



# **Evaluation Report**

## **Kangan TAFE Program**

January 2021

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# Introduction to the Evaluation

## Evaluation objectives

This evaluation of the Kangan TAFE Program is an internal evaluation conducted by the Northern Community Legal Centre (NCLC). The evaluation entails an outcome evaluation and a process evaluation. The outcome evaluation asks whether intended outcomes were achieved, and whether there were any unintended outcomes that could be attributed to the Program. The process evaluation asks whether the Program was implemented as planned.

The purpose of the evaluation is to evaluate:

- the outcomes achieved by the Program
- the implementation processes
- what considerations and changes might be required for future iterations of the Program

## Evaluation method

The evaluation process began with the creation of a program logic which makes explicit the program objectives, resources, activities and outcomes (Appendix C: **Program logic and evaluation framework**). The program logic draws on existing documentation and was developed in consultation with the NCLC program implementers. An evaluation framework was subsequently developed from the program logic (Appendix C: **Program logic and evaluation framework**).

Various sources of data were triangulated to inform the findings of this evaluation. The document analysis drew data from the proposal, interim reports and existing client case studies. The consultation process involved interviews with four NCLC staff members and one Kangan staff member, all of whom were involved in the implementation of the Program. The client feedback survey data was sent out to Arabic-speaking program participants with an e-mail address (n = 4). However, no responses were received. The quantitative data analysis involved drawing data from internal client reports.

## Limitations

The limitations of this evaluation are typical to qualitative evaluations. The majority of the findings draw from a small number of interviews, which subjects the findings to a high risk of bias. This is especially the case when all the interviews are conducted by the program implementers. Some of the risk of bias is mitigated by the fact that this evaluation follows the conclusion of the funding application process. Therefore, the risk of positively inflated responses is partially reduced.

A further limitation arises from not being able to interview program participants. The insights from program participants are captured via a client feedback survey sent to Arabic-speaking participants. The limited target audience is due to a lack of capacity to translate the survey into other languages. The lack of participant interviews reduced the voice of participants in the data.

We have sought to capture the participants' perspectives by drawing on case studies and by asking interviewed staff about participants' experiences.

In effect, these limitations make it difficult to establish causal relationships between the program activities and the program outcomes. This is typical of qualitative evaluations, especially those of socio-legal interventions where evidence is often 'ambiguous, sometimes partly contradictory... and there may be time constraints that restrict the gathering of evidence' (Wilkie and Grant 2009)<sup>1</sup>.

## Overview of the Kangan TAFE Program

### Problem statement

Hume has the second highest number of newly arrived Syrian and Iraqi refugees in Australia, 900 of whom undertake English classes at the Kangan Institute (Broadmeadows campus). Prior to the initiation of the project, NCLC had worked with the newly arrived/refugee community in the north of Melbourne to understand the specific systematic barriers faced by this community in accessing legal information and services. Many of our target audience had articulated a high level of suspicion toward the legal and justice system, which stems from experiences of war, persecution and displacement in their country of origin. Without intervention, such systematic barriers were likely to further entrench newly arrived/refugee communities in disadvantage.

### Program aims

The Kangan TAFE Program builds on the 'Know Your Rights' Program developed by the Footscray Community Legal Centre and actioned by Victoria Legal Aid. The 'Know Your Rights' Program was developed to train Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) teachers to present legal topics as part of English language programs.

The Kangan TAFE Program started in December 2018 and ended in December 2020. Through this project, NCLC aimed to build the capacity of newly arrived refugee/asylum seeker students to self-help where appropriate or make use of accessible legal services as required. The Program aimed to directly address the systematic barriers to justice faced by newly arrived students, and create positive engagement between our target audience and the legal and justice system. Through direct and ongoing engagement with this community, NCLC sought to overcome these barriers and increase confidence of this community in their ability to respond to legal matters.

### Components

The initial program proposal sets out five major program activities:

1. Train Kangan staff to identify legal need and undertake legal needs assessments through strategically administered focus groups
2. Weekly outreach legal clinics based at Kangan TAFE

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<sup>1</sup> Wilkie, J and Grant, A. (2009), 'Using Evidence Well', [https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-03/02\\_Using\\_evidence\\_well.pdf](https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-03/02_Using_evidence_well.pdf).

3. Embed legal literacy within the curriculum and tailor our preventative legal education to meet the needs of students by identifying and addressing issues raised at differing points along student's settlement journey
4. Develop a suite of self-help legal tools that aid in the resolution of legal issues of minimal complexity
5. Identify student leaders/champions who will be trained to assist with the simple administrative elements of matters that may become complex legal issues if not addressed early

### **Stakeholders**

The Kangan TAFE Program was funded by Hume City Council and delivered by NCLC in partnership with the staff at Kangan TAFE. Participating NCLC staff included the CEO, Legal Practice Manager, Partnerships and Community Development Manager, Community Paralegal and several Community Lawyers. Participating staff at Kangan TAFE included the Lead Educator in Vocational English and the AMEP teachers.

The primary audience of the project was the 900 recently arrived refugee/asylum seeker students undertaking English language classes at the Kangan Institute (Broadmeadows campus). It is estimated that 85% of these students were Arabic-speaking.

