and to again can contribute to the valuable work of the organisation.

NDI RUPPERT

Ndi obtained her Bachelor of Business and Law with a Diploma of Legal Practice from the University of Newcastle in 2010 and was admitted to the Supreme Court of New South Wales as a solicitor in 2011. In 2017, she obtained her Master of Laws from the University of Newcastle, majoring in Human Rights and International Business; her master thesis was published in the African Journal of International and Comparative Law. Ndi worked for Disability Advocacy NSW for approximately 8 years before commencing work in immigration law. Ndi is the Principal Solicitor & Founder of the law practice, Ruppert Legal. She has significant experience with the Australian Migration system, both personally and professionally and was honoured by being listed on the 2021, 2022 and 2023 Doyles list of leading New South Wales Immigration Lawyers. Until recently, Ndi used her immigration expertise to assist refugee clients one day a week through a local NGO called Mosaic Multicultural Connections. She now offers a limited pro bono service within her practice, focusing on assisting victims of domestic and family violence whose perpetrators are their visa sponsors. Ndi is also on the Board of Advocacy Law Alliance Inc. and is part of the executive leadership team of the Centre for African Research, Engagement & Partnerships at the University of Newcastle.



Chairperson’s Report

It was a privilege to assume the role of Chairperson from Hayden Asper. I thank Hayden for his ongoing dedication to ALA as a director.

Over the past year, the executive team successfully facilitated a seamless transition to a company Limited by guarantee.

In an environment where both the organisation and its clients have been impacted by natural disasters, funding uncertainty, and changes to funding guidelines and reporting requirements, the focus on delivering quality services and improving access has been paramount.

Financially, the organisation has remained strong and aligned with its core values.

A review of service delivery throughout the year clearly shows that ALA and its funded programs have set a high benchmark within the sector. The organisation continues to develop and implement systems that uphold a high standard of service delivery while fostering a thriving workplace for passionate team members.

I wish to acknowledge the CEO and management team for their dedication and strong work ethic in positioning ALA as a financially and structurally resilient organisation, operating within an ever-changing funding landscape.

The team and directors remain committed to exploring opportunities for growth from within the organisation.

My sincere thanks also go to my fellow directors for their ongoing commitment to ALA.

Nicole Grgas
Chairperson

Treasurer’s Report

This is the Treasurer’s report, which is in respect to the Advocacy Law Alliance’s (“ALA”) financial report for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

The financial report was prepared and audited by goodCom Audit & Assurance. The audit did not identify any issues with the financial report. I make the following comments in respect to the financial report:

Key Financial Information

> Income & Expenditure Statement

ALA received \$12,017,039 in grant income for the 2025 financial year, an increase of \$584,186 from the 2023 financial year. ALA also received some other income (\$221,351), primarily in the form of government subsidies and interest income, leading to a total of \$12,238,390 of inflows received over FY25. \$12,061,641 was incurred in expenses, resulting in an operating surplus of \$176,748.

I note that during the financial year several unexpected funding opportunities presented themselves. ALA originally forecasted income of \$11,769,676 and expenses of \$12,067,586, which would have seen an expected deficit for FY25 of \$-297,910. However, following some positive funding developments throughout the year, a subsequent surplus of \$176,748 has been achieved, which is a great result in light of the challenging macroeconomic environment seen across FY25.

> Balance Sheet

ALA’s balance sheet identifies assets in the sum of \$3,299,445. Total assets are primarily comprised of cash and cash equivalents, being money held in bank accounts and term deposits. Other assets include amounts for property, plant and equipment, debtor amounts and rental bonds. The balance sheet also identifies total liabilities in the amount of \$1,511,513.

I note that ALA’s net asset position has increased relative to the 2024 financial year, by an amount of \$176,748 to \$1,787,932. The net asset position indicates that ALA can pay all of its debts as and when they fall due.

> Overview

ALA continues to operate in a financially sound manner. As at 30 June 2025, ALA has a current ratio of 2.46, an increase from last financial year’s current ratio of 1.61. This improvement in liquidity available to ALA (which the Current Ratio measures) is a result of a decrease in current liabilities, particularly in the “Other Current Liabilities” account held in comparison to the previous year, and is pleasing to see. Based on the financial statements, I am confident that ALA will be able to continue to operate as a going concern.

ALA’s staff should be congratulated for their hard work and performance in the 2025 financial year as they have once again delivered an amazing service to all stakeholders and be a leader in their industry”

Toby Thomas
Treasurer

CEO’s Report

This year marks our 40th anniversary.

I have been privileged to be part of this organisation for a significant part of this journey. What began in 1985 as two small, cottage-industry-style initiatives has grown into a professional and respected operation.

Disadvantaged people deserve professional and competent social and legal advocacy, and over the past 40 years, hundreds of staff, volunteers, and directors have worked tirelessly to make that a reality. To each of them, I extend my heartfelt thanks.

As we celebrate this milestone, I can’t help but think that perhaps life really does begin at 40.

At Advocacy Law Alliance, our focus continues to be clear: delivering the very best independent legal and social advocacy for the communities we serve. We know this work depends not only on the quality of our services but also on the wellbeing, culture, and performance of our staff. Supporting a courageous, caring, creative and connected team is central to ensuring clients receive the advocacy they need.

This year, we have continued to strengthen our internal systems to meet the challenges of operating across such a wide geographic area. Investment in technology has streamlined client record management, online staff learning, HR and payroll, IT security, and intranet communications. The use of AI is also increasing, and we are planning to use it in a controlled and positive way. These tools don’t replace people—they empower them. By reducing administrative pressure, they allow our staff to spend more time where it matters most: supporting clients.

Our commitment to local presence remains strong, with solicitors and disability advocates based in the communities they serve. This is complemented by the Disability Advocacy Support Helpline (The Helpline), which extends our reach nationally to people unable to access local advocacy services.

Funding remains a mixed picture. The Mid North Coast Legal Centre has secured a five-year contract, giving us certainty and the ability to plan ahead. In contrast, Disability Advocacy (DA) and the Disability Advocacy Support Helpline (The Helpline) face the challenge of reapplying for funding in 2026 following a proposed review of the sector, which includes increased funding for advocacy. A review of the advocacy sector will be positive if it produces a system that more efficiently and effectively addresses advocacy support for people with disability.

Disability Law NSW continues to provide vital specialist legal support, linking DA and MNCLC operations and assisting advocates in complex matters. Both DA and MNCLC again achieved full compliance in their independent quality accreditation assessments—recognition of the professionalism and consistency of their work. We have also built our own client outcomes framework, which will allow us to better track our performance based on client feedback and drive continuous improvement.

Our Board remains a source of strength, bringing together financial, legal, and governance expertise with lived experience of disability to guide our strategy and uphold our values.

Finally, this year marked a milestone in our journey with our transition on 1 July 2024 to Advocacy Law Alliance Ltd. The name may be slightly different, but our “for purpose” values and objectives remain unchanged.

Thank you to all our staff, volunteers, partners, and directors for their extraordinary commitment and contribution over the past year. Together, we are building not just services, but stronger systems of justice and advocacy for people who need them most.

Mark Grierson
Chief Executive Officer

DCEO’s Report

This year, Advocacy Law Alliance proudly marks 40 years of service—four decades of standing beside individuals and communities during their most challenging times. As we reflect on this milestone, I am incredibly proud of the progress we’ve made throughout 2024–25, and of our continued commitment to the values that guide everything we do: caring, courageous, connected, and creative.

The past year has been one of deep impact and meaningful growth. Our team has worked tirelessly to support people across rural and regional NSW, providing essential legal and social advocacy services to over 6884 individuals. Our Disability Advocacy Support Helpline also delivered vital support to 2226 people with disability nationally, ensuring that no one is left to navigate complex systems alone.

Being caring means putting people first - meeting every client with empathy and respect. This approach remains central to ALA’s mission and is reflected in the way we’ve continued to deliver accessible, inclusive services tailored to the unique needs of the communities we serve.

To be courageous is to stand up and speak out for justice, even when it’s difficult. This year, ALA has continued to challenge inequity, advocate for systemic change, and push for improved outcomes for those who are most vulnerable. We have done so with integrity and determination. Being courageous also means looking inward. This year, we’ve demonstrated courage by taking time to reflect honestly on our own practice—examining how we work, listening to one another, and seeking ways to improve. It takes strength to ask tough questions, embrace change, and hold ourselves

accountable to the high standards our clients deserve. That commitment to continuous improvement is what ensures our social and legal advocacy remains strong, relevant, and impactful.

Staying connected has never been more important. In 2024–25, we deepened our engagement with local communities, strengthened partnerships, and invested in building a shared identity across our teams—one that supports high-quality, professional services that reflect who we are as an organisation.

And we have been creative in responding to sector shifts and preparing for the future. As we head into a period of significant national reform, we’ve taken important steps to ensure our service is stable, strong, and future-ready—through better systems, sustainable workloads, and clearer structures that support long-term quality and consistency in our work.

As we celebrate this significant anniversary, we are also looking ahead—with optimism and purpose. With the continued dedication of our staff and the strategic support of our Board, I am confident ALA will continue to thrive, grow, and make a lasting difference. To our incredible team across all offices and programs - thank you. Your commitment to this important work makes it a pleasure to come to work. To our Board—thank you for your guidance and vision. And to the individuals and communities we serve—it is our honour to walk alongside you.

Catherine Peek
Deputy Chief Executive Officer



OUR People

At ALA, our people are at the heart of everything we do.

In cities, towns, and communities across NSW and through our national Helpline, our team supports people to have their voices heard and their rights upheld.

This shared commitment is what makes our impact real.



**Disability
Advocacy**

Report



DA Leaders Report

Amanda Brickwood

Executive Officer

Charlotte Rider

Manager Advocacy

This year, Disability Advocacy NSW has focused on strengthening both our advocacy practice and the systems that support how people engage with our service.

On the practice side, we have spent time reflecting on the advocacy landscape we work in and identifying the pressures that can affect the advocacy role. In response, we have put in place clear frameworks and tools to help advocates practice with integrity, clarity, and sustainability. We have also built on DA's Theory of Change by embedding our Outcomes Measurement Framework (OMF) into daily practice, giving us the ability to track and show the impact of our work more clearly.

On the systems side, we have advanced the design of our new Client Engagement Hub. This centralised intake team brings together our intake resources across the state into one coordinated structure with dedicated leadership. The Hub will provide a more flexible and scalable approach to intake, giving people a consistent

experience that is fair, timely, and focused on quality. It is designed to adapt to peaks in demand and routine workforce changes, while also streamlining the pathway through to regional advocates. By pooling resources and making use of technology and streamlined processes, the Hub will help people move more efficiently to the local support they need.

