

Media Release

Wednesday 3rd September 2014

knowmore welcomes funding extension for Royal Commission

knowmore legal service today welcomed news that the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse funding would be extended as a relief for survivors and others waiting to have their stories heard.

knowmore provides free and independent legal assistance to all people currently engaging with or considering engaging with the Royal Commission, through a national advice line, and with offices in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, and Perth.

knowmore Executive Officer Jenny Hardy said that the Royal Commission's two year extension and funding boost of \$125 million was fantastic news for survivors, and those yet to have their stories heard.

"The concern was, and it became apparent as soon as the Interim Report was released – that a large number of people would have to be turned away if the Royal Commission was not funded.

"The revised timeframe means that a great deal more stories can now be heard. Such an important process has been started through the Royal Commission, and already a great deal of healing has started. Organisations are also changing their practice and requirements to better protect children from harm.

"Our legal service has a unique model, giving our clients access to lawyers in the first instance, but also counsellors/social workers, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officers who provide support to clients and assist with making referrals to other support services for ongoing help.

"We have had a strong response from the community thus far – we have provided over 4000 advices and seen a high level of engagement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – 19% of our clients identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

"Some of the common issues and questions that people present with include options for engaging with the Royal Commission, whether a matter falls within the terms of reference of the Royal Commission, advice around unique individual legal circumstances such as the effect of confidentiality agreements in past proceedings, and compensation issues.

"**knowmore** can also assist people to obtain representation where they are required to appear at interviews or public hearings of the Royal Commission, and can assist with making referrals to experienced lawyers to seek compensation.

"We have an emphasis on delivering safe, trauma-informed and culturally appropriate services," Ms Hardy said.

For more information, please contact Executive Officer Jenny Hardy on 0437 583 283.

Brisbane

Suite 1, Level 16, 141 Queen St,
Brisbane QLD 4000
PO Box 2151, Brisbane QLD 4001
t 07 3218 4500

Sydney

Suite G02, Ground Floor,
233 Castlereagh St, Sydney NSW 2000
PO Box 20319, World Square NSW 2002
t 02 8267 7400

Melbourne

Level 1, 180 Flinders St,
Melbourne 3000
PO Box 84, Flinders Lane VIC 8009
t 03 8663 7400

Perth

Level 9, 41 St Georges Terrace,
Perth WA 6000
PO Box 8095, Cloisters Square, WA 6850
t 08 9225 0200