### **Resources**

Funding for the project enabled the employment of a Community Paralegal working on the Program for six hours per week. The participation time of Kangan staff and other NCLC staff which was not resourced by the funding received.

### **Assumptions**

The Program was developed and delivered on the assumption that having an on-site outreach legal clinic at Kangan would lead to Kangan students having greater knowledge of and greater access to legal services. A peer support model involving a community paralegal and student champions was hypothesised to be more effective than ad-hoc community legal education that is not integrated with English learning.

Other underlying assumptions include: 1) the peer support model could be effective without NCLC staff being on-site on a permanent basis, 2) asylum seeker/refugee students would have sufficient legal needs to justify the implementation of the outreach clinic and other program activities, 3) Kangan students and staff would be able to update their legal knowledge after the program ends in a sustainable, less resource-intensive way (e.g. through CLE delivered by NCLC every three months).

### **External Factors**

Several external factors were flagged as being possible risks to the Program, including:

- The impact of COVID-19 restrictions on students' access to the outreach clinic, and the availability of staff to implement the Program
- The level of funding for the NCLC Community Paralegal and other program costs
- The availability of the NCLC Community Paralegal and NCLC Community Lawyers
- The capability of the NCLC Community Paralegal and NCLC Community Lawyers (legal skills, language skills, general communication skills, interpersonal skills, teaching skills)
- The engagement of Kangan students, Kangan staff and NCLC staff

## Findings

### Outcome Evaluation

The overall aim of the Kangan TAFE Program was to build the capacity of the 900 recently arrived refugee/asylum seeker Kangan students to be able to resolve their own legal issues where appropriate, or make use of an accessible legal services where their legal problem was more complicated.

Each of the program components worked to achieve an intended outcome. The NCLC legal education presentations to Kangan staff was intended to improve Kangan staff members' ability to identify legal need and undertake legal needs assessments. The weekly outreach legal clinics based at Kangan were intended to improve students' access to legal services. The NCLC legal education presentations to Kangan students was intended to improve Kangan students' legal knowledge. Various activities as part of Law Week were intended to increase students' awareness of NCLC legal services, and to reduce the barriers to accessing legal services.

#### **Outcome 1: Kangan staff members' ability to identify legal need and undertake legal needs assessments**

Teachers were considered to be a conduit between students and NCLC services; an uplift in their legal knowledge is likely to also improve the legal knowledge of their students. The NCLC legal education presentations to Kangan staff members occurred at the Kangan staff meetings on an ad hoc basis (estimated to be once per term). The presentations were intended to inform Kangan staff of NCLC services and to build the knowledge of Kangan staff in relation to various legal topics. NCLC Community Lawyers routinely presented case study scenarios illustrating how NCLC could help with particular legal matters.

The Kangan program lead (Lead Educator Vocational English) reported that Kangan teachers were more aware of NCLC services as a result of the staff presentations. Teachers were better able to support students and recommend students to use NCLC services. The NCLC Community Paralegal also added that the English-speaking Kangan teachers were more confident in helping students themselves as a result of their increased awareness of NCLC legal services. The staff presentations also provided the Kangan program lead with opportunities to identify which teachers were open to having NCLC lawyers present to their class based on level of participation of each teacher in the staff presentations.

The Kangan program lead reported that there is appetite for the NCLC presentations to staff to continue in 2021 beginning at the start of the first term.

## **Outcome 2: Students' access to legal services**

Students' access to legal services was supposed to improve with the installation of the weekly outreach legal clinic based at Kangan. The outreach legal clinic was supplemented by the NCLC Community Paralegal's engagement with students around campus. The NCLC Community Paralegal would set up at the Kangan library or cafeteria, such that students could speak to her during their break time. The Community Paralegal would assist students in setting up appointments with NCLC lawyers where required.

The Kangan program lead reported that the outreach clinic was "brilliant – a really big advantage to the services". They observed that the Community Paralegal, through the outreach legal, built a sense of trust in the students so that students were not as fearful when they were talking about sensitive experiences (e.g. experiences of domestic violence, housing issues). The NCLC Community Paralegal also reported that students trusted her with their legal problems. Kangan students came to know that the NCLC Community Paralegal had been a lawyer in Syria and spoke to her "like a friend". It was noted by multiple stakeholders that the Community Paralegal's ability to communicate in both English and Arabic was integral to connecting newly arrived students with NCLC, and in getting their buy-in. It was not considered practical to have resourced a lawyer and an interpreter for the Program.

Students reportedly felt less legal stress while the clinic was operating at Kangan. This is exemplified by a number of examples. One student was involved in a car accident and was highly stressed whenever they received letters from the other party. They were "crying all the time, couldn't sleep and was scared". Their level of stress reduced significantly when they spoke to the NCLC Community Paralegal, and eventually a NCLC Community Lawyer. At the conclusion of their case, they wanted to thank NCLC in front of all the other students and talk about the relief they felt when NCLC helped them to resolve their legal problem.

It was reported that students would probably not have been aware of NCLC services without the outreach clinic, as newly arrived Kangan students spend most of their time at school rather than in the broader community.