Our focus is on steady evolution, building on what works well and strengthening it further. By investing in our people and fostering shared clarity in how we practice, we are shaping a service that is both a good place to work and a dependable source of advocacy for people with disability. We take a whole-of-team approach, where everyone plays a part in making sure what we do is clear, consistent, and strong in how we show up for the people we support. This is what makes us effective, and it is how we will continue to deliver quality, accessible advocacy for people with disability into the future.



Key Highlights:

Strengthening advocacy practice and measuring impact

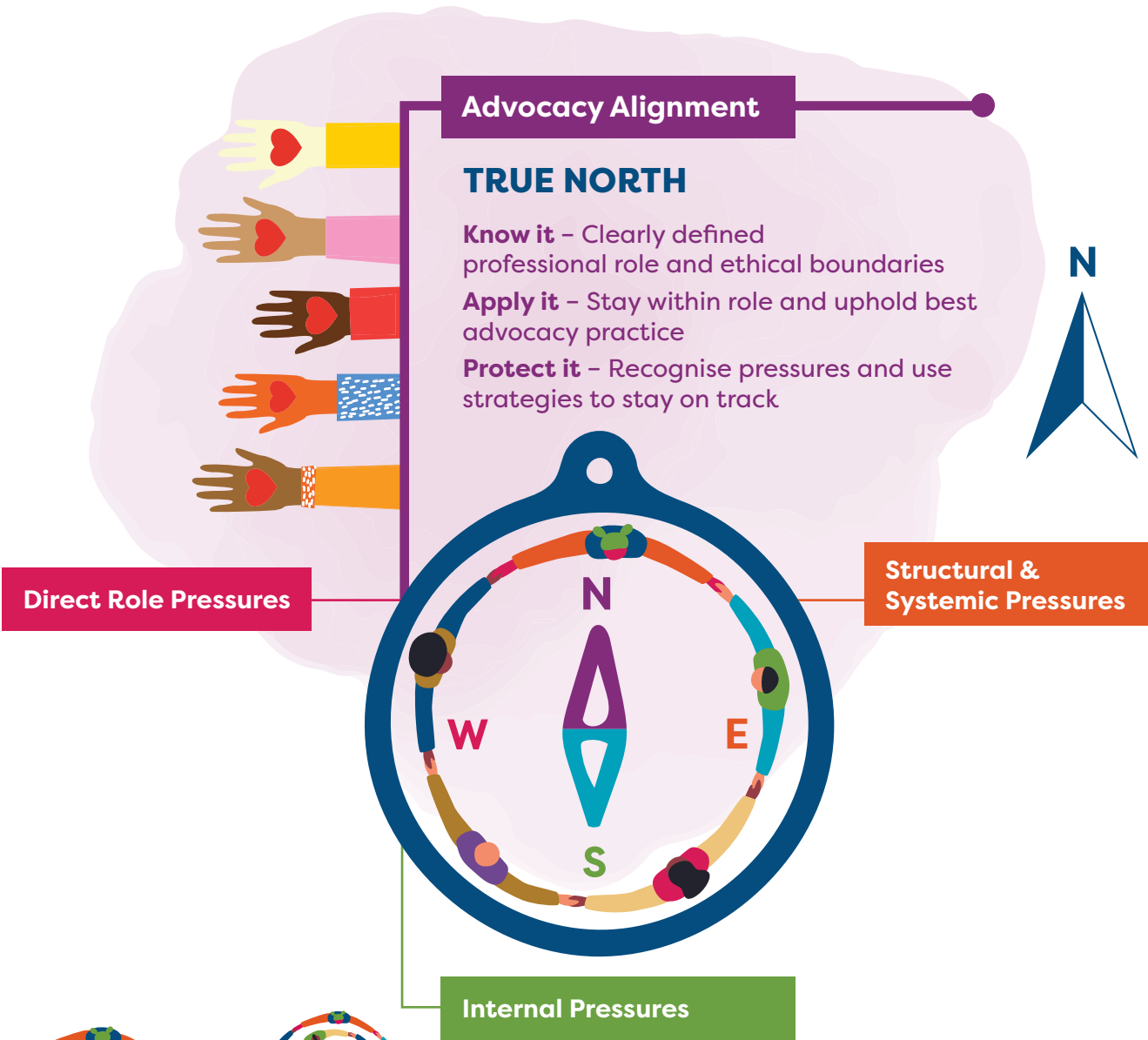
This year we introduced our True North Framework, developed to help advocates stay clear and confident in their role. It builds on last year's launch of Advocacy Foundations, our service-wide approach to effective, human rights-based, person-directed and trauma-informed advocacy, grounded in supported decision-making. Advocacy involves navigating many pressures, externally from systems and people, and internally from our own sense of responsibility. True North names these pressures and provides practical tools for staying grounded. It gives us a shared way of thinking and talking about advocacy, helping to build consistency across a large and diverse service.

One area where we've already seen True North in practice is in our NDIS Appeals work. This space brings unique pressures, especially around maintaining boundaries between advocacy and legal work. Over the past year we've developed new resources, including a Boundary Reference Guide and a reflective tool to help advocates pause and check whether their work is staying within the advocacy role. While this work will be reported on more fully next year, it shows how True North is guiding us not just in principle, but in practice, in some of the most challenging advocacy contexts.

At the same time, we have fully embedded our Outcomes Measurement Framework (OMF) across all programs. We now have a consistent way of capturing whether our advocacy is achieving the changes we are aiming for. The key to this is our purpose-built Advocacy Outcomes and Feedback Survey, which asks clients about both the outcomes of advocacy and the quality of the service they received. We want to know whether we're helping clients gain knowledge, build self-advocacy skills, and develop the confidence to make their own decisions. We also want to ensure we've created a supportive environment where clients can assert their rights, have their say, and feel heard by those treating them unfairly.

With nine months of data now collected, **we are preparing to release our first social impact report.** This will be an important milestone in showing not just what we do, but the difference our work makes in people's lives.

Together, True North and the OMF form two parts of the same whole. True North strengthens how we practise advocacy day to day, while the OMF helps us understand and demonstrate the impact of that practice. Both are about ensuring that our service is principled, consistent, and accountable, and that people with disability can have their voices heard and their rights upheld.



Disability Advocacy

Advocacy Outcomes & Feedback Survey

Disability Advocacy

In this survey we ask you to tell us about your experiences working with us. For each question, please tick the response that applies to you. Your responses won't impact your access to the service in future.

Client Name: _____

Advocate Name: _____

Confidence and choice and control to make your own decisions

Before working with my advocate I felt confident making decisions to respond to my issue 1 2 3 4 5

After working with my advocate I feel confident making decisions to respond to my issue 1 2 3 4 5

Access to information and knowledge

After working with my advocate... I know where to find information and resources about my issue that I can understand 1 2 3 4 5

I better understand the options available to me to respond to this type of issue 1 2 3 4 5

Building self-advocacy skills

After working with my advocate... I have gained skills to advocate for myself 1 2 3 4 5

I feel more confident to respond to issues like this in the future 1 2 3 4 5

Supported decision-making in practice

In the second half of 2024, we partnered with **Michelle Browning**, founder of **The Decision Agency** and a recognised expert in supported decision-making, to run a service-wide communities of practice program and leadership workshops. These sessions gave advocates regular opportunities to reflect together and apply 10 key supported decision-making principles to real-world advocacy. Manager-level sessions focused on how to support staff in embedding these principles, respond when practice goes off track, and navigate the biases and pressures that can arise in complex situations.

Building on this foundation, we are now working with Michelle Browning to design a tailored learning series on supported decision-making in advocacy. This series will translate the principles into practical tools, resources, and case studies developed specifically for Disability Advocacy. It is being created to give new staff a strong grounding in advocacy practice while also supporting ongoing learning and reflection across the whole team.

Annual DA Conference

Our annual DA Conference, held this year at Shoal Bay, marked the official launch of our True North Framework. Over two days, staff took part in six in-house professional development workshops that explored what good advocacy looks like in practice and drew attention to the pressures and contexts that shape it.

The program was hands-on and reflective, but also made space for something just as important: time to connect as a dispersed team. Informal collaboration and team-building gave advocates the chance to share experiences, strengthen relationships, and build a culture that supports learning and resilience across the service.

The conference concluded with **Making communication accessible: information to empower, not exclude**, presented by **Ruby Yee**, senior speech pathologist and Easy Read specialist at **Embrace Access**. Ruby shared practical strategies for making information more inclusive, with a focus on Easy Read approaches that reduce barriers and support meaningful access for people with communication disabilities and support needs.

Together, the conference offered a chance to step back from day-to-day work, strengthen our professional identity, and build shared foundations for collaboration and consistency in advocacy practice.

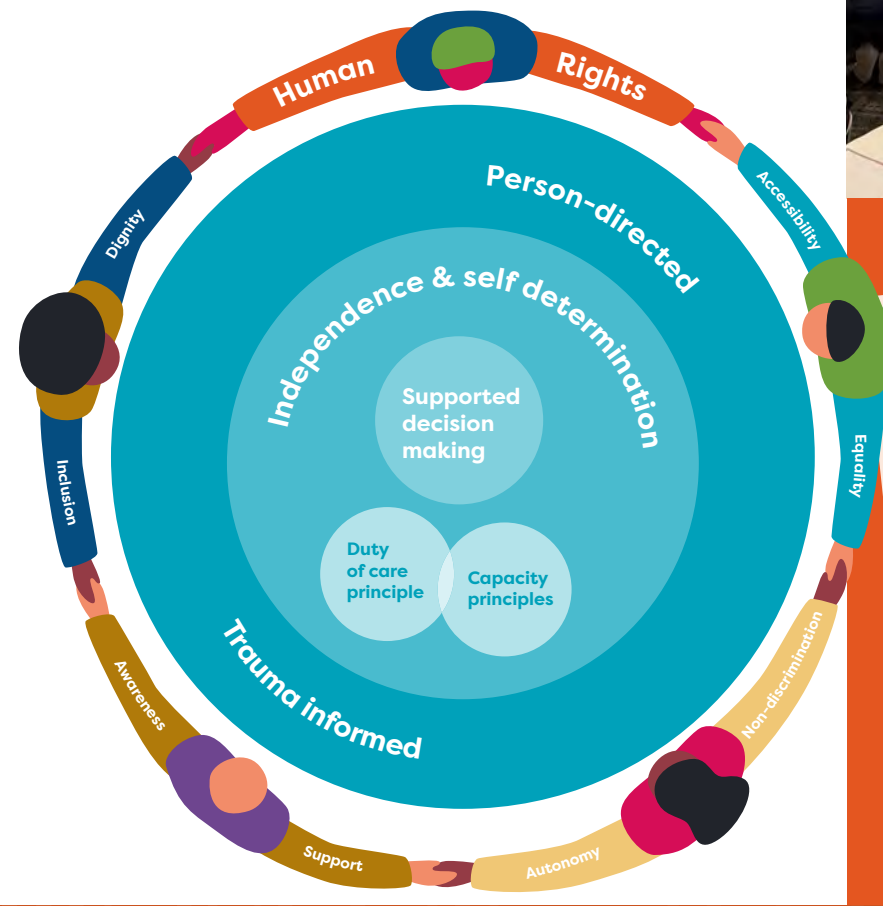
Acknowledgements

Over the past year, with our focus on strengthening practice, we've committed to stretching and growing together. We've pushed ourselves to think differently, to reflect deeply, and to expand our understanding of what it means to be an advocate. That work is not always easy. It takes honesty, openness, and a willingness to test ideas together. But it is through that collective effort, bringing different strengths and perspectives and working towards shared goals, that we continue to grow as a service.