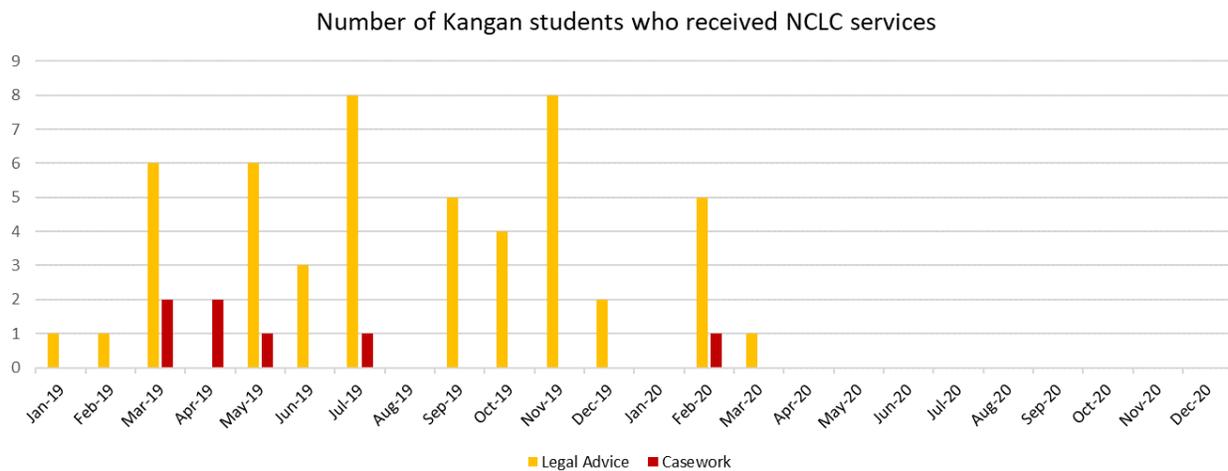
The NCLC Management Team recalled that the number of referrals from Kangan TAFE fluctuated and overall, was not as high as expected. Figure 1 below confirms that, at most, Kangan students accounted for eight legal advices, and two casework files in a month. There were months where the Community Lawyer neither provided legal advice or worked on a case relating to a Kangan student. Some of the fluctuation is due to low numbers around term breaks, but most of it is due to low demand for services.

Staff at NCLC expected from the outset that the newly arrived Kangan students would need legal services for particular types of issues (e.g. migration or settlement matters). However, these

expectations were not met for the entire duration of the program. Many of the request for services were did not necessarily require legal intervention (e.g. how to convert overseas medical practice qualifications to Australian ones).

The success of the Program is not necessarily compromised in light of the low referral numbers, as the main aim of this Program is to build student and staff awareness of NCLC services and the law. The aim was not to find problems where there may not have existed.

Figure 1: Number of Kangan students who received NCLC services as part of the Kangan TAFE Program



### Outcome 3: Students’ capacity to self-help through increased legal knowledge

Students’ legal knowledge was supposed to improve with the occurrence of in-class NCLC presentations to Kangan students, which covered an introduction to NCLC and an overview of the matters that NCLC could help students with. In these presentations, the content would first be delivered by an English-speaking NCLC Community Lawyer and subsequently translated by the NCLC Community Paralegal into Arabic. Staff and students would both be present. Kangan staff and students also went on an excursion to Broadmeadows Magistrates’ Court, which included a tour of the Court and an overview of court processes.

The Kangan program lead reported that two teachers had provided feedback on the most recent presentation which was delivered to Certificate II and Certificate IV-level students. The presenting Community Lawyer was found to be “very engaging, clear, and very approachable in their delivery” even though the session was delivered virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Community Lawyer answered students’ many questions, and students sai that they learned a lot about how fines and infringements are treated in the Australian legal system. The NCLC Community Paralegal echoed the success of the in-class presentations in helping students and teachers feel more confident in resolving less complex issues and seeking help where appropriate.

The excursion to Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court occurred in 2018 and 2019, and involved a large group of students. Students had the opportunity to learn about the court system and court processes (including where the NCLC Duty Lawyer was located at the Court). The tour was delivered in English and translation was undertaken by the NCLC Community Paralegal.

Both the NCLC Community Paralegal and Kangan program lead observed that this particular excursion was significant in reducing students' fear of the Australian legal system. This was due to several factors. Students came to learn that one of the law clerks who was present at the time of the tour was also newly arrived. In effect, this meeting led to heightened interest in the law clerk's journey and students feeling inspired about their future. The Kangan program lead reported that students were probably thinking "if they [the law clerk] can get a job like that, then I can too". Moreover, the attending judge "had a beautiful manner and spoke clearly to everyone". These positive interactions between the Kangan students and the present court officials rendered the court and the legal system less intimidating to students.

The tour of the Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court did not occur in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, Kangan are interested in resuming the excursion in 2021 (either face-to-face or remotely) due to the success from previous years.

The translation of precedent letters is currently being undertaken by the NCLC Community Paralegal, with the aim of bolstering students' ability to self-help in less complex matters (e.g. insurance disputes). It is anticipated that students would still need help from NCLC in using these self-help tools.

#### **Outcome 4: Students' awareness of NCLC legal services and their capacity to seek help where required**

The presence of NCLC staff at Kangan and various Law Week activities were intended to increase students' awareness of NCLC legal services. Law Week activities included the excursion to the Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court and the undertaking of Legal Health Checks at a barbecue event.