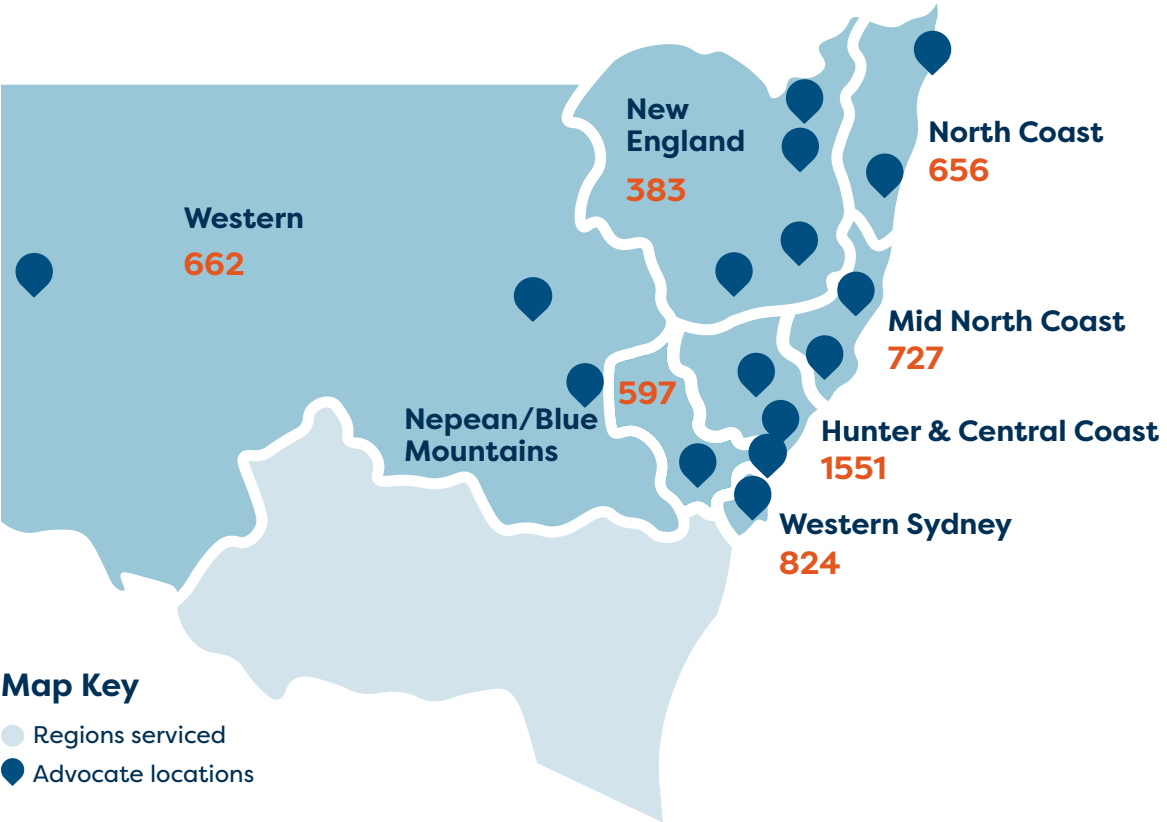
At its heart, Disability Advocacy is a collective of people committed to a common purpose: providing somewhere for people with disability to turn when they are not getting a fair go, and walking alongside them to pursue just outcomes. That commitment has continued to shine this year through the many ways people contribute, supporting clients, leading teams, working on projects, and strengthening advocacy through learning and reflection.

I want to thank every member of the DA team for the commitment you have shown, and for the difference you make every day to the lives of people with disability we support. I also extend my thanks to our CEO, Mark Grierson, Deputy CEO, Catherine Peek, the ALA staff, and our volunteer Board members for their continued support and guidance. Together, your contributions ensure that Disability Advocacy remains a strong, responsive, and reliable service for people with disability living across the many communities we serve.