It was reported that the profile of NCLC was primarily raised through the NCLC presentations to staff and students, and the Community Paralegal's strong relationship with students. It is unclear to what extent the Law Week activities directly increased student and staff awareness of NCLC services.

#### **Unintended outcomes**

The only unintended outcome that was reported was that some components of the program inspired students with regard to career pathways. Students felt that they could see themselves in the position of the newly arrived law clerk who was present during students' visit to the Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court. The effect was similar when students learned that the NCLC Community Paralegal had once been newly arrived, and had also been a lawyer in Syria. This shows the potential of the Program to address outcomes relating to career development in the

newly arrived refugee/asylum seeker population. Newly arrived people often need guidance in applying existing skills and qualifications in a new context, or in seeking new career pathways.

## **Process Evaluation**

This section of the report assesses how the Program was implemented according to the five dimensions of implementation fidelity:

1. Program specificity – the extent to which distinguishing program elements are present or absent
2. Adherence – the extent to which methods or implementation conformed to theoretical guidelines (particularly when the intervention is adapted to meet the needs of specific circumstances)
3. Dose/exposure – the extent to which program participants were ‘exposed’ to the program
4. Quality of delivery – the extent to which the program implementer approaches a theoretical ideal in delivering program content, the skillfulness in the delivery of the intervention and includes interpersonal and process level skills
5. Engagement – the degree to which program implementers and participants are engaged in the program

### **Program specificity**

The distinguishing component of the Kangan TAFE Program is the co-location of the NCLC Community Paralegal with newly arrived students at Kangan TAFE. This unique way of engaging culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities was driven by the understanding that engagement is more than just outreach. Students needed someone to deeply understand their issues and help connect them to wraparound services – which includes legal services as well as health and community services. As such, the NCLC Community Paralegal served as the intermediary response when students presented with legal problems and other associated issues (e.g. anxiety as a result of the legal problem).

The location of the NCLC Community Paralegal at Kangan TAFE – a hub that attracts newly arrived persons – was also a distinctive program element. In many cases, students’ first interaction with the NCLC Community Paralegal was also their first interaction with the service system. A positive experience, where people were connected to the right services at the right time, had the potential to significantly improve newly arrived people’s trust in not just NCLC, but the service system as a whole.

The community legal education (CLE) delivered through this project was more intense than other CLE conducted by NCLC, as it occurred on a more frequent basis and to a larger number of participants. Moreover, the NCLC Community Paralegal also worked alongside NCLC lawyers in the presentation of in-class legal education sessions to translate the content into Arabic. This distinctive program element served to minimise language barriers during the interactive presentations.

The combination of these elements enabled a greater sense of trust to develop between Kangan and NCLC, particularly between the students and the NCLC Community Paralegal.

The Kangan TAFE Program is similar to 'lawyer in school' programs that have been implemented at other community legal centres. However, the Kangan TAFE Program does not involve permanently embedding a lawyer into the school's staffing structure (e.g. the WestJustice School Lawyer is a member of the school's wellbeing team). The NCLC Community Paralegal remained as part of the NCLC staff, and dedicated six hours a week to the Kangan Program (as the funding allowed).

### **Adherence**

The level of funding received was a significant factor that impacted on the extent to which implementation accorded with what was originally specified in the proposal. The funding received (10% of the original target) only enabled NCLC to staff the Community Paralegal onto the project on a six hours per week basis. The time spent on the project by the NCLC Community Lawyers and other staff were in-kind contributions by NCLC.

The original design incorporated a component that embedded legal education into the curriculum, such that students (with the help of peers and teachers) could learn to identify and respond to their own legal need. The delivery of this component would have required both an NCLC Community Lawyer and Community Paralegal to be dedicated to the Program. This component was not delivered due to limited funding.

Another component that was not delivered was the development of 'legal champions' – students who would become ambassadors for the service and provide peer support. This component was not implemented as the resources required was too great. There were approximately 20 classes of students involved. Moreover, NCLC was wary of the demands students already had as newly arrived people who may be receiving formal education for the first time. Training students to become legal champions in this context was not seen as appropriate or practical. Finally, the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions interrupted program delivery, such that there was very little program activity during the first lockdown before activity started gaining momentum during the second lockdown. These conditions rendered the ongoing development of legal champions unfeasible.

The impact of COVID-10 restrictions in Victoria on the program was significant, particularly with regard to how the legal education presentations were delivered. The presentations to students changed from face-to-face to online delivery. The Kangan program lead reported that staff were initially nervous about the transition to online learning, as there were many swift changes in a short period. However, many Kangan teachers have now adapted to being online, and are enjoying the change. Lower level teachers still preferred face-to-face teaching.

Online delivery was reported to be more beneficial for students in higher level English courses, particularly Certificate 4 students, who need to acquire digital and IT skills for their mainstream

courses. Lower level students (pre-level certificate 0 and level 1) face a greater challenge with online learning as these newly arrived students may be in formal schooling for the first time, or may not yet have access to a laptop for online classes. A hybrid mode of delivery was proposed by the Kangan program lead.

The training of Kangan staff to undertake legal needs assessments was also modified. The original design was to train Kangan staff to identify legal need and undertake legal needs assessments through focus groups. Focus groups were not implemented due to the resources required and the need to be mindful of teachers' existing workloads. Instead, staff received information on how to refer students through NCLC presentations at staff meetings and supported students to complete Legal Health Checks during the Law Week barbecue.

Self-help legal tools have recently been developed by the NCLC Legal Team and translated into Arabic by the NCLC Community Paralegal. These tools include precedent letters - templates that students can self-populate to resolve less complex issues. It is anticipated that the use of these tools would reduce the time that NCLC Community Lawyers spend on transactional matters, such as fines. The templates were originally intended to be provided to teachers to be integrated into English language classes, but that did not happen. It is anticipated that these tools will now be delivered separately, and explained to teachers and students at future NCLC CLE sessions at Kangan.

### **Dose/exposure**

Participants' 'exposure' to the program was not explicitly tracked in this program as it varied according to the legal needs of each student. The Program was in place between December 2018 and December 2020, during which approximately 1,311 students interacted with the Program to some degree. A total of 129 CLE activities were delivered.

The number of students referred from Kangan fluctuated over time, with an overall downward trend even though the scope of the legal services was widened for this program. NCLC would help with quasi-legal issues that were beyond the casework guidelines to ensure wider access for a group of potential clients with varying legal needs. At the start of the Program, the NCLC Community Paralegal met with students more frequently - about 10 to 15 appointments per week. Towards the end of the program, they had about 1-2 appointments per week.

Several explanations for the dwindling number of referrals were proposed by stakeholders: 1) Referrals may have fluctuated/decreased due to changes in staff and student engagement levels as staffing changed at NCLC and Kangan. When staffing changes, there is inevitably a transition cost in terms of onboarding time; 2) Students may have also spoken to the Community Paralegal early in the program so they did not have the need for legal service later on; 3) Students may not have been in the country for long enough to have legal issues arise. For instance, newly arrived students are less likely to own and drive cars, and are therefore less likely to commit driving offences; 4) Staff and students may not have fully developed the capability of being able to identify/self-identify a legal issue despite program efforts.

It is plausible that newly arrived students probably did not have as many legal issues as was expected, and as many legal issues relating to settlement. These findings are not necessarily considered weaknesses of the program because a large component of the Program aimed at preventing the occurrence of legal issues, mostly through the delivery of CLE.

### **Quality of delivery**

The quality of delivery relates to the competency of all participating staff at Kangan and NCLC in delivering the Program. The Kangan program lead and NCLC staff reported that the Community Paralegal had excellent interpersonal skills and professional skills, especially in their interactions with students. They were always punctual, maintained excellent recordkeeping and most importantly, had an ability to anticipate students' needs. The NCLC Legal Practice Manager provided the feedback that the Community Paralegal was effective in making the legal system less intimidating for students by communicating matters in an accessible way (i.e. minimal legal jargon) and "getting people through the door" by continually establishing trust with students.

The Community Paralegal role was reported by NCLC staff to be a mix of translation, community engagement and administration. In terms of administrative duties, the Community Paralegal was responsible for file noting, completing intake forms and collecting client details. They were familiar with these NCLC processes prior to being staffed onto the Program as they had previously assisted with administration and translation duties. These past experiences would have contributed to their competency in delivering the Program, and allowed them to work independently.

The Community Paralegal worked with the lawyers in several ways – primarily in co-presenting the CLE sessions at Kangan and in client management. The Community Paralegal would refer potential clients to the Community Lawyers, who would subsequently assess the legal need and undertake appropriate action (i.e. give advice, take on as casework or make a referral). There was reportedly no disconnect between the Community Paralegal and the Community Lawyers in terms of communication.

New NCLC lawyers were usually staffed onto the Program as the referred matters were not usually complex. The Community Lawyers would bring complex matters to the Legal Practice Manager when they arose. There were no reported competency issues regarding the NCLC Community Lawyers, other than the fact that it would have been advantageous to have bilingual Community Lawyers.

The lack of bilingual staff at NCLC presented some challenges with regard to quality management. For instance, NCLC managers and lawyers had to trust that the translation of legal content by the Community Paralegal in CLE sessions, client meetings and in writing was accurate (which would be the case with any translator). NCLC mitigated the risk of miscommunication by resourcing another Arabic and English-speaking NCLC staff member to assist the Community Paralegal in the written translation of legal content. The likelihood of miscommunication was

higher here than if all or most participating staff were fluent in both Arabic and English. On the whole, these challenges were not considered to be significantly problematic.

## **Engagement**

The engagement of NCLC was reported to be generally high over the course of the Program, although staffing changes to the NCLC Legal Team meant that three lawyers worked within the role over the project period, with the Legal Practice Manager filling in during short periods while the role was vacant. It may be assumed that the turnover of NCLC staff could have impacted on engagement with staff and students, where trust and inter-personal engagement is critical to success. Engagement from the NCLC Management team with regard to the program remained high over the project period, as is reflected in the number of funding to philanthropic organisations to continue funding the Program. There were at least two grant applications in the final year of the Program.