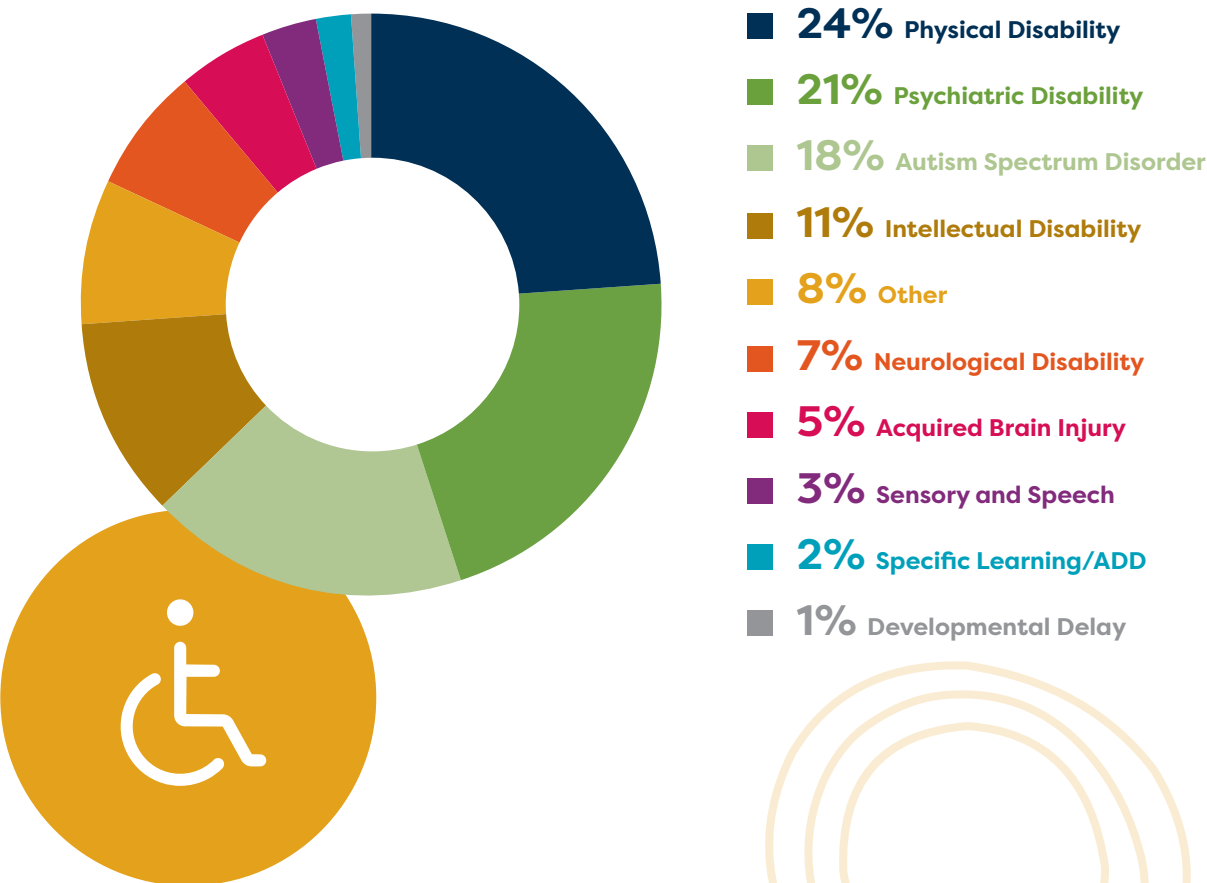
Amanda Brickwood
Executive Officer



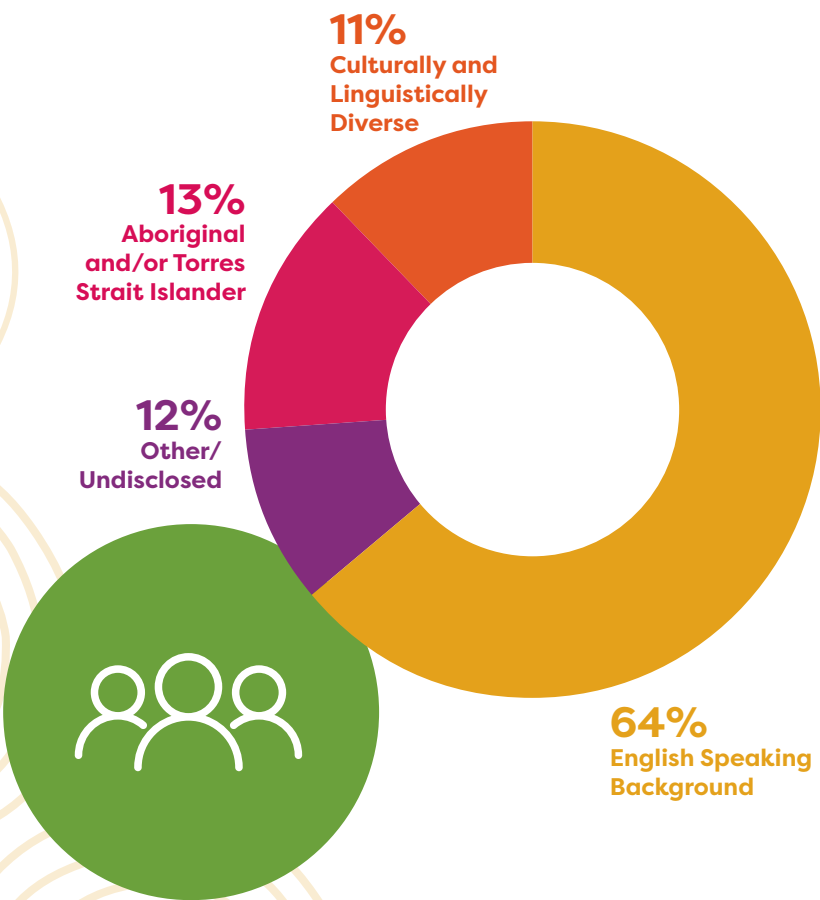
Our clients



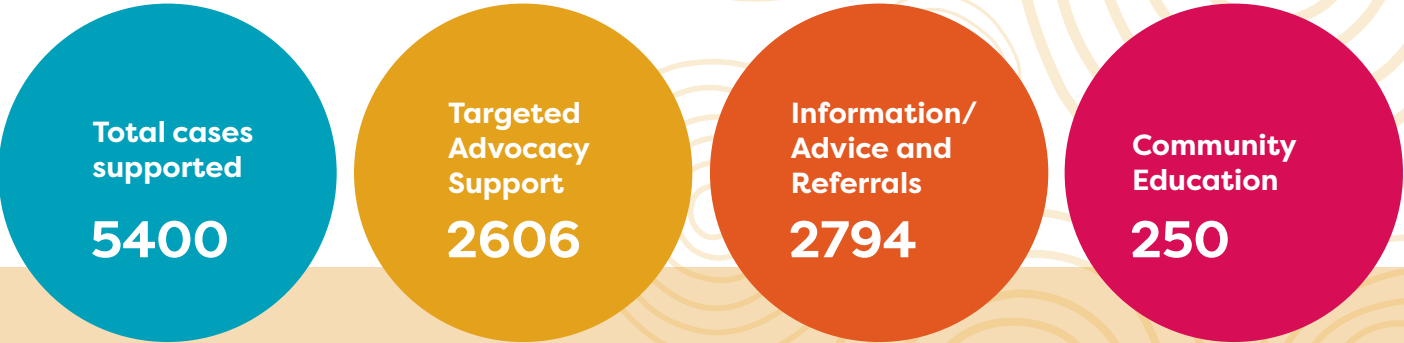
Primary Disability



Cultural Background



Our Impact



Targeted Advocacy case timeframes



→ For 80% of Targeted Advocacy Support matters, the advocacy goal was achieved.

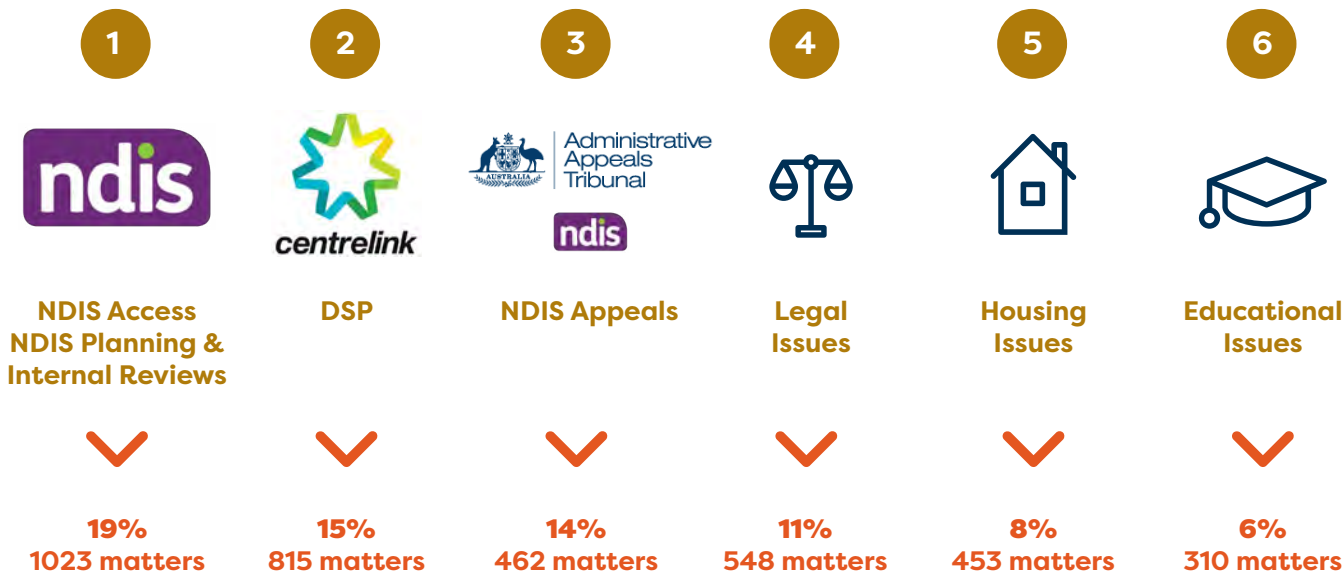


Feedback



Coming soon
Our first Social Impact Report will share outcomes data from the new Advocacy Outcomes and Feedback Survey, giving a deeper picture of the difference our advocacy makes.

Top Advocacy Issues



We also provide advocacy support across a diverse range of other issues

- Disability services complaints
- Finances
- Discrimination/rights
- Health/Mental Health
- Abuse/Neglect/Violence
- Access to non NDIS services
- Employment
- Child Protection
- Vulnerable/isolated
- Community Inclusion - Social/Family
- Equipment/aids
- Transport
- Physical access



Compliments

The advocate for my case has been very supportive throughout the ART process. I'm truly impressed with her professionalism in providing advocacy support. Her guidance has helped me to better advocate for my child and to know his rights. I'm grateful to her for making this entire process as smooth as possible for me.

My advocate was amazing she had so much patience with me and explained everything to me. She always made my daughter case feel important and did everything she could to help. My experience in working with her was so helpful in navigating ndis requirements and there changing criteria. I would gladly recommend your services.

My advocate was very understanding from the moment of intake to the closure of my file. She is kind, respectful and considerate. She showed compassion and empathy. She was very informative and provided me with any resources she thought I would need. She explained the disability advocacy process with good detail as well as explaining the NDIS processes. Her assistance and insight are highly valued. I thank her for all her help, it is much appreciated.

I'm so grateful to have had support from disability advocates. They have been the voice for my thoughts and the advocates for my needs. Even though we didn't go through with the full tribunal, I felt heard by my advocate and that empowered me to make the choice to pull out, and the voice to complain about the tribunal process when I'm ready.

My advocate was invaluable, I couldn't have gotten through the process on my own. At all times, he was supportive, available, patient, empathetic and kept me up to date and informed. Such a wonderfully helpful place for people who struggle with overwhelming processes. Thank you.

INDEPENDENT
ADVOCACY
only for you



Our Broken Hill advocate is a local born and bred and has lived experience of disability.

Case Studies

Case Study 1 – Education

Nature of case: A parent referred their primary school-aged child to our service seeking advocacy to ensure the child was safely supported at school with eating (choking risk), manual handling and hearing supports. The school was hesitant to provide these supports as the School Learning Support Officer (SLSO), a trained school staff member who provided this day-to-day assistance, had recently left the school. The parents sought advocacy because their relationship with the school had broken down, and they needed support to re-establish constructive communication about the child's supports.

Advocacy plan:

- The advocate met with the parents to understand the issues, clarify goals on the child's behalf using supported decision-making, and agree on an advocacy plan.
- The advocate provided information on rights and options and assisted the parents to obtain legal advice from Disability Law NSW; escalation to the Australian Human Rights Commission was considered but not pursued.
- The advocate assisted the parents to request and prepare for a stakeholder meeting with the child's long-term physiotherapist, classroom teacher and school principal.

- At the meeting, all attendees co-designed a safe mealtime plan (roles, training, risk controls), a manual handling plan (equipment, positioning schedule, sign-offs) and a hearing support plan (consistent hearing-aid use), and documented responsibilities and review dates.
- After the meeting, the advocate reconnected with the parents and outlined options for written communications with the school (e.g. email summary of agreed actions, responsibilities list, review schedule). The parents led the follow-up, with the advocate available for brief check-ins to support implementation and review.

Outcome: The child's preferred School Learning Support Officer, who had left, was reinstated and trained additional staff in safe feeding. The school adopted the mealtime and manual handling plans and embedded a routine to check hearing aids throughout the day. The child now eats safely at school, participates in social and food-based learning, and communicates more effectively in class. Parents report feeling heard, confident and better equipped to resolve future issues.

Case Study 2 – NDIS Appeals

Nature of case: A person self-referred to our service requesting advocacy support for an NDIS Appeals matter before the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART). The person had a diagnosed intellectual disability and requested support to understand the appeals process, communicate their preferences, and organise the additional targeted clinical evidence requested by the NDIA lawyer. Their treating professionals were questioning why earlier reports were insufficient, and the person's plan funding had run out, putting essential supports at risk during the appeal.

Advocacy plan:

- The advocate used supported decision-making to clarify the person's goals and preferred role at each stage of the appeal.
- The advocate supported the person to ask the NDIA lawyer for targeted questions to guide treating professionals so new reports addressed what the Tribunal required.
- The advocate supported the person to obtain a plan variation (remittal) so supports could continue while the appeal progressed.
- The advocate supported the person to arrange and attend a Legal Aid appointment so they could receive independent advice on evidence requirements and the appeals process.

- The advocate supported the person to request an extension of time while evidence from the second case conference was being gathered to ensure compliance with directions.
- The advocate supported the person to collate and submit the additional evidence to the ART and NDIA representative.
- Ahead of conciliation, the advocate supported the person to organise their documents and talking points, referring to the Legal Aid advice already provided, linking each requested support to the relevant clinical evidence, and ensuring the person felt ready to explain their views and respond to common process questions.

Outcome: At conciliation the person clearly presented the supports sought and an agreement was reached on the day. The plan variation maintained continuity of essential supports during the process. The person reported that advocacy made the appeals pathway understandable and accessible; without advocacy they would have struggled to comply with directions or participate meaningfully in Alternative Dispute Resolution.