The engagement of Kangan staff also varied with staffing changes, as is typically the case when staff are onboarded into new roles. The first Kangan program lead was a champion of the Program, and instigated monthly wrap-around meetings involving Kangan, NCLC Management, and other services providers (e.g. Foundation House, Arabic Welfare, Brotherhood of St Laurence). These meetings were regarded as valuable for effective cross referrals, and significantly contributed to a collaborative effort in the early phases of the program. There was an interruption in these meetings when the initial program lead departed in 2019. The new Program leader re-introduced the meetings (one meeting every school term), and provided opportunities for NCLC staff to present at these meetings. The Kangan lead continued to provide strong support of the program, providing opportunities for NCLC staff to present at teacher's meetings, responding quickly to any issues raised in regards to the office space used by the lawyer, and coordinating between Kangan staff and students to support engagement in Law Week activities hosted by NCLC.

## **Recommendations**

This section captures recommendations for future iterations of the Program.

### **Recommendation 1: Leverage deeper understanding of target cohort**

More detailed information around the target cohort's legal needs and relevant systemic barriers would have been beneficial to delivering a more targeted service. In this round, there was some misunderstanding about the number of participating Kangan students. It was anticipated that there would be 900 students but there were only 100 participating students at the Broadmeadows campus.

It also became apparent to NCLC staff that some of the target cohort, primarily the lower level English classes, were perhaps too newly arrived to have encountered legal issues. If this was understood in advance, more resources could have been diverted into components that had a preventative focus (e.g. CLE) for these focused. The resourcing for higher level classes could then

be more focused on components that improve students' ability to resolve their own issues (e.g. self-help tools), or that improve their access to legal services (e.g. outreach clinic).

NCLC stakeholders recommend that more detailed analysis of the Program's target audience be undertaken prior to the next iteration of the Program. As a starting point, the next program implementers could look to data collected from this Program and externally to identify the most common legal issues in newly arrived communities (perhaps matters relating to fines and debt).

### **Recommendation 2: Improve data collection processes**

Quality data is usually underpinned by robust data collection tools and processes. NCLC stakeholders suggested that the administration of the Legal Health Check tool needed to be improved to collect higher quality data on newly arrived communities' legal needs. Legal Health Checks (LHCs) were conducted several times in this iteration of the Program. The data quality would improve where students were actively assisted in filling out the form, primarily during the first few times the LHC was administered. The Legal Health Check was translated by bilingual NCLC staff into Arabic, Nepalese, Punjabi and Hindi, which accounted for over 85% of students. It likely that students who spoke none of these languages may not have returned quality responses. Some NCLC stakeholders suspected it would have taken a long time to extract useful data from all the LHCs, perhaps due to the varying data quality.

It is recommended that the LHCs be revisited to ensure appropriateness, and that the process for administering the LHCs be reconsidered to ensure that all students are consistently given sufficient guidance in filling out the form. Moreover, the development of case studies, which draw from LHCs, client testimony and file data be presented in a standardised way and selected against consistent criteria.

### **Recommendation 3: Map out staff capabilities and responsibilities**

Clear job scoping requires a clear mapping of the required capacity and capabilities, and a delineation of responsibilities. This iteration of the Program revealed what competencies are integral to project success. The Community Paralegal role is said to require excellent interpersonal skills, fluency in both English and Arabic (and possibly Syrian), the ability to set and manage expectations with a range of stakeholders, the ability to anticipate students' needs, standard paralegal skills and IT competency. Moreover, there needs to be clear communication about what the Community Paralegal's role would be as this role is part interpreter in some situations, part paralegal and part community liaison.

The support structure relating to the Community Paralegal role also needs to be well thought out before the next iteration of the Program - whether Community Paralegal is sufficiently resourced to achieve the intended outcomes through the program components, and whether the communication structures enable the Community Paralegal to effectively liaise with the Community Lawyers and other program stakeholders.

Some stakeholders suggested that the program would have been more effective if the NCLC Community Lawyers were also fluent in English and Arabic. This may have led to a more direct connection between the students and the Community Lawyers during the class presentations and client meetings. Stakeholders also noted that this is the ideal situation and that they are aware of the constraints that limited funding can present.

#### **Recommendation 4: Closely monitor the state of the Kangan and NCLC relationship**

The Kangan and NCLC partnership was on the whole, a positive working relationship. However, it was at times disrupted by staffing changes, which is likely to occur in any inter-organisational project. Toward the end of the Program, both organisations were also occupied with changing conditions during COVID-19 restrictions.

It is recommended that future program implementers undertake both monitoring and evaluation for the duration of the project. Evaluation at the end of the project is useful for understanding the program as a whole. Ongoing monitoring enables program implementers to flag changes and possible risks early, such that mitigation strategies can be deployed well in advance. For instance, organisations can agree to double the frequency of project meetings (and perhaps halve the duration) where staffing changes are announced to keep abreast of the changing project conditions, and to ensure that newly onboarded staff are well connected to the project. This anticipatory approach to minimising the effect of possible risks is applicable, too, to unforeseen changes, such as the transition to online service delivery as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.

#### **Recommendation 5: Prepare self-help tools in advance of classes**

NCLC has now developed self-help tools for students to use to resolve less complex matters by themselves. It was suggested that these tools could be introduced to staff and students from the very first CLE session, or be presented at the first few English classes that students undertake. This would enable staff and students to refer to a tangible tool in their discussions, and more clearly understand and convey the value of the Program.