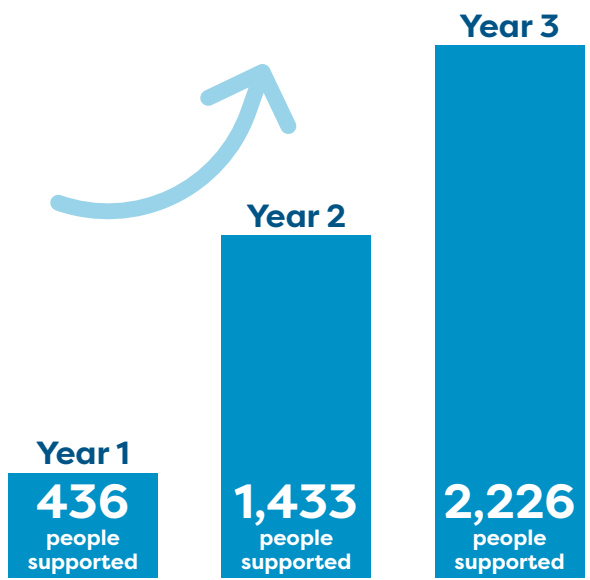
The Helpline

Disability Advocacy Support Helpline (The Helpline)

The Disability Advocacy Support Helpline (The Helpline) has now completed its initial three-year pilot, launched under Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021-2031. The Helpline provides short-term advocacy and referral support for people with disability, their families, and carers, accessible through the Disability Gateway.

Across the pilot period, The Helpline supported 4,095 people, including 2,226 in the past year alone. This means that, on average, around 45-50 people every week were able to access advocacy quickly, receiving structured, short-term assistance when they needed it. The steady year-on-year growth demonstrates both the demand for the service and its ability to expand capacity while maintaining quality and timeliness. This growth also reflects the commitment of The Helpline team and managers, whose work has been central to delivering support consistently at scale.

Growing impact, year by year

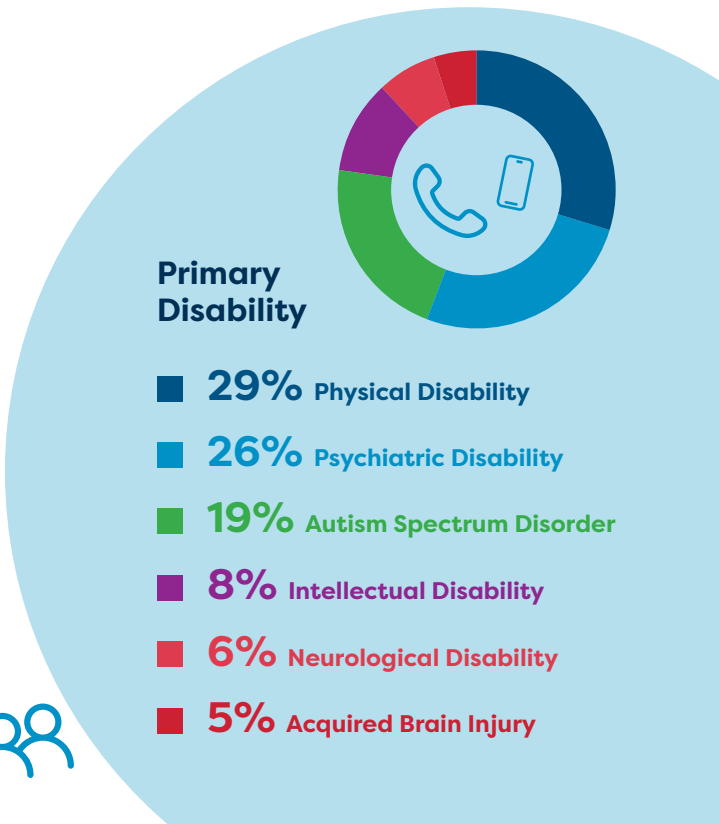


The Helpline supported 4,095 people over the three-year pilot, with more than five times as many people supported in year three than in year one.

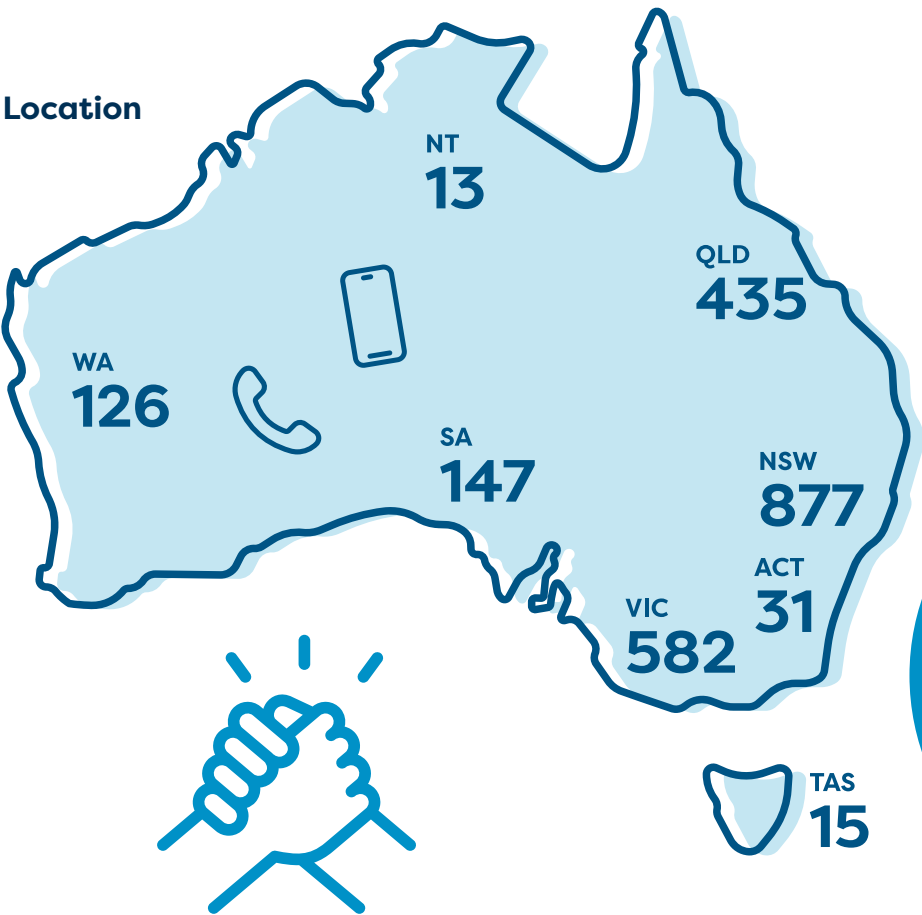


A major milestone in the final year of the pilot was the rollout of Phase 3, which established direct referral pathways from NDAP advocacy services into The Helpline. This strengthened collaboration across the national advocacy system and provided a reliable alternative when local services were at capacity. By opening up this pathway, The Helpline adds flexibility to the system, giving people another option for timely support when demand on local providers is high.

With these achievements, The Helpline has matured into a stable, accessible service that responds effectively to demand and sits as a complementary part of the national advocacy system. The pilot has since been extended until June 2026, reflecting confidence in the model and its potential to continue playing a vital role in ensuring people with disability can access advocacy support when and where they need it.



Location



Clients

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representation: 7.06%

Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Representation: 11.29%

Top 5 Issues

- 1 Government Payments
- 2 NDIS
- 3 Housing/ Homelessness
- 4 Legal/Access to Justice
- 5 Education

Impact

1.12 days
average response time

12.1 days
average time to finalise case

2226
people supported

374
referrals made

4.6 hrs
average support time per case



Compliments

My Advocate helped me make a plan of action and clarified the issues with me. I didn't bury my head in the sand like I tend to do.

Was very happy with how fast I was contacted after making referral to the Disability Gateway. I have really appreciated the support and recommended DASH to my friends and family.

Vital service, invaluable to have a person who understands the issue and listens. Do not feel like a number.

I have already recommended service to my MS support group. The service was very valuable and to have a sounding board that is independent from somebody who has some insight, and knowledge.

I feel like my advocate she has given me a voice and created a level in confidence in me that I wasn't aware I could have.

I do not have the vocabulary to simply express how amazing my advocate was in our time of need. She was the lifeboat I needed to be able to get on with what needed to be done.

Case study

Case Study – Discrimination

Nature of case: A person self-referred to The Helpline after being excluded from a council-run community workshop because the venue had no wheelchair access. The person sought support to understand their rights and the available pathways to address the issue, identify the right contact point, and frame their complaint constructively so relationships were maintained, and they could be included in future activities.

Support Block 1: Understanding the issue (remote file review and preparation)

- With support from a support worker, the person emailed a summary of what happened.
- The advocate reviewed the information.
- The advocate prepared plain-English resources on access rights and disability discrimination.
- The advocate sourced examples of similar complaints.

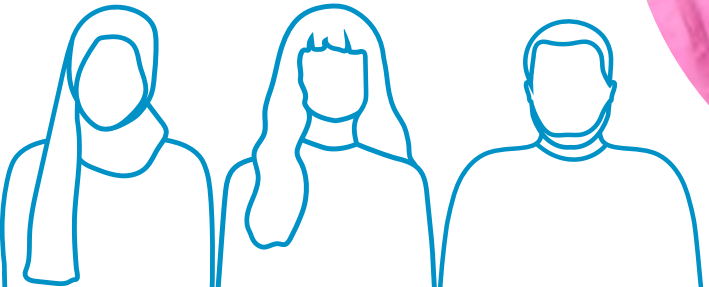
Support Block 2: Exploring pathways (phone session; supported decision-making)

- The advocate provided plain-English information about discrimination and access rights.
- Using supported decision-making, the advocate helped the person consider pros and cons of options (e.g writing to council or lodging a complaint with the Australian Human Rights Commission).
- The person chose to begin with a constructive letter to council, aiming to be included in future activities and to prompt accessibility improvements so others aren't excluded.

Support Block 3: Taking the next step (phone session and document draft)

- Over the phone, the person dictated the complaint in their own words while the advocate typed.
- Together they clarified the key points and identified the appropriate recipient at council.
- The advocate emailed a copy for the person to review with their support worker before deciding whether to submit it.
- The advocate shared referral options for further help or independent legal advice.

Outcome: Within three remote support blocks the person gained a clear understanding of their rights, drafted a complaint letter in their own words, identified the correct recipient, and received a copy to review with their support worker before deciding whether to submit. The short-term remote model provided the structure and information to progress the advocacy issue at their pace.



Systemic Advocacy

Our approach to systemic advocacy is grounded in what we see every day through our work with clients and communities. Our regional teams play a vital role in identifying barriers and turning those insights into targeted, practical initiatives that complement our broader reform work.

This year, much of our systemic focus was on education. Regional teams led projects to strengthen relationships with schools, raise awareness of advocacy among families and teaching staff, and promote inclusion. Other initiatives included work on housing challenges in the North Coast region, tackling physical accessibility issues in the Far West, and contributing to the culturally and linguistically diverse working group with the Ageing and Disability Commission. These projects reflect our approach of using client experience and data to drive targeted systemic advocacy at the local level. Alongside this, we also collaborate with specialist systemic advocacy organisations on broader reform priorities.

At the service-wide level, we contributed to national reform processes, including submissions on the NDIS (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No. 1) Bill 2024 and proposed NDIS support lists, as well as participation in consultations on Administrative Review Tribunal changes. We also finalised a research report into systemic issues within the NSW Trustee and Guardian.

Importantly, systemic change also happens through individual advocacy. As a large, regionally dispersed provider, we work in the same local systems repeatedly, education, housing, health, and community services. Supporting clients to know their rights, have their say, and address unfair treatment not only achieves outcomes for individuals but also encourages services and the people making decisions within them to change their practice over time. This cumulative influence is a defining feature of how Disability Advocacy contributes to systemic change.



Key Initiatives

Education:
Regional teams strengthened relationships with schools, raised awareness of advocacy among families and teaching staff, and promoted inclusion.



Housing:
Advocacy on tenancy and accessible housing challenges in the North Coast.



Accessibility:
Projects addressing physical access issues in Far West NSW.



Collaboration:
Contributions to the culturally and linguistically diverse working group with the Ageing and Disability Commission.



NDIS reform:
Submissions to the Senate Community Affairs Committee on the NDIS (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No. 1) Bill 2024 and the proposed NDIS supports lists.



Administrative Review Tribunal (ART):
Input into consultation processes on tribunal design and rules, advocating for a trauma-informed approach.



NSW Trustee and Guardian:
Completion of a research report into systemic issues within the Trustee and Guardian framework.





MID NORTH COAST LEGAL CENTRE

Report



Principal Solicitor Report

Jane Titterington

The past year has been another dynamic and rewarding period for the Mid North Coast Legal Centre (MNCLC), marked by continued service to our community, strategic development, and sector-wide change.

Throughout 2024–25, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to delivering accessible, high-quality legal assistance across our region. As always, our work spans far beyond courts and casework — encompassing vital legal information, referrals, community legal education, and advocacy for systemic reform.

We welcomed a significant step forward in national legal assistance funding with the announcement of the new National Agreement on Justice Partnership (NAJP), due to commence in July 2025. While the overarching agreement has been confirmed, we are still awaiting clarity on what this means for the community legal sector broadly, and specifically with regards to additional funding for MNCLC. We continue to engage with local members and government agencies to ensure our community's needs — particularly those in underserved areas north of Coffs Harbour — are recognised and met.

One of our key milestones this year was the relocation of our Coffs Harbour office. While it was a short move within the same arcade, the difference has been substantial. Our new, street-facing office provides greater visibility, much-needed space, and a more functional environment for both clients and staff. Importantly, we've maintained our proximity to Disability Advocacy, supporting strong referral pathways and collaborative service delivery.

In preparation for sector-wide digital changes, our team has been actively involved in planning for the transition from the CLASS client management system, which

will be decommissioned in 2025. A dedicated internal working group has been established to manage the transition to a new system, AIIM. This transition will happen in August 2025 and we are confident it will lead to more streamlined processes, better data collection, and ultimately, improved client outcomes.

Beyond day-to-day legal practice, MNCLC continues to engage in broader conversations around access to justice, law reform, and ethical legal practice. Our Assistant Principal Solicitor, Patrick Hourigan, presented on an Ethics Panel alongside representatives from the Law Society, the Office of the Legal Services Commissioner, and academia - recognition of the strong reputation MNCLC has built. Staff continue to engage actively in networks including the Domestic Violence Network (Sarah Dahlenburg), Rural Regional and Remote Network (Haley McEwen), and disaster response planning for community legal centres (Mel Kallmier), who also recently participated in a Law and Justice Panel on Natural Disasters.

In September 2024, we proudly launched our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in Port Macquarie. The event was a meaningful opportunity to connect with the local community and reaffirm our commitment to working respectfully and collaboratively with First Nations peoples.

Our legal work continues to focus on high-need areas, including family and domestic violence and traffic-related matters, while we also maintain outreach and education efforts to ensure broader civil law issues are addressed. Community engagement remains central to our practice - ensuring we meet people where they are, both geographically and in terms of legal need.

As we look ahead to a year of significant transition - in funding models, systems, and service delivery - I want to thank our incredible team at MNCLC. Your dedication, professionalism, and compassion are the foundation of everything we achieve. I also extend my gratitude to our Board, Mark Grierson (CEO), Catherine Peek (Deputy CEO), and our colleagues at the Advocacy Law Alliance for their ongoing support and leadership.

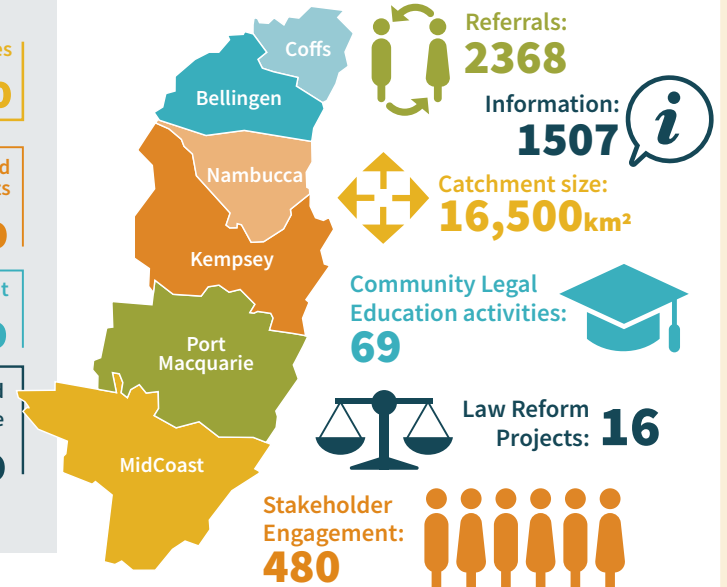
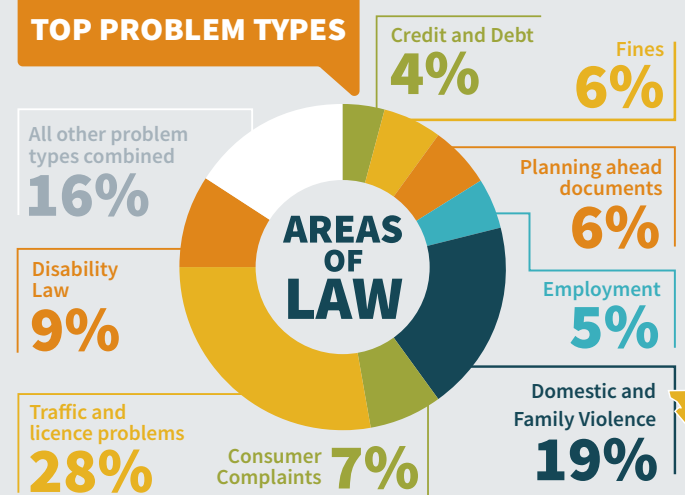


Our Impact

MID NORTH COAST LEGAL CENTRE 2024-25 FINANCIAL YEAR OVERVIEW



TOP PROBLEM TYPES



Provided **2368** legal services to **1489** clients

40% live with a disability

15% identify as First Nations

4% culturally and linguistically diverse

7% have unstable accommodation

9% live in remote/rural areas

97% of the representation services were given to people experiencing financial disadvantage

Funding

MNCLC's primary funding comes from the Commonwealth and State Governments, administered through the Community Legal Services Program by Legal Aid NSW. This year, we continued our LAMP (Legal and Mental Health Partnership), delivering legal services in collaboration with health and mental health providers across our region. We also maintained our work in the disaster recovery space, supported by Federal funding, to assist communities still affected by recent natural disasters.

Key Events
and Achievements



We launched our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan in Port Macquarie on 26 September 2024 which was a wonderful day and a great connection with local community. It is also an important step for Mid North Coast Legal Centre in ensuring we continue to actively work with our First Nations communities.

As part of our commitment to mental health awareness, MNCLC staff took to the field for the Neami Community Cup—a soccer tournament that brings together consumers, community members, and 28 local organisations during World Mental Health Month. Now in its fifth year, the event promotes inclusion and mental health awareness through sport. Staff also joined the Wellness Walk hosted by the Endeavour Mental Health Recovery Clubhouse, one of our valued LAMP partners.



In December 2024, our Coffs Harbour office relocated to a larger, street-facing space just across the hallway. The move has improved visibility and functionality, with separate areas for meetings, work, and staff use. We remain in the same arcade as Disability Advocacy, supporting ongoing collaboration and referrals.



We celebrated a special milestone with Melanie Kallmier’s 14-year anniversary at Mid North Coast Legal Centre. As our Legal Services Manager, Mel has been an integral part of the Centre’s growth and success, and her dedication over the past 14 years continues to shape the work we do.

Client and
Stakeholder Feedback

Thank you [Josh] for your meticulous and sincere connection yesterday. I valued your knowledge and I’m reassured with some confidence of the issues that we were able to discuss and document, some of which have influenced (and will continue to influence) my thoughts and actions in an important, informed and mature way.

Julia is a very polite and patient young lady, she was taking her time to read through things with me because I didn’t bring my glasses, and she was just very nice to me.

Elaine is always helpful and is really great at her job.

Thank you for the fabulous presentation today at Mission Australia. It was informative and engaging. I imagine everyone will have walked away having learnt something new. I appreciate you picking this presentation up with only 3 days’ notice.

I just wanted to say thank you for everything in regards to your legal advice and with that taking the time to help me. Your advice was deeply appreciated and really made me feel much more grounded and gave me a better understanding about my choices in the situation. I’m aware of how emotional I am and come across trying to talk about it but your patience and compassion was truly felt and it means so very much to me.

It was like she was adrift in an angry sea, and you rocked up in a helicopter to help.

Meggie is kind and approachable and a ‘safe person’ to share information with. It is clear they value Meggie’s work and her relationship with their team.

Legal Assistance –
General Practice

MNCLC records statistics in the CLASS database utilised by all Community Legal Centres. This is our last financial year using CLASS as we are transitioning to AIIM in August 2025.