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation of the Kangan TAFE Program reveals that the integration of community law services into a school program targeted at newly arrived people can lead to effective and integrated service delivery. The strength of the Program was in the ability of the Community Paralegal to connect newly arrived people to support services at the start of their settlement experience. The Program was largely hindered by the onset of COVID-19 restrictions, insufficient funding and interruptions relating to staffing changes. These are either unforeseen, necessary or likely program risks that can be easily mitigated in light of the learnings from this iteration. The outcomes achieved in this iteration of the

Program are arguably, proportionate to the resourcing. There is sufficient evidence from both the outcome and process evaluation to suggest that a more supported version of the Program can achieve the intended outcomes with less process issues, and to do so on a larger scale.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Stakeholder interview list

Name	Job Title	Organisation	Interview date and time
Cathy Kakoliris	Lead Educator Vocational English (English for Work and Settlement)	Kangan TAFE (Broadmeadows Campus)	11 Dec 2020 9:30am – 10:30am
Heyam Haddad	Paralegal Community Worker	Northern Community Legal Centre	18 Dec 2020 10am – 11am
Jenni Smith	Chief Executive Officer	Northern Community Legal Centre	24 Dec 2020 11am – 12pm
Marquita Nolan	Legal Practice Manager	Northern Community Legal Centre	23 Dec 2020 10am – 11am
Tania McKenna	Partnerships & Community Development Manager	Northern Community Legal Centre	18 Dec 2020 2pm – 3pm

### Appendix B: List of documents reviewed

Document Title	Description
'2019 Partnership Tier 1 and Tier 2 Grant Application'	This is the proposal sent by NCLC to Hume City Council to apply for the Partnership Grant, which would fund the Kangan TAFE Program
'2020 Community Grants Mid-Year Progress Report'	This is the progress report sent by NCLC to Hume City Council to provide an update on how the Partnership Grant has been used to deliver the Kangan TAFE Program

## Appendix C: Program logic and evaluation framework

Problem statement	Stakeholders	Funding/cost	Timeline
To build the capacity of 900 recently arrived refugee/asylum seeker students undertaking English languages classes at Kangan Institute (Broadmeadows) to self-help where appropriate or make use of an accessible legal services as required	<b>NCLC staff:</b> Heyam (Community Paralegal), NCLC lawyer, Tania <b>Key decisionmakers:</b> XX <b>Funders:</b> Hume City Council <b>Stakeholders:</b> 900 Kangan students, Kangan staff	\$20,000 (Hume Council Grant)	Dec 2018 - Dec 2020

Assumptions	External factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Having an on-site outreach legal clinic at Kanagan will lead to Kangan students having greater knowledge of and greater access to legal services</li> <li>* A peer support model (community paralegal, student champions, Kangan staff) enhances students' knowledge of legal knowledge/legal services, possibly because students are receptive to peer advice</li> <li>* The peer support model can be self-sustainable into the future (i.e. does not need NCLC staff on-site on a permanent basis)</li> <li>* Asylum seeker/refugee students have ongoing legal needs (enough to justify the running of the clinic, program, self-help tools, training)</li> <li>* Students and staff are able to update their legal knowledge after the program ends in sustainable, less resource-intensive way (e.g. CLE by NCLC every 3 months)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* COVID impacting on access and availability</li> <li>* Funding for NCLC Community Paralegal, NCLC lawyer and other program costs</li> <li>* Availability of NCLC Community Paralegal and NCLC lawyer</li> <li>* Capability of NCLC Community Paralegal and NCLC lawyer (legal, language, general communication, teaching)</li> <li>* Engagement of Kangan students, Kangan staff, NCLC Community Paralegal, NCLC Lawyer, NCLC decisionmakers, funder)</li> </ul>

Components of implementation fidelity	Process Evaluation questions	Data source
<b>Program Specificity:</b> the degree to which elements which would distinguish one type of program from another are present or absent	1. Which components set this program apart from similar programs?	Interview/s with Jenni, Marquita and Tania (NCLC)
<b>Adherence:</b> the strict adherence to methods or implementation that conforms to theoretical guidelines (particularly when the intervention is adapted to meet the needs of specific circumstances)	2. Were there any discrepancies in what was detailed in the proposal and what was actually implemented (i.e. components not delivered, components added)? Why were there discrepancies/no discrepancies?	
	3. What adaptations were made (i.e. component delivered but with changes)? Why were there adaptation/no adaptations?	
	4. What was the impact of component addition/subtraction/adaptation on program outcomes?	
<b>Dose/exposure:</b> the completeness and dosage of implementation	5. Were all participants exposed to the program as intended (i.e. duration, frequency)?	
	6. Why did some participants complete the program and not others? (if applicable)	
	7. How do you think the rate of program completion impacted on the program outcomes?	
<b>Quality of Delivery:</b> the extent to which a provider approaches a theoretical ideal in delivering program content, the skilfulness in the delivery of the intervention and includes interpersonal and process level skills	8. How would you describe the competency of the program implementers (e.g. interpersonal skills, ability to understand and follow process, ability to balance fidelity/adaptation)?	
	9. How do you think this impacted on the program outcomes?	
<b>Engagement:</b> the degree to which participants are engaged	10. How would you describe the engagement levels of the program implementers, students, Kangan staff, NCLC staff?	
	11. How do you think this impacted on the program outcomes?	