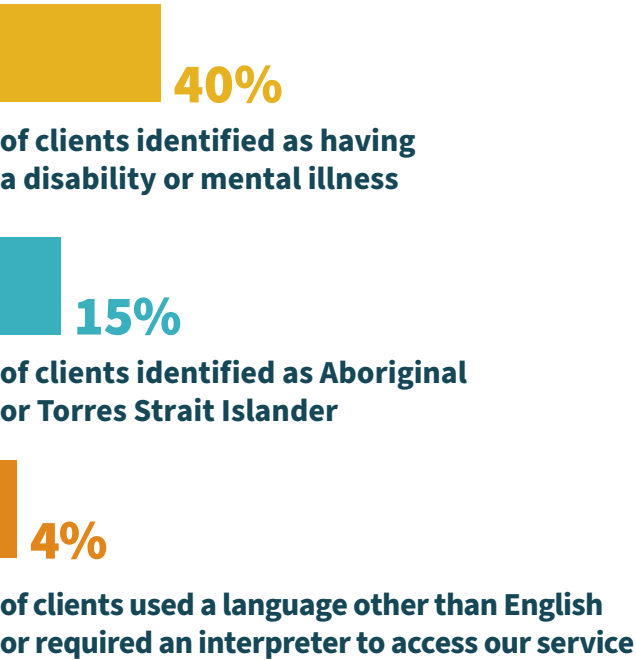
This financial year MNCLC provided information and referral on at least 3361 different occasions. This includes referrals made as part of other advice or casework services and highlights our commitment to ensuring wrap around service delivery for our clients.

CLASS allows MNCLC to record characteristics of either the kinds of people we assist or the areas of law in which we provide help. In 2024/25, MNCLC assisted 1341 clients across a range of 2157 different “services”. Of these, 1002 were new clients.

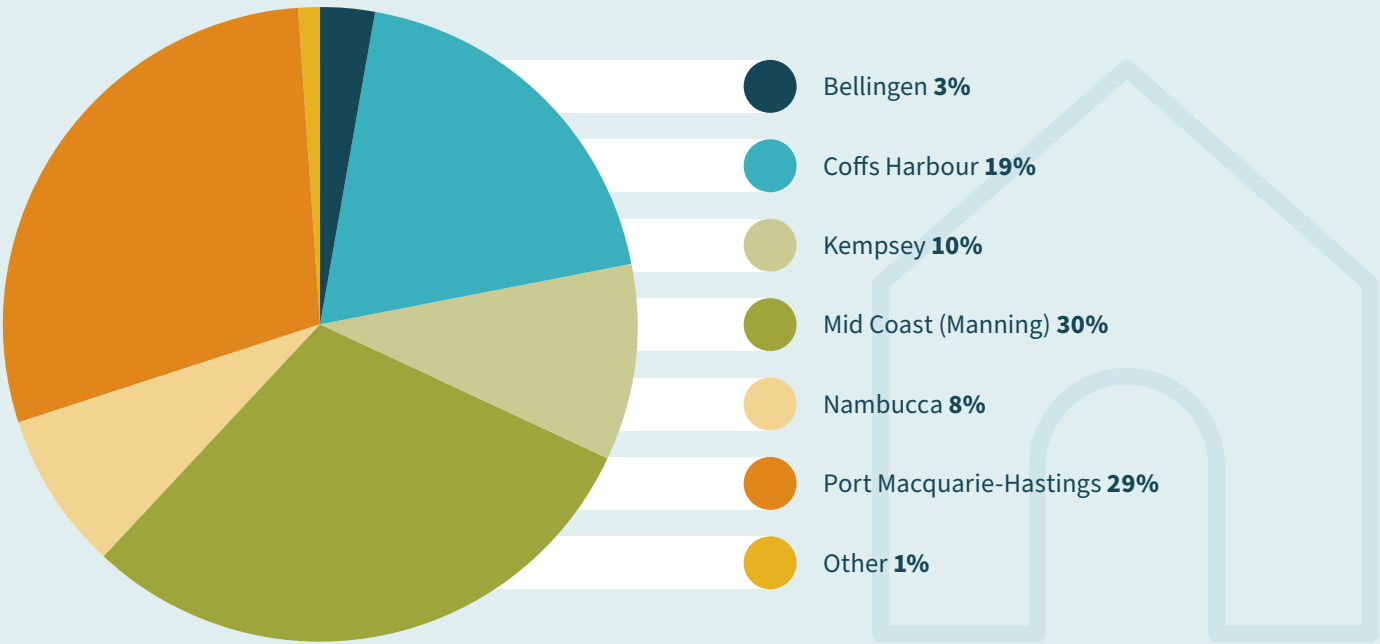
Clients were distributed throughout our catchment area as represented in the figures below.

MNCLC offers regular face to face advice sessions in the Kempsey, Bellingen, Nambucca and MidCoast regions of our catchment, encouraging equal access to legal services for those who may be disadvantaged by distance.

Our clients



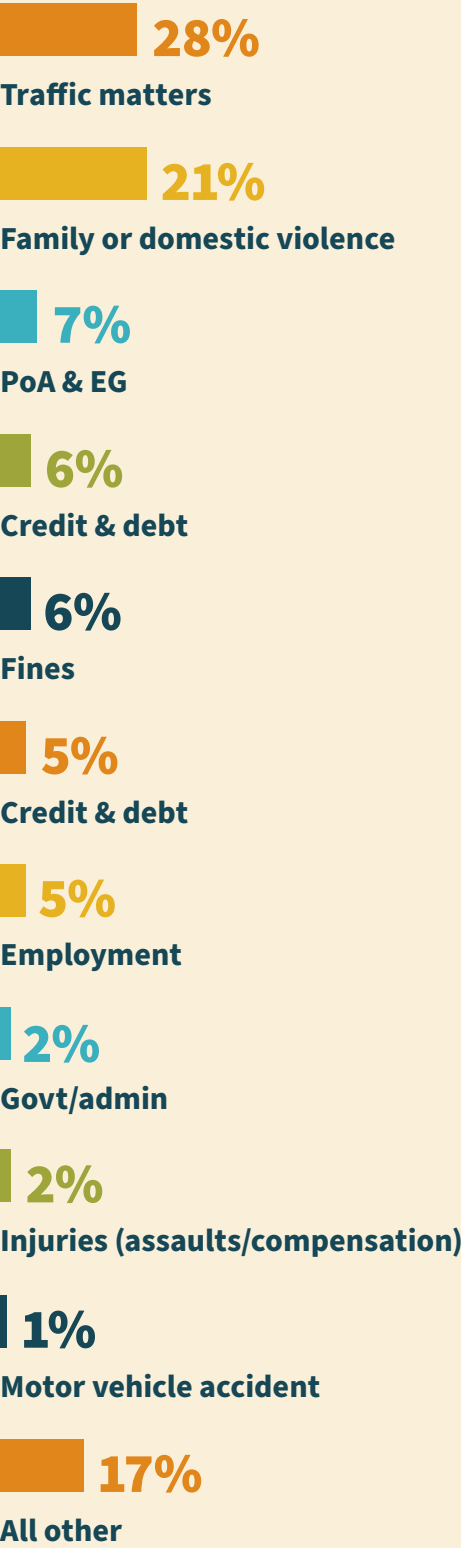
Where do MNCLC clients live?



Legal Advice

A total of 1198 legal advice services were given in the last financial year. Legal advice is defined in CLASS as “the provision of fact specific legal advice to a person (a client) in response to a request for assistance to resolve specific legal problems.”

Legal Problem Type



Legal Task

This financial year MNCLC provided legal task assistance on 234 occasions. Legal task work is often undertaken during outreach and is defined as “where a Centre completes a discrete, one-off piece of legal work, to assist a person in their own efforts attempting to resolve a problem or a particular stage of a problem”.

Case Studies

Dividing Fences

We assisted an older client who had been attempting to reach an agreement with the owner of an adjoining property for a dividing fence. They had been trying to contact the owner of the property for a long period of time. MNCLC assisted the client in drafting a Fencing Notice and forwarded it to the owner of the adjoining property. The owner accepted and signed the notice and as a result fencing work may now go ahead. MNCLC will continue to assist this older client until the matter is finalised.

Employment

We recently assisted a client with an unfair dismissal matter and got a successful outcome in the Fair Work Commission. The matter involved an unfair dismissal related to a transfer of business ownership and employee entitlements. The employer refused to engage with conciliation and the matter proceeded immediately to final hearing.

MNCLC was able to overcome a jurisdictional objection and satisfy the Deputy President that the dismissal was unfair. The client was awarded compensation and was grateful for the assistance and happy with the result.

Traffic Law

We represented a client in the local court in a driving matter. The client was subsequently stopped again by Police for driving while disqualified. It was later discovered that the conviction had been recorded incorrectly by the Magistrate and not in accordance with the transcript on the day of sentencing. MNCLC helped the client lodge an appeal to the district court and made submissions on behalf of the client. This led to the NSW Police withdrawing the later charges related to driving whilst disqualified.

A great outcome and another example of the complexity of traffic matters and a demonstration of the value of our traffic court programs for community.

Legal Assistance - Disability Law NSW Program

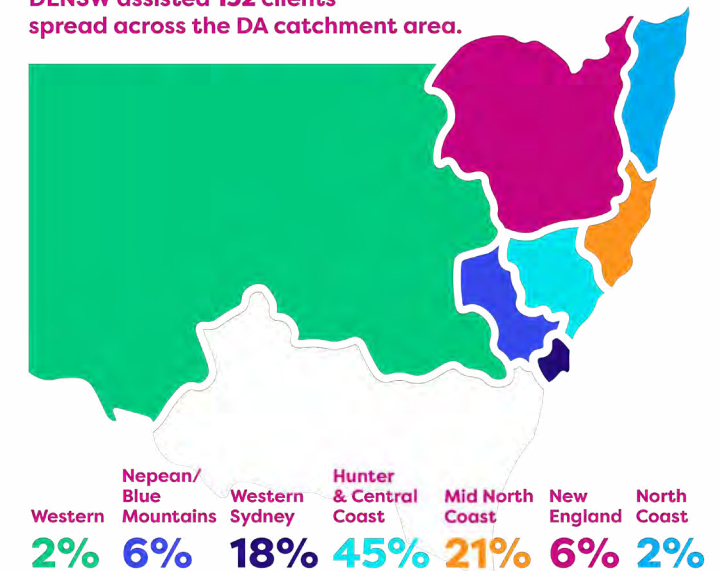
DLNSW 2024-2025



9% identify as First Nations



DLNSW assisted 152 clients spread across the DA catchment area.



Over the year, 152 clients received:



204 advices



6 tasks



4 representation services



Disability Law team (L – R) Anita Jones, Sarah Dahlenburg and Holly Lawson.

Disability Law NSW (DLNSW) program is a collaboration between the two arms of Advocacy Law Alliance - Mid North Coast Legal Centre and Disability Advocacy NSW - and has been in operation since July 2020.

The referral pathway for DLNSW is through DA intake. Clients must first engage with DA as an advocacy service so that they have access to face-to-face support for their matters with one of our local advocates. It is our experience that many clients with a disability need a face-to-face contact so they can access and engage with the legal process. People with a disability are often drawn to DA due to its broad coverage, especially in regional NSW. DA has offices and local advocates in the

Hunter, Central Coast, Mid North Coast, New England, Central West, Western and Far West NSW, Sydney West and Blue Mountains.

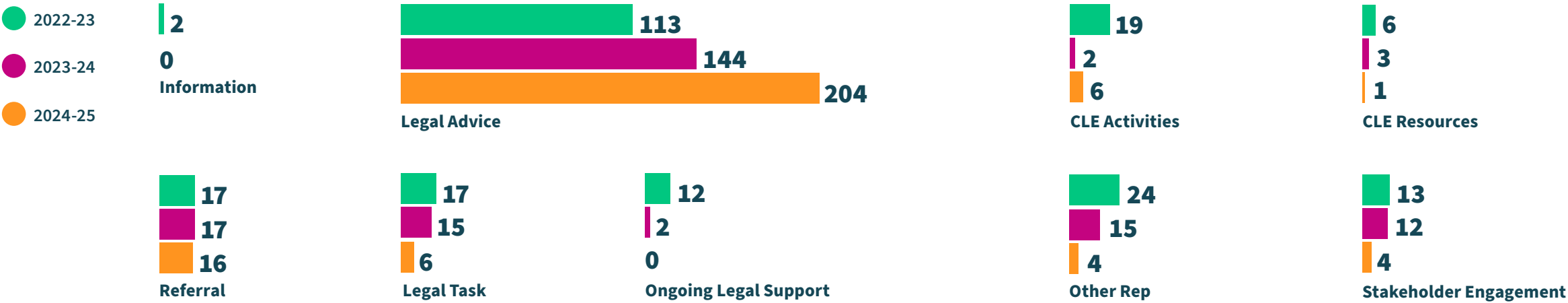
It is wonderful when the DL team receives positive client feedback like, “I wanted to extend our sincere gratitude for the invaluable legal advice and assistance you provided in supporting (client) to gain access through the NDIA. Your expertise and commitment to this case were instrumental in presenting the necessary evidence before the Tribunal, resulting in a positive outcome.”

We thank all staff that worked in the DLNSW team this financial year including Anita Jones, Holly Lawson and Sarah Dahlenburg.



Legal Services

DLNSW has had another successful year, despite some staff changes. There has been a focus on providing mostly legal advice (and less representation services) to ensure the small team is able to assist as many clients as possible across the DA catchment.



Case Studies

NDIS Appeal

We supported a client in an appeal to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. The client had been declined access on four previous occasions and was feeling overwhelmed, discouraged, and ready to give up.

On reviewing the case, we identified that the key barrier was the medical evidence provided — the reports focused on clinical treatment outcomes rather than functional impacts. We worked collaboratively with Disability Advocacy to request updated documentation from the client’s treating professionals that clearly addressed functional limitations.

As a result, the client was granted access to the NDIS without the need for a tribunal hearing.

Disability Discrimination

We partnered with Disability Advocacy to assist a client in making a disability discrimination complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission.

The client, who has a hearing impairment, alleged that a business had failed to provide reasonable adjustments to enable her to access their services. We provided legal advice on discrimination law and supported the client to prepare for the conciliation process.

The client reported a successful conciliation, during which she was able to confidently negotiate the outcome she sought. The business agreed to undertake disability awareness training and implement systemic changes to ensure accessibility for people with hearing impairments in the future.



Community Legal Education

MNCLC (including DLNSW) delivered 46 CLE activities and undertook 414 stakeholder engagement activities in the financial year.

Some examples include:

- Education sessions on the legal assistance available to clients of DA through DLNSW including on Guardianship and Debts.
- Delivering CLE on the Victim’s Services Scheme in Taree.
- Education sessions on “Planning Ahead” to support older people to minimise the risks of abuse and exploitation.
- Education sessions to aged care workers on Family & Domestic Violence, and Victims Compensation, in collaboration with local support services Liberty and Warrina.

Pat delivers community legal education at Valla Beach on legal issues that might arise after a disaster.



Community Outreach and Engagement

We provide community legal outreach at Taree, Kempsey, Nambucca, Macksville and the Mid North Coast Correctional Centre. We attended our traffic programs at Taree Court and Macksville Court.

Outreach & Clinics	Location	When
Kempsey Neighbourhood Centre	West Kempsey	Wednesday, fortnightly
The Hub	West Kempsey	Tuesday, fortnightly
Manning Uniting Church	Taree	Wednesday, fortnightly
Nambucca Small Hall	Nambucca	Tuesday, fortnightly
Mid North Coast Correctional Centre	Aldavilla	Thursday, fortnightly
Taree Traffic Program	Taree Court House	Tuesday, weekly
Macksville Traffic Program	Macksville Court	Thursday, fortnightly
Liberty Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Service	Port Macquarie	Tuesday, fortnightly
Headspace (LAMP)	Taree	Monday, fortnightly
Endeavour Mental Health Recovery Clubhouse (LAMP)	Port Macquarie	Monday, fortnightly
Samaritians (LAMP)	Taree	Monday, fortnightly
Macksville Medical Centre (LAMP)	Macksville	Tuesdays, fortnightly

We would like to thank our outreach partners – Kempsey Neighbourhood Centre (Kempsey), The Hub (Kempsey), Manning Uniting Church in Taree, Nambucca School of Arts, Macksville Medical Centre, Headspace (Taree and Kempsey) and Samaritans (Taree) and the Mid North Coast Correctional Centre.



Above: Haley attends Burrun Dalai Family Fun Day, October 2024. Below: Nat at Manning Valley Neighbourhood Centre for outreach.



Above, top: Cassie and Anna attend Yarn Up Information Session in Bowraville, September 2024. Above, bottom: Meggie and Tiarna at NAIDOC week celebrations in Wauchope, July 2024.



Law Reform

The MNCLC Law Reform Committee meets monthly to discuss issues and upcoming opportunities for law reform work. The Committee has been active and has had participation from a number of different staff within the Centre. MNCLC was involved 10 law reform activities this year across the Centre.

- Mel Kallmier was part of the Law and Justice Foundation panel on disaster response and planning.
- Jane attended a consultation with the Federal Attorney General's department on the draft National Plan into Abuse of Older Persons.
- MNCLC endorsed the actions of the DV/VS Committee of CLCNSW in relation to the need for an independent Victim's Services Commissioner.
- Sarah participated in quarterly round table meetings on the review of the Disability Discrimination Act with the Disability Discrimination Commissioner and other stakeholders.
- Patrick was invited to be part of an Ethics Panel presenting to the community legal sector.
- Haley chairs the CLCNSW RRR network and has been critical in planning for the RRR conference, held in Port Macquarie in July 2025.



Melaine Kallmier speaking on the Law and Justice Foundation "Natural Disaster-Related Legal Assistance – Insights and Strategies" panel.

Reconciliation

MNCLC acknowledges the Biripi, Birpai, Dunghutti and Gumbayngirr Peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work. We recognise the deep spiritual connection of First Nations Peoples to Country and remain committed to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

Since opening in 2011, MNCLC has prioritised building respectful relationships with local First Nations communities. We launched our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in April 2019, and our second Innovate RAP on 26 September 2024.

We celebrated the launch of our second RAP in Port Macquarie with a day of meaningful conversations, a heartfelt Welcome to Country by Uncle Bill OAM, inspiring speakers, live music, and shared stories that strengthened our commitment to reconciliation. We are proud to walk alongside First Nations Peoples across our catchment and will continue to listen, reflect, and foster respect, relationships, and opportunities.

As part of this work, we collaborated with Angela Marr, a Birrbay woman and Creative Director of Cultural Industries, who brings over 20 years of experience in cultural arts, design, and education. Angela is a National Aboriginal Design Agency artist, Supply Nation registered, and an Indigenous Art Code Member.

Kelly O'Brien and Uncle Bill at our Innovate RAP launch, September 2024.



"As an Aboriginal woman and artist, I am extremely passionate about celebrating and promoting my culture through art and language. I am inspired and driven by the depth of my culture through art and my place within it. This artwork is named 'Djuyalgu Barrayga', meaning 'Conversations on Country' in Gathang, the language of the Birrbay, Warrimay and Guringay people. It represents the MNCLC and the communities they work within across three nations of Birrbay, Daingatti and Gumbayngirr Countries. It highlights Country from the west in the mountains and hinterlands, the river systems and east to the headlands and sea. It symbolises a gathering on Country, with the line work having a dual meaning of flowing waterways but also communication."

Angela Marr

Pro Bono Partners

We would like to extend our deep appreciation for the ongoing support of our pro bono referral partners

- Gilbert & Tobin
- Hall & Wilcox
- Justice Connect (who assist by linking pro bono requests with firms that may be able to assist)
- Lander & Rogers (who assisted with the development of a factsheet on consumer law for caravan owners).



Our Volunteers



PLTS Matt and Julia attend Kempsey Seniors Expo in Kempsey, April 2025.

MNCLC relies on the support of volunteers to deliver an effective and accessible legal service. The volunteers also bring different outlooks and experiences, and we are enriched by their association with our Centre.

We would like to thank our volunteers this year for the valuable contribution they made to the Service:

- Sullivan Izzard
- Matthew Pinkerton
- Zachary Armytage
- Christine Skinner
- Dakota Macourt
- Molly Langley
- Emily Hollingworth
- Anne Gallen
- Ella Clark
- Kaylie O’Brien
- Safia Manwarring
- Julia Ros

Volunteers Report

Sullivan Izzard, PLT and Volunteer

“Volunteering at the Mid North Coast Legal Centre (MNCLC) has been an uplifting experience. The team is wonderful. They have supported me with respect to career development and legal skills – but have also brought me out of my shell. I have been exposed to a range of matters at MNCLC. It is helpful to see matters from beginning to end. Often, I am able to assist with the intake process and open files. I have been given a number of research tasks and observed many advice appointments. To round-off matters, I have closed files, and prepared case studies. It is illuminating to get such a comprehensive exposure to legal practice before my admission. I have particularly enjoyed working-on draft submissions for solicitors, and assisting the duty lawyer on court days.

Working at MNCLC has been enriching. This is because of the content of the work, and in no small part because of the workers and workplace culture!”





Suite 1, Level 2, 408 King Street
Newcastle West, NSW
Australia 2302

P: 02 4924 3599
advocacylaw.org.au