Goal	Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes					
		Activities	Audience	Short-term (6 months)	Data	Medium-term (1 year)	Data	Long-term (2 years)	Data
To build the capacity of 900 recently arrived refugee/asylum seeker students undertaking English languages classes at Kangan Institute (Broadmeadows) to self-help where appropriate or make use of an accessible legal services as required	NCLC lawyer, NCLC Community Paralegal	Develop <b>case studies</b> and a sound understanding of the legal issues facing our target audience	Various audiences	Build evidence base of the legal needs of Kangan students		Triangulate evidence from case studies with wider data on the legal needs of asylum seekers and refugees		NCLC and Kangan have greater understanding of the legal needs and experiences of asylum seeker/refugee students, and asylum seeker/refugees more widely	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)  Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)
	NCLC lawyer	Lawyer will <b>train a bilingual paralegal</b> to undertake the administrative elements of a range of legal matters	Community paralegal (Heyam)	NCLC paralegal knows how to undertake the administrative elements of a range of legal matters	Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)	NCLC paralegal confidently and effectively undertakes the administrative elements of a range of legal matters	Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)		
	NCLC lawyer, NCLC Community Paralegal	<b>Train Kangan staff</b> to identify legal need and undertake legal needs assessments through strategically administered focus groups	Kangan Staff	Kangan staff know how to identify legal need through legal needs assessments	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)	Kangan staff undertake legal needs assessments effectively, direct students to self-help tools and/or refer students to legal services	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)	The capacity of the students to self-help where appropriate or make use of an accessible legal services has increases (knowledge x confidence x tools x access)	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)  Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)
	NCLC lawyer, NCLC Community Paralegal	Weekly <b>outreach legal clinics</b> based at Kangan	900 Kangan students	Increase access to legal services for Kangan students	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)  Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)	Students feel more confident in accessing legal services	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)  Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)		
	NCLC lawyer, NCLC Community Paralegal	Embed <b>legal literacy</b> within curriculum and tailor our preventative legal education to meet the needs of students by identifying and addressing issues raised at differing points along student's settlement journey	900 Kangan students	Students have greater legal knowledge and knowledge of legal services	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)  Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)	Students feel more confident in navigating potential or actual legal problems (either through self-help or via legal services)	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)  Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)		
	NCLC lawyer, NCLC Community Paralegal	Develop a suite of <b>self-help legal tools</b> that aid in the resolution of legal issues of minimal complexity	900 Kangan students	Students have greater knowledge of self-help legal tools (how to use, when to use, when to seek help)	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)  Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)	Students confidently and effectively use self-help legal tools to resolve legal issues of minimal complexity	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)  Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)		
	NCLC lawyer, NCLC Community Paralegal	Identify student leaders/champions who will be trained to assist with the simple administrative elements of matters that may become complex legal	Subset of 900 Kangan students	Student champions have greater knowledge of how to resolve simple administrative elements of matters	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)  Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)	Student champions confidently and effectively assist their peers in resolving simple administrative elements or matters	Interview with Kangan staff (Cathy)  Interview with NCLC Community Paralegal (Heyam)		

## Appendix D: Interview guides

### Kangan Evaluation Interview Guide: Outcome Evaluation

The evaluation of the Kangan TAFE Program entails an outcome evaluation and a process evaluation. The outcomes evaluation asks whether intended outcomes were achieved, and whether there were any unintended outcomes that could be attributed to the Program. The process evaluation asks whether the Program was implemented as planned. This interview guide pertains to the outcome evaluation.

This interview is confidential. The data collected from this interview will be de-identified in the evaluation report, and synthesised with other findings.

#### Question

1. What was the impact of the staff presentations on Kangan staff members' ability to identify legal need, and undertake legal needs assessments?
2. What was the impact of the outreach legal clinics on students' access to legal services?
3. What was the impact of legal education presentations on students' legal knowledge (e.g. NCLC presentations to Kangan students, tour of Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court)?
4. To what extent did the law week activities raise awareness of NCLC legal services among students?

### Kangan Evaluation Interview Guide: Process Evaluation

The evaluation of the Kangan TAFE Program entails an outcomes evaluation and a process evaluation. The outcomes evaluation asks whether intended outcomes were achieved, and whether there were any unintended outcomes that could be attributed to the Program. The process evaluation asks whether the Program was implemented as planned. This interview guide pertains to the process evaluation.

This interview is confidential. The data collected from this interview will be deidentified in the evaluation report, and synthesized with other findings.

#### Question

1. Which components set this program apart from similar programs?
2. Were there any discrepancies in what was detailed in the proposal and what was actually implemented (i.e. components not delivered, components added)? Why were there discrepancies/no discrepancies?
3. What adaptations were made (i.e. component delivered but with changes)? Why were there adaptation/no adaptations?
4. What was the impact of component addition/subtraction/adaptation on program outcomes?
5. Were all participants of the program involved as intended (i.e. duration, frequency)?
6. Why did some participants complete the program and not others? (if applicable)
7. How do you think the rate of program completion impacted on the program outcomes?
8. How would you describe the competency of the program implementers (e.g. interpersonal skills, ability to understand and follow process, ability to balance program fidelity/adaptation)?
9. How do you think this impacted on the program outcomes?
10. How would you describe the engagement levels of the program implementers, students, Kangan staff, NCLC staff?
11. How do you think this impacted on the program outcomes